Why is "*John Ran to the House*" the Same as "*John Went to the House Running*" in Arabic?

Hanan M. Kabli[1&2]

[1] English Department, King Abdulaziz University, Rabigh, Saudi Arabia

[2] English Language Institute, Jeddah University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Correspondence: Hanan M. Kabli, English Department, King Abdulaziz University, Rabigh, Saudi Arabia; English Language Institute, Jeddah University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. E-mail: hmkabli@kau.edu.sa or hmkabli@uj.edu.sa

Abstract

The study explores how Arabic has the same conflation pattern characteristics as English even though it belongs to Verb-framed Languages. A focused-group approach is used to evaluate the effect of the first language (L1) and the potential role of proficiency in the acquisition of the English directional preposition 'to' with manner-of-motion to goal construction. One group consists of Saudi speakers at two levels of development; an intermediate and advanced proficiency levels; whereas, the second group (control group) comprises of English native speakers. Acceptability Judgment Task associated with video animation clips is designed to elicit participants' judgments in the depicted event. Results indicated that the intermediate Saudi speakers accept the directional preposition 'to' with and without boundary-crossing event, as is the case of their L1, which was opposite for the advanced and native English speakers for the without boundary-crossing event. The advanced Saudi speakers accept the constructions of encoding the manner with the motion and expressing the manner as the complement depicting an appropriate description of the event, reflecting L1 influence. All the group's judgment varies based on the acceptance to conflate the manner with the motion overexpressing manner as a complement in an event without boundary-crossing.

Keywords: boundary crossing, conflation, manner, motion, satellite-framed language, verb-framed language

1. Introduction

The motion concept is universally acknowledged across all languages around the world based on its pervasiveness in the daily lives (Blackledge & Creese, 2017). Pavlenko and Volynsky (2015) state that the motion expression differs among languages. In the Second Language Acquisition (SLA), the acquisition of argument structures has been widely recognized, particularly in the area of the acquisition of manner-of-motion to goal constructions (Rothman & Slabakova, 2018). Talmy (1985) has intrigued the interest of researchers who investigated the realization of English manner-of-motion to goal constructions by different first language learners (L1s) (Cadierno & Ruis, 2006; Brown & Gullberg, 2010; Chen, 2005; Choi & Lantolf, 2008; Donoso & Bylund, 2015; Römer, O'Donnell, & Ellis, 2014; Vergaro & Iacobini, 2014). Talmy's lexicalization (word making process for expressing a concept) of the semantic primitives (concepts that are innately understood and cannot be expressed in simpler terms) in the motion event yields to cross-linguistic variation in the conflation (i.e., merging of information, texts, opinions, ideas, and more sets) of these primitives in the main verb. His work classifies the languages into Verb-framed languages, such as Spanish, Turkish and Semitic languages, which include Arabic and Hebrew and Satellite-framed languages, i.e., English and German (Note 1) topic.

Considering the manner verbs, Albaqami (2016) cited Slobin's (1996) study and highlighted two-tiered lexicon manner-of-motion verbs; where one exists in a routine task, i.e., jump, walk, fly, run and more. Whereas, the second one is more specific and expressive such as walking can be expressed specifically with words like wander, stroll and which for running can be jog. Concerning the second language learners, Lardiere (2009) has articulated that the L2 complete acquisition is based on their reassemble of the L1 features into their L2.

Based on Talmy's typology, the core characteristic of Verb-farmed languages is to encode the path with the motion, such as the following Spanish example in (1) from Slobin (1997).

(1) Salí por la puerta de la cocina

   Exit by the door of the kitchen

   'I exited the kitchen door.'

For example (1), the verb *Salí* 'exit' has path conflation with the motion. However, the manner is deleted or can be expressed as a complement, as in example (2) (Chen & Gue, 2009):

(2) Salí por la Puerta de la cocina corriendo

   Exit by the door of the kitchen running

   'I exited the kitchen door, running.'

Verb-framed-languages, such as Spanish and Korean, disallow the co-occurrence of the manner verbs with the preposition phrases (PPs) to yield a directional interpretation to the goal. It is illustrated in the following example from Son (2007):

(3) a. Juan??corrio/*anduvo/*gateco a la tienda (Spanish)

   Juan ran/ walked/ crawled to the store

   'Juan ran/walked/crawled/crawled to the store.'

   b. Mary-ka kakey-ey ttwi-/ kel- / ki-ess-ts (Korean)

   Mary-NOM store-LOC run/ walk/ craw-PAST-DC

   'Mary ran/ walked/ crawled to the store'

Beavers, Levin and Tham (2010) explain that French *à*, Spanish *a* and Japanese *-ni* are often glossed as 'to' because of these prepositions co-occurrence with the path verbs. However, the researcher believed that it should be glossed as 'at' because of their locative meaning when used with non-motion verbs. They argue that even though these prepositions exist with manner-of-motion verbs, they do not give rise to goal interpretation. The conflation (i.e., semantic primitives possible combinations into a single word) encodes the path with the motion in Verb-framed languages as proposed by Talmy semantically in Figure 1.
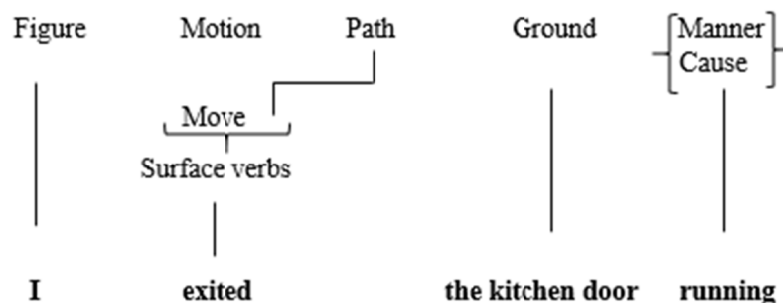

Figure 1. The conflation of the path with the motion in Verb-framed languages

Aske (1989) and Slobin and Hoiting (1994) suggest that speakers of Verb-framed languages conflate manner with motion when an activity is being conveyed *running toward a house* or *strolling in the Park*. However, when it comes to cross the boundary, path verbs are used, such as *enter*, *exit*, *across* for expressing boundary-crossing (Özçalişkan, 2013, p. 2). Concerning Satellite-framed languages, Talmy assumes that motion and manner can be encoded within the same verb root. However, the path is usually expressed via a 'satellite' particle or preposition, such as.

