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The GO-future and GO-past periphrases in Gallo-Romance

A comparative investigation

Sandra Paoli and Sam Wolfe

4.1 Introduction

Without a doubt one of the most salient developments in the evolution from Latin to modern Romance has been the emergence of a range of auxiliary verbs and other dedicated functional categories (see in particular Vincent 1997b; 1999; Ledgeway 2016a).¹ While the domain of Romance auxiliiation is hardly an untrodden path,² many questions in this area still remain. The relevant developments are significant both from a typological perspective (Schwegler 1990) and in terms of different theoretical approaches to the phenomenon of grammaticalization.³

In this chapter we focus on the development of two periphrases in Gallo-Romance, namely the French analytic future, the so-called *futur proche* ‘near future’ or GO-future, formed with the verb ALLER ‘go’ and the infinitive (1), and the Occitan GO-past (2), formed via the same means—ANAR ‘go’ + infinitive—but with a past-time reading:

- (1) Je vais faire. (Fr.)
I GO.PRS.1SG do.INF
‘I’m going to do/I will do.’

¹ It is undoubtedly an oversimplification to think of all functional categories as an innovation, with various periphrases, such as that involving ESSE ‘be’ + past participle already attested in early Latin texts (Adams 2013:616). Likewise, functional structure is best thought of as having overt exponence in dedicated functional heads in Romance, as opposed to having been absent previously. On evidence for an articulated D-layer in Latin, see Giusti and Iovino (2016).

² See in particular Harris (1982), Pinkster (1985), Cennamo (2008), and Ledgeway (2016a:767–770).

³ On which, see Hopper and Traugott (2003) and Traugott and Trousdale (2013) for a functional perspective and Roberts and Roussou (2003) and Van Gelderen (2011) for a formal perspective.

- (2) e van lo conjurar quel sieu poder, s' il
 and GO.PRS.3PL it= beg.INF that his power if it
 platz que demostres ... (OOcc.)
 please.PRS.3SG that show.PST.SBJV.3SG
 'And they pleaded with him to show his power, if he was willing.'
 (Jensen 1990:§684)

Considering (1), note that the grammaticalization path that sees a verb of motion develop into a future marker is well attested cross-linguistically, and movement-verb constructions represent the most frequent and prototypical lexical sources for so-called future grams.⁴ This is no surprise, since motion verbs are known to allow for non-literal motion use: for the verb GO this can be understood, for example, as an instance of semantic contiguity between distance from the speaker in terms of space and distance from the speaker in terms of time.⁵ More specifically, the subject of the verb of motion is on a certain path that, if followed, potentially leads to a certain event in the future.

Studies taking a cognitive approach to grammaticalization explain the 'small pool of possible source concepts' for auxiliaries (Heine 1997:6) on the basis of basic conceptual structures that are lexicalized by individual verbs. Verbs meaning GO would under this interpretation be strong candidates for grammaticalization as auxiliaries, since they lexicalize the cognitive schema SOURCE–PATH–GOAL (cf. Kuteva's 'kinesthetic image-schemas' 1995:379), one of the most fundamental schemas that derive from the idealized cognitive models of our bodily interaction with the physical world as we make sense of it. These schemas have a generally spatial or force-dynamic character, to which motion verbs are perfectly suited.

Significantly less frequent is the development of a motion verb construction into an expression of past, such as the Occitan pattern we see in (2).⁶ Within the

⁴ In a sample of 46 dedicated (i.e., not principally aspectual) future forms, Bybee, Pagliuca, and Perkins (1994:252f.) found 20 to be derived from constructions with verbs of movement such as COME and GO.

⁵ The term 'contiguity' is used here and in the next paragraph in its non-technical meaning. However, there is also a technical use of the term, that specifically contrasts it to similarity: semantic contiguity is the basis of metonymy, while semantic similarity is the basis of metaphor (cf. Traugott and Dasher 2001:79). Metaphor and metonymy may involve different axes (i.e., paradigmatic and syntagmatic respectively), but they interact closely and extensively (cf. Goossens' 1995 coinage of the term 'metaphonymy' to refer to such interaction). Specifically applied to the development of GO-futures, the two processes would identify different paths, a spatial goal coming to represent a temporal goal from a metaphor's perspective, and an action coming to stand for its likely consequence in the case of metonymy. However, since they are not mutually exclusive and interaction between them is highly likely, we do not pursue the specific identification of which of the two may have played a larger role in the process of grammaticalization of the construction.

⁶ Notable exceptions are mentioned in Jacobs (2011:249): a number of unrelated languages spoken in South America and Africa seem to have a similar construction, although its use appears to be limited to specific types of texts or styles, unlike the common, spoken usage of the GO-past in Catalan. More productive uses of the periphrasis are recorded by Lichtenberk (1991:498) in Oceanic languages, in which there seems to be an interesting correlation between the presence of a COME-future and a GO-past construction.

modern Romance languages, it is only found in Catalan, in some Béarnais varieties of Gascon, and in Guardiolo, the Occitan variety spoken in northern Calabria in southern Italy where it has survived mainly as a residue (Berchem 1968; Jacobs and Kunert 2014:183), but was also found sporadically in older periods of French:

- (3) a. Vaig cantar. (Cat.)
 GO.PRS.1SG sing.INF
 ‘I sang.’
 b. Ba i. (Gsc.)
 GO.PRS.3SG go.INF
 ‘He/She/It went.’

In contrast to Occitan, the development and establishment of the GO-past construction in Catalan has been extensively documented and investigated,⁷ and a variety of analyses have been proposed. Traditional accounts (such as Colón 1978a; 1978b; Badia i Margarit 1994:370f.; Wheeler 2017) have all focused on the use of the historical present in narratives,⁸ that is, a present tense form with past tense value, as one of the key factors in the grammaticalization of the periphrasis as an expression of past. More recent accounts (chiefly Juge 2006; 2008), focus on morphological factors linked to the syncretism between the present and past paradigms of GO in the first- and second-person plural forms in old Catalan (i.e., *anam* and *anatz* respectively), and the prevalence of past tense forms of GO in the early use of the periphrasis. Nagy C. (2010:79) further develops this observation, claiming that the higher incidence of past forms of GO over present forms in the early stages also played a fundamental role in the development of the periphrasis as an expression of past, but, more significantly, in ensuring that the construction did not develop into a future.

