



Prototypes, Meanings and Motion: Cognitive Evolution of Spanish *Acostarse*¹

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to analyse the Spanish verb *acostarse*, following the theoretical tools established by Geeraerts (1997). From the perspective of Cognitive Semantics, linguistic categories evolve from prototypic to new meanings as a result of metonymic or metaphorical projections along the history of a language. In this way, I will study the evolution of the verb *acostarse*, from its latin meaning of *rib* (which generates a directional prototype) to its current polisemy, in which the meaning of *to lie down* prevails.

KEYWORDS: Diachronic semantics, cognitive linguistics, theory of prototypes

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I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to present an analysis of the semantic evolution of the verb *acostarse*, carried out using the parameters of cognitive diachronic semantics. This method is characterised by its ability to explain semantic changes, which occur at different linguistic levels, taking as a starting point certain cognitive concepts such as metaphor, metonymy and the concept of prototype. Therefore, we are looking at a method which exceeds many of the explanatory limitations that characterise the study of diachronic semantics from a structuralist point of view. The cognitive approach assumes that language is a living thing related to its environment and not an immanent abstract code cut off from reality, as some structuralists have claimed. Consequently, semantic change must be explained according to this model, “from the outside”, starting from the reality which is verbalised by language and assuming that the human brain processes the information it receives by using a series of very specific cognitive mechanisms, which must be taken into account when describing a specific semantic change.

II. DIACHRONIC COGNITIVE SEMANTICS

In 1997, Geeraerts published his book *Diachronic prototype semantics. A contribution to Historical Lexicology*, which can be considered the first semantic history of a cognitive nature (Soared da Silva, 1998: 279). This author claims that the evolution of the meaning of the words and structures of a language cannot be explained unless we take the cognitive theory of prototypes as a starting point. This theory considers that the different categories with which we can classify reality are not discrete (that is, completely autonomous and susceptible to being defined, starting with necessary and sufficient conditions), but vague, which is why contact relationships are established between them. Due to this, the different categories would form a *continuum* in which there would be points that are more focal and prototypical, which would explain the fact that there are always more prototypical or central elements within a category, as well as more secondary or peripheral elements. For example, in our culture, *doctor* or *carpenter* are more likely to be more prototypical within the category *profession* than *astronaut* or *pyrotechnician* (Cuenca & Hilferty, 1999; Fernández Jaén, 2007).

Geeraerts takes the effects of prototypicality postulated by prototype semantics (Kleiber, 1990: 51) and develops from there four causes of semantic change that are directly related to these effects. The causes are the following:

- (1) Within a category some members are more representative than others (“extensional non-equality”).
- (2) The different meanings of an element may make up a group of one or more central cases surrounded by peripheral meanings which proceed from these central meanings (“intensional non-equality”).
- (3) There are fluctuations when establishing the limits of a category, as the limits between one category and another are always vague (“extensional non-discreteness”).
- (4) The definition of a category, which acts as a semantic nucleus, may pose problems, contradicting the classic hypothesis (in the Aristotelian tradition), according to which

definitions may be made starting with necessary and sufficient conditions (“intensional non-discreteness”). If this were the case, all the conditions within a category would have the same degree of application, which does not happen. For example, within the category *bird*, the condition *can fly*, although very common in many of the elements found within this category, is not applicable to some birds, such as *penguins*.

The first two points highlight the importance of distinguishing between central and peripheral meanings. Diachronically, nuclear categories tend to withstand time, while abstract and peripheral new meanings arise from them, brought about by metaphors and metonymies (main categorisation mechanisms according to cognitive linguistics). Geeraerts names this process *Semantic polygenesis*, and relates it to the third effect of prototypicality. In turn, the fourth effect explains why semantic changes are closely related to the speakers encyclopaedic knowledge since the metaphors and metonymies that motivate these changes are very frequently triggered by cultural phenomena. The table below summarises Geeraerts’s proposal in an orderly manner:

