The Polysemy of the verbs *pegar*, *apegar* and *empegar* in Catalan: A synchronic manifestation of semantic change[*]

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Abstract

In this paper we study the polysemy that the verbs *pegar* ('hit/stick'), *apegar* ('stick') and *empegar* ('stick') possess today in the Catalan language. First of all, we perform a thorough description of the meanings that each of these verbs have acquired not only in the standard but also in the colloquial language. Each of the meanings has been differentiated from the others by analysing the most prominent dictionaries currently available and a corpus of written texts. Additionally, a number of surveys on the spoken language have also been taken into account. Our research has shown that in the different Catalan dialects they do not always have the same meanings or the same verb forms. To be able to interpret how this polysemy has come about, we have taken cognitive linguistics as our theoretical framework. We have been able to show that the notion of image schema of path, combined with prototypicality effects and with the Invited Inference Theory of Semantic Change, in which the mechanism of metonymy plays a fundamental role, can provide a satisfactory explanation for the semasiological complexity of the verbs under study.

Keywords: semantic change; polysemy; cognitive linguistics; metonymy; linguistic variation; Catalan.

Resum. *La polisèmia dels verbs* pegar, apegar *i* empegar *en català: una manifestació sincrònica del canvi semàntic*

En aquest article estudiem la polisèmia que tenen els verbs *pegar*, *apegar* i *empegar* en el català actual. Primer de tot, fem una descripció completa dels significats que han adquirit aquests verbs no tan sols en la llengua estàndard, sinó també en la col·loquial. Per distingir-ne els significats hem analitzat els diccionaris actuals més rellevants i un corpus de textos escrits. A més, també hem tingut en compte unes quantes mostres de la llengua oral. La nostra recerca ha posat de manifest que no hi ha els mateixos significats ni les mateixes formes en tots els dialectes. Per poder entendre com s'ha produït aquesta polisèmia, hem partit del marc teòric de la lingüística cognitiva. Hem pogut mostrar que, quan es combina la noció d'esquema d'imatge del camí amb els efectes de prototipicitat i amb la Teoria del Canvi Semàntic per Inferència Convidada, en què juga un paper

fonamental la metonímia, podem obtenir una explicació satisfactòria de la complexitat semasiològica dels verbs estudiats.

Paraules clau: canvi semàntic; polisèmia; lingüística cognitiva; metonímia; variació lingüística; català.

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1. Introduction

The study of semantic change and polysemy in Catalan has advanced a great deal in recent years thanks to the research carried out from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. The studies by Martines (2000a, 2000b, 2013) and Montserrat (2007), and more recently the monographic study published in the journal *Caplletra* 56 (Martines 2014), have become a reference in the field. But there are still many topics to be addressed. One of these topics is the study of one of the verbs with the most dynamism in Catalan, the verb *pegar*. We still do not have an in-depth approach that reveals all of the semasiological variety of this verb and its variants *apegar* and *empegar*. In fact all we have available are the contributions made by Catalan reference dictionaries, especially the DCVB and the DECLC.

The study presented here is part of a more extensive research project on these verbs that we are currently working on. The aim of this study is not only to analyse the polysemy they display today but also to date and record the semantic evolution that they have undergone throughout the history of the Catalan language. Due to space restrictions, in this paper we will focus on just the synchronic perspective, although this will in no way prevent us from putting forward an explanation, from the point of view of cognitive linguistics, as to how the diversity of meanings noted in the text have developed.

The different meanings will be differentiated using information taken from the following contemporary reference dictionaries: *Diccionari de la llengua catalana* (DIEC), *Gran diccionari de la llengua catalana* (GDLC), *Diccionari Normatiu Valencià* (DNV), *Diccionari Descriptiu de la Llengua Catalana* (DDLC), *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear* (DCVB) and *Diccionari Etimològic i Complementari de la Llengua Catalana* (DECLC). Furthermore, we also have the documentary material provided by the *Corpus Textual Informatitzat de la Llengua Catalana* (CTILC). The data will be completed using information about the spoken language.[1]

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1. The basic information from the CTILC about the verbs studied here is already summarised in the corresponding entry of the DDLC. Nevertheless, we have also carried out a more detailed search based on the extraction of the CTILC between the years 1901 and 1953. Accordingly, we wish to thank Joan Soler for his collaboration in exporting the data from the CTILC. Regarding the spoken language, the data come from 20 surveys carried out in different dialectal areas of the Catalan-

2. The polysemy of *pegar*, *apegar* and *empegar* today

Based on the sources we have used as a reference, in this section we show the meanings that the verbs under analysis have developed in the Catalan in use today. These meanings cover all the variation that can exist in Catalan. That is to say, there are meanings that are common in the formal written language, but we can also find values that are typical of the informal colloquial language. In some cases a meaning appearing in a dictionary may even have become obsolete in the spoken language. Likewise, the geographical extension of a particular meaning may also be different. We will attempt to take account of all these incidences in the paper.

