

**THE SYNTAX-LEXICAL SEMANTICS INTERFACE:
PREPOSITIONALIZING MOTION VERBS IN SPANISH**

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Prepositions have been treated as functional closed-class items, rather than as constituting a lexical set (Baker 2003, etc.). However, it has been observed that participial forms of verbs can become preposition-like elements, which would seem to indicate that prepositions do not form such a closed set of items after all. In this paper we reinforce this idea by considering motion verbs in Spanish (a very pliant category), which productively convert to prepositions when in their gerundive form, as in (1):

- (1) *El Decanato está subiendo/bajando la escalera.*
The Dean's Office is going up/down the stairs
"The Dean's Office is up/down the stairs."

Interestingly, it is only verbs of inherently directed motion (VIDM) in the sense of Levin (1993), such as *ir* 'go', *venir* 'come', *llegar* 'arrive', *cruzar* 'cross', etc. that are possible in the prepositional use under discussion. In contrast, manner of motion verbs are not prepositionalized. We claim that this is so because it is only the directional (as well as deictic) aspects of the meaning of these verbs that are relevant to the process under consideration, and manner could not enter into the purely directional relation denoted here.

Drawing on Hale & Keyser (1993), and Jackendoff (1990), we propose a Lexical Relational Structure as in (2), in which the (null) goal required by the path constituent has been recategorized as a static point ("[AT]"), and the (optionally expressed) source is the deictic point. The VIDM acquires its prepositional status by checking the [AT] feature on the phonologically null P, which, in turn, is argued to be licensed by Emonds' (1987) Invisible Category Principle:

- (2) [PP [P' AT_i [IP PRO_{arb} [I' *-ndo* [VP VIDM [PP SOURCE-PATH-GOAL_i]]]]]]

Finally, we account for the possibility of this process in terms of lexicalization patterns (Talmy, 1985), and suggest ways of bridging the gap between generativist and functionalist approaches to grammaticalization.