The unusual outcome of GO + infinitive into an expression of past is taken by Detges (2004) as an indication that, after all, grammaticalization is not driven by cognitive forces,⁹ rather, by discourse-pragmatic strategies, in this case, the speakers’ desire to give prominence to their past actions. The specific conclusions that he draws are that, as far as grammaticalization of tense markers is concerned, it is not ‘motivated by a desire (or need) to conceptualize time’ (Detges 2004:213). In the same contribution, Detges goes on to formalize the suggestion made by a number of scholars (cf. Diez 1882; Meyer-Lübke 1899; Gougenheim 1929) that the GO-past periphrasis, which in the Middle Ages was widespread both in northern

⁷ Jacobs (2011:227) reports that the earliest mentions of the GO-past periphrasis go back to the late nineteenth century.

⁸ Within this category it would also be possible to include a number of studies (cf. Berchem 1968) that interpret the periphrasis as a stylistic variant that eventually established itself as a grammatical category. However, since these studies do not address at all the steps involved in this change, they are not considered here.

⁹ According to a cognitive approach, and supported by cross-linguistic variation, expressions marking past develop from a source-oriented schema formed by COME FROM or GO FROM constructions.

and southern France as well as in northern Spain, developed from an aspectual construction in which GO + infinitive conveyed ‘inchoative’ aspect. As will be discussed in §4.4, this label is problematic both in terms of the discrepancies in the ways in which it has been used by these authors, and its actual relevance for the final development of the construction.

Against this background, we suggest that the time is ripe for a reappraisal of the evolution of the GO-past in Occitan and the GO-future in French. The GO-future in French is arguably one of the best-studied cases of a periphrastic form competing with, and ultimately replacing, a synthetic paradigm in Romance. Although the Occitan GO-past has not been as widely studied, it too has the potential to shed new light on how an analytic form came to take over functions previously associated with a synthetic past in Latin, such as *SCRIPSI* ‘I wrote, I have written’. Considering them side by side, we propose in this chapter that the two developments into past and future expressions stemmed from a common construction: rather than expressing inchoative aspect, as is commonly assumed, this was a more basic expression of posteriority, closely linked to the semantic contiguity between space and time and the SOURCE–PATH–GOAL schema associated with GO.

After setting out the established facts regarding the genesis of the GO-future in French in §4.2, we present novel data from old Occitan in §4.3. Considering the data side by side leads to a new comparative analysis and discussion in §4.4 before we conclude in §4.5.

4.2 The GO-future in French

4.2.1 From Latin to old French

Although traditional manuals of Romance philology and linguistics frequently suggest a simplistic synthetic > analytic evolution to Romance from Latin as regards auxiliiation, the picture is rather more nuanced. While Latin did feature two synthetic future forms, *AMABO* ‘I will love’ and *REGAM* ‘I will rule’, a periphrastic construction formed from a conjugated form of *HABERE* which could either precede or follow the infinitive was in use at least from the second century CE to indicate possibility, obligation, intention, and later, possibly from the fifth century CE (Clackson 2016:9), futurity (for recent critical discussion see Adams 2013:655–666). Eventually, the conjugated form of *HABERE* ceased to have independent status and was reanalysed as a functional affix attached to an infinitival stem. It originally had a clear reading of obligation and intention (Pinkster 1985), and there is a degree of debate as to when it lost its original semantics. Recent review of the extant evidence by Adams (2013) suggests that there are very few unambiguous examples of a purely future reading in sub-literary and late Latin texts. The example given in (4) is one often-cited but controversial example

It is also the case throughout the medieval period that a range of constructions arise where ALLER ‘go’ appears alongside an infinitive. A search of the *Base de Français Médiéval* reveals *c.* 3,000 instances of this construction.¹¹ The consensus in the literature is that during the old French period (ninth–fourteenth centuries) ALLER yields a purely lexical reading in such constructions, with no sense of intention, obligation, or future temporal reference.¹² Our analysis of the examples confirms this, where lexical encoding of motion is clear in examples such as (8).

- (8) a. et après alerent dormir (OFr.)
 and after go.PFV.3PL sleep.INF
 ‘and afterwards they went to sleep.’ (Qgraal_cm 229)
- b. Mais alons courir sur noz ennemis (OFr.)
 but go.PRS.1PL run.INF on our enemies
 ‘But let us go and charge at our enemies.’ (Melusine 283)

However, there is also an alternative construction, which is widely employed during the medieval period, where a conjugated form of ALLER is used alongside an infinitive, allegedly to yield an inchoative reading. Although Gougenheim (1929:92f.) argues that this construction does not fully take hold until the fifteenth century, he cites clauses such as (9) where the core lexical content of ALLER is not clear from context. Rather, it appears to encode the beginning of an action during a narrative sequence. If we consider (9b), Gougenheim highlights that co-occurrence of ALLER with *ferir* ‘strike’ occurs 31 times in the *Roland* alone, which would be a surprising frequency were it a purely lexical use. However, as we suggest below in § 4.4, although cases such as (9) do suggest an early functional use of ALLER, that this use is inchoative is not clear.

- (9) a. Et al maitin alerent logier devant les
 and at.the morning GO.PFV.3PL camp.INF in.front the
 portes de la vile (OFr.)
 gates of the town
 ‘And in the morning they camped out in front of the town.’
 (Villehardouin 1 84)
- b. Le cheval brochet, vait ferir Oliver (OFr.)
 the horse spur.PTCP GO.PRS.3SG strike.INF Oliver
 ‘The horse spurred, he struck Oliver.’ (Roland 112, 1313)

Note that the use of morphologically present verb forms to encode past events is widespread in old French poetry and prose (10), with Einhorn (1974:116) referring

¹¹ <http://txm.ish-lyon.cnrs.fr/bfm>. The search was limited to cases where a conjugated form of the verb ALLER was followed within four constituents by the infinitive. The corpus is not fully lemmatized, so the number may be lower than that indicated.

¹² Wilmet (1970:179) suggests there are only two cases of a periphrastic future used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

to ‘a striking combination of present and past tenses to describe a sequence of past events’, which frequently entails a past tense usage in the subordinate clause, followed by a narrative present in the main clause.