2.1. The verb pegar

The meanings will be ordered such that the first senses will be those more commonly found in the standard language, according to information from the normative dictionary of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans (DIEC). This will be followed by the meanings that, despite being found on a widespread basis in Catalan, are not typical of the standard language or do not appear in the DIEC. The last to be dealt with will be the meanings that can be considered as being of a dialectical nature. For the sake of convenience, we have assigned a letter to each meaning.[2]

With regard to the usual senses in the standard language, the following meanings can be distinguished:

Meaning A: 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit'. As reflected in all the lexicographical sources that were studied as well as in the surveys, this is the most prototypical meaning in modern-day Catalan and is in generalised usage throughout the whole geographical area.[3]

(1) Va   pegar (una punyada) al   germà.
AUX.PAST.3SG hit.INF (a   punch)   to the brother
'He punched his brother'

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speaking domain (Balearic, Central and North-western Catalan and Valencian). We are fully aware that the limited number of surveys precludes the possibility of considering this study of the spoken language as being a comprehensive representation of the Catalan dialects. We do believe, however, that as complementary material it is useful as a way of orienting us towards the dialectal tendencies of the verbs under study. Indeed, many of these tendencies already appear in the dictionaries analysed or can be deduced from the examples in the CTILC. I also wish to express my gratitude to those who so willingly collaborated in this study, with special thanks to Robert Albiac for having coordinated 10 surveys in the geographical area in which North-western Catalan is used.

2. It should be noted that, when it comes to classifying which meanings appear in each of the reference sources, the dictionaries do not display a unified list of the different senses. In some cases we have therefore had to interpret the semantic equivalences, often from the examples given.

3. In the case of *pegar* + NP (noun phrase, with a meaning denoting impact) (1), Catalan alternates between *pegar* and *donar*, although there is usually a preference for the verb *pegar* in the Valencian-speaking area.

Meaning B: 'trip, bump into an obstacle'. This meaning is also generalised throughout Catalan as a whole. All the dictionaries note this sense except for the DECLC.

(2)   Es   va   pegar a/contra   la   cadira.
      Himself.REFL AUX.PAST.3SG hit.INF on/against the chair
      'He stumbled over the chair'

Meaning C: 'occur unexpectedly (a thought, a passion, an illness, a bad smell)'. This meaning is given in the DIEC, GCLC, DCVB and DDLC dictionaries, while it is not included in the DNV and the DECLC. The DCVB records it as used in texts written in Majorcan and Valencian. The results of our surveys endorse this usage and expand it to the area of Tortosa and the Western Strip in Aragon, although we have observed a loss of dynamism in the rest of the Catalan dialects.

(3)   Li   va   pegar   el   rampell d'anar-se'n.
      Him.DAT AUX.PAST.3SG hit/stick.INF the impulse of anar.INF-se.CL.REFL+ne.
                                                                        CL.GEN

      'He suddenly decided to leave'

Meaning D: 'do, give'. In this sense, it is accompanied by a NP that indicates the action expressed by the predicate. It appears in all the lexicographical sources consulted, but it should be noted that it occurs with far greater frequency in Valencian than in the rest of the Catalan dialectal variants.[4]

(4)   Va   pegar un bot.
      AUX.PAST.3SG hit.INF a   leap
      'He jumped'

Meaning E: 'persist obstinately in, suddenly take to'. This meaning appears in all the dictionaries that were consulted. It is used in all the Catalan dialects, but more frequently in the Balearic, North-western and Valencian varieties.

(5)   Ara   li   pega   per menjar/per això/per aquí.
      Now him.DAT hits/sticks for eat.INF/for this/for here
      'He has suddenly taken to eating/doing this/behaving in this way'

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4.   The other Catalan dialects often prefer to use *fer* or *donar*. A good example of this variation can be found in the *Atles Lingüístic del Domini Català* in its entry dealing with the concept of *besar* ('kiss'): <http://aldc.espais.iec.cat/files/2013/06/Mapa-3.pdf>. Owing to space restrictions, in this paper we cannot conduct an in-depth study of this kind of constructions, which also open up the way to the rich phraseology of the verb *pegar* – especially rich in Valencian – although not exclusive to it: *pegar foc* ('set fire to'), *pegar voltes* ('think over'), *pegar cabotades* ('nod off'), etc. They would also be part of phraseological structures such as: *pegar de cap* ('fall'), *pegar en pedra* ('run into hard opposition'), etc.

Meaning F: 'stick with an adhesive material'. This meaning appears in the DIEC, although as a secondary form that refers the user to *apegar*. It is also included in the DCVB and in the DDLC, as well as in the DECLC, but only in the historical records or quotations. It does not appear in the GDLC or in the DNV. It is usually infrequent in the spoken language and is also sporadic in the written language.

(6) ?Hem   pegat   els cartells a la paret.
     Have.1PL stuck.PP the posters on the wall
     'We have stuck the posters on the wall'

The other meanings that we outline below do not appear in the normative dictionary (DIEC). Hence, with regard to the standard language, they can be or indeed are considered to be senses that are either dialectal or typical of the colloquial language. The first of these meanings that we will deal with are those found on a general basis throughout the language:

Meaning G: 'fight, brawl'. Despite being a generalised sense present throughout the whole of the Catalan language, it is only explicitly mentioned in the DNV and in the DDLC.

(7) El teu germà i   un foraster s'han   pegat.
     Your brother and a   stranger themselves.REFL have.3PL hit.PP
     'Your brother has had a fight with a stranger'

Meaning H: 'Suit, fit, match'. This meaning is only included in the DDLC and the DCVB. The surveys conducted on the spoken usage show that this meaning is widely extended throughout all the Catalan dialects.

(8) No (li/hi)   pega   gens el quadre que has   posat al
     No (it.DAT/there.LOC) sticks/hits at all the picture that have.2SG put.PP in
     menjador.
     the dining room
     'The picture you put up in the dining room doesn't go with it at all'

Meaning I: 'cheat'.[5] Although this meaning does not appear in the DIEC, GDLC or DECLC, it is included in the DNV, DDLC and DCVB and is used throughout the whole geographical area, but only in colloquial contexts.