(4) a. John ran *into* the house

   b. Mary walked *to* school

Example (4) shows the manner and motion conflation in the main verb for path expression in PPs for directional interpretation. However, English allows encoding the path with the motion, such as *I exited the kitchen door, running*. Nevertheless, it is preferable to say *I ran out of the kitchen door* by English speakers (Chen & Gue, 2009, p. 1750). As per Aske's (1989)'s and Croft et al. (2010), this is because path verbs, such as *enter*, *exit*,

ascend are borrowed from romance languages. Levin and Rappaport Hovav (2015) share a similar view as in '[a]lthough English may lexicalize the path in the verb, most of its path verbs are of Latinate or other Romance origins (e.g., *arrive*, *ascend*, *enter*), and directed motion event descriptions with such verbs are taken to reflect Romance influence (Talmy, 2000, pp. 52–53, Wienold, 1995, 323–325)'. Figure 2 represents Talmy's schema of encoding the manner with the motion in Satellite-framed languages.
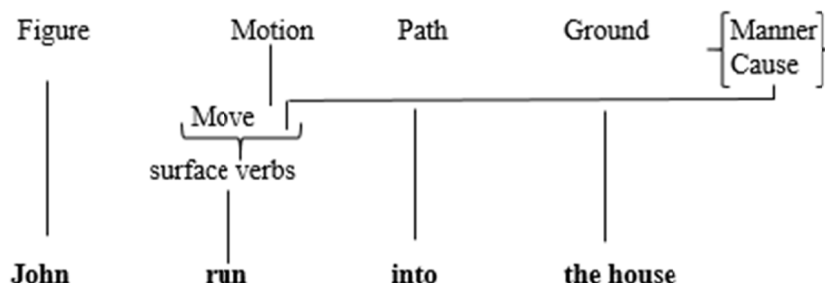

Figure 2. The conflation of the manner with the motion in Satellite-framed languages

Chen and Guo (2009) investigate the position of Mandarin Chinese among the languages in Talmy's lexicalization pattern. They examined the Chinese writers' narrative description of the motion. Mandarin Chinese allows at least two verbs in one clause. One verb is used for the manner while the other is used for the path (example 5).

    (5)   Wǒ <u>pǎo chū</u> le chúfáng

          I run exit PFV kitchen

          'I ran out of the kitchen.'

The example above shows that the first verb *pǎo* 'run' reflects the manner whereas the second verb *chū* states the path. Typologically, the Chinese position is determined by the path status in the argument structure. 'If the path verb is the main verb, the Chinese should fall into Talmy's class of V-languages. If the path verb is a satellite element and the manner verb is the main verb, Chinese should be considered an S-language' Chen and Guo (2009, p. 1751). Findings of the Chinese writers' narration indicate a unique pattern of narration that belongs to neither type of Talmy's language classification. This equal force in the linguistic form has led Slobin (2004) to propose that Chinese belongs to a frame namely 'equipollent-framed' language.

It appears that the Talmy's identification divides the natural languages neatly. It offers a clearly cut classification based on the lexicalization of the semantic primitives in the main verb. However, the difficulty lies when applying this lexicalization system into Arabic. It is because Arabic looks similar to Spanish-type particularly as (1) it does not encode the manner with the motion for directing the goal interpretation, (2) the prepositions are inherently locative, and (3) it uses the path verbs to express boundary-crossing. However, the following section highlights the inapplicability of some of these issues to Arabic as is the case with its cohorts, such as Spanish, Italian, and Korean concerning these issues.

Arabic fine-grained analysis shows that it has a preposition *ʔila* 'to' which denotes a directional interpretation. *ʔila* 'to' has rarely been considered equivalent to English 'to'. However, prepositions like 'into' and 'onto' are unavailable in Arabic (Folli & Ramchand, 2005). A closer look at the directional preposition *ʔila* 'to' shows that it is unambiguously directional. Kabli (2013) provides evidence supporting the present study's conclusion on Saudi Arabic speakers. Also, the directional preposition *ʔila* 'to' cannot co-occur with stative verbs as the following example from Kabli (2013, p. 65).

    (6)   * Ʒalast Jawana ʔila albayt

        sit-$_{\text{I-Past}}$ Jawana to the house

        'Jawana sat to the house.'

Although Arabic belongs to Verb-framed languages as a Semitic language, it is revealed that Arabic encodes the manner with a motion to denote the goal interpretation like the structures in (7):

(7)   a. ṭara alʕuṣfuru ʔila alaqafaṣ

      fly-PST-3SG the bird to the birdcage

      'The bird flew to the birdcage.'

      b. taslala allesu ʔila almanzil

      sneak-PST-3SG the thief to the house

      'The thief sneaked into/to the house.'

      c. zaḥafa aljaişu ʔila almadina

      march-PST-3SG the soldiers to the city

      'The soldiers marched into/to the city.'

      d. ʒara allaʕbu ʔila arḍi-almalʕab

      run-PST-3SG the player to ground-of- football pitch

      'The player ran onto the football pitch.'

The question is what licenses the manner to be encoded with the motion in Arabic? Example (7) shows that manner conflate with motion with the directional prepositions *ʔila* 'to' in Arabic. However, Kabli (to appear) argues that the directional preposition *ʔila* 'to' is ambiguous and behaves differently from English 'to'. It implies the same meaning of English 'to' when it is associated with no boundary-crossing interpretation. Thus, it allows the conflation of the manner with the motion (7a and c). It denotes the interpretation of 'into' or 'onto' when it involves boundary-crossing (7b, c, and d). Due to the absence of these prepositions, Arabic adopts different means to express boundary-crossing. English and Arabic primary difference is the inability of Arabic to encode the manner with the motion when it comes to boundary-crossing event. However, Arabic allows expressing manners as a complement (example 8). Such construction is not ungrammatical in English (Note 2).

(8)   ðahba alʕuṣfuru ʔila alaqafaṣ taʔiran

      go- PST-3SG the bird to the birdcage flying

      'The bird went into the birdcage flying'.

Arabic allows another type of conflation, along with the lexicalization pattern. This is the conflation of the motion with the path in the verb root leaving manner to be expressed *optionally* as a complement (example 9).