- (10) et quant cil oï qu’ il li crie, si
 and when he hear.PFV.3SG that he him= cry.PRS.3SG si
 li cort le glaive aloignié (OFr.)
 him= run.PRS.3SG the sword lengthen.PTCP
 ‘And when he heard what he is shouting to him, he dashes towards him
 with his sword out.’ (Grael 90.28 from Jensen 1990:344)

To summarize, from the earliest attestations of French through to the fourteenth century, futurity is typically encoded by means of the infinitive + HABERE construction inherited from Latin, or a morphologically present tense verb. There is no evidence of periphrastic forms with ALLER encoding futurity, intention, or obligation, though incipient uses of a periphrasis, which has been described in the literature as inchoative, are found. However, we will suggest in §4.4 that caution should be exercised in basing an account of the genesis of the analytic future on this assumption, as the term ‘inchoative’ may have been used in the French literature in a way that does not conform to the modern understanding of that term.

4.2.2 Middle to modern French

There is a general acceptance in the literature that the genesis of the ALLER + infinitive construction with future temporal reference occurs during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, often referred to as the middle French period (Wilmet 1970:183–190; Champion 1978:33; Marchello-Nizia 1980:136; Fleischman 1982). We also note, and return to this point in §4.4, that the ‘inchoative’ ALLER-periphrasis is most widely employed in early middle French (11), typically in portions of text in narrative chronicles, before falling out of use in the majority of French texts in the seventeenth century (Gougenheim 1929:96).

- (11) A l’ endemain leur coureur alèrent courir jusques
 at the morning their horses GO.PFV.3PL run.INF as.far.as
 ès bailles de Bregerach (MidFr.)
 to.the waters of Bregerach
 ‘In the morning their horses rode as far as the waters of Bregerach.’
 (Froissart, I, §207, III, 46, as cited in Gougenheim 1929:95)

It is also from the fifteenth century onwards that ALLER, alongside a number of other verbs such as DEVOIR ‘must’ and VOULOIR ‘want’ (Gougenheim 1929:72–79, 88–92; Wilmet 1970:179–181), which have grammaticalized elsewhere in Romance as future auxiliaries (Iliescu 1972:228; Ledgeway 2011:422; Mensching

and Remberger 2016:285),¹³ begins to yield a reading of obligation and intention (12a–b show the latter).¹⁴ The example in (12a) is taken from our corpus search of the *Base de Français Médiéval* and (12b) comes from Wilmet (1970). While the examples in (12) are instructive in demonstrating the emerging intentional reading of the periphrasis, (13) is particularly significant, as the purely andative reading of ALLER ‘go’ is not directly compatible with the notion of displacing oneself to lose something:

- (12) a. Et puis on se dispose d’ aller mourir
 and thus one REFL= prepare.PRS.3SG of GO.INF die.INF
 ou vivre avec luy, et pour amour ne l’
 or live.INF with him and for love NEG him=
 abandonner point (MidFr.)
 abandon.INF NEG
 ‘And thus one prepares to go and die or live with him, and due to love
 never to abandon him.’ (Jouvencel 2, 21)
- b. Or je vois savoir // au povret
 now I GO.PRS.1SG know.INF to.the poor.thing
 qu’ il me voudra dire (MidFr.)
 what=he me= want.FUT.3SG say.INF
 ‘Now I’m going to find out from this poor thing what he means.’
 (Pathelin 707, Wilmet 1970:183)
- (13) Tu vas perdre ta conscience // tu t’ en
 you GO.PRS.2SG lose.INF your conscience you you= PART=
 vas au dyable server (MidFr.)
 GO.PRS.2SG to.the devil serve.INF
 ‘You are going to lose your conscience// you are going to serve the devil.’
 (*Moralité de Charité* 3, 392, ATF, Gougenheim 1929:98)

However, while the use of DEVOIR ‘must’ and VOULOIR ‘want’ declines over this period, this is not the case for ALLER ‘go’. Examples such as (13) show quite clearly that neither obligation nor intention are inherent readings of the construction. Though no contemporary corpus analysis has been completed on the GO-future’s frequency, Gougenheim (1929:98f.) shows it to be particularly frequent in theatre and direct speech from the fifteenth century onwards (Champion 1978:34f.) and, furthermore, notes a strong tendency for it to be found with first-person subjects (compare this with the data on the Occitan GO-past in § 4.3). The construction’s acceptance as part of the written norm by both Maupas (1607) and Arnauld and Lancelot (1660) suggests it was not exclusively considered a ‘low’ spoken variant at

¹³ For discussion of the influence of Gascon on early modern regional French, see Gougenheim (1929:89).

¹⁴ See § 4.2.1 for similarities with Latin in this regard.

the time. Furthermore—although contingent on one’s theory of creolization—the fact that future-marking functional heads derived from *ALLER* appear in a number of French-lexicalized creoles could be viewed as a piece of evidence for its widespread use in speech at the time (Posner 1997:208; Lefebvre 2006:130f.; Bollée and Maurer 2016:464):

- (14) To va allé demain (18th-c. Haitian)
 you GO go tomorrow
 ‘You will go tomorrow.’ (DeGraff 2008:320)

By the second half of the eighteenth century the main development to note is the ability of *ALLER* to occur in this periphrasis in a variety of tense forms and the general decline in the seemingly free alternation between *ALLER* + infinitive and *S’EN ALLER* (lit. ‘to leave, make off’) + infinitive (Gougenheim 1929:101). Referring to eighteenth-century French, Gougenheim (1929:103), suggests that the construction is used in the same way as in the modern language, in that it encodes temporal proximity between the present and the future event. We will now see, however, that this characterization of the *GO*-future’s use in modern French is far from exhaustive.

4.2.3 Contemporary developments

Both the synthetic future and periphrastic *GO*-future persist in French varieties today, though they do so with distinct functions, instantiating distinct points on a grammaticalization pathway. Grevisse and Goosse (2016:§820) suggest that the *GO*-future, in contrast to the synthetic future, indicates a ‘future viewed from the present, often a near-future, sometimes a distant future but one considered inevitable’ (our translation). These factors commonly occur in other descriptive and theoretical treatments of the distinction in modern French. However, there is an increasing body of evidence that the distribution of the *GO*-future relative to the synthetic future is an area of ongoing change in the grammar and one of considerable interspeaker variation (see Tagliamonte, Durham, and Smith 2014; Denis and Tagliamonte 2018 for a parallel with contemporary English, about which the observations in 1 and 2 below also hold to a degree). While not attempting an exhaustive review of the literature (for an overview, see Poplack and Turpin 1999:136–139; Lacross 2018:28–41), the following formal factors have been identified as significant in conditioning the variation observed:

1. Proximity or immediacy of the event. A strong proximity or immediacy between speech time and the future event is said to favour the *GO*-future over its synthetic counterpart (Fleischman 1982:96; Blanche-Benveniste 1990:188; Poplack and Turpin 1999:148; Smith 2016:306).

