# MOVING PLACES. THE SYNTAX OF GOAL OF MOTION CONSTRUCTIONS REVISITED

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**Abstract:** 'Goal of motion' constructions have been used in the literature (Talmy 1985, Klipple 1997, Higginbotham 2002, Rappaport Hovav and Levin 2001, Ramchand and Folli 2001, 2005, etc.) as the basis for setting a parameter which distinguishes English (a satellite-framed language) from Romance languages (verb-framed languages) in terms of mapping conceptual categories such as 'manner' and 'path' onto syntactic ones (VPs and PPs). Starting from Folli and Ramchand's (2005) analysis of 'goal of motion' constructions, we will show that some 'goal of motion' constructions in Italian and Romanian appear to force a reconsideration of the above-mentioned parameter.

## 1. Introduction

'Goal of motion' is defined in the literature (Talmy 1985, Klipple 1997, Higginbotham 2002, Rappaport Hovav and Levin 2001, Ramchand and Folli 2001, 2005, etc.) as a construction which describes a complex event consisting of two subevents: a motion process, lexicalized by a manner-of-motion verb, and the endpoint of such motion, realized by means of a prepositional phrase. The same literature argues that languages employ different strategies to express 'goal of motion': while in languages such as Latin, German or Russian the combination 'motion verb and prepositional phrase' can express either directed or located motion, depending on the case of the DP which is the complement of the preposition. In English, the same combination results in mostly ambiguous interpretations, as either directed or located motion, due to the ambiguity of the prepositions themselves (exceptions are prepositions such as *to*, *into*, *onto*, *across*, which always contribute to a directed motion interpretation). On the other hand, in Romance languages, the same combination is assigned only a located motion interpretation. To express directed motion, these languages use an inherently telic motion verb which also expresses the endpoint, while the manner of motion is realized by means of an adjunct (*He danced into the room./A intrat în cameră dansând.*).

These different strategies have been accounted for in terms of a parameter which shows that English and Romance languages map conceptual categories such as 'manner' and 'path' onto syntactic ones (VPs and PPs) in distinct ways. As suggested by Talmy (1985), English is a satellite-framed language in which 'manner' is encoded in the verb and 'path'/'goal' in the preposition, whereas Romance languages are verb-framed languages in which 'path' is encoded in the verb, the accompanying prepositional phrase is interpreted only as 'location', and 'manner' is expressed by means of an adjunct. As a result, in addition to the many ambiguous prepositions (*under*, *over*, *behind*) and the strictly locative ones (*in*, *on*, *at*), English has developed special goal prepositions which are always assigned a dynamic interpretation (*to*, *into*, *onto*, *across*). In contrast, in Romance languages all prepositions are claimed to be locative due to their co-occurrence with stative verbs.

In what follows, we will consider as our starting point Folli and Ramchand's (2005) analysis of 'goal of motion' constructions to show that, although crosslinguistic variation seems to conform to a large extent to the parameter which distinguishes between satellite-framed and verb-framed languages, the picture offered by Italian with respect to goal of motion constructions is more complex. Moreover, Romanian includes examples which seem to challenge the parameter analysis, further complicating the picture. In other words, it appears that the association of 'path' with verbs and 'location' with prepositions in Romance