(9)   daxla alwaledu almanzil (jarian)

      Enter-I-PAST the boy the house (running)

      'The boy entered the house (running)'

The expression of manner separately from motion in Arabic is due to the notion of the boundary-crossing. Arabic allows expressing manner as a complement when the event involves displacement from one position to another. Özçalişkan (2013) investigates if the boundary-crossing constraint can be held responsible for the cross-linguistic differences. First, she examines if the Turkish speakers express path verbs in the free description of the boundary-crossing event, as is the case in their L1. Then, she imposed manner verbs when describing the event. She concludes that the boundary-crossing acts as a reliable test to determine the typology of any given language.

Kabli (2013) investigates the motion event with the element of boundary-crossing, such as *John went into the room running*. She finds that their L1 still constrained Saudi speakers at the advanced and the intermediate stages of development. Both Saudi groups accepted the construction as an appropriate construction depicting boundary-crossing in English. This highlights that the argument structure is persistent in the acquisition due to the absence of the directional prepositions that involve boundary-crossing meanings in the L1. Iacobini and Vergaro (2014) examine a corpus study of manner-of-motion verbs in Italian. It shows that manner verbs are used equally in describing the motion event regardless of the presence or absence of the boundary-crossing specification.

As is the case in Arabic, Son (2009) examines Hebrew which belongs to Verb-framed languages and falls under the Semitic languages. She observes that Hebrew has two prepositions *el* and *le* that is equivalent to the English 'to.' They are used as directional prepositions and cannot co-occur with the stative verbs. Examples included are from Son (2007, p. 153) (Example 10).

(10) *yoni haya {el ha-/la-} xeder

Yoni was All the/DAT.DEF-room

'John was to the room.'

The Hebrew speakers use manner-of-motion verbs for directional goal interpretation (Son, 2009, p. 139).

(11) a. David {rac/zaxal} {la-xeder/ el ha-xeder}

David ran/crawled DAT.DEF-room All the-room

'David ran/crawled to the room.'

b. Ha-bakbuk caf {la-me'ara/ el ha-me'ara}

The-bottle floated DAT.DEF-room All the-cave

'The bottle floated (in) to the cave.'

Indonesian is very similar typologically to Arabic and Hebrew. Son (2007) shows that the manner is encoded with motion and co-occur with the directional preposition *ke* 'to' for directional goal interpretation (example, 12).

(12)

    a.   Intransitive Directed Motion

        John berlari/berjalan/merangkak ke dalam ruangan

        John ran/walked/crawled to inside room

        'John ran/walked/crawled into the room.'

    b.   Caused Directed Motion

        John mendorong gerobak itu ke took

        John pushed cart the to store

        'John pushed the cart to the store.'

It is plausible to assume that Arabic has two ways to express the boundary-crossing event. One is to use the directional preposition 'to' that is associated with the boundary-crossing interpretation and expressing manner as a complement. The other way is to conflate the manner with motion with directional preposition ʔila, which leads to an ambiguous interpretation. The third type is to conflate the motion with the verb root path, which lies outside the study scope.

The present work explores the issue of the first language and the role of proficiency in the acquisition of manner-of-motion verbs with the directional preposition 'to' by L1 Saudi speakers at two phases of development. It is mostly concerned as to why Arabic encodes the manner with the motion, besides, to express the manner as a complement. It is assumed that since the Arabic 'to' allow two interpretations, the low level of proficiency Saudi speakers, unlike English, typically will transfer their L1 property in their acquisition of L2 construction. They will accept English 'to' as denoting both boundary-crossing and no boundary-crossing interpretations. Likewise, the L1 effect will appear in expressing manner as a complement. Both groups of Saudi speakers will allow manner separately from motion in the event of denoting boundary-crossing. However, it seems that proficiency will play a negative role in the acquisition of the relevant construction.

Since Arabic allows the two types of conflations, both groups of Saudi speakers will likely to conflate manner with motion and express manner as a complement for boundary-crossing as a proper description of the event in English. In contrast, Saudi speakers will conflate manner with motion, but not express manner separately from motion in the event without boundary-crossing since this structure, as typically realized in Saudi Arabic.

In light of the above predictions, the present study aims to address the following research questions:

Q1: If L1 plays a role in the acquisition of L2 argument structures, will the intermediate Saudi group accept 'to' with an event depicting boundary-crossing the same as without boundary-crossing like their L1 and unlike English as are in the following cases:

a. The man climbed to the tree house (i.e., into the tree house)

b. The man climbed to the tree house (i.e., to the tree house)

Q2: Will both groups of Saudi speakers accept expressing manner as a complement with 'to' in the event

depicting boundary-crossing?

a. The boy went to the castle sliding

Q3: If Arabic allows the conflation of the manner with the motion as well as expressing the manner as a complement, will Saudi groups:

a. Accept both the conflation of the manner with the motion in addition to expressing manner as a complement in the event involves boundary-crossing as in their L1?

a. The boy slid to the castle

b. The boy went to the castle sliding

b. Accept the conflation of the manner with the motion rather than expressing the manner as a complement in the event does not involve boundary-crossing?

a. The bird flew to the cage

Q4. If proficiency plays a role in the acquisition of manner-of-motion to goal construction, will advanced Saudi group disallow 'to' with boundary-crossing event and disallow to express the manner as a complement in the event with boundary-crossing, as follows?

a. The man swam *to* the cage   (+boundary-crossing event)

b. The man went to the cave *swimming*   (+boundary-crossing event)

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Design

A mixed study design is adopted as it presents the data in the statistical form while providing a comprehensive analysis of the findings. The focus group approach was used for assessing the lexical difference between the two languages. Moreover, this approach is also instrumental in overcoming that prevail in a specific approach which facilitates drawing a holistic picture of the research problem.

2.2 Study Participants

An anonymous approach was adopted for performing the study. In it, the participants were recruited by word of mouth in a Saudi Organization. Three groups were formed, where the control group composed of 15 English native speakers while the other two groups were of L1 Saudi participants and L2 English participants at two proficiency levels. There were 16 Saudi speakers at an advanced level of proficiency and 17 Saudi speakers at an intermediate level. Saudi participants were classified as an intermediate level based on paper and pencil Oxford Placement Test. However, the advanced proficiency of Saudi participants who were employed at the institute were enrolled in MA and Ph.D. programs in the USA and the UK. They reported their IELTS and TOFEL test scores as acceptable for admission in the universities. However, the mean score of IELTS was 7.5 whereas the mean score of TOEFL (IBT) was 100.5.