(9) Ell es   pensa que la dona li la/la hi
     He himself.CL thinks that the wife him.DAT+it.AC.FEM/it.AC.FEM+him.DAT
     pega.
     hits
     'He thinks his wife is cheating on him'

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5. In this sense, the verb is accompanied by the lexicalised feminine accusative pronoun *la*.

Meaning J: 'have an accident'.[6] This sense does not appear in any of the lexicographical sources that we have used as a reference but, as occurred with the previous meaning, it is in colloquial usage in all the Catalan dialects.

(10) Ens   la   vam   pegar quan vam   entrar
      Ourselves.REFL it.AC.FEM AUX.PAST.1PL hit.INF when AUX.PAST.1PL enter.INF
      a   l'autovia.
      on the dual carriageway
      'We had an accident as we were going onto the dual carriageway'

The following meanings are used today in a smaller geographical area:[7]

Meaning K: 'head towards, end up'. This meaning is not included in the DIEC or the GDLC, but does appear in the others. It is common in spontaneous uses in Majorcan and Valencian, while a certain recession is observed in the North-western area.[8]

(11) Ahir   va   pegar   cap a   València.
      Yesterday AUX.PAST.3SG stick.INF towards Valencia
      'He went to Valencia yesterday'

Meaning L: 'be oriented towards a place'. Although the dictionaries that were consulted do not explicitly mention this meaning of the verb *pegar*, the surveys that we conducted and some of the examples provided by the DDLC and the DECLC show its existence in colloquial Majorcan, the North-western and Valencian speech.

(12) La   finestra de la casa pegava   al   riu.
      The window of the house stick.PAST.3SG to the river
      'The window of the house looked out onto the river'

Meaning M: 'be close to a place without actual contact'. This meaning is included in the DDLC and the DECLC, but does not appear in the other dictionaries. The DECLC provides spoken sources mainly from the Balearic dialect but also from the Ribagorçan and Valencian varieties. It should be noted, however, that

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6.   As in the previous case, it contains the lexicalised feminine accusative pronoun *la*.
7.   The DCVB includes the absolute use of the verb *pegar*, which it defines as 'assault, attack; set upon somebody (especially one animal against another or against something)'. We have considered this syntactic usage as being included within meaning A.
8.   Massip (1991: glossary) also noted this usage in the area around Tortosa. On the other hand, we have observed that when asking about the place, in the area of Majorca it is accompanied by a lexicalised object pronoun (dative or accusative): *A on li/la pegues avui?* ('Where are you going today?'). The lexicalisation of the pronoun is not a recent phenomenon, as the historical dictionary published by Aguiló (1915: s.v. *pegar*) already included the form with the accusative. Moreover, it should be noted that the element that acts as the subject of the sentence does not necessarily have to be a person, but can also be an inanimate element that involves a trajectory or course, such as a path, a road, a shortcut, etc.

the examples given are often a continuation of meaning L ('be oriented towards a place'). Our surveys record this usage in the Ribagorça area, but not in the Balearic or Valencian dialects.

(13) Aquest poble pega   amb la   capital.
     This   town sticks with the capital
     'This town lies next to the capital'

Meaning N: 'come into contact (the sun, the wind, water) with certain intensity'. This meaning appears in the DNV and the DDLC but not in any of the others. Although its use is declining in the North-western variant, it is common in Majorcan and Valencian.[9]

(14) En aquella part li/hi   pega   el sol.
     In that   part it.DAT/there.LOC sticks/hits the sun
     'It's quite sunny in that part'

Meaning O: 'dedicate oneself to, carry out an activity with certain intensity'.[10] It is recorded in the DNV, DDLC, DCVB and DECLC, but does not appear in the DIEC or in the GDLC. This meaning is used by Valencian and Balearic authors, as indicated in the DCVB and the DDLC, and is not considered unusual in the North-western dialect.

(15) Li   pega   a la beguda / a córrer / (a escriure) en francés.
     Him.DAT sticks/hits to the drink / to run.INF / (to write.INF) in French
     'He drinks a lot / He often goes running / He usually writes in French'

Meaning P: 'cause a certain feeling, especially in terms of mood'. This meaning is given in the DNV and the DDLC, but the other dictionaries do not mention it. It is used in Valencian and appears in texts written in Balearic Catalan.[11]

(16) Les teues paraules li   van   pegar   molt malament.
     Your   words   him.DAT AUX.PAST.3PL stick/hit.INF very badly
     'He didn't like what you said at all'

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9. The fact that this meaning implies intensity is not always obvious. Indeed, with a subject like *the sun*, among Valencian speakers the verb *pegar* needs an intensifying complement for it to take on this intensifying meaning, i.e. 'heat', otherwise it merely expresses contact, 'touch'.
10. With this meaning, *pegar*, which presents the lexicalised dative clitic, shares many similarities with meaning D, that is, with the light verbs. This is due to the fact that it is the presence of certain sentential constituents that determines its final meaning: *Aquell jugador li pega bé* 'that player plays well'; *Quan és al treball, li pega fort* 'when he is at work, he works hard'.
11. The CTILC offers a couple of examples by Pere Capellà (*L'amo de Son Magraner*, Palma de Majorca, 1952).

Meaning Q: 'suddenly start'. This case is included in the DNV, DCVB and DECLC, but has no entry in the DIEC, GDLC and DDLC. The results of the surveys show that usage today is restricted to the Valencian area, although the DCVB and CTILC also record it in the writings of several authors from the Roussillon and Catalan regions dating back to the early 20th century.

