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Go and come in Baltic languages: The tug of war between Deixis and Aktionsart

The present study aims to investigate the relationship between Deixis and *Aktionsart* (here mainly understood as the telic structure of the event described by the verb) in Baltic languages from a diachronic perspective, with particular emphasis on the situation displayed by early literature.

The semantics of the deictic motion verbs "go" (Lith. *eiti*; Latv. *iet*) and "come" (Lith. *ateiti*; Latv. *nākt*) will be analysed, in order to understand the role of Deixis in the selection process between the two verbs.

Many languages display a pair of basic verbs of motion similar to the English *go / come*. The terms ITIVE and VENTIVE are usually adopted in literature, in order to denote the movement away from the *hinc et nunc* of enunciation, and the movement towards it. In Lithuanian the opposition I / V is morphological: the verb V *at-eiti* "come" is obtained by means of the affix *at-* applied to the basic form I *eiti* "go"; the same deictic opposition affects those verbs that describe the manner, in which the movement takes place. An example of this is *joti* "ride" / *atjoti* "arrive on horseback".

In Latvian, instead, the opposition I/V is lexical: the itive form *iet* "go" is opposed to the ventive form *nākt* "come". The direction of the movement is expressed by means of verb prefixes or verb particles (*ieiet* ~ *iet iekšā* "to go in").

The study of deictic motion verbs in Baltic languages was conducted by comparing the situation attested in these languages to that offered by other Indo-European languages, such as Greek, Latin and Gothic.

More specifically, the presentation is devoted to showing the behaviour of deictic motion verbs in the first translations of the Bible into Lithuanian and into Latvian. The results will be compared to the situation attested in Greek Bible, Latin Bible and in Wulfila's translation of Bible into Gothic.

In all these languages the interplay between Deixis and *Aktionsart* will be analysed, giving evidence that in many cases Deixis plays a secondary role compared to *Aktionsart*, which is therefore the main factor determining the choice between the itive and ventive form.

As a matter of fact, in many cases, the itive form is used to express a movement directed towards the *origo* of enunciation, which contrasts with what takes place in languages that are fully deictic. This phenomenon occurs only in contexts where the components of Deixis and *Aktionsart* are in conflict.

In the last part of the presentation, a quick look will be taken at the situation displayed nowadays by Baltic languages for a comparison from a diachronic point of view.