2.3 Data Collection

2.3.1 Questionnaire

An Acceptability Judgment Task accompanied with video animation clips examined participants' responses to the task items. Participants watched the animation pictures on the screen of the laptop and marked their responses on the answer sheets. The responses were based on 3-point Likert scales (i.e., 1 *acceptable*, 2 *not sure* and 3 *unacceptable*). They were requested to select *acceptable* if the statement describes the motion they saw on the screen. However, if they found that the animation picture mismatched the statement, *unacceptable* was to be selected. If participants were unsure if it was a proper English statement, they select *not sure*. Manner verbs used in the task were selected based on Levin's (1993) English verbs classification. The task was administered individually to all participants by appointment or during their breaks.

Participants were introduced to two examples of the animation clips at the beginning of the task. The setting of the animation clips involves describing two situations. The first situation designed as an individual crossed the boundary to inside another place. There were three choices described in this situation. The first choice involved the directional preposition 'to' with the manner incorporated with the motion in the verb. The second statement expressed the manner separately from the motion with directional preposition 'to' whereas the last choice was a distractor (example, 13). In contrast, the second situation implies an event without boundary-crossing, i.e., there was no displacement from one place to another. Again, there were three choices describe the motion event. The first statement includes the directional preposition 'to' with the manner conflated with motion. The second

situation involves the directional preposition 'to' with expressing manner as a complement while the last choice was a distractor (example, 14). Therefore, there were six animation pictures with boundary-crossing motion events while the other six pictures were designed without a boundary-crossing motion event. The choices were 24 statements related to the study while the remaining 12 choices were distractors. Also, there were ten animation clips functioned as fillers.

(13) **A. An event involving no B-C animation clip**

The boy climbed to the tree house   Acceptable   Not Sure   Unacceptable

The boy went to the tree house climbing   Acceptable   Not Sure   Unacceptable

The boy climbed to the top of the tree house   Acceptable   Not Sure   Unacceptable

(14) **An event involving B-C animation clip**

The boy climbed to the tree house   Acceptable   Not Sure   Unacceptable

The boy went to the tree house climbing   Acceptable   Not Sure   Unacceptable

The boy climbed to the top of the tree house   Acceptable   Not Sure   Unacceptable

All animation clips and the choices in the task were ordered randomly. Distractors and fillers were unrelated to the study and were excluded from the analyses.

2.3.2 Bio-Data

Questions related to participants' backgrounds, such as age, gender, first language, other languages they speak, the type of instruction they received, etc. are attached to the questionnaire. Also, participants' consent was obtained by marking the bottom page of the bio-data.

2.4 Study Procedure

The administration of the task began by requesting participants to fill out the questions related to their background and sign the consent form. Participants were informed verbally as well as in the consent form that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage of administration. They were asked to answer all the choices by selecting one answer only from the scale for each choice. Each participant completed the task individually with the researcher. They watched the video clips one at a time and marked their judgments on the provided answer sheets. The researcher acted as a mentor to ensure that all participants did not miss to response to any choice, besides, to the grantee that participants would not go back to change their responses.

2.5 Data Analysis

IBM SPSS version 21 is used to analyze data after administration. Descriptive statistics of all experiment groups in the target items are computed. Based on the test of reliability, it appears that the test gives the value of .841. The test of normal distribution indicates that the $p > .05$. Therefore, a parametric test is conducted for determining the significance between the variables. The t-test measures the significant difference between two independent variables whereas the paired t-test measures two related variables on a single test item. The motion event is analyzed based on: 'to' with the manner-of-motion verbs in the event with boundary-crossing, 'to' with manner-of-motion verbs without boundary-crossing, 'to' with path verb 'go' in the motion event with boundary-crossing. Also, it used manner as a complement and 'to' with path verb 'go' without boundary-crossing and the manner as a complement.

3. Results

The demographic characteristics of the sample presented that all participants were monolingual and females. The mean age of the advanced Saudi participants was 35.5 years, whereas, the mean age of the intermediate Saudi participants was 19.5 years. The mean age of native speakers was 45 years. All Saudi participants were classroom instructed for about nine years in the state schools. Table 1 presents the Acceptability Judgment Task results. All items are calculated based on the acceptable tokens supplied by participants. Table 1 presents the means and the standard deviations of the participants' acceptable judgments to the target items. It showed that Saudi participants at the two levels of proficiency accepted the co-occurrence of the directional preposition 'to' in the motion event with the boundary-crossing (Advanced Saudi speakers = 50 % – Intermediate Saudi speakers = 63 %). In contrast, native speakers supply low acceptable judgments (41 %) since the directional preposition 'into' should replace 'to'. No boundary-crossing is found, where all participants scored high acceptable judgments in this construction as it is the typical realization of their first languages. Both Saudi groups accepted to conflate manner with motion with 'to' in the event with and without boundary-crossing. Since this conflation pattern is the characteristic of the English language, native speakers supply high judgments in the event without

boundary-crossing. However, the low judgments of the native group in the event with boundary-crossing is due to the reason stated above.

However, Table 1 shows participants' acceptance in expressing manner as a complement. Although all groups rated these constructions low, Saudi groups scored higher acceptable percentages than the native group with the boundary-crossing event (Advanced Saudi speakers = 43 % – Intermediate Saudi speakers = 39 % – Native = 19 %). Similarly, Saudi speakers supplied higher acceptable judgments than native speakers in the event without boundary-crossing (Advanced Saudi speakers = 42 – Intermediate Saudi speakers = 41 % – Native = 14 %). This is due to expressing manner as a complement is a distinctive feature of the Arabic language but not of English.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the participants (all groups)

	Native			Advanced Saudi			Intermediate Saudi		
	%	Mean	SD	%	Mean	SD	%	Mean	SD
+ to + boundary	41	2.46	.99	50	3.00	2.28	63	3.82	1.62
+ to - boundary	84	5.06	.96	81	4.87	1.02	66	3.94	1.63
+ to + boundary + manner	19	1.13	1.18	43	2.56	2.27	39	2.35	1.83
+ to - boundary + manner	14	1.00	1.60	42	2.50	2.00	41	2.47	1.62

3.1 Results of 'to' with and Without Boundary-Crossing

The results of 'to' with boundary-crossing event highlighted that an entity performs an action and crosses the boundary. The event involved a transfer from one place to another, such as *the boy slid to (inside) the castle*. An inferential statistic compares the performance of both Saudi groups to each other on the one hand in addition to comparing the native speakers with the Saudi groups. The independent t-test shows no significant difference between Advanced Saudi group and the native group ($t = .854$, df = 20.744, $p = .403$, two-tailed). However, a significant difference is found between intermediate group with the native group ($t = 2.798$, df = 30, $p = .009$, two-tailed), providing evidence for proficiency.