	Extensional (on the referential level)	Intensional (on the level of senses)
Non-equality (salience effects, internal structure of core and periphery)	(a) Differences of salience among members of a category (1) Semantic change as a modulation of prototypical centres	(b) Clustering of readings into family resemblances and radial sets (2) Semantic change as an alteration of the grouping of meanings according to family resemblance
Non-discreteness (demarcation problems, flexible applicability)	(c) Fluctuations at the edges of a category (3) Ephemeral semantic changes (semantic polygenesis)	(d) Absence of definitions in terms of necessary and sufficient attributes (4) Encyclopaedic nature of semantic change

Table 1. The effects of prototypicality and semantic change (Geeraerts, 1997)

In this model *Semantic polygenesis* is the fundamental concept for understanding the flexibility of categories and the dynamic nature of their evolution, a dynamism which is always motivated by the action of metaphorical and metonymic processes. Furthermore, *Semantic polygenesis* explains a very peculiar phenomenon: the fact that a meaning, having disappeared from a category, can reappear much later if the cognitive mechanisms that made it arise in the first place act again. This is because *Semantic polygenesis* “consists of the diachronic discontinuity of peripheral meanings based on the continuous transmission of the more salient readings of a lexical item” (Geeraerts, 1997: 65). The fact that the more central or prototypical meanings tend to withstand time without undergoing too many alterations, explains how the cognitive substratum which made a new meaning appear at a given time in the past, remains latent. This latency allows peripheral meanings to reappear at any moment,

even though they have not been used for centuries. Geeraerts illustrates this phenomenon with the Dutch verb *verduisteren*, which until the 17th century meant *to make disappear*, a meaning that spontaneously reappears at the end of the 20th century without having any connection with any of the current meanings of this verb (Geeraerts, 1997).

On the other hand, a question must be asked: if categories are flexible, what is it that restricts the formation of meanings? Is the creation of new meanings hazardous or are there constraints? According to Geeraerts, what makes the origin of new meanings not completely arbitrary or unpredictable is the presence of a prototypical central meaning (which may change, as we shall see, with the passing of time). There must always be some kind of contact between the new meanings and the prototype, whether direct or indirect, which means that the different meanings will always be related by family resemblances. Therefore, reconstructing the semantic evolution of a category is equivalent, according to cognitive diachronic semantics, to reconstructing the progressive semantic network of its successive metaphorical and metonymic extensions, taking as a starting point the most central meanings, which usually remain invariable.

Geeraerts' proposal is rounded off with some general principles to explain prototypical fusions and polysemy. Standing out from these ideas is the principle according to which, when a meaning is difficult to relate to its prototype (because the family resemblances have become too weak) it tends to disappear.

In short, Geeraerts' work offers a systematic and coherent explanatory system for the reconstruction and study of the diachronic semantics of any linguistic category, whenever a documental corpus large enough to demonstrate empirically the processes of metaphorical and metonymic expansion is available. Moreover, this theory proves that semantic change has a lot in common with our way of perceiving reality and with the intrinsic logic that reality imposes upon language. For all these reasons, the proposals of diachronic cognitive semantics exceed some of the theoretical limitations of structural diachronic semantics; unlike the latter, cognitive semantics history takes into account not only the meaning of words, but also the meaning of syntactic structures (since meaning is understood to be conceptualisation). Furthermore, it uses the speakers' knowledge of the world and cultural factors to explain changes, something is not common in the more objectivist models.

III. ORIGIN AND POLYSEMY OF *ACOSTARSE*

In order to carry out our analysis of the verb *acostarse* following the model we have just seen, we must take two things into account: firstly, the etymological origin of this verb, and secondly, the different meanings it has had through time. Etymology is fundamental for a very simple reason; in order to reconstruct the semantic evolution of any element it is necessary to know where it comes from. This knowledge is essential to track the different semantic innovations that have been created from the original meaning and from the etymon from which it arose. Regarding polysemy, this is fundamental information to determine how many semantic branches this element has developed throughout the centuries.