(17) Quan va   veure el perill, va   pegar   a
     When AUX.PAST.3SG see.INF the danger, AUX.PAST.3SG stick/hit.INF to
     córrer.
     run.INF
     'When he saw the danger, he ran off'

Meaning R: 'be too much'. Only the DECLC includes this meaning. As indicated by this lexicographical source and confirmed by our surveys, this meaning is often used in the districts around Tortosa and in Valencian.[12]

(18) L'arròs pega   en dolç.
     The rice sticks/hits in sweet
     'The rice hasn't got enough salt in it'

Meaning S: 'insist on something or act insistently against someone'.[13] This meaning does not appear among the senses or the examples in the dictionaries consulted, except for the DCVB and the DDLC, which both contain examples from the late 19th century. The oral surveys that we carried out show that they are still in use in Valencian and, albeit residually, in the southern part of the North-western region.

(19) L'ha   pegada   en ell/en comprar-se   un cotxe.
     It.AC.FEM has stuck/hit.PP.FEM on him/on buy.INF+himself.REFL a car
     'He acts insistently against him/insists on buying himself a car'

Meaning T: 'reach a certain place, up to a certain point (which is seen as being excessive)'. This sense is only recorded in the DCVB. It is used in Majorca, as is also shown by our survey, but it has not been recorded in the other territories in which the language is used.

(20) L'herba   era   mala de segar   perquè li   pegava
     The grass be.PAST.3SG bad of mow.INF because him.DAT stick/hit.PAST.3SG
     pel   pit.
     by the chest
     'The grass was hard to mow because it was too long'

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12. In the southernmost parts of the Valencian region, there is also a syntactic variant constructed with the preposition *per* instead of *en*. Moreover, in Valencian a property assigned to the subject of the sentence may also have a locative meaning: *La casa d'ella pega* (*per*) *lluny* 'Her house is too far away'.

13. In this case, the feminine clitic pronoun *la* is included in the verb.

Meaning U: 'come across unexpectedly'. This case does not appear in any of the dictionaries consulted. In the spoken language, it appears colloquially in Valencian.

(21) Si pegues en un professor dur,   no   aprovaràs.
     If   hit.2SG on a   teacher   hard, not pass.FUT.2SG
     'If you find yourself with a demanding teacher, you won't pass'

Meaning V: 'put together, be one thing touching another'. It does not appear with this meaning in the information about the contemporary language offered by the following publications: DIEC, GDLC, DNV and DDLC, yet it does appear in old examples in the DCVB and the DECLC. It does not appear to be used in the spoken language either, except for the case with the participle *pegat* (22b), which we have found in the North-western area, especially in the part under Aragonese administration.

(22) a. ?Pega   aquella cadira a/contra   la   paret.
          Stick.IMP that   chair   to/against the wall
           'Put that chair up against the wall'

     b. ?Aquest poble està pegat   a   la   capital.
          This   town is   stuck.PP to the capital
          'This town is right next to the capital'

Meaning W: 'stick'. This sense is included in the DDLC, but is not recorded in the DIEC, the GDLC or the DNV. The DCVB and the DECLC, on the other hand, only offer historical examples. It is usually infrequent in the spoken language and is found only sporadically in the written language.

(23) ?El peix es   pega a la paella.
     The fish itself.CL sticks to the frying pan
     'The fish is sticking to the frying pan'

Meaning X: 'pass on, transmit (an illness, a custom, an obsession, a way of speaking)'. This case does not appear in any of the following sources: GDLC, DNV, DIEC, DECLC. In contrast, it is included in the DCVB and in the DDLC, but in quotations from before 1900.

(24) ?Li   vam   pegar   la grip.
     Him.DAT AUX.PAST.1PL stick.INF the flu
     'We passed the flu onto him'

2.2. The verbs *apegar* and *empegar*

The variant forms with prefixes, *apegar* and *empegar*, have not developed as many senses as *pegar* in the language used today and are not so generalised, geographi-

cally speaking. The form *apegar*, on the one hand, shares the following meanings with *pegar*:

Meaning F: 'stick with an adhesive material'. This sense is recorded in the DIEC, GCLC, DNV, DDLC and DCVB and only appears in the DECLC in the quotations (examples from before the year 1900). It is common in the Valencian and North-western dialectal areas, but is rarely found in the rest of the Catalan dialects.[14]

(25) Hem   apegat els cartells a   la paret.
     Have.1PL stuck.PP the posters on the wall
     'We have stuck the posters on the wall'

Meaning W: 'stick'. It appears in the DDLC and in the DCVB. The DECLC only records it in historical quotations. This sense is not explicitly mentioned in the DIEC, GDLC or DNV. In the spoken language, *apegar* can be found in the Valencian and North-western dialectal areas.

(26) El peix s'apega   a la paella.
     The fish itself.CL sticks to the frying pan
     'The fish is sticking to the frying pan'

Meaning X: 'pass on, transmit (an illness, a custom, an obsession, a way of speaking)'. This meaning appears in the DIEC, GDLC, DNV, DCVB and DDLC, and in some old examples quoted in the DECLC. In the spoken language it is used in the Valencian and North-western dialectal areas.

(27) Li   vam   apegar la grip.
     Him.DAT AUX.PAST.1PL stick.INF the flu
     'We passed the flu onto him'

Meaning V: 'put together, be one thing touching another'. This meaning does not appear in any of the dictionaries consulted, but is frequently heard in colloquial Valencian and North-western speech.