2. Certainty that the event will occur. Speakers use the GO-future more when the event's occurrence is thought to be certain (Confais 1995:399; King and Nadasdi 2003:333f.; Rebotier 2015:3).
3. Grammatical person. First-person subjects favour use of the GO-future (Söll 1983:19f.), while the synthetic future is preferred with the formal second-person singular form *vous*, demonstrating the interaction of person with register (Poplack and Turpin 1999:154)
4. Polarity. The synthetic future is more widely attested in negative sentences than affirmative ones (Deshaies and Laforge 1981:27–30; Söll 1983:17; Poplack and Turpin 1999:154f.).

In addition, varieties of French spoken in Canada have been the subject of several studies into future marking. While Poplack and Turpin (1999) suggested that the synthetic future was heading in the direction of total obsolescence in their Ottawa–Hull corpus, more recent work by Wagner and Sankoff (2011) has revealed an age-grading pattern suggesting such a change may be slowing down, while King and Nadasdi (2003) report that in Prince Edward Island retention rates of the synthetic future are considerably higher than in similar studies for other regions.

Overall, there is an increasing body of evidence that the division of labour between the two future constructions is variable across the francophone world today, both within and outside the Metropole. While certain speakers conform to some version of what we might term the 'conservative' system outlined in Grevisse and Goosse (2016), this is not the case for other speakers, where the synthetic future has either seen a further narrowing of its function, while remaining part of the core grammar, or is strongly dispreferred.

4.3 Old Occitan

Although in the modern Lengadocian variety of Occitan the GO + infinitive construction expresses futurity (cf. Vernet 2007:29; Mooney 2020), texts from the thirteenth–fifteenth centuries bear witness to the periphrasis being used with a past interpretation:¹⁵ this existed alongside the same construction being used to express a non-past meaning.

The source of the Occitan data considered here is a collection of texts in verse, including both stretches of narrative and dialogue, dating between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, loosely originating from the Languedoc area.¹⁶

¹⁵ The first author gratefully acknowledges Balliol College for granting some research funds, and Siall Ferdinand for being an invaluable research assistant and a fountain of knowledge.

¹⁶ The data were partly obtained from the second part of the *Concordance de l'occitan médiéval* (COM2, Ricketts 2005), and partly from the integral texts. A full list follows, together where necessary with the code by which each text is referred to in this chapter: 11th century: *Cançó de Santa Fe*; 12th

In our corpus, the periphrasis GO + infinitive first appears in the twelfth century. While in *Roland à Saragoſse* it is almost exclusively found in collocations with the verb *fèrir* ‘hit’ (nine out of a total of 10 occurrences),¹⁷ similarly to what we have already seen for French (9b), in *GdR* and *RdJ* it also occurs with a variety of verbs used both transitively and intransitively (e.g., *penre* ‘take’, *deslaçar* ‘undo’, *pausar* ‘place, put’, *recinglar* ‘tighten (the cinch on a horse)’, *manjar* ‘eat’, *cochar* ‘lie down, set (of sun)’). There is a single instance of the periphrasis with a verb of motion (*prosmar* ‘approach’):¹⁸ it is only in the fourteenth century that a variety of verbs of motion are found,¹⁹ suggesting that not until then had the periphrasis reached a level of grammaticalization that divested GO of its lexical meaning. Therefore, a lexicalized (or understood) goal or destination is found in the early examples (15a–b) but becomes less common in the later period: the construction is still compatible with a lexicalized (or understood) goal in the fourteenth century, but it can only yield a literal interpretation implying movement (15c).

- (15) a. E va s' en una part gitar,// car
and go.PRS.3SG REFL= PART a side throw.INF because
totz es las e pesoiantz. (OOcc.)
everything be.PRS.3SG weary and heavy
'And he goes over to one side to lie down,// because everything is weary
and burdensome'. (RdJ 2822–2823)
- b. Lo solel vai cochar vers Balenberc (OOcc.)
the sun go.PRS.3SG sleep.INF towards Balenberc
'The sun goes to set towards Balenberc'. (GdR 4633)
- c. Montatz es tantost sus la cela// e
mount.PTCP BE.PRS.3SG immediately on that there and
va-s metre davant l'efant// e
go.PRS.3SG=REFL put.INF in.front the child and

century: *Girart de Roussillon* (*GdR*); *Roman de Jaufré* (*RdJ*); *Roland à Saragoſse*; 13th century: *Canso de la Crotzada*; *Fierabras*; *Flamenca*; 14th century: *Guilhem de la Barra* (*GdB*); *La Passion provençale du manuscrit de Didot* (*MDP1*); *Le Roman d'Arles* (*RdA*); 15th century: *Mystère rouergat de la Passion* (*MDP2*); *Lo Jugamen General* (*JG*); *Istoria Petri et Pauli* (*IPP*).

¹⁷ Colón (1978b:144) reports that in the old French and old Catalan texts he analysed GO + *fèrir* (or synonyms) was also the most frequent combination.

¹⁸ The relevant example is given in (i):

- (i) Mantenèn se vai d' el prosmar// e portet
now REFL= GO.PRS.3SG of him approach.INF and carry.PFV.3SG
lansa sobre man (OOcc.)
lance on hand
'Now he approached him // and carried a lance in his hand'. (RdJ 1830–1831)

¹⁹ We find *venir* ‘come’, *tornar* ‘go back’, *yssir* ‘go out’, *intrar* ‘go in’, *partir* ‘leave’, *perregir* ‘head towards’, *layssar* ‘leave’, and *colarse* ‘sneak in’.

volc cavalgar mais avant (OOcc.)
 WANT.PFV.3SG ride.INF more forward
 'He immediately mounted the horse // and he goes and places himself
 in front of the child, // and was about to ride further.'

(GdB 3112–3114)

Throughout the corpus, the GO verb appears almost exclusively in the present tense,²⁰ and it is inflected for all grammatical persons. On closer inspection, an interesting asymmetry in usage emerges between third person on the one hand, and first and second persons on the other.