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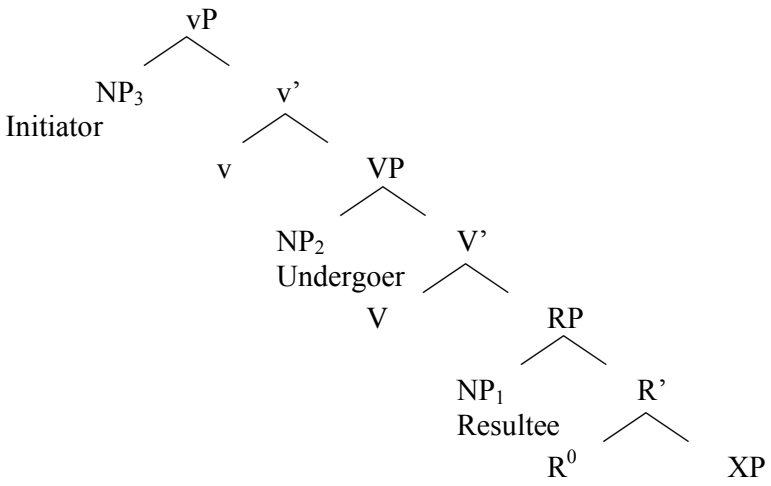
languages is not as clear-cut as suggested. What the examples in Romanian seem to indicate is that the analysis of 'goal of motion' constructions needs to take into account the semantic content of both the verb and the preposition and especially the way they interact to result in a 'goal of motion' interpretation.

In their approach to 'goal of motion' constructions, Folli and Ramchand (2005) analyze the above mentioned crosslinguistic variation in terms of parameters of lexical semantic decomposition (causation and telicity) and the formal properties of verbs and prepositions in Italian and English.

**2. Folli and Ramchand's framework**

Starting from the idea that the syntactic projection of arguments is based on event structure, they propose three event projections which represent the three possible components of a complex event, as illustrated in (1): vP (expressing the causing subevent and licensing the external argument interpreted as the Initiator), VP (expressing dynamicity/change and not merely activity/process and licensing the entity which undergoes the change/process) and RP (indicating the result state of the process expressed by VP and licensing the entity that comes to hold such state).

(1)




While the causing subevent and the result subevent are optional, the VP projection represents the minimally required projection of any dynamic predicate. In addition, there are two event composition rules which, when combined, result in the kind of complex event represented above: causation: $e = e_1 \rightarrow e_2$ (where $e_1$ causes $e_2$ ) and telic augmentation: $e = <e_1, e_2>$ (where $e_1$ represents the process and $e_2$ the resulting state).

On the other hand, the lexical entries for verbs in the lexicon contain a bundle of categorial features which correspond to the three projections: [+v], [+V], and [+R]. According to the categorial features they are specified for, verbs generate different event structures, since the presence of a certain feature results in the projection of the correspondent l-syntactic head and this accounts in fact for their variable argument structure realizations. For instance, *break* always specifies a result state and therefore contains in its lexical entry all three features: ([+v]), [+V], [+R]. The fact that [+v] is between round brackets signals that the vP projection is optional, as expected, given that *break* can alternate between *Mary broke the vase.* and *The vase broke*.

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Similarly, prepositions can be specified for [+P] and/or [+Rp], function of whether they express only path or path and final location (on analogy with RP for verbs). Thus, prepositions classify into purely dynamic, which are specified for [+P, +Rp] and which cannot appear with stative predications (*I went to the shop./*I was to the shop.*), prepositions that are ambiguous between a stative and a dynamic reading, for which the Rp projection is optional, and stative prepositions, specified only for [+P], which, when combined with motion verbs, never express goal of motion, only location. Examples are provided in the table below:

(2)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dynamic | *to, into, onto, across,* etc. | [+P, +Rp] |
| Ambiguous | *under, behind, over*, etc | [+P, (+Rp)] |
| Stative | *in, on, underneath, beneath* | [+P] |

**3. Folli and Ramchand's analysis**

Focusing on 'goal of motion' constructions, Folli and Ramchand (2005) identify examples in Italian which do not bear out Talmy's parameter analysis. Although Italian seems to behave like all Romance languages in lexicalizing 'goal of motion' – encoding 'path' in the verb, 'location' in the preposition and 'manner' in an adjunct, there are ambiguous constructions which resemble those in English in the sense that they combine a manner-of-motion verb with a prepositional phrase indicating the endpoint of motion, as illustrated below (Folli and Ramchand 2005):

(3) The boat floated under the bridge. (ambiguous between directed/located motion)
(4) La barca galleggiò sotto il ponte. (located motion)
'The boar floated under the bridge.'
(5) La barca passò sotto il ponte galleggiando. (goal of motion)
'The boat went under the bridge floating.'
(6) La palla rotolò sotto il tavolo. (ambiguous between directed/located motion)
'The ball rolled under the table.'

