

A journey through the Romance-based motion verbs: a contrastive approach of English and German



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Introduction

- Justification and Objectives

“German, which has borrowed much less from Romance languages, lacks verb roots that might correspond to most of the Path verbs in the list” (Talmy, 2000b: 53).

The list he provides concerns the following verbs: *enter, exit, ascend, descend, cross, pass, circle, advance, proceed, approach, arrive, depart, return, join, separate, part, rise, leave, near, follow* (Talmy, 2000b: 52).

- RQ and Hypotheses

Q1: How were Romance-based motion verbs translated into German?

H1: German is going to make use of its rich lexicon of manner-conflating verbs to solve the lack of these path verbs.

Q2: To what extent was the structure of the target language influenced by the source one?

H2: The influence of the structure in the translation is going to be relatively evident.

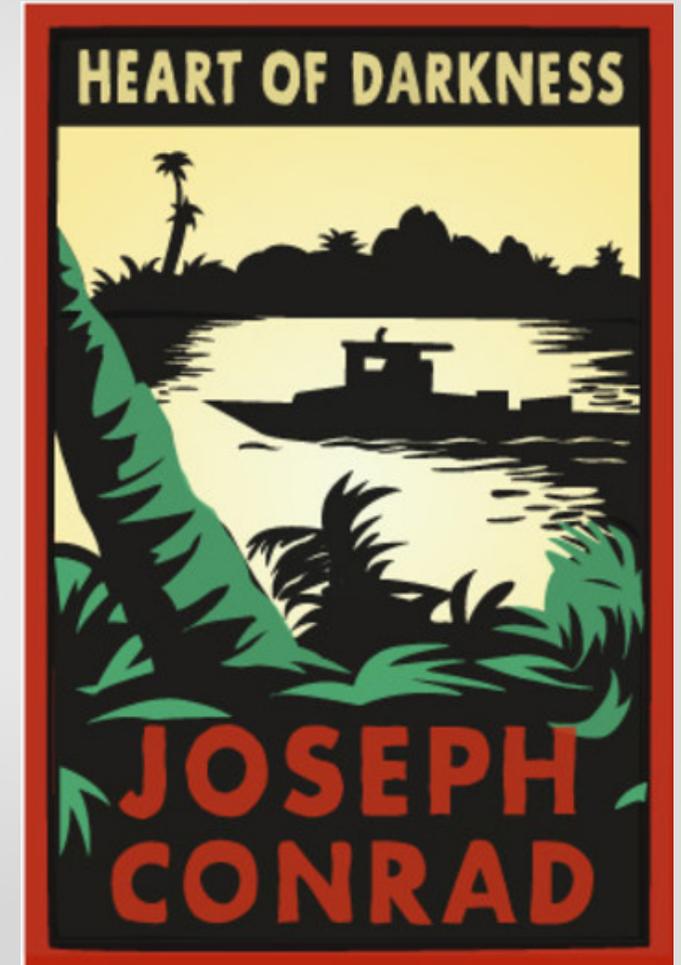
Theoretical preliminaries

- 1) Application of Corpus Linguistics in Translation Studies
- 2) Motion events
 - – Typologies (basing on Talmy's verb-framed and satellite-framed)
 - – Degrees of manner salience in languages belonging to the same family and typology.
 - – etc.

Corpus description and procedure (I)

Table 1. Corpora used for this study.

Corpus	N° of words
<i>Heart of Darkness</i> (Original version)	41.456
<i>Herz der Finsternis</i> (German translation)	37.758

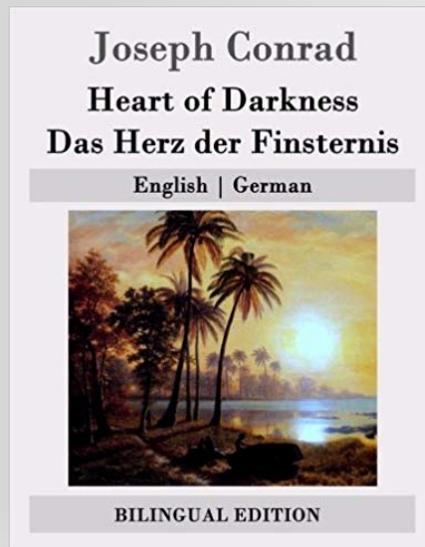


Corpus description and procedure (II)