Third-person subject GO + infinitive constructions appear exclusively in narrative stretches of texts. The event they express never occurs in isolation: it is part of a sequence of events of which it is never the first (in terms of temporal succession), but often the second or third, followed by some other(s), and frequently linked to the previous one(s) by the conjunction *e* 'and', the disjunction *mas* 'but', or by *pueis* 'then, after'. The surrounding verbs are mostly in the preterite but can also occur in the present (normally understood as a historic present), or, in fact, in a mixture of the two:²¹ generally, the verb that precedes the GO + infinitive construction is in the preterite, and the verb that follows it is very often in the present, as in the examples in (16).

- (16) a. E Gilbers quant l' oit vai se
 and Gilbers when it=hear.PFV.3SG go.PRS.3SG REFL=
 seder. (OOcc.)
 sit.down.INF
 'And when Gilbers heard it, he went and sat himself down.' (GdR 4177)
- b. [...] Carles venc apoint a grant poest.//
 Charles come.PFV.3SG rushing at great gallop
 Vai ferir un donzel fran de
 GO.PRS.3SG strike.INF a young nobleman of
 tiest// amount sobre son elme, [...]. (OOcc.)
 German on.top over his helmet
 'Charles came rushing galloping furiously.// He went to strike a young
 German nobleman// on his helmet, [...].' (GdR 5279–5281)
- c. E me levet del palafre // senpre e portet
 and me=take.PFV.3SG of.the palfrey always and carry.PFV.3SG
 m' en ab se, // [...] Pueis va mi sus un lieg
 me= PART= with self then GO.PRS.3SG= me on a bed

²⁰ There are a total of 42 instances of the periphrasis with the verb GO in the preterite, mostly occurring in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, compared with 372 in the present.

²¹ Tense switching within the same sentence or narrative unit is a typical feature of these medieval texts, which were primarily designed for oral presentation, and it is used as a strategy to mark off different events within the story, and to differentiate between points of view (Fleischman 1990), or to add vividness to the narration.

gitar, // on me volc forzar et aunir. (OOcc.)
 throw.INF where me= WANT.PFV.3SG force.INF and dishonour.INF
 ‘And he took me from the palfrey // and carried me with him, // [...] Then,
 he threw me onto a bed, // and was about to force me and dishonour me.’

(*RdJ* 2985–2989)

- d. E el lisset nos aseguir // loing del castel per
 and he let.PFV.3SG =us chase.INF far.away of.the castle for
 nos trair, // e pueis va a ferir lo premier, //
 us= lead.INF and then GO.PRS.3SG to strike.INF the first
 si que l’ abat mort del destrier. (OOcc.)
 so that him= knock. PRS.3SG die.PTCP of.the steed
 ‘And he let us chase him // to draw us far from the castle, // and then he
 struck the first (knight), // such that he knocked him dead from the steed.’

(*RdJ* 891–894)

All the GO + infinitive constructions above have been translated as past forms, an interpretation that derives from the tense of the surrounding verbs in the narration.

First- and second-person GO + infinitive constructions, conversely, are restricted to direct speech and do not appear to be connected to other events; however, they are linked to the moment of speech. The second persons, both singular and plural, are clearly imperatives or directives (17a–b), while the first person can either be a prediction or an intention in the singular (17c–d),²² or an exhortation in the plural (17e), and the motion component of the meaning of GO is clearly available:

- (17) a. ‘Cons, vai parler o lui, conseil li
 earl go.IMP.2SG speak.INF with him advice to.him=
 quer// e ce qu’ il te dirar fai
 ask.IMP.2SG and that that=he you= say.FUT.3SG do.IMP.2SG
 volenter.’ (OOcc.)
 willingly
 ‘‘Earl, go to speak to him, ask him for advice // and what he will tell you
 do without hesitation.’’
 (*GdR* 2978–2979)
- b. Anatz sezer a una part! (OOcc.)
 go.IMP.2PL sit.INF at a side
 ‘Go and sit by the side!’
 (*RdJ* 153)
- c. Ele enbracha Bertran e dist rient:// ‘Eu
 she embrace.PFV.3SG Bertran and say.PFV.3SG laugh.PTCP I

²² (17c) could also mean ‘I leave in order to get married’, since the following verses see Bertrand inciting the couple to leave quickly: however, the departure is motivated by trying to escape the bride-to-be’s parents, who are ‘riding against her’, and not necessarily in order to reach the place where the marriage will take place. It is therefore highly improbable that GO is used in its sense of motion.

mèn vauc a mari tan paubrement, // nen
 REFL=PART= GO.PRS.1SG to wed.INF much poorly NEG
 port od mei aver, aur ne argent, // paile,
 bring.PRS.1SG of my possessions, gold nor silver, silk
 samit ne porpre ne ornement.' (OOcc.)

satin nor crimson nor jewellery

'She embraced Bertran and said laughing: // "I am going to get married in such poverty, // I leave behind my belongings, gold and silver, // silk, satin, crimson, and jewellery"' (GdR 8396–8399)

- d. 'Ieu m' en vauc negar autresi, // Que ja,
 I REFL=PART= GO.PRS.1SG drown.INF as.well that now
 per Dieu, sols no-i mora!.' (OOcc.)
 for God alone NEG=LOC= die.PRS.SBJV.3SG

"I will drown myself in the same way, // so that, by God, he may not die there alone!"

(RdJ 8532–8533)

- e. 'Cavalier, anem aiudar // a mon seiner lo rei
 knights go.IMP.1PL help.INF to my lord the king
 Artus! [...]' (OOcc.)

Arthur

"Knights, let's go to the aid of // my lord King Arthur! [...]"

(RdJ 286–287)

In the twelfth century, most instances of the constructions in the first and second persons retain movement as a component of their meaning (although compare (17c) and (17d), in which motion is not the only available interpretation nor the most natural one), and hortatives and imperatives, in the first-person plural and second-person singular and plural, respectively, continue to do so throughout the entire corpus: these are all purposive constructions, in which the periphrasis has the basic meaning of 'being in motion in order to do something'. This is not the case for the first-person singular expressing a prediction as in (17c), in which GO clearly conveys a sense of futurity. By the thirteenth century the first-person singular expressing an intention becomes incompatible with an interpretation including movement, as illustrated by (18) where Fierabras (the Saracen) and Olivier are already standing face to face.