(28) a. Apega   aquella cadira a/contra   la paret.
        Stick.IMP that   chair to/against the wall
        'Put that chair up against the wall'

     b. Aquest poble està apegat   a la capital.
        This   town is   stuck.PP to the capital
        'This town is right next to the capital'

Conversely, *apegar* has taken on other meanings that are not shared by *pegar:*

14. This is what was found in the surveys we conducted. See also Veny (2008: 12).

Meaning Y: 'latch onto somebody, get in touch with somebody to gain some kind of benefit from them'. This meaning is included in the DDLC and in the DCVB but does not appear in the others. In the region of Valencia and in the North-western area it is typically used in the colloquial spoken language.

(29) Com que vol　progressar,　　　s'apega a　l'alcalde.
　　　As　　　wants progress.INF, himself.CL sticks　to　the mayor
　　　'As he wants to go up in the world, he latches onto the mayor'

Meaning Z: 'link, have a strong inclination'. It is included in the DDLC and in the DCVB, but not in the others. It is used colloquially in the Valencian region and in the North-western area.

(30) Viu　molt　apegat　a　sa　mare.
　　　Lives very　stuck.PP　to　his　mother
　　　'He has a very close relationship with his mother'

On the other hand, all the dictionaries show the same sense of *empegar*, which we represent as 'Meaning Ɵ': 'smear with pitch or with some other adhesive material'.

(31) Va　　　　　empegar　　　　　i　cosir　la bóta de vi.
　　　AUX.PAST.3SG smear with pitch.INF and sew.INF the cask of wine
　　　'He smeared with pitch and sewed the wineskin'

Nevertheless, except for the DIEC, where meaning F ('stick with an adhesive material') appears as a secondary form, and the DDLC, which also includes meanings W ('stick') and X ('pass on an illness, a custom, an obsession, a way of speaking)', the other dictionaries that were consulted do not offer any more meanings. Our surveys place the spoken use of these senses of the verb *empegar* in an area restricted to the North-western region, especially in the district of the Segrià, where meaning V ('put together, be one thing touching another') is also known. In the rest of the Catalan dialects and in the written language, it is usually infrequent.[15] It should be noted that we have no written or spoken examples of usage of *empegar* with meanings Y and Z.

3. Interpretation of the polysemy

In the previous section we have seen how the verb *pegar* displays a notable degree of polysemy in current language usage, although its geographical and diaphasic

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15. On referring to the peculiarity of the speech used in Lleida, Masip *et al.* (2000) cite meanings W and X. In the period under study, the CTILC only included one written example of *empegar* with meaning W, in this case used by the Lleida-born writer Antoni Sabater Mur (*La dansa de les fulles,* 1937).

distribution is not always uniform. Meanings A, B, C, D and E are generalised throughout the whole Catalan language and are typical of the standard language. Meanings G, H, I and J, although generalised, are usually considered colloquial solutions. Meanings K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T and U, depending on the individual case, are rather limited in their dialectal scope (Balearic, North-western, Valencian) and are typically found in colloquial language. Meanings F, V, W and X have become obsolete in language usage today. In fact these meanings are covered in the Valencian and North-western areas by the verb *apegar*, which also expands the meaning to cases Y and Z. Finally, *empegar*, besides its standard meaning Ɵ, has developed, dialectally, a semantic extension towards meanings F, V, W and X.

Given the heterogeneity of meanings in the language used today, the question arises as to how it can be explained. To do so, we will base our explanation on cognitive linguistics and more particularly on its studies on semantic change, which consider polysemy in synchrony as being but a manifestation of semantic changes in diachrony. According to cognitive linguistics,[16] language reflects our vital experiences and allows us to conceptualise the world. Meaning therefore plays a fundamental role and cannot be separated from our experience, which leads to the assumption that semantics must be linked to pragmatics (Traugott 2012). Hence, linguistic expressions and grammatical constructions are a formal manifestation of the way in which we conceptualise the world. In this conceptualisation of the world, and more particularly in the explanation of semantic change, prototypicality effects become especially significant (Geeraerts 1997: § 1.3), as do metonymic and metaphorical mechanisms (Barcelona 2011; Paradis 2011) and their relationship with the Invited Inference Theory of Semantic Change (Traugott and Dasher 2002), and the concept of image schema (Soares da Silva 2003; Oakely 2007 and Peña Cervel 2012, as well as the works included within them).

In the following we will see how these three theories may have interacted to explain the semantic change of the verb *pegar* and of its formal variants *apegar* and *empegar*.

3.1. Early manifestations of semantic change

First, let us recall that the Latin etymon of *pegar* is PĪCĀRE 'smear, stick with pitch', derived from the noun PIX, PICIS 'pitch' (Coromines 1983-1991).[17] As claimed by

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16. For an introduction to cognitive linguistics and the theories that we draw on in this paper, the reader is invited to see the handbooks by Ungerer and Schmid (1996), Cuenca and Hilferty (1999), Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007) and Ibarretxe and Valenzuela (2012).

17. Historically it is related to other Latin cognates: *pegar* (Spanish), *pegar* (Portuguese and Galician), *pegar* (Occitanian), *péguer* (French), *picàre* (Sardinian) and *(ap)piccare* (Italian). We have not found it recorded in Romanian, at least in the modern-day language. With regard to Italian, there is no agreement among philologists when it comes to determining the etymology of the cognates *appiccare* and *piccare*, but the meanings acquired throughout the history of the Italian language (cf. Battaglia 1961-2002: s.v. *piccare*) show that there must be a relationship with the etymon PĪCĀRE, despite the fact that at some time or another a process of blending (Pascual 2012) might have taken place with a hypothetical etymon *PĪCCĀRE 'hit with a pick'. Likewise, it should be noted that the

Coromines (1983-1991) and we ourselves have found in our research, in Catalan texts from the 13th and 14th centuries the verb *pegar* had already taken on a more generic sense. Indeed, it no longer designates the specific action of smearing or sticking with pitch, but instead expands the sense to 'stick with any material' (meaning F) and to 'stick', without the need to state what adhesive material is used (meaning W). Note that this semantic change is governed by a metonymic process, since the attention is focused on the final effect (the sticking) and not on the cause (the action of smearing or sticking with pitch): smear with pitch > stick with pitch > stick.