The verb *acostarse* is a term derived from Latin; it came about by combining the Latin preposition *a* and the noun *costa,-ae* (is a denominal verb). The preposition gives the combination a pronounced directional character, since in Latin this preposition introduced structures that mainly indicated *place or point of departure, place from which, origin, source, point of distance* and *time from which*. With regards to *costa,-ae*, it had two meanings in Latin: *rib* and *side of a ship or boat*. *Acostarse*, therefore, originated as a verb that was semantically related with displacement and with a physical part of the body or of a boat, which will bring about very interesting metaphorical motivations, decisive in its evolution. We have been able to determine the polysemy of our verb by analysing the diachronic corpus that we have compiled for our study. Using the CORDE (Corpus Diacrónico del Español) database we have compiled a historical corpus made up of a total of 1,405 occurrences, with uses of *acostarse* that span from the end of the 12th century through to the end of the 1970s. We have to specify that we have only used documents in Peninsular Spanish and that we have used all kinds of texts, from literary to scientific.

So, from this corpus, we can see that our verb has had the following meanings throughout time: *to go to a physical place, to take something to a physical place, to get close to a non-physical place or a concept, to reach the coast, to lie down, to lean, to have sexual intercourse with somebody, to tilt* (in the case of a building or construction) and *to lay somebody or something down*. Some of these meanings are still used in present day Spanish, others have disappeared completely (although many dictionaries still keep them) and others remain only partially, being very infrequent. What is interesting is that these meanings seem to be too varied to have a common origin. What is it that connects them? Have they all originated from a single meaning? Is there any logic that explains this diversity? If Geeraerts' thesis is correct, a historical study will allow us to establish the family resemblances which exist between these meanings and the point in history they originated at.

IV. PROTOTYPES AND EVOLUTION, METAPHORS AND METONYMIES

After analysing the 1,405 occurrences from our corpus and organising them by centuries, we have obtained a table that allows us to reconstruct the evolution of our verb. Logically, we must assume that new meanings do not appear suddenly and unexpectedly, but form gradually, following in this way the evolutionary model defended by grammaticalisation. On the other hand, it is to be expected that very distant meanings do not coexist in the same time period, since the effect of metaphorical and metonymic projections is slow and progressive. Finally, we must bear in mind the fact that writing is always subsequent to speech and that corpora offer samples for guidance. This is why, even if a meaning is not highly documented at a particular time, we must assume that in spoken language its use might be quite well established. The results of our analysis can be seen in the table below, which shows the number of occurrences for each meaning per century²:

Meaning	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th
A	0	34	74	18	25	5	0	0	0
B	3	2	2	9	1	1	0	0	0
C	0	7	16	26	18	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	1	2	9	5	0	0	1
E	0	2	8	41	157	149	23	222	339
F	0	2	0	2	5	0	0	0	0
G	0	0	1	3	4	2	2	1	88
H	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
I	0	0	0	0	18	16	1	27	32

Table 2. Grouping of meanings per century

From this information we can reconstruct the diachronic evolution of *acostarse* following Geeraert's model. The first thing that we notice is that during the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries, the main and most frequent meaning of *acostarse* was meaning A (*to reach a physical place*), that is to say, we can see that due to Latin influence, originally our verb meant literally something like *to take the rib to a place*. Therefore, our verb is originally a verb of direction or directional movement (Cifuentes Honrubia, 1999), hence its semantic prototype is meaning A (*to go or physically move to a place*). See example below:

- (1) “E como **se acostassen** a la casa aquella en do fazien la obra subtosament, tanta claredat resplandio dentro la casa que oyxos de hombre no lo podien guardar por sobre grant claredat”. (Anonymous, *Obra sacada de las crónicas de San Isidoro, de Don Lucas, Obispo de Tuy*, 1385-1396)

[And when they approached the house in which they carried out those so extraordinary works, so much light was shining inside the house that no human eye could stand such brightness.]