They account for this variation claiming that "goal of motion in Italian is not dependent on the choice of preposition (and in particular occurs with purely locative PPs), but on the choice of verb. In English, on the other hand, the variation seems to be blind to the particular motion verb chosen, but depends on the type of PP it combines with." (Folli and Ramchand 2005)

Thus, in English 'goal of motion' is formed only with dynamic prepositions, be they purely dynamic (*to*, *into*, *onto*, *across*, etc.) or ambiguous between a dynamic and a stative reading (*under*, *behind*, etc.), as suggested by the possibility/impossibility to combine them with state verbs:

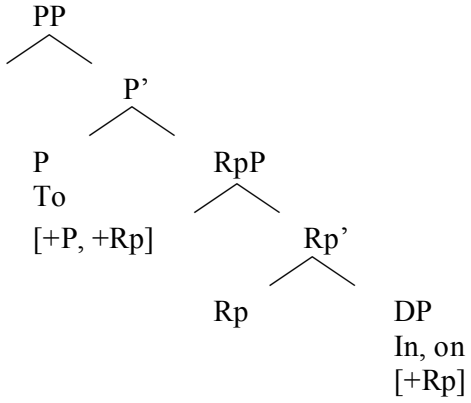
(7) Mary walked to the park.
*Mary was to the park.
(8) The ball rolled into the water.
*The ball was into the water.
(9) The boat floated under the bridge.
The boat was under the bridge.

According to Higginbotham (2002), dynamic prepositions are accomplishment predicates of the type $<e_1, e_2>$ encoding both path and endpoint in their structure. Hence, they are

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specified for both [+P] and [+Rp]. Their semantic complexity is reflected in their syntactic complexity, in the sense that they consist of two event projections, as in (10) below:

(10)




Such dynamic prepositional phrases are attached in adjunct position and create telic structures at the level of outer aspect, as proved by the fact that they can combine with any verb of motion to form 'goal of motion'. English manner-of-motion verbs are claimed to never encode 'path'; hence, 'goal of motion' depends only on the type of preposition, a fact which supports Talmy's parameter analysis.

As already stated, in Italian the combination of a manner-of-motion verb with a preposition receives only an atelic/locative motion interpretation. To express 'goal of motion', Italian employs a verb of directed motion in combination with a prepositional phrase, while manner is expressed by an adjunct (*La barca passò sotto il ponte galleggiando*. 'The boat went under the bridge floating.').

On the other hand, although all simple prepositions in Italian are claimed to be stative since they can all occur with stative predications unlike the English *to*, Folli and Ramchand (2005) show that such prepositions can appear with manner-of-motion verbs in telic constructions as well:

(11) La palla rotolò sotto il tavolo per/in un secondo.
'The ball rolled under the table for/in a second.'
(12) La palla ha rotolato sotto il tavolo per/*in un secondo. (atelic)
'The ball rolled under the bridge for/*in a second.'
(13) La palla è rotolata sotto il tavolo in/*per un secondo. (telic)
'The ball rolled under the bridge in/*for a second.'

While (11) is ambiguous between located motion (i.e. 'the ball was under the table, rolling') and directed motion (i.e. 'the ball got under the table by rolling') due to the simple past form, the sentence loses its ambiguity when employing a tense that includes an auxiliary. If the auxiliary is *avere*, the sentence receives only an atelic reading, as proved by the co-occurrence with a *for*-phrase in (12). If the auxiliary is *essere*, then the interpretation is telic, as demonstrated by its compatibility with an *in*-phrase in (13).