- 1) To identify the Romance-based motion verbs under study, in this case, the verbs selected were extracted from Haselow (2012: 650): *enter, pass, cross, ascend, descend, circle, arrive, depart, approach and return*.
- 2) To use AntConc's Concordance function to spot every single instance of the above-mentioned verbs in the original version.

Corpus description and procedure (III)

- 3) To make use of a (magnificent) bilingual version of the novel in order to observe how the verbs were translated into German.
- 4) To follow the typology offered by Brala-Vukanović and Memišević (2014) to classify the results:



Source and Goal verbs	Lowering and elevation verbs	Approaching verbs	Target distance verbs	Circular verbs	Area verbs
Depart, arrive, enter	Descend, ascend	Approach	Pass	Circle, return	Cross

Some conclusions

- Regarding the first hypothesis (more manner-conflating verbs in the German version...) → at odds with original expectations.

English

I turned and **descended** to the left.

Finally, I **descended** the hill, obliquely, towards the trees I had seen.

(...) just **returned** to London (...).

Anything **approaching** the change that came over his features I have never seen before (...)

All that had been Kurtz's **had passed** out of my hands: (...)

German

(...) wandte ich mich um und **ging** nach links **wieder hinunter**.

Schliesslich **ging** ich den Hügel **hinunter**, schräg auf die Bäume zu, die ich gesehen hatte.

Eben nach London **heimgekehrt** (...).

Etwas, das auch nur im entferntesten an den Wechsel **hingereicht hätte**, der sich in seinen Zügen vollzog, habe ich noch nie zuvor gesehen (...)

Alles, was Kurtz einmal besessen hatte, **war** mir aus den Händen **geglitten**.
gleiten → *glide, slip*

More conclusions and limitations

- When it comes to the second hypothesis, it is shown that the structure of the source language has influenced the target one.

English

A whole minute **passed**, and then she made a step forward

But we **passed** various places—trading places—with names like...

He **crossed** the room gently to (...)

People **were arriving**.

Strings of dusty niggers with splay feet **arrived** and departed; (...)

English

and **returning**, said to me, (...)

No sooner had we fairly **entered** it than I became aware (...)

German

Eine volle Minute **verging**, dann machte sie einen Schritt vorwärts.

Doch **kamen** wir an mancherlei Orten **vorbei**,
Handelsniederlassungen - mit Namen wie...

Er **überquerte** leise das Zimmer, um (...)

Leute **kamen an**.

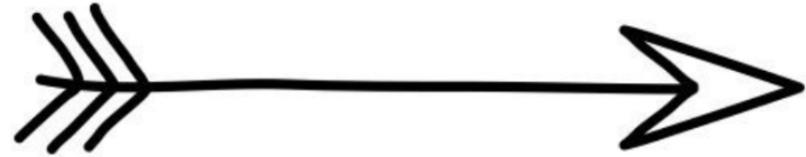
Scharen von staubigen Negern mit schwieligen Füßen **kamen an** und
gingen weg; (...)

German

und sagte mir **beim Zurückkommen**: (...)

Kaum **waren** wir richtig drin, da merkte ich, (...)

Thanks for your attention



KEEP MOVING

FORWARD

References

- Brala-Vukanović Maja and Anita Memišević. 2014. English path verbs: A comparative-contrastive English-Croatian analysis. *Jezikoslovlje*. Vol. 15. (2-3). 173-197.
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- Talmy, Leonard. 2000. *Toward a Cognitive Semantics. Vol. II: Typology and process in concept structuring*. Cambridge, MA.: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Source text

Conrad, Joseph. 2015. *Heart of Darkness / Herz der Finsternis: English | German. Bilingual Edition*. Berlin: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.