With these senses, the verb *pegar* can be characterised as an action verb, and as such it should be conceptualised as a motion verb (Palancar 1999). At this point, then, it is important to refer to the theoretical concept of image schema, and more particularly to a schema with a spatial basis. In this case, the representation suggests a displacement that starts out from a point (source) until it reaches a destination (goal). This trajectory or displacement involves the image schema of path and a directionality (see Figure 1). In the case we are dealing with here, the element that moves is focused on as a *trajector* (or *figure*) in relation to the element that acts as a *landmark* or point of reference (*ground*) for the movement initiated by the trajector.

But it is important to note something that will become essential to be able to interpret the semantic change. Thanks to the prototypical meaning of *pegar*, the element that acts as a trajector, that is to say the entity that we wish to paste, is conceptualised as being in contact with the element that acts as a landmark, i.e. the part that the projector will be stuck to. Therefore, the resulting visual representation is that of contact (Figure 2).[18]

Contact involves spatial proximity and if two entities are so close to each other, they can exert a mutual influence and display a link or connection between them.
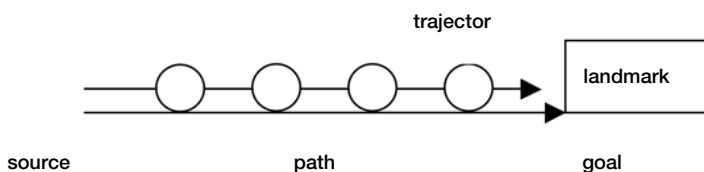

Figure 1. Image schema of path.

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French form *péguer* is not used in the language today, but does appear in mediaeval French (DMF). It is not our intention to go into Latin cognates in depth in this paper, since that would fall beyond the scope of this study and needs to be dealt with separately.

18. Some scholars, such as Peña Cervel (2012), also refer to contact as another experiential pattern that gives rise to an image schema, although they consider it to be a subsidiary of the near-far image schema and, at the same time, dependent on the basic image schema of path.
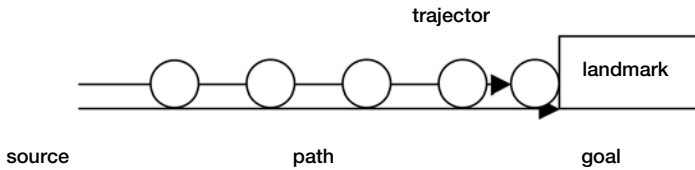
Figure 2. Image schema of contact.

If one of them is stronger than the other, it can even control or exert power over the other one (Peña Cervel 2012: 83).

Hence, we can say that contact, together with motion, are two prototypical characteristics of the verb *pegar* in this early stage of the Catalan language. Indeed, these prototypical characteristics were the starting point from which the meaning of 'stick' must have soon begun to expand, a process that we can represent as a radial semantic network (Figure 3). In this network there are some meanings that are more central and give rise to other derived senses, grouped in clusters, which at the same time and due to family resemblance can overlap with or be linked to other senses that have their origin in another basic or derived meaning.[19]

3.2. Consolidation of new basic meanings

As we understand it, everything seems to point to the fact that three meanings have derived from the sense of 'stick' and have become essential to be able to interpret the semasiological complexity of the verbs under study: meaning X, 'pass on', meaning V, 'put together, be one thing touching another', and meaning A, 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit'.[20]

The creation of meaning X, 'pass on', can be explained easily by means of a metonymic association, derived from the subjectification of the original sense. With *pegar*, initially material entities could come into contact. Now the speaker raises the level of abstraction of the meaning of the verb and establishes a link between non-material elements (an illness, a habit, a way of speaking) and material elements (people), who receive or experience that relationship. Thus, *pegar* becomes a more expressive alternative with which to designate contagions: contact gives rise to contagion.

When two entities are in contact, we can conceptualise them as a new unit resulting from an agglutination or we can infer that one is placed beside the other, such as in meaning V, 'put together, be one thing touching another'. In this case, the trajectory in the image schema of path means that the element we focus our