Therefore meaning A is going to be the nucleus of the category (with a directional meaning) from which the semantic branches of this verb start. But this original prototypical meaning is going to coexist from the beginning with another less prototypical meaning, also with directional value: meaning B (*to take something to a place*).

Indeed, when we think of the scene or cognitive model that triggers a meaning such as *to approach* (that of A), we imagine an element approaching a place, a scene much more prototypical than one in which someone (the subject) brings something (the direct object) to a place (the target)³. This second possibility, which represents a meaning independent from meaning A, is much rarer (as we can see from its infrequent appearances in the corpus) since motion tends to be expressed with intransitive verbs. However, as pointed out earlier, we found examples of B in the earliest records of *acostarse*, and, in fact, we have been able to find three cases from the end of the 12th century (a little earlier than the first examples of A). An example of this meaning is shown below:

- (2) “Qvi su casa quisiere **acostar** o arrimar a paret de otro o arrimar sobrella, de primero meytad del preçio que costo la paret; desend arrime & **acueste** su casa a la paret o armar sobre ella, si la paret fuere en rrayz de comun; ca si de comun non fuere, non puede labrar sobre ella paret nj **acostar** nj arrimar, si de señor dela paret non quisiere”. (Anonymous, *Fuero de Soria*, 1196)

[He who wishes to position his house close to the walls of another, should first pay half the price that the wall cost and after position his house close to the wall, if said wall is similar to the house, as if not, no work may be carried out, nor may the house be put in place without the authorisation of the owner.]

Besides this meaning, which is related to a not very prototypical conceptualisation of motion meaning A coexists since the 13th century with another meaning: a metaphorical projection to the place the subject is approaching; in this sense, meaning C stems from meaning A. Thus, due to an ontological metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1986), the target of the movement is no longer a physical place but an abstract place or concept. Due to this new meaning, *acostarse* will be associated with a wide range of contents, many of them attributive⁴. See example below:

- (3) “Ujo vn golpe que fizo don Roldane, ujdó a don Roldan acostado a un pilare, como **se acostó** a la ora de finare”. (Anonymous, *Roncesvalles*, Documentos Lingüísticos Navarros, 1230)

[He/She saw Don Roldán strike a blow, and he/she saw Don Roldán approaching a pillar, in the same way as the hour of death approaches.]

As well as this metaphorical projection towards abstract grounds, prototype A also acquired, from very early on, another peripheral meaning due to the action of metonymy and the influence of the second Latin meaning of *costa,-ae* (*side of a ship*): we are referring to meaning D (*to reach the coast*), which starts to be documented in the 14th century in our corpus. This meaning appears because, of all the places that can be the end destination of *acostarse*, the most relevant one in terms of metonymy is the coast, and, by extension, the port or any other place to which boats can be headed⁵. This meaning is not very highly documented⁶, but remains nowadays in the nautical field. See example (4) below:

- (4) “Lo mismo hicieron todos los marineros, visto que el Almirante reposaba y que la mar era calma. El Almirante **se había acostado** por estar seguro de bancos y de peñas, porque cuando el domingo envió las barcas al rey Guacanagarí habían visto la costa toda los marineros y los baxos que había y por dónde se podía pasar desde aquella punta al pueblo del rey dicho, lo que no habían hecho en todo el viaje”. (Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, 1527-1561)

[All of the sailors did the same, seeing as the admiral was resting and the sea was calm. The admiral had moored the boat to be safe from rocks and crags, as when he sent the boats to King Guacanagarí on Sunday the sailors had seen all the coast

and the shallow waters and the route they could take from that place to the king's village, something that they had not done in all the voyage.]

Therefore, in its first evolutionary phase, *acostarse* was a directional verb with a semantic prototype from which three peripheral meanings arose; one which expressed a non-prototypical directional movement of a transitive type, another with a metaphorical end point, and a third one with a metonymic end point. Together with meanings B, C and D, a new meaning began to arise from A (tentatively documented in the 13th century), which is going to be decisive in the evolution of our verb; we are referring to meaning E (*to lie down*).