- (18) '[...] vay Sarrazi, si t' arma: trop mi
 come.on Saracen then REFL= arm too.much me=
 fas demorar. // si no, vau ti ferir
 make.PRS.2SG wait.INF if not GO.PRS.1SG you= strike.INF
 senes pus esperar.' (OOcc.)
 without anymore wait.INF

"[...] Come on Saracen, arm yourself: you are making me wait too long. // If not, I am going to strike you without further ado." (Fierabras 935–937)

Overall, with first and second person, GO + infinitive conveys a sense of futurity, either by implying movement towards a goal, or by expressing a prediction or an intention. The temporal point of reference is speech time (hence, the periphrasis works deictically), and the events are interpreted as proximal futures.

This person asymmetry is not simply a concomitant of narrative style or text type: the complementary distribution described here is a robust feature found in all the texts throughout the five-century period, hence across genre and register. While it is true that the majority of the narration is in the third person, which may explain the lack of first- and second-person subjects with the GO-past construction, there are nevertheless episodes of narration in first or second person, uttered in direct speech, and these never feature the construction in its past meaning. There may in fact be a link between the deixis encoded by first- and second-person pronouns and the anchoring of the construction in the speech time: temporal deixis used to point to the 'here and now' of speech time triggered by the presence of speaker and hearer encoding compatible deixis. The lack of deixis compatible with the deixis of speech time in third-person pronouns and referents in general would have made such anchoring unnatural.

4.4 Discussion

Focusing on the incipient stages of the use of the GO periphrasis affords an insight into the initial usage as well as the initial features of the construction, especially into what its 'ancestor', so to speak, could be. In spite of the obvious difference in interpretation between the periphrasis in the first and second person on the one hand, and the third person on the other, we claim that the two are actually different surface interpretations of the same underlying semantics.

As to what this underlying semantics may be, there are several proposals that cross-linguistically favour an inchoative construction. For Occitan, Jensen (1986:229, §684), observes that '[the ANAR 'go' + infinitive construction] has acquired inchoative value, serving to denote actions that will take place in the immediate future', and cites a number of Occitan examples that are translated as 'x is about to do y', 'x will do y', or even, simply, 'x does y'. For French, Henrichsen (1966:362), following Diez (1882:930) and Meyer-Lübke (1899:§324), claims that the periphrasis originates in the change in meaning, from spatial to inchoative, of the reflexes of Lat. IRE 'go'. Gougenheim mentions the term *inchoatif* ('inchoative') a few times (1929:92, 93, 95) before offering a definition (96); he suggests that '*Il va dire*' [lit. 'he GO.PRS.3SG say.INF'] does not mean 'he began to say', but rather 'he said suddenly', which he notes in modern French would typically be realized as '*Il se mit à dire*' [lit. 'he REFL= place.PFV.3SG to say.INF']. The specific example that he adduces in which the construction has a 'clear and constant' inchoative use (Gougenheim 1929:95) uncontroversially shows a lack of any 'inchoative'

meaning: there is clearly no possible interpretation such as ‘it starts to happen that ...’. In fact, even the assumed meaning of the sudden death of the knight’s spouse is not necessarily supported by the wider context.

- (19) Ce chevalier eut sa première femme qu’ il
 this knight have.3SG.PFV.3SG his first wife who =he
 ama à merveilles. Si va advenir que la
 love.PFV.3SG at wonders SI GO.PRS.3SG happen.INF that the
 mort, qui tout prent, la print, dont le
 death that all take.PRS.3SG her=take.PFV.3SG of.which the
 chevalier fut si dolent que a peu qu’ il
 knight be.PFV.3SG so grieved that at little that =he
 n’ en mourut de deuil et de couroux. (14th-c. Fr.)
 NEG= PART= die.PFV.3SG of pain and of sorrow
 ‘This knight had his first wife whom he loved deeply. It so happened that
 death, that takes everything, took her too, for which the knight was so
 grieved that he almost died from pain and sorrow.’

(*Le chevalier de la Tour Landry*)

As mentioned above, the term ‘inchoative’, as well as being used differently by these authors, also does not correspond to the way it is usually conceived.²³ The periphrasis itself is also often reinforced by inchoative verbs: if inchoative aspect really were an intrinsic part of the meaning of the periphrasis, examples such as (20) would be hard to explain.

- (20) a. Si se vont mettre à desjuner tous deux. (OFr.)
 SI REFL= GO.PRS.3PL put.INF to lunch.INF all two
 ‘And both started to eat lunch.’
 (*Nicolas de Troyes*, in Gougenheim 1929:96)
- b. Et quant il fut là arrivé, il va
 and when he BE.PFV.3SG there arrive.PTCP he GO.PRS.3SG
 commencer à prier Dieu et la Vierge Marie. (OFr.)
 start.INF to pray.INF God and the Virgin Mary
 ‘And when he arrived there, he started to pray to God and the Virgin
 Mary.’
 (*Nicolas de Troyes*, in Gougenheim 1929:96)
- c. Si se bessa de rechef et redressa le roy
 SI REFL= bow.PFV.3SG again and raise.PFV.3SG the king
 d’Espagne, lequel va commencer à dire [...]. (OFr.)
 of Spain the.which GO.PRS.3SG start.INF to say.INF
 ‘The king of Spain bowed and stood up, and began to say [...]’
 (*Jean de Paris*, in Gougenheim 1929:96)

²³ See, for example, Matthews (2007:187), who defines an inchoative form as ‘indicating the initiation of some process or action.’

Furthermore, Gougenheim (1929:101) also refers to an entry in a seventeenth-century grammar (Régnier-Desmarais 1705:417) in which the GO + infinitive periphrasis is described as conveying the meaning of 'being on the verge of / being about to' do something. A move to expressing what 'is about to happen' from an alleged starting point of what 'starts to happen' seems cognitively unlikely, but would be plausible if it were instead a development from 'what occurs subsequent to a given reference time.' This is, in fact, what Gougenheim seems to mean when he uses the term *inchoatif*, that is, prospective aspect which expresses a relationship between a given moment in time and a (near) future eventuality (Jendraschek 2014:158f.).