The results of 'to' without boundary-crossing demonstrated that an entity does not perform an action that involves crossing the boundary, such as *the boy slid to the castle*. The independent t-test shows no significant difference between the native group and the advance Saudi group as the ($t = .536$, df = 29, $p = .596$, two-tailed). However, a significant difference is found between the native group and the intermediate group ($t = 2.328$, df = 30, $p = .027$, two-tailed). The figure below presents a visual comparison between groups on 'to' with and without boundary-crossing events for all groups.
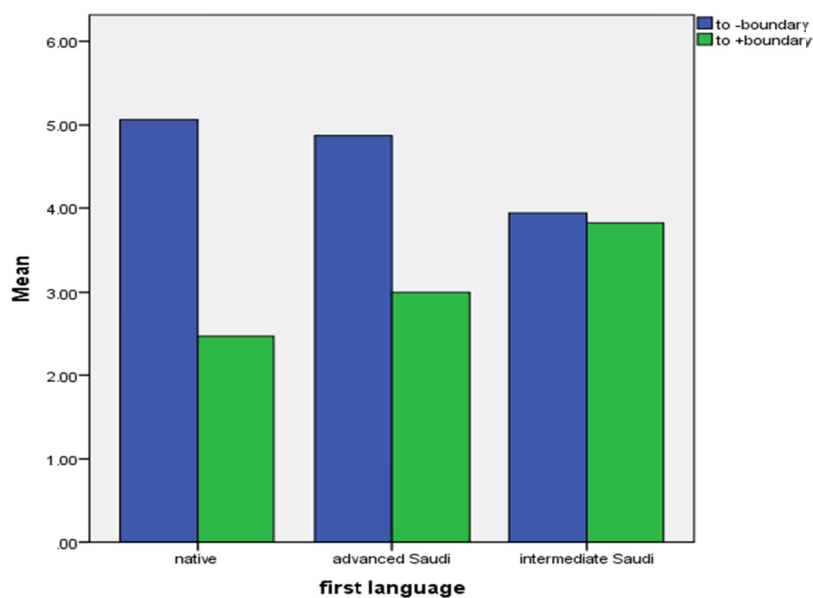

Figure 3. The performance of all groups on 'to' with and without boundary-crossing

The comparison of the group's performances showed that for the 'to' with and without boundary-crossing, the paired t-test indicates a significant difference between the two constructions in natives' performance (t = 9.539, df = 14, p = .000, two-tailed). Likewise, a significant difference is found in the performance of the advanced Saudi group in the relevant constructions (t = 4.118, df = 15, p = .001, two-tailed). However, the paired t-test shows no significant difference in the performance of the intermediate Saudi group (t = .226, df = 16, p = .824, two-tailed).

3.2 The Result of 'to' with and Without Boundary-Crossing and Manner as a Complement

In this type of construction, it involves expressing manner as a complement in an event portraying displacement from one place to another, such as *the boy went to (inside) the castle sliding*. The independent t-test shows a significant difference between native group and the advanced Saudi group in expressing manner as a complement with 'to' (t = 2.209, df = 22.884, p = .037, two-tailed). Similarly, a significant difference is found between the native group and the intermediate Saudi group (t = 2.257, df = 27.665, p = .032, two-tailed).

Paired t-test result indicates no significant difference in the performance of the advanced Saudi group in the given constructions (t = .940, df = 15, p = .362, two-tailed). In contrast, a significant difference is found in the performance of the native group (t = 2.870, df = 14, p = .012, two-tailed) and intermediate Saudi group (t = 2.742, df = 16, p = .014, two-tailed) (Figure 4).
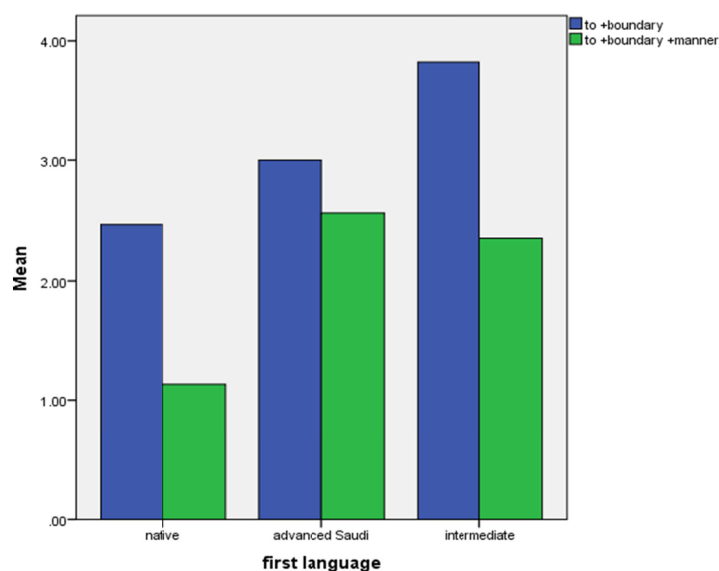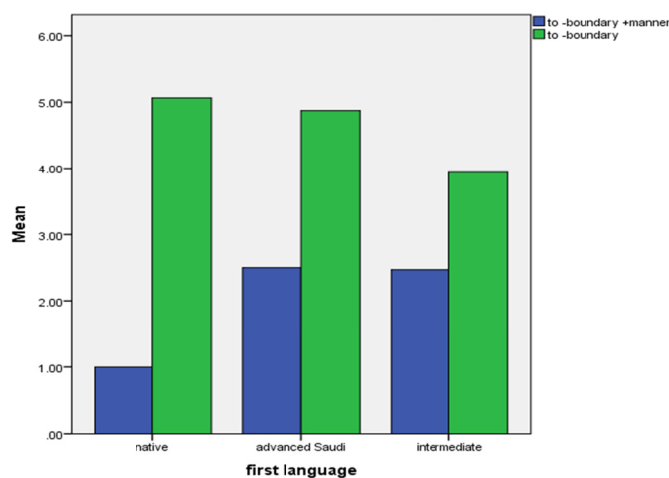

Figure 4. Participants' judgments on the conflation of the manner with the motion in comparison with expressing the manner as a complement in the event involves boundary-crossing

Similarly, paired t-test confirms a significant difference in the performance of the advanced Saudi group (t = 4.344, df = 15, p = .001, two-tailed) and the performance of the intermediate Saudi group (t = 2.553, df = 16, p = .021, two-tailed) as well as the native group (t = 7.313, df = 14, p = .000, two-tailed).