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19. For the sake of simplicity, Figure 3 only shows the meanings given in the previous sections, and no explicit mention is made of the verbs involved. The definition of these verbs can easily be established by consulting the synthesis at the beginning of section 3.
20. In fact these are the meanings that are usually exemplified in historical dictionaries such as the DECLC and the DCVB.
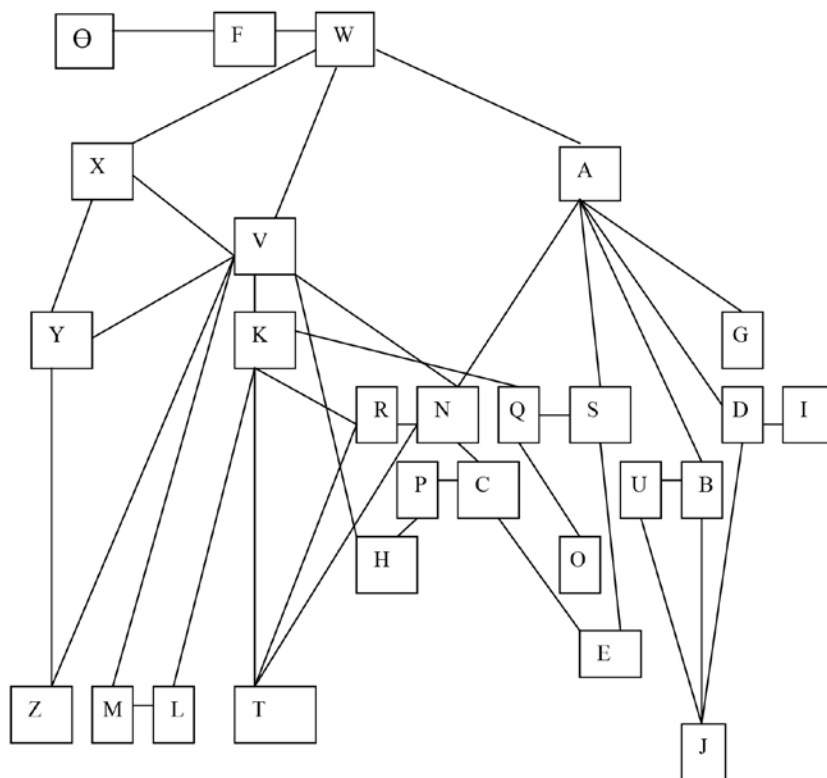
Figure 3. Radial semantic network.

A: 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit'.

B: 'trip, bump into an obstacle'.

C: 'occur unexpectedly (a thought, a passion, an illness, a bad smell)'.

D: 'do, give'.

E: 'persist obstinately in, suddenly take to'.

F: 'stick with an adhesive material'.

G: 'fight, brawl'.

H: 'suit, fit, match'.

I: 'cheat'.

J: 'have an accident'.

K: 'head towards, end up'.

L: 'be oriented towards a place'.

M: 'be close to a place without actual contact'.

N: 'come into contact (the sun, the wind, water) with a certain intensity'.

O: 'dedicate oneself to, carry out an activity with certain intensity'.

P: 'cause a certain feeling, especially in terms of mood'.

Q: 'suddenly start'.

R: 'be too much'.

S: 'insist on something or against someone'.

T: 'reach a certain place, up to a certain point (which is seen as being excessive)'.

U: 'come across unexpectedly'.

V: 'put together, be one thing touching another'.

W: 'stick'.

X: 'pass on, transmit (an illness, a custom, a mania, a way of speaking)'.

Y: 'latch onto somebody, get in touch with somebody to gain some kind of benefit from them'.

Z: 'link, have a strong inclination'.

Ө: 'smear with pitch or with some other adhesive material'.

attention on, the trajector, is seen as being next to the landmark and not at the same point as the landmark, which was the case with meanings F, W and X. The verb *pegar* therefore takes on a new sense based on the fact that two elements in contact are two elements that are close to each other. This association is also the one that guides meaning M ('be close to a place without actual contact'), although in this case the idea of motion is of a metaphorical nature, it is imaginary, since it expresses a static situation.[21]

Meaning A, 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit', is the third of the basic derived meanings and the one that will eventually become the most prototypical representative in the language today. In this case we also reach this new meaning on the basis of the idea of the image schema of path that results in contact. But the difference with respect to the previous cases is that this contact is perceived as an aggression. In our cultural setting, and more so in a society like that of mediaeval times, the act of two people approaching each other until coming into contact can be taken to mean two things: either a high degree of intimacy,[22] or completely the opposite, an attack on one's privacy. In Catalan, the speaker, through a metonymic association, decides on this second option, that is to say, contact implies an aggression. But other associations of a metaphorical and metonymic nature were also made: the person with more power attacks, having power is having force, and a person who has force acts with intensity. That must be how meaning A 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit' came into being. After becoming conventionalised, this meaning could later involve not only persons but also things.

The semasiological expansion of a verb can result in the appearance of other verbs or formal variations as a consequence of an onomasiological or synonymic change. The reasons underlying this may be that one of the senses developed is no longer perceived as being so prototypical or simply that some interest has arisen to reduce the degree of polysemy with the aim of favouring communication (Grondelaers, Speelman and Geeraerts 2007). This process would explain how the verb *pegar* came to alternate as a synonym with the formal variants *apegar* and *empegar*. These variants must have been felt to be more marked and communicatively more effective in the particular case of meanings F, W, X and V (and also Θ, in the case of *empegar*), since they allowed a clear semantic differentiation to be made with respect to meaning A. Moreover, this alternation is responsible for the fact that the verb *pegar*, with the same senses, has eventually become obsolete in the language today.[23] Likewise, the appearance of the new formal variant *apegar*,

21. This perception can be related to what some authors have called the *imaginary path* or *fictive motion* (Ungerer and Schmid 1996: 227; Montserrat 2007: 355; Soriano 2012: 117). Other cases that could be included as examples of imaginary or fictive motion are the formal possibilities of expressing meaning V by means of a stative construction: copulative verb + past participle (for example, (22b)).

22. In the case of intimacy, up to the point of sexual connotations, there is the example of the use that is made of the verb *pegar* in Brazilian Portuguese.

23. As regards the alternatives that can be used instead of the verb *pegar* with these meanings, future research will have to determine onomasiological aspects such as the role of verbs like *enganxar* or

which pushes the traditional form *pegar* somewhat into the background, means that the innovative form is the one that generates novel unrecorded senses with *pegar*. In this case we are referring to meanings Y and Z. In these cases we can interpret that from the concept of proximity it is also possible to infer a capacity of influence. This allows us to link meaning V with meaning X, which gives rise to the adjacent senses Y ('latch onto somebody, get in touch with somebody to gain some kind of benefit from them') and Z ('link, have a strong inclination'). This is an extension of the meaning of *apegar* towards more abstract usages following a process of metonymy: contact entails a link and an additional fact: the material or emotional benefit.