One alternative would be to consider *sotto* ambiguous between dynamic and stative on a par with *under* in English, but this is not a valid analysis since not all manner-of-motion verbs in Italian enter such a combination as in English:

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(14) *Giani è camminato in spiagia.
'Gianni walked to the beach.'
(15) *La barca è galleggiata sotto il ponte.
'The boat floated under the bridge.'

The examples above indicate that verbs like *camminare* and *galleggiare* do not combine with the auxiliary *essere* and do not receive a telic interpretation.

As a result, Folli and Ramchand (2005) assume that the possibility of forming 'goal of motion' with simple prepositions in Italian does not depend on the choice of preposition, but rather on the choice of verb. It is only manner-of-motion verbs whose specification is [+R] that can license goal of motion constructions. Hence, manner-of-motion verbs in Italian classify according to whether they include an optional [+R] feature in their lexical entry and, thus, can license an RP projection further specified by the prepositional phrase:

(16)

| | |
|---|---|
| [(+v), +V, (+R)] | correre 'run', rotolare 'roll', rimbalzare 'bounce', scivolare 'glide, slide', gattonare 'crawl', saltare 'jump', volare 'fly', saltellare 'hop' |
| [(+v), +V] | galleggiare 'float', camminare 'walk', galoppare 'gallop', danzare 'dance', nuotare 'swim', sciare 'ski', passeggiare 'walk around', vagabondare 'wander' |

More examples of goal of motion constructions of this type are provided below (Folli and Ramchand 2005):

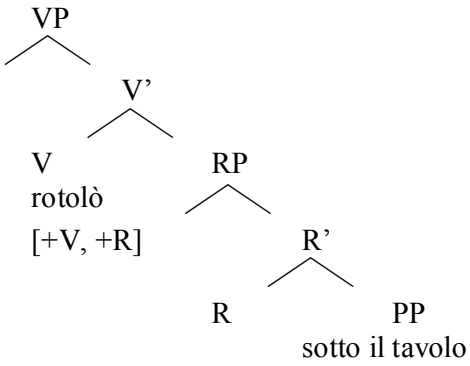
(17) a. Gianni è corso in spiaggia in un secondo[1].
'Gianni ran to the beach in a second.'
b. Gianni ha corso in spiaggia per un secondo.
'Gianni ran on the beach for a second.'
(18) a. La palla è rimbalzata dietro il tavolo in un secondo.
'The ball bounced behind the table in a second.'
b. La palla ha rimbalzato dietro il tavolo per un secondo.
'The ball bounced behind the table for a second.'

Such combinations of manner-of-motion verbs with prepositional phrases are instances of real telic augmentation at the level of inner aspect, i.e. they represent alterations in the argument structures of the respective verbs, since they trigger a change of auxiliary from *avere* to *essere*. In these cases, the verb licenses an RP projection whose complement is the prepositional phrase indicating the endpoint of motion, as in (19) below. The manner-of-motion verb used in its telic variant (i.e. with the auxiliary *essere*) requires the presence of the prepositional phrase, as demonstrated by the impossibility of dropping the PP if the interpretation is telic (**Gianni è corso.*/**La palla è rotolata*.)

[1] It should be noted that the two examples provided by the authors in (17) raise questions as to the validity of their meaning in the real world. Thus, it would be impossible for anyone to reach the beach *in a second*, unless *in a second* is a figure of speech. Similarly, a second is not enough time for anyone to actually run on a beach.

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(19)




In addition to this alternative of combining a verb specified for [+R] with a simple preposition, Italian also forms 'goal of motion' with morphologically complex prepositional phrases (*attraverso* 'through', *fino a* 'up to', *dietro a* 'behind', *al di lá* 'to the other side'). Their structure is similar to that illustrated for dynamic prepositions in English, in (10), where the first preposition specifies the path and the second the endpoint. Such complex prepositions can combine with any kind of manner-of-motion verb, irrespective of whether the verb carries a [+R] feature or not, as demonstrated by the examples below with [-R] verbs:

(20) La barca ha galleggiato attraverso la grotta in un minuto.
'The boat floated through the cave in a minute.'
(21) Gianni ha camminato fino a casa in un minuto.
'Gianni walked home in a minute.'