Figure 5. Participants' judgments on the conflation of the manner with the motion in comparison with expressing the manner as a complement in the event without boundary-crossing

4. Discussion

The results present evidence that Arabic licenses the directional preposition ʔila 'to' to co-occur with motion verbs to give rise to directional goal interpretation whether with or without boundary-crossing. Besides, the results prove that ʔila 'to' is an ambiguous directional preposition. Concerning conflation patterns, Arabic allows both encoding the manner with the motion and expressing the manner as a complement in the motion event entails boundary-crossing. However, in the motion event which is absent of the boundary-crossing, Arabic allows encoding the manner with motion only.

It evaluates whether L1 plays a role in the acquisition of English 'to' with manner-of-motion verbs in the motion event with and without boundary-crossing, such as *The man climbed to the tree house* vs. *The man climbed into the tree house*. The preliminary result indicates that the Saudi intermediate level of proficiency accepts English 'to' with and without boundary-crossing, as is the case in their L1. Similarly, Kabli (n.d.) shows that the Saudi students in the experiment and the control groups at an intermediate level of proficiency rated the directional preposition 'to' as denoting both boundary-crossing interpretations and no boundary-crossing meaning in the pretest. This outcome is in line with the inferential statistics. The paired t-test shows a significant difference in the judgments of the native and the advanced Saudi groups in the rating of 'to' with and without boundary-crossing as denting the same interpretation. Since 'to' in Arabic has the same interpretation of English 'into' as well as English 'to', an insignificant difference in the judgment of the intermediate on 'to' with and without boundary-crossing is found. The intermediate level participants treat English 'to' as it is in their L1. Bodean-Vozian and Cincilei's (2015) study corroborates the findings when assessing Talmy's seminal work for the Spanish, French and Italian languages.

The independent t-test shows a significant difference in the performance of the Saudi intermediate group in comparison with the native group in the event with 'to' and boundary-crossing. The results were expected since 'to' in English does not imply the interpretation of 'into'. Therefore, the native group rates this construction differently from the intermediate Saudi speakers. Consequently, this is another clear evidence of L1 influence. Surprisingly, a significant difference is found in the two groups (the intermediate and the native) with the event without boundary-crossing.

It is anticipated that the intermediate Saudi group should transfer L1 grammar to L2 given the availability of the construction in both the languages and where such a significant should be absent. However, the preliminary results indicate that the intermediate group rated both interpretations as the same—repeated once again. In contrast, the native group rejected 'to' to denote boundary-crossing interpretation in comparison to without boundary-crossing. Thus, both groups accepted 'to' without boundary-crossing. However, the native group favors this construction far more than without boundary-crossing as in their L1 causes a significant difference to exist.

The result also confirmed that the advanced Saudi speakers acquire the L2 grammar with an increased proficiency level and disallow 'to' in the boundary-crossing event. The independent t-test shows no significant

difference between the advanced Saudi speakers and the native group in the acquisition of 'to' with boundary-crossing. Such an insignificant difference is absent between the intermediate level Saudi speakers and the native group as it is pointed out in the above section. To summarize, the results support the claim that L2 speakers transfer the property of the L1 while acquiring L2 grammar at the onset of the development. However, the influence of the first language is resolved due to an increase in proficiency level and exposure to the input.

Concerning the result of 'to' and expressing manner as a complement, the second research question aims to examine if both groups of Saudi speakers accept to express the manner as a complement with the boundary-crossing event. The study findings reveal significant differences between the intermediate level of proficiency Saudi speakers and the native group and also between the advanced Saudi speakers and the group. This result is due to the manner as a complement is impossible in English. However, it is possible in Arabic when it involves boundary-crossing. This concludes that both Saudi groups accept expressing the manner as a complement. As a result, proficiency insignificantly effects acquiring this property because the statistics reveal no significant difference between the judgment of intermediate and advance Saudi groups. Similarly, a study by Kabli (2013) shows that the advanced and the intermediate Saudi speakers persistently accepted the manner as a complement in construction such as *The lady went **into** the room **running***, unlike the English and German native speakers who rejected this construction. In her study, the descriptive statistics showed that the intermediate Saudi rated this construction as 65% while the advanced Saudi speakers scored 66%. In English and German where this construction is impossible, both German and English rated this construction as 25% and 32%, respectively.

The research seeks whether both Saudi groups accept the conflation of the manner with the motion as well as expressing the manner as a complement in the event involving boundary-crossing. The paired t-test reveals no significant difference in the performance of advanced Saudi speakers. They rated both constructions as an acceptable judgment of the event. However, advanced Saudi speakers started to recognize that 'to' is unacceptable with the boundary-crossing event due to an increase in proficiency, unlike the intermediate Saudi learners who accept this construction as 63%. Therefore, their judgments are lower than the intermediate Saudi speakers who are still constrained by their L1 in this stage of development as indicated by the preliminary result. Surprisingly, the performance of the intermediate Saudi speakers resembles that of the native speakers in the inferential statistics. The significant difference in both constructions stems from the fact that the native speakers generally accept the conflation of the manner with the motion regardless of the presence or absence of the boundary-crossing. Simultaneously, expressing manner as a complement is unavailable in English. As a result, a significant difference has risen. The question brought up is why the intermediate Saudi speakers' performance is dissimilar to that of the advanced Saudi speakers although both constructions are possible in Arabic. Upon interviewing some intermediate speakers later, Saudi speakers expressed difficulty to pronounce the sentence when manner as a complement in Arabic. For example, they find it easier to say in Arabic *Sara ran to the room* or *Sara entered the room* rather than *Sara went to the room running*. Therefore, they were more likely to accept the conflation of manner with motion than to express manner as a complement as is the result of the descriptive statistics revealed (63% vs. 39%). Slobin (2006) comes up with the concepts of *heavier construction* and *the most common expression*. He explains that the Satellite-frame languages usually prefer to select linguistically common expression. Therefore, he finds speakers of Dutch, German and English prefer to conflate manner with motion as *the most common expression*. 'In order to add manner to the perspective, [these] speakers … face the same processing problem as speakers of verb-framed languages: they would require a heavier construction, such as 'come flying out'' (Slobin, 2006, p. 10). Saudi students likely favor the conflation of manner with the motion more than expressing manner as a complement because of the influence of heavy construction in communication. A plausible alternative account is addressed by McCawley (1978).