Indeed, the original metaphorical image of *taking the rib to a place* conceptualises a scene in which a subject takes his/her rib to a place (that is, takes himself or herself, as the rib is an inalienable part of the subject), an idea of directional movement *par excellence*. Soon a variation that did not imply directional motion, but simply motion around a fixed point with no trajectory arised from this prototypical meaning. This new meaning E added a nuance of meaning that could not be found in A: the rib displaces itself so that in physically *touches* the target. In a prototypical situation⁷, taking the rib towards a place so that it physically touches it implies lying down on the ground (verticality), not carrying it across a space towards a place (horizontality). Meaning E arises, therefore, from A, but loses the directional value, focusing on the act of laying the body on the ground or on any other surface for whatever reason (*sleep*, prototypically). This new meaning maintains the idea of movement in prototype A, but it is a very different non-directional movement. See example (5) below:

- (5) “Y assi mesmo desta manera hazian las falsas profetissas almohadas y cabezales haziendo que los hombres **se acostasen** sobre ellos diziendo asi podres dormir segura y sosegadamente sin njngun temor”. (Anonymous, *Biblia romanceada*, 1400)

[And in the same way the fake witches also made pillows and bolsters, and made the men lie down upon them by saying that in that way they could sleep peacefully and fearlessly.]

At the same time, meaning E also gives rise to different meanings that maintain indirect relations of semantic similarity with the prototype. As early as the 13th century another meaning was documented that did not come from A, but from E: meaning F (*to lean*). In this case, the meaning involved a more subtle movement than E, as the downwards motion does not reach an end point; it seems that the subject is going to lie down but, in the end, it only leans (partial metonymy to express a global concept). See example (6) below:

- (6) “Et sea aquella tierra llana deguisa que **se non acueste** ell estrumente a ninguna parte port al que se non pierda la parte del zonte”. (Rabí Zag, *Libros de la lámina universal*, 1277)

[And that land should be flat, so that the instrument does not lean in any direction and so that the part of the horizon is not lost.]

Along with meaning F, from the 13th century onwards E is going to be the most highly used peripheral meaning. For this reason, other variants start to form, characterised, in each case, for their lack of directional movement.

During the 14th century another new meaning arises from E, also originating from a metonymy; meaning G (*to have sexual intercourse with somebody*)⁸. It is obvious that a particular subject can carry out the action of lying down accompanied by somebody else (the person who is represented in the sentence by a comitative complement). Since the prototypical companion with whom somebody may go to bed is his/her lover, a variation originates from E that highlights via a part-for-whole metonymy the person with whom the subject goes to bed (lover) and the intention, not to sleep, but to have sexual intercourse. See example below:

- (7) “Vós, Brangel, es menester que **os acostéis** esta noche con el rey, e abrá vuestra virginidad”. (Anonymous, *Tristán de Leonís*, 1501)

[Brangel, it is necessary that you sleep with the king tonight, and that he take your virginity.]

In the 15th century, as can be seen in the Table 2, the use of meaning E increases significantly, and at the same time meaning A starts to become weaker. This is normally due to what is known as a change of prototype (Montserrat i Buendia, 2004), which is the case with *acostarse*; E becomes the nucleus of the category in the 15th century, the result of this being that meanings A, B and C (that is, the meanings with directional content⁹) begin to be used much less, even disappearing with the passing of time. On the other hand, meaning E still generates two further meanings in the 16th century. On the one hand, meaning H is produced. This is a value mainly used in the field of architecture, as it expresses the content *the tilting of a building or construction*. In this case the vertical movement is also minimal and the subject does not end up touching the ground, which is explained in the same way as meaning F, that is, by the action of a part-for-whole metonymy (only a small part of the movement necessary for the subject to lie down is expressed by the verb). In our corpus we have only documented one case (despite the fact that many dictionaries register this meaning), although many more could possibly be found in written texts, as this meaning still exists in modern day Spanish. See example (8) below:

- (8) “El suelo se cabe muy alto para que no le toque el sarro quando lo xaharen, ni con el pavimento, que es el suelo quando lo solaren; porque, quando están soterrados, con la vejez se marchitan y arrugan, y después, assentado encima, **se acostan**, y assí rompen el enluzimiento de las paredes”. (Miguel de Urrea, *Traducción de la Arquitectura de Marco Vitruvio Pollión*, 1582)

[The ground should be dug very deep so that it is not destroyed when it is built upon. Because with the passing of time, the foundations tilt and crumple and cause the tiles upon the walls to break.]

- B: *to bring something closet o a physical place*
 C: *to approach a non-physical place or a concept*
 D: *to reach the coast, to dock*
 E: *to lie down (second prototype)*
 F: *to lean*
 G: *to have sexual intercourse with someone*
 H: *in the case of a building or construction, to tilt*
 I: *to lay something or somebody down*

V. SYNTACTIC REANALYSIS AND CHANGE OF CONCEPTUALISATION

As has been seen, the change in prototype produced in the 15th century entails an evolution from a horizontal conceptualisation (idea of direction with displacement) to a vertical prototypical conceptualisation (movement without displacement). These differing conceptualisations are also going to alter the syntax of *acostarse*, which will evolve from a directional verb at first instance, to just a common verb of motion. The syntactic differences between the verbs of direction or displacement and the verbs of motion are the following (Cifuentes Honrubia, 1999):

- a) The locative complement (which in Talmy's theory is called BACKGROUND) is obligatory with directional verbs and optional with verbs of motion.
- b) Verbs of displacement may be combined with locative complements that indicate source, goal or both (idea of trajectory). These complements are usually introduced by prepositions such as *to*, *towards*, *up to*, *from*, etc. Verbs of motion may not be combined with these complements as they lack the idea of trajectory.
- c) Verbs of displacement, when combined with locative directional structures preceded by the prepositions *along* or *through*, conceptualise the movement as a path or trajectory through space. Motion verbs never represent a path.
- d) Verbs of displacements cannot combine with complements referring *to the place in which the event takes place* (e.g., *to be at home*, *to sleep on the floor*), except for those cases where we are talking about a thematic or demarcating location. However, motion verbs easily admit these locative complements.

This syntactic reanalysis explains why uses such as **se acostó hacia allí* or **se acostaron* (without stating the destination) are impossible with prototype E; these directional values will end up disappearing as values of motion without a trajectory become established. For this reason, from the 17th century onwards, *acostarse* begins to have (with the exception of specific uses of meaning D) only the syntactic properties of verbs of motion.

The semantic evolution of *acostarse* involves another very interesting syntactic change, which shows the high degree to which syntax and semantics are indissolubly united. We are referring to the creation of a structure originated from meaning G. Indeed, when *acostarse* means *to have sexual intercourse* it requires a complement with the preposition *con* (*with*), which introduces the person with whom the subject has sexual intercourse. This complement is one of company (comitative); such company is so indispensable in meaning G

(since the lover is a true coauthor of the action) that it finally becomes an obligatory complement or actant required by the semantics of the verb, thus no longer being a simple adjunct¹¹. The diagrams below show the two conceptualisations that *acostarse* has had and the different changes it has undergone:

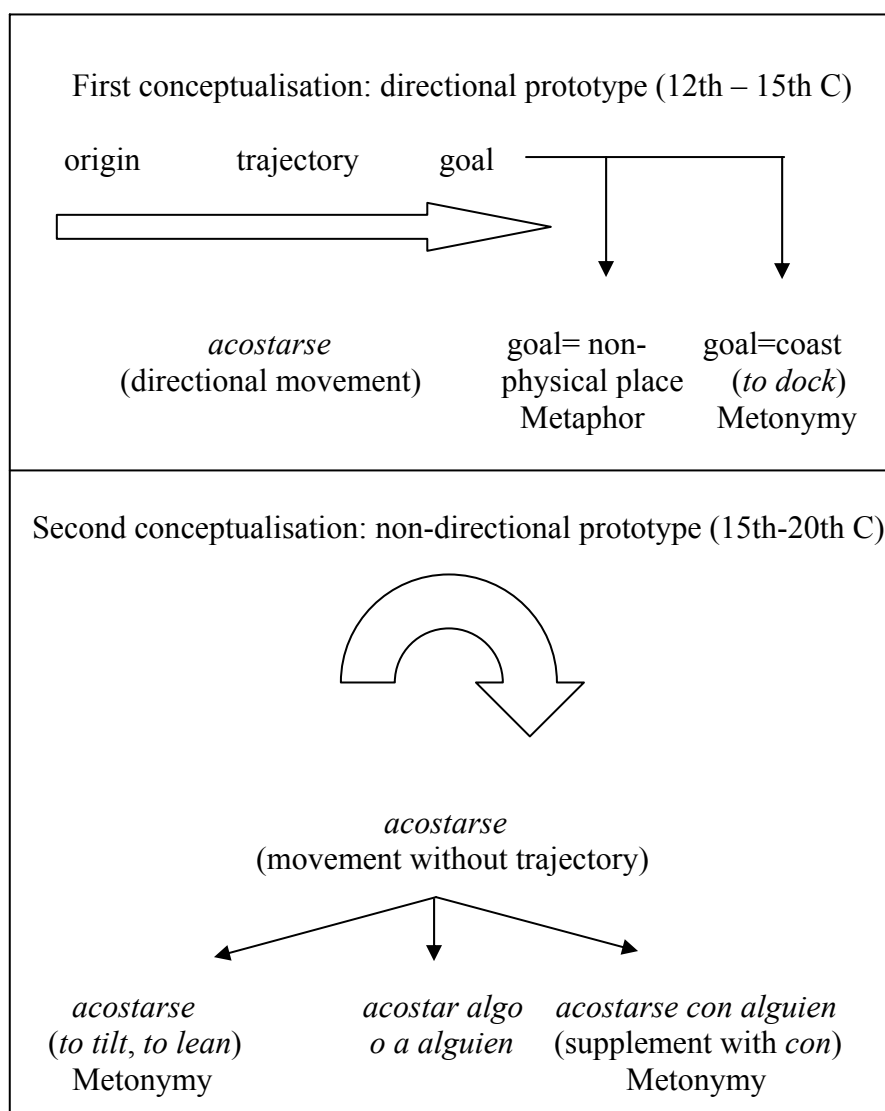


Table 4. Conceptualisations of *acostarse*

VI. CONCLUSION

In this work we have applied Geeraerts's Diachronical Cognitive Semantics Model to the analysis of a specific verb; this model proves to be an ideal theoretical framework for rigorously and exhaustively establishing the semantic evolution of any linguistic category. We have observed how *acostarse* arises from Latin as a verb of directional movement and how, from this first semantic prototype, other meanings originate (as predicted by the dynamic nature of conceptual categories), motivated by metaphorical and metonymic effects and by social factors (encyclopaedic nature of semantics). One of these new meanings (*to lie down*)

arises in the 15th century and becomes the new nucleus of the category (prototypical change), resulting in the disappearance of senses with directional meanings, with the exception of meaning D (*to dock*) which will remain in certain contexts¹². We have also been able to establish that the semantic evolution of *acostarse* is parallel to its syntactic evolution (given that the conceptualisation unites both levels); this is mainly shown by the reanalysis undergone by our verb, which goes from being a verb of direction to a verb of motion without trajectory.