Just like in English, the respective prepositional phrases are adjuncts and attach at the level of outer aspect, since they do not force auxiliary selection to change.

Folli and Ramchand's conclusion is that 'goal of motion' is a term that covers two distinct processes, one at the level of inner aspect (in Italian with a simple preposition and a [+R] verb) and another at the level of outer aspect (in Italian with complex prepositions and in English with dynamic prepositions), in which case the prepositional phrase is an adjunct, not a complement of the verb, and is independently assigned an accomplishment interpretation.

**4. Problems for Folli and Ramchand's analysis**

Despite its attractive straightforwardness, Folli and Ramchand's analysis fails to account for several phenomena in both English and Italian, which we will discuss in what follows. Moreover, the examples we have found in Romanian appear to further complicate the situation, challenging their theory from a different perspective.

First of all, when discussing directed motion causatives, Harley and Folli (2004) point out that there are constructions of the type 'manner-of-motion verb + PP' which are felicitous even if not telic:

(22) a. *John walked the dog.
b. *John danced Mary.
(23) a. John walked the dog to the park.
b. John danced Mary across the room.
(24) a. John walked the dog along the fence all afternoon/for hours.
b. John danced Mary towards the far corner of the room for two minutes.

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While the examples in (22) show that the intransitive verbs *walk* and *dance* cannot be recategorized into transitives without an accompanying prepositional phrase, those in (23) and (24) demonstrate that recategorization is felicitous whether the prepositional phrase expresses direction and endpoint or direction only. Folli and Ramchand (2005) accepted (23) as proof for the existence of an RP in the eventuality description, i.e. at the level of inner aspect, as there is a change in the argument structure of the verb (*Mary* is an unselected object). However, their theory cannot account for (24), where the prepositional phrases do not specify the endpoint, as proved by the compatibility of the eventualities described with durative adverbials (*for hours*, *all afternoon*) and, hence, cannot be assumed to operate as complements of the R head. In view of such examples, Harley and Folli (2004) conclude that telicity is not crucial in the formation of directed motion causatives since causatives of motion verbs are possible with atelic prepositional phrases as well; in other words, causativization does not necessarily correlate with telicity.

On the other hand, claiming that the respective atelic prepositional phrases are adjuncts is wrong as proved by several tests Harley and Folli (2004) supply: ordering locatives vs. ordering a locative and a VP-internal PP, ordering temporal adverbials and locatives, VP-internal PPs respectively, *do-so* VP elision, etc. Such tests demonstrate that the atelic PP is a complement of VP and not an adjunct. Thus, the positions of two locatives modifying the same event can be switched in (25), but this is impossible if one prepositional phrase is an atelic Goal PP (26):

(25) a. Sue danced at the party in the bathroom.
b. Sue danced in the bathroom at the party.
(26) a. Sue danced around the bathroom at the party.
b. *Sue danced at the party around the bathroom.

In addition, locative adjuncts can be preceded by temporal adverbials as in (27), but atelic Goal PPs cannot (28):

(27) Sue danced at the party for hours/for hours at the party.
(28) Sue danced around the room for hours/*for hours around the room.

We might add that the same question regarding the status of the prepositional phrase as adjunct or complement also arises for our intransitive 'goal of motion' constructions; remember that Folli and Ramchand (2005) claimed that the telic prepositional phrase was an adjunct which attached at the level of outer aspect. However, a prepositional phrase such as *into the room* in *Susan danced into the room*. cannot be considered an adjunct given that it cannot be preceded by a temporal adverbial: **Susan danced in two minutes into the room*.