He introduces the concept of *less linguistic effort* in speakers' utterances. McCawley explains that the adjective *pale* can occur with many colors, such as *pale green*, *pale blue*, *pale yellow*. Colors, such as *red*, *black*, *white* are unlikely to co-occur with *pale*. The reason for lacking this combination is due to the existence of an alternative expression as mentioned by Householder (1971). He explains that the common expression of *pale red* in a single lexical item is *pink*. Thus, speakers prefer to use less linguistic effort when they say *pink* rather than *pale red*. In a similar vein, Levin and Rappaport Hovav state that 'Empirical studies show that information about manner is often omitted in descriptions of directed motion events with path verbs (Slobin, 1996b, pp. 212–213; see also Papafragou et al., 2006 on Greek). Expressions of the manner in PP and adverbial phrases are often considered heavy or unnatural (Talmy, 1973, p. 71), Levin and Rappaport Hovav (2015, p. 7). Since the conflation of the manner with the motion and the expression of the manner as a complement are available in Arabic, Saudi students acquire the habit to use the less linguistic effort of the conflation pattern in communication. Intermediate Saudi speakers would likely change this habit in writing. Thus, this observation opens the doorway

for further investigation in the future. the L1 influence continues at the advanced stage of development. The advanced Saudi speakers accept the same pattern of their L1 in acquiring manner argument structure. The outcome of the study is consistent with Stringer (2012) which supports that syntax of motion events for the L2 acquisition is associated with that of the lexicon.

The result shows a significant difference in the performance of all groups. The significant difference in the native group is a result of accepting the conflation of motion with the manner and rejecting the manner as a complement. Similarly, the Saudi groups accept the conflation of the manner with the motion and reject the manner as a complement because the event does not involve boundary-crossing as is the case in their L1. Also, this study proves that the element of crossing-boundary is an accurate test to distinguish languages within the typology, as proposed by Özçalişkan, (2013).

It may be worth noting that the limitation of this study lies in using one type of describing the boundary-crossing event in which the manner is expressed as a complement. It is better if the task included the other types of expressing boundary-crossing by using path verbs, such as *enter*, *cross*, *arrive*, *ascend*. By doing so, it would provide a solid background to test the degree of the preferred style of Saudi speakers in expressing boundary-crossing in the motion event. It hints that expressing the manner as a complement might be optional with path verbs. Therefore, it was desirable to add a choice that excludes the manner from path verbs construction to examine the performance of Saudi speakers in this form of construction. These limitations can shed light on further future research in the argument of the manner-of-motion to goal constructions.

5. Conclusion

This study investigates the influence of the L1 and proficiency in acquiring English manner-of-motion to goal argument structures. It answers the reason that Arabic encodes the manner with the motion in the main verb, in addition to expressing the manner as a complement. It supports that the L2 learners transfer the property of the L1 at an early stage of development. However, L2 learners show that they can overcome the L1 influence easily with an increase in proficiency, such as expressing 'to' with an event depicting boundary-crossing. Other constructions remain persistent in acquisition even with an increase of proficiency level, such as expressing the manner separately from the motion.

It has been acknowledged previously that the intermediate Saudi speakers acquired the habit to use the less linguistic effort of conflation patterns in communication. It is recommended for future studies to investigate if Saudi speakers maintain this habit in writing as well. Arab speakers usually use elaborate constructions in writing. Therefore, it is recommended to design a task based on describing the pictures in Arabic words. If it proves that Saudi speakers embrace this pattern of expression in writing, then it will be possible to say that the Arabic language has been changed over history, especially that the conflation form of less linguistic effort does exist in Arabic.

Acknowledgment

References

Albaqami, R. (2016). *Second Language Acquisition of Motion Constructions: A Bidirectional Study of Learners of Arabic and English*. Doctoral dissertation, University of York.

Aske, J. (1989). *Path predicates in English and Spanish: A closer look* (pp. 1–14). In Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society. https://doi.org/10.3765/bls.v15i0.1753

Baker, M. (1988). *Incorporation: a theory of grammatical function changing*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Beavers, J., Levin, B., & Tham, S. (2010). The typology of motion expression revisited. *Journal of Linguistics*, *46*, 331–377. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022226709990272

Blackledge, A., & Creese, A. (2017). Language and superdiversity: An interdisciplinary perspective. In C. Angela & B. Adrian (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of language and superdiversity*. New York, NY: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315696010-1

Bodean-Vozian, O., & Cincilei, C. (2015). Encoding path in motion events: boundary-crossing as a relevant typological criterion. *Sustainable Multilingualism*, *7*, 94–110. https://doi.org/10.7220/2335-2027.7.5

Brown, A., & Gullberg, M. (2010). Changes in the encoding of the path of motion in a first language during the

acquisition of the second language. *Cognitive Linguistics*, *21*(2), 263–286. https://doi.org/10.1515/COGL.2010.010

Cadierno, T., & Ruiz, L. (2006). Motion events in Spanish L2 acquisition. *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, *4*(1), 183–216. https://doi.org/10.1075/arcl.4.08cad

Chen, L. (2005). *The acquisition and use of motion event expression in Chinese*. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Chen, L., & Guo, J. (2009). Motion events in Chinese novels: Evidence for an equipollently-framed language. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *41*, 1749–1766. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2008.10.015

Choi, S., & Lantolf, J. (2008). Representation and Embodiment of Meaning in L2 Communication: Motion Events in the Speech and Gesture of Advanced L2 Korean and L2 English Speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *30*(2), 191–224. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263108080315