All in all, we believe that cognitive linguistics offers an effective paradigm for analysing a language and its evolution, insofar as it incorporates basic cognitive and mental concepts, which are those which regulate our way of understanding reality and conceptualising it. Unless we take into account the fact that metaphor and metonymy are basic cognitive processes and that reality is categorized prototypically then it will be very difficult for us to be able to explain the evolutionary leaps produced in language and the apparent contradictions that we come across in the study of historical semantics.

NOTES:

¹ This paper was awarded the prize for the best paper presented in poster format at the *V Congreso Internacional de la Asociación Española de Lingüística Cognitiva*, held at the University of Murcia from the 19th to the 21st of October 2006.

² The keys to the meanings are the following: A *to go to a physical place*, B *to take something to a physical place*, C *to get closet o a non-physical place*, D *to reach the coast*, E *to lie down*, F *to lean*, G *to have sexual intercourse*, H in the case of a building, *to tilt*, I *to lay somebody or something down*.

³ According to Talmy (1985), there are four fundamental elements in a prototypical movement scene: FIGURE, BACKGROUND, MOTION and PATH. Two more elements can be added to these, which are optional: MANNER and CAUSE. As we can see, (at least in Spanish) movement naturally generates an intransitive conceptualisation, and thus a direct object being moved by a FIGURE (subject) is not so common. In fact, *acostarse* (which the meaning *to approach*) can be included in the category of *verbs of inherent direction*, that is, verbs that are characterised by their essentially intransitive nature. Regarding the question of conceptualisation of movement and its connections with transitivity, see the work of Batsiukova (2004).

⁴ For example, the sentence *Pedro se acuesta a la virtud* is semantically equivalent to *Pedro es virtuoso* [Peter is virtuous].

⁵ That is, instead of taking the *rib* closer, the *side of the boat* is taken closer, and therefore, a specific target (coast or port) becomes the sole destination (partial metonymy to express the global concept).

⁶ In fact, it was in the 16th century when more documentation of this usage was found, nothing unusual when we take into account that it was the time of the colonisation of the New World and that many sailors and adventurers wrote navigation diaries that we still have today. This shows that cultural and encyclopaedic factors are related to semantics (see factor (4) in Geeraerts' model, 1997: 22).

⁷ In order to understand the concept of a prototypical situation we can refer to Kleiber's classic example (1990: 10). Let's imagine the scene generated by the following sentence: *The ball is under the table*. Presented with this sentence, and due to our knowledge of the world, we all imagine a perfectly positioned table with four legs,

under which we can find a ball. However, it would be equally possible for the table to be upturned and for the ball to be squashed by the surface of the table. There is no doubt that, in both cases, the ball is under the table, but the first situation is more prototypical than the second.

⁸ As can be seen in Table 2, written documentation on this meaning is very rare prior to the 20th century, which could be due to its taboo meaning. In fact, the majority of mediaeval examples of this meaning can be found in translations of Arabic texts, something which can perhaps be explained by the differences in the perception of love by Arab and Catholic cultures. To see more about the influence of taboos and euphemisms in semantic configuration, see the work of Martines (2000).

⁹ Meaning D is the only value with direccional content that is still used in Spanish from 17th century onwards.

¹⁰ Although no examples of A prior to the 13th century have been found, in the chain it is placed in the 11th century because it is obvious that it was the first meaning of the category and that it must have already been used in Spanish in that century. Moreover, the fact that examples of B in the 12th century (a much more peripheral meaning) have been found confirms this hypothesis, as it is not possible that a very peripheral meaning should appear before the prototype from which it arises.

¹¹ Moreover, in the case of meaning G the pronoun *juntos* (*together*) appears very frequently with the verb, which once again shows the importance of the presence of two participants. As we can see, this meaning illustrates very well the synergic relationship between syntax and semantics defended by cognitive semantics, and it is a very clear example of grammatical iconicity. To see these matters in more detail, see Haiman's book (1985).

¹² However, we must say that Catalan, for example, has maintained the direccional value of *acostarse*, a prototype that has not changed in this language.

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