Italian poses a further problem for their theory. Folli and Ramchand (2005) related the 'goal of motion' interpretation to auxiliary selection (*avere* vs. *essere*). However, Harley and Folli (2004) show that telicity is not involved in auxiliary selection in Italian as the atelic Goal PPs in (31) and (32) also force a change in auxiliary selection from *avere* to *essere*:

(29) Gianni ha corso nel bosco per ore/*in un minuto.
'Gianni ran in the woods for hours/*in a minute.'
(30) Gianni è corso nel bosco in un minuto/*per ore.
Gianni ran in the woods in a minute/*for hours.
(31) Gianni è corso verso il bosco.
'Gianni ran towards the woods.'

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(32) Gianni è scivolato in direzione della pianta.
'Gianni slid towards the tree.'

Last but not least, the examples below, (33) to (36), demonstrate that there *are* manner-of-motion verbs in English which require the presence of a prepositional phrase, be it telic or atelic; hence, the respective PP is an argument, not an adjunct. On the other hand, remember that Folli and Ramchand (2005) claim that English does not have manner-of-motion verbs which can independently license an RP projection in first phase syntax and, thus, license a prepositional phrase as the complement of R:

(33) The car careened/hurtled around the corner.
(34) *The car careened/hurtled.
(35) He sneaked/crept along the wall/into the room.
(36) *He sneaked/crept.

Similar examples can be found in Romanian which also includes verbs that cannot occur without a telic/atelic prepositional phrase. *Gramatica Academiei* (2005, vol. I: 335) lists *a locui* 'to live/reside', which requires the obligatory presence of a locative PP, and *a ajunge* 'to arrive/get to', which is supposed to combine with a telic PP. According to *Gramatica Academiei*, the prepositional phrase can be omitted only if it can be retrieved from the context: *El locuieşte aproape de facultate, ajunge √ zilnic în 20 de minute*. 'He lives close to the university building, he gets √ in 20 minutes every day.' We have found examples of manner-of-motion verbs that behave similarly:

(37) S-a strecurat în cameră./*S-a strecurat.
'He sneaked into the room.'/'*He sneaked.'
(38) Au năvălit în casă./*Au năvălit.
'They dashed into the house.'/'*They dashed.'
(39) S-au furişat pe lângă gard./*S-au furişat.
'They crept along the fence.'/'*They crept.'

Moreover, assuming that Romanian follows Folli and Ramchand's classification of verbs into [+/- R], we cannot explain within this framework why in a construction with a manner-of-motion verb like *to fly*, specified as [+R] in Italian (i.e. which allows 'goal of motion' formation) ambiguity between directed and located motion arises only with certain prepositional phrases:

(40) Pasărea a zburat pe cer timp de zece minute/*într-un minut. ( only atelic)
'The bird flew in the sky for ten minutes/*in a minute.'
(41) Pasărea a zburat pe o ramură/în copac într-o secundă/*timp de zece minute. (only telic)
'The bird flew onto a branch/in the tree in an instant/*for ten minutes.'
(42) Pasărea a zburat în hambar într-o secundă/timp de zece minute. (ambiguous)
'The bird flew into the barn in an instant.'/'The bird flew in the barn for ten minutes.'
(43) S-a târât pe podea timp de trei minute/*în trei minute. (only atelic)
'He crawled on the floor for three minutes/*in three minutes.

(44) S-a târât după tufişuri timp de trei minute/într-o secundă. (ambiguous)
'He crawled behind the bushes for three minutes/in an instant.'

Last but not least, Romanian includes examples in which a manner-of-motion verb, which Folli and Ramchand (2005) classify as [-R], appears in telic constructions with simple P:

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(45) "…păgubaşul alerga la cătun." (V. Voiculescu, *Zahei orbul*)
'… the plaintiff *ran to* the hamlet.'
(46) "Oamenii au prins să se foiască în aşternuturi, să se perinde cu paşi târşâiţi (…) care la hârdău, care la butoi." (V. Voiculescu, *Zahei orbul*)
'The people began to toss in their beds, to *walk* with dragging steps (…) some *to* the night bucket, others *to* the barrel.'
(47) "A fost destul să-şi rezeme preotul mâna de tâmpla lui ca Zahei să meargă fără şovăire de-a lungul sălilor, prin uşi, drept la patul popii." (V. Voiculescu, *Zahei orbul*)
'The priest's touch to his temple was enough for Zahei to *walk* without hesitation along the halls, through the doors, straight *to* the priest's bed.'
(48) "Aş fi alergat la tata…" (V. Voiculescu, *Zahei orbul*)
'I would have *run to* father…'
(49) Unde e Ion? Tocmai a înotat la mal.
'Where is Ion? He has just *swum to* the shore.'
(50) S-a speriat când a văzut rechinii şi a înotat la mal ca să scape de ei.
'He got scared when he saw the sharks and *swam to* the shore to get away from them.'
(51) Ţineam ochii închişi din cauza soarelui, dar când barca a plutit sub pod i-am deschis.
'I was keeping my eyes closed because of the sun, but when the boat *floated under* the bridge I opened them.'
(52) Lebăda a plutit după perdeaua de stuf.
'The swan *floated behind* the curtain of reed.'

**5. Instead of conclusion**

In the present paper, we have shown that the status of the prepositional phrase as adjunct in English is debatable, as indicated by the obligatory presence of the prepositional phrase with some verbs (*sneak*, *creep*, *step*, *hurtle*, etc.), as well as by the tests that demonstrated the impossibility of moving the prepositional phrase from its complement position over an adjunct (locative or temporal adverbial). The first type of evidence was further supported by the existence of similar verbs in Romanian (*a se strecura*, *a năvăli*, *a se furişa*). If the respective prepositional phrase is a complement, then we must reconsider the status of manner-of-motion verbs in English as always [-R] and allow for a [+R] feature in their lexical entry even for the intransitive variants (*walk to school*, *dance into the room*), not only for the transitive alternatives (*walk the dog to the park*, *dance Mary into the room*).

In addition, the fact that the verb can take a prepositional phrase which is not interpreted as 'endpoint', but merely 'path' and still functions as a complement of the verb suggests a need to allow for verbs to be specified for more than [+v], [+V] and [+R]. It might well be that we need to further split the PP projection into a Path projection and an Place projection (which would be the complement of the RP projection of the verb) so that verbs are specified for [+Path] and/or [+R(esult)].

Evidence in Italian has indicated that we also need to reconsider the classification of verbs in Italian as [+/- R] based on whether they trigger a change in auxiliary selection from *avere* to *essere* when occurring with a prepositional phrase and receiving a 'goal of motion' interpretation. As we have already seen, the combination of a manner-of-motion verb with a prepositional phrase which is interpreted merely as 'path' triggers the same phenomenon. Hence, we cannot safely relate telicity to auxiliary selection and, thus, auxiliary selection cannot operate as a criterion for the classification of manner-of-motion verbs in Italian as [+/- R].

For Romanian, we have shown that Folli and Ramchand's theory cannot explain why ambiguity between located and directed motion arises for the same manner-of-motion verb

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only with certain prepositions, as in examples (42) to (44). Such examples for Romanian, as well as those under (33) to (36) in English seem to indicate that both the verb and the preposition share responsibility in producing a 'goal of motion' interpretation and we cannot attribute such responsibility only to prepositions in English or only to verbs in Romanian.

Last but not least, we need to look carefully into those verbs marked as [-R] in Italian, but whose equivalents in Romanian *are* able to form 'goal of motion' with simple prepositions. Interestingly, it appears that at least in some cases, such verbs are assigned a different semantic interpretation, being synonymous with verbs of inherently directed motion:

(53) S-a speriat când a văzut rechinii şi a înotat (= s-a întors) la mal ca să scape de ei.
'He got scared when he saw the sharks and swam (= went back swimming) to the shore to get away from them.

(54) Ţineam ochii închişi din cauza soarelui, dar când barca a plutit (= a intrat) sub pod i-am deschis.
'I was keeping my eyes closed because of the sun, but when the boat floated (went floating) under the bridge I opened them.'

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