Croft, W., Barðdal, J., Hollmann, W., Sotirova, V., & Taoka, C. (2010). Revising Talmy's typological classification of complex event constructions. In C. B. Hans (Ed.), *Contrastive Studies in Construction Grammar* (pp. 201–235). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/cal.10.09cro

Donoso, A., & Bylud, E. (2015). The construal of goal-oriented motion events by Swedish speakers of L2 Spanish: Encoding of motion endpoint & manner of motion. In T. Judy & S. Perpiñán (Eds.), *The Acquisition of Spanish in Understudied Language Pairings* (pp. 233–254). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.1075/ihll.3.09don

Folli, R., & Ramchand, G. (2005). Prepositions and results in Italian and English: An analysis from event decomposition. In V. Henk, D. S. Henri¨ette & V. H. Angeliek (Eds.), *Perspectives on the aspect* (pp. 81–105). Dordrecht: Kluwer. Fong, Vivienne. 1997. https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-3232-3_5

Householder, F. W. (1971). *Linguistic speculations*. London and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kabli, H. (2013). *The acquisition of English manner-of-motion to goal and resultative change-of-state by L2 speakers with L1 Saudi Arabic and L1 German*. Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Essex.

Kabli, H. (n.d.). *The effect of the first language in learning English 'to' and 'into' with manner-of-motion to goal constructions by L1 Saudi Arabic speakers*.

Lardiere, D. (2009). Some thoughts on the contrastive analysis of features in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research*, *25*(2), 173–227. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658308100283

Levin, B. (1993). *English Verb Classes and Alternations: A Preliminary Investigation*. The University of Chicago: Chicago.

Levin, B., & Rappaport, H. M. (2015). Lexicalization Patterns. In R. Truswell (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Event Structure*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

McCawley, J. D. (1978). Conversational implication and the lexicon. In P. Cole (Ed.), *Syntax and semantics: Pragmatics* (vol. 9, pp. 245–259). New York: Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004368873_009

Özçalişkan, S. (2013). Ways of crossing a spatial boundary in typologically distinct languages. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *36*(2), 485–508. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716413000325

Papafragou, A., Massey, C., & Glemeitman, L. (2002). Shake, rattle, 'n' roll: The representation of motion in language and cognition. *Cognition*, *84*, 189–219. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0010-0277(02)00046-X

Papafragou, A., Massey, C., & Gleitman, L. (2006). When English Proposes What Greek Presupposes: The Cross-linguistic Encoding of Motion Events. *Cognition*, *98*, B75–B87. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2005.05.005

Pavlenko, A., & Volynsky, M. (2015). Motion encoding in Russian and English: Moving beyond Talmy's typology. *The Modern Language Journal*, *99*(S1), 32–48. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12177

Römer, U., O'Donnell, M. B., & Ellis, N. C. (2014). Second language learner knowledge of verb-argument constructions: Effects of language transfer & typology. *The Modern Language Journal*, *98*(4). https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12149

Rothman, J., & Slabakova, R. (2018). The generative approach to SLA and its place in modern second language studies. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *40*(2), 417–442. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263117000134

Slobin, D. I. (1996a). From 'thought and laugh' to 'thinking for speaking.' In J. J. Gumperz & S. C. Levinson (Eds.), *Rethinking linguistic relatively* (pp. 70–96). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Slobin, D. I. (1996b). Two ways to travel: Verbs of motion in English and Spanish. In *Grammatical constructions: Their form and meaning* (pp. 195–217).

Slobin, D. I. (1997). Mind, code, and text. In J. Bybee, J. Haiman & S. A. Thompson (Eds.), *Essays on language function and language type: Dedicated to T. Givón* (pp. 437–467). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/z.82.24slo

Slobin, D. I. (2004). The many ways to search for a frog: linguistic typology and the expression of motion events. In S. Stro¨mqvist & L. Verhoeven (Eds.), *Relating Events in Narrative: Typological and Contextual Perspectives* (pp. 219–257). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ.

Slobin, D. I. (2006). What makes manner of motion salient? Exploration in linguistic typology, discourse, and cognition. In M. Hickman & S. Robert (Eds.), *Space in languages: linguistic systems and cognitive categories* (pp. 59–81). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/tsl.66.05slo

Slobin, D. I., & Hoiting, N. (1994). *Reference to movement in spoken and signed languages: typological considerations* (vol. 20, pp. 487–505). In Proceedings of the Berkeley Linguistics Society. https://doi.org/10.3765/bls.v20i1.1466

Son, M. (2007). Directionality and resultativity: the cross-linguistic correlation revisited. *Nordlyd: Thomas Working Papers in Linguistics*, *34*(2), 126–164. https://doi.org/10.7557/12.116

Stringer, D. (2012). Spatial feature assembly in first and second language acquisition. *Spatial Cognition & Computation*, *12*(4), 252–274. https://doi.org/10.1080/13875868.2011.568271

Talmy, L. (1973). *The Basis for a Crosslinguistic Typology of Motion/Location: Part II* (pp. 23–83). Working Papers on Language Universals 11, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

Talmy, L. (1985). Lexicalization patterns: semantic structure in lexical forms. In T. Shopen (Ed.), *Language typology and syntactic decomposition* (pp. 57–149). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Talmy, L. (2000). *Towards a Cognitive Semantics II: Typology and Process in Concept Structuring*. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA. https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/6848.001.0001

Vergaro, C., & Iacobini, C. (2014). The role of inference in motion event encoding/decoding: a cross-linguistic inquiry into English & Italian. *Lingue E Linguaggio*, *2*, 211–240.

Wienold, G. (1995). Lexical and Conceptual Stuctures in Expressions for Movement and Space: With Reference to Japanese, Korean, Thai, and Indonesian as Compared to English and German. In U. Egli, P. E. Pause, C. Schwarze, A. Von Stechow & G. Wienold (Eds.), *Lexical Knowledge in the Organization of Language* (pp. 301–340). John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia. https://doi.org/10.1075/cilt.114.14wie

Notes

Note 1. In fact, Talmy (1985) proposes three types of conflations. However, the third type is not included in the study as it differs from the current study.

Note 2. Some English native speakers report that this construction is available in English, but it is rarely used. Others believe that adding a prior comma manner will make it a proper English construction.