Careful consideration of all the Occitan data, but especially of the early examples in which the construction is primarily found in collocation with the verb *ferir* 'strike', clearly focusing on the completed action rather than on its initial stages, does not afford any evidence that the GO + infinitive periphrasis had, at that point, a genuinely inchoative meaning, nor do they suggest an inchoative construction as its 'immediate ancestor' (Detges 2004:213). We therefore wish to pursue an alternative path, rooted in the basic motion meaning of GO, which can be assumed for both the GO-future and GO-past constructions.²⁴ Specifically, building on what may have already been an intuition on Gougenheim's part, we argue that the spatial component of GO is interpreted as temporal, resulting in the event expressed by the infinitive verb being interpreted as posterior to a given reference time.

By proposing the same underlying construction for both periphrases, we are able to maintain the idea that grammaticalization in general, but specifically for verbs of motion, draws on universal forms of conceptualization (cf. Kuteva 1995; Heine 1997) that encode certain basic conceptual structures, which are then re-analysed as temporal. More specifically, if we adopt this stance, the typologically robust generalization that the cognitive schema SOURCE-PATH-GOAL, expressed by structures such as the GO + infinitive periphrasis, conceptualizes posteriority, and generally develops into expressions of future, can be maintained.

Considering the different path taken by the periphrasis in Catalan, it was mentioned in § 4.1 that the many proposed analyses suggest a number of factors as having played a crucial role in the development of the construction into an expression of past: Nagy C. (2010) in particular attributes pivotal roles to the higher frequency of preterite versus present GO forms at the initial stages of the development of the construction, and to the past narrative context within which the periphrasis was interpreted.

As noted above, the periphrasis in the third person that we find overwhelmingly used in narrative expresses an action that is part of a sequence of events, of which it is never the first, witness the conjunctions *e* 'and', *mais* 'but', and *pueis* 'after, then'

²⁴ Bres and Labeau (2013b:20) also take a unified approach to the development of the two periphrases, albeit resolving it in favour of the inchoative meaning.

at the beginning of sentences containing the GO + infinitive construction. The order of the clauses tends to reflect the order of events as they unfold in time (i.e., $a > b > c$). The periphrasis is surrounded by verbs in the preterite or in the present indicative (i.e., historic present): starting from the previous event in the simple past, GO + infinitive implies a movement that leads prospectively to the next event. Bres and Labeau (2013b) claim for French that ‘the periphrasis is purely aspectual’, in that it has no temporal content:²⁵ the event expressed by the periphrasis is anchored to the surrounding narration, and its temporal interpretation is established through a link to the sequence of events, all taking place in the past.

The periphrasis as a whole, but GO specifically, conveys the same prospective orientation towards the action denoted by the infinitive that we see with first and second person, that is, an event that occurs subsequent to a given reference time. The difference between the two, however, lies in this ‘given reference time’: while for the first and second person this is speech time, for third person the time frame is interpreted anaphorically, that is ‘the prospective movement originates in the situation that precedes it rather than in the moment of speech’ (Bres and Labeau 2013a:297). Consequently, the periphrasis in the third person is interpreted as an expression of past.

The past and non-past (i.e., prediction/intention, directive and hortative) interpretations of the GO + infinitive construction coexist throughout the period between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, in complementary distribution across third person and first and second person, respectively. From the fourteenth century the first attestations of first and second person used with a past interpretation start to appear (21).

- (21) a. Tantost sos vestirs hac trencatz // e totz
 immediately her clothes HAVE.PFV.3G rip.PTCP and all
 sos cabels de son cap; // et yeu no m’ o
 her hairs from her head and I NEG= REFL= it=
 tengui a gab: // de la cambra vau tost
 take.PFV.1SG at joke from the room GO.PRS.1SG quickly
 yssir, // e tantost pres mi al
 leave.INF and immediately take.PFV.1SG I to.the
 fugir, // [...]. (OOcc.)
 run.away.INF
 ‘Immediately she had torn off her clothes// and all the hair from her
 head; // and I didn’t take it as a joke: // from the room I quickly ran out,
 // and I immediately took flight, // [...].’ (GdB 2864–2868)

²⁵ Similarly, Blasco Ferrer (2005:601) sees the periphrasis as a ‘kind of omnitemporal, distinctly unmarked tense, the first value that the periphrastic acquires in the Occitan verbal system’. He concludes that ‘its temporal referent may then become displaced, either to the past or to the future’.

- b. L' autre jort, vau veyre // Qu' a ung orb
 the other day GO.PRS.1SG see.INF that to a blind.man
 la veyre // Ly vas rendre tu. (OOcc.)
 the sight to.him= GO.PRS.2SG give.back.INF you
 'The other day, I saw // that with a blind man // you restored his sight.'
 (IPP 4894–4896)

However, as Table 4.1 shows, the past use with first and second person is significantly less frequent than the non-past overall. Furthermore, the past usage is primarily found with first-person singular, only very rarely with second-person singular, and never with first- or second-person plural.

Table 4.1 'Non-past' and 'past' interpretation with first and second persons

Century	Text	Non-past	Tot.	Past	Tot.
14th	<i>GdB</i>	1p (1); 2p (1)	2	1s (6)	6
	<i>RdA</i>	1p (3)	3	0	0
	<i>MDP1</i>	1s (1)	1	2s (1)	1
15th	<i>MDP2</i>	1s (20); 1p (5); 2p (12)	37	1s (4)	4
	<i>JG</i>	1s (7); 1p (1); 2s (4); 2p (5)	17	0	0
	<i>IPP</i>	1s (5); 2s (2)	7	1s (2); 2s (2)	4
		Overall total	67		15

This absence suggests that the 'prediction' and 'intention' meaning components of the GO + infinitive construction found with first-person singular, being at the initial stages of the semantic development of the future gram (Bybee et al. 1991:32), are compatible with a past interpretation (cf. 21a, in which *vau tost yssir* is part of a sequence of events, and it follows the woman's actions). The imperative/directive meaning component expressed by second-person singular and plural, however, already having reached an advanced stage in the development of the future gram, could not.²⁶ From a more abstract perspective, this asymmetry could be interpreted as the result of a morphomic developmental distribution, with cells only realized in the third persons to start with, eventually including the first-person singular, but with empty cells for the second-persons and first-person plural.

A further point for reflection is also that the past reading of the GO + infinitive construction emerges in the first and second person much later than in the third: given that the latter typically originated in written narratives, hence a higher register, the change must have been 'from above', only reaching what can reasonably be assumed to be the reflexes of the spoken language at a later stage. However, this was only a temporary state of affairs, since the forces 'from below' eventually won

²⁶ Although the stages of development of meaning components proposed in Bybee et al. do not include 'hortative', which we see expressed by first-person plural, we assume here for simplicity that it represents a type of directive, and hence can be classified as an imperative alongside second person.

out and allowed for the complete grammaticalization of the future interpretation of the construction.

From the fourteenth century, we find the periphrasis in the third person used for the first time with a possible non-past interpretation:

- (22) a. Benezeyt siatz, filh de Dieu, // que va salvar
 bless.PTCP be.SBJV.2PL son of God who GO.PRS.3SG save.INF
 lo poble sieu! (OOcc.)
 the people his
 ‘Blessed be you, son of God, // who will save his people!’
 (MDP1 328–329)
- b. Aras s’ en va serquar Raguelh la Vida,
 now REFL=PART= GO.PRS.3SG search.INF Raguelh the life
 he li digua, sus lo // escadafal: // [...]. (OOcc.)
 and to.her= say.SBJV.3SG on the pedestal
 ‘Now (the angel) Raguell goes looking for Life, and it says to her, on the
 // pedestal: // [...]’
 (JG 1609P.1–2)

In (22a) Jesus is still alive and directly addressed, suggesting a future interpretation; (22b) is an instance of descriptive directions to indicate non-verbal actions to be performed by actors, and the interpretation is directive. It is difficult to come to any firm conclusions on the basis of very few examples. However, it is possible to imagine that as the past interpretation of the GO + infinitive construction declines,²⁷ the non-past interpretation extends to the third person, which eventually allowed the anchoring to speech time just as with first and second persons.²⁸

Favouring the grammaticalization of the periphrasis as an expression of futurity rather than past, two main factors are likely to have played a role. First, the almost exclusive use of the present tense form of GO in the periphrasis: the higher frequency of preterite forms in medieval Catalan are, according to Nagy C. (2010:79), the reason why the construction did not evolve into a future tense. She reaches this conclusion drawing on an observation by Bybee et al. (1994:268) that, when a future marker develops, the construction includes progressive, present, or imperfective meaning components. This, crucially, was not the case in Catalan. Conversely, the use of the present tense may have favoured the eventual Occitan development into an expression of futurity. Furthermore, the GO + infinitive construction coexisted with a GO + gerund construction: the latter conveyed a ‘continuous, ongoing action’ (Jensen 1986:229, §685, 255, §756) where GO could occur in both the present and preterite (*tals obras va pertot fazen* lit. ‘such works

²⁷ According to Meyer-Lübke (1925:106), the construction became obsolete in Occitan in the sixteenth century.

²⁸ Bres and Labeau (2013b:20) report that for French the ‘posterior’ use emerged later than the narrative use, appearing sporadically in the thirteenth century, and spreading in the fifteenth century, and that it was especially evident in texts containing stretches of dialogue in which use of first and second person naturally abounds.

go.PRS.3SG everywhere do.GER (= such works he goes everywhere doing)' (*Cançó de Santa Fe* 134), *ieu trobei, tant anei queren* lit. 'I find.PFV.1SG so.much go.PFV.1SG search.GER (= I found [it], (after) much searching)' (*RdJ* 10158)), and it pre-dated the GO + infinitive construction, as witness its attestation in the eleventh-century *Lo Poema de Boeci*. In the early period (twelfth century), it is possible to encounter a GO + infinitive construction which clearly is used instead of GO + gerund, suggesting that the two overlapped at least partly in the mind of the speakers, most probably on account of their shared imperfective aspect. In (23a) Jaufré is on a quest to find Taulat, and questions a knight as to his whereabouts; since the quest is ongoing, the use of GO + infinitive must necessarily be interpreted as equivalent to the use of GO + gerund,²⁹ witness also the later reprises by the knight (23b–c):

- (23) a. [...] mas si-m sabiatz dir lo ver // d'un
 but if=me know.IPFV.2PL say.INF the truth of a
 cavallier que vauc querer, // ves qual part
 knight whom GO.PRS.1SG seek.INF towards which part
 lo poria seguir, // [...]. (OOcc.)
 him= can.COND.1SG find.INF
 '[...] but if you could tell me the truth // about a knight I am seeking,
 // and where I might find him, // [...]' (*RdJ* 4757–4759)
- b. "E per qual ops l' anatz querenz?" (OOcc.)³⁰
 and for what reason him= GO.PRS.2PL seek.PRS.PTCP
 "And for what reason do you go/are you looking for him?" (*RdJ* 4764)
- c. [...]Car vos aquest anatz cercan, [...]. (OOcc.)
 because you this GO.PRS.2PL seek.GER
 '[...] Because you are looking for him [...]' (*RdJ* 4792)

Second, the grammaticalization of the periphrasis as an expression of futurity rather than past was also favoured by the anchoring of the construction which, as mentioned above, was devoid of temporal features in that it encoded only posteriority: anchoring to the speech time, which led to the development of a future construction, and situational anchoring to the narrative tense, which led to the development to an expression of past. These factors, coupled with the fact that functional polysemy was not tolerated for long, eventually led to the loss of the past interpretation, such that the future reading became conventionalized and finally grammaticalized as an expression of future tense.

²⁹ There is also the possibility, of course, that this may be purely the result of misreading a scribe's 'n' for an 'r'.

³⁰ Jeanroy (1941:382f.) comments on the frequent substitution of the gerund with forms of the present participle.

4.5 Concluding remarks

In this chapter we have argued that both GO-past and GO-future periphrases originated from the same construction, in which the basic spatial meaning of the motion verb was reinterpreted as posteriority at the time level. Along with Bres and Labeau (2013a), we understand this construction as being devoid of temporal meaning. In narrative stretches, in which the periphrasis was surrounded by verbs in the preterite form, as well as the historic present, a past interpretation obtained via situational anchoring, while in direct speech, the periphrasis conveyed an exhortation, a command/direction, or a prediction/intention, and derived its eventual future interpretation deictically, in that the prospective movement originates in the moment of speech.

The past interpretation never fully extended to productively include the periphrasis with first and second persons in either French or Occitan, and eventually it fell out of use altogether, leaving the road completely free for the periphrasis to fully grammaticalize as an expression of future. Reconciling the two developments of the GO + infinitive periphrasis by adopting a unified analysis that focuses on the component of posteriority has the advantage of maintaining the widely attested generalization that structures with verbs of motion develop into future grams. Furthermore, this also allows us to maintain the equally justified cognitive schema SOURCE-PATH-GOAL.