3.3. New interconnected semantic extensions

Meaning V develops other semantic extensions that are not linked to the form *apegar* but instead to the form *pegar*, which have been geographically more widely extended. Here we are referring to meaning K, 'head towards, end up'. In this case, the contact that occurs between the element that is displaced and the point where it should encounter the other element is projected more upon the directionality of the course than upon proximity. Apart from this meaning, meaning L, 'be oriented towards a place', is developed and, thanks to metonymic associations, it allows the directional value of meaning K to join up with the proximity value of meaning M.

Moreover, meaning V opens up the way to other values that are, however, now also linked to meaning A. Earlier we have pointed out that a basic characteristic conveyed by meaning A is intensity. Yet, by metonymy, intensity can easily be associated to excess: an intense action is an action in an extreme degree, and can therefore be perceived as excessive. By linking meanings K and A, this association is the one that has guided the dynamic meaning T, 'reach a certain place, up to a certain point (which is seen as being excessive)', and the static meaning R, 'be too much'. This second case takes things a step further, since metaphorically we go from the conceptual domain of space to the conceptual domain of states; the motion is therefore fictive and the verb takes on a sense that is similar to that of the attributive verbs. The case of N, 'come into contact (the sun, the wind, water) with a certain intensity', also maintains a connection with these meanings. With this value, an atmospheric agent heads towards another element in an intense manner.

Likewise, we can speak of the semantic extension of meanings K and A in cases Q, O and S. In all three cases there is a movement that makes it possible to establish contact between the protagonist, a person, and the place, although this place is not generally of a physical nature but instead expresses an action that was carried out with a certain intensity. This abstraction of the locative referent allows the formation of syntactic structures in which *pegar* takes on functions that are close to those of the auxiliary verbs, especially when followed by an infinitive.

aferrar (as well as *encomanar* for meaning X) in the current dialectal distribution. Furthermore, in ancient Catalan there is another case in which the prefixing of a verb makes it possible to overcome both polysemy and synonymy: *parer* (*parèixer*) 'seem' / *aparer* (*aparèixer*) 'appear' (Ramos 2013).

Through a metaphorical mechanism, we go from a spatial domain to a temporal or modal domain, which allows us to glimpse the beginning of a process of grammaticalisation (Pérez Saldanya 2008; Cuenca 2012; Company 2012). For example, with sense Q, 'suddenly start', it adds an inchoative aspectual meaning; with sense O, 'dedicate oneself to an activity with certain intensity', it is associated to a reiterative aspectual meaning; and with sense S, 'act insistently', it is related with a negative modal appraisal. Meaning E, 'persist obstinately in', is also linked to this last function. At the same time this meaning connects to other meanings we will comment on in the following.

In this case we are referring to meanings C ('occur unexpectedly (a thought, a passion, etc.') and P ('cause a certain feeling'). These meanings taken on by the verb *pegar* are still compatible with the image schema of path, but now the relationships that are established between the protagonists become more abstract. The destination is no longer a physical place and has become a person who experiences the consequences of a cause: syntactically the location is expressed with a dative and the verb takes on a value that is similar to the psychological verbs. Also in relation to these senses, mention should be made of meaning H, 'suit, fit, match'. In this case, the element on which we focus our attention is put into contact with a space and we use our experience of the world to appraise whether the focused element and the space within which it is inserted can remain together. This also allows us to establish a link with meaning V.

Turning to the basic meaning A, 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit', we can see that, from an asymmetrical violent attitude or situation in which there is an actor who assaults an experiencer, it becomes possible to infer another situation in which the dispute is symmetrical: aggression and reply from the victim. This metonymic inference gives rise to meaning G, 'fight, brawl'.

Later on in time, there may be a turn in the way the violent contact is perceived. The verb *pegar* can also be used in communicative contexts in which we do not perceive the protagonist of the action as an assailant that moves to attack someone, but rather as a victim or the experiencer of the motion that is carried out. We are therefore dealing with, on the one hand, meaning B ('trip'), in which the impact takes place with a physical element and, on the other, meaning U ('come across unexpectedly'), which establishes a more abstract relationship – the impact now takes place with a metaphorical element – generally related to a person's behaviour. These senses have given rise to another far more modern meaning, J ('have an accident'). With this new value, *pegar* takes on the reflexive verbal form (*pegar-se*) and appears with a lexicalised accusative clitic, which generically represents the kind of blow involved.

One of the syntactic possibilities the verb *pegar* has with meaning A (1) is to make explicit mention of the kind of blow that was dealt (punch, slap, stab, etc.). This use alternates in modern-day Catalan with the verb *donar*, although it is far more expressive with *pegar*. This expressiveness was undoubtedly responsible for the fact that this verb derived a new sense, D ('do, give'). Following the image schema of path, with this new meaning the focus of attention is on the verbal object (direct object), which moves towards a destination (4). But the fact that this object does not

specify the kind of blow, but instead involves an action in itself, leaves the meaning of violent contact expressed by the verb somewhat in the background and it now simply expresses intensity. At this point, *pegar* may even eventually become just a light verb, without there necessarily being any association with intensity. The most obvious case is its usage in the Valencian dialectal area.[24]

Meaning A, in its transitive manifestation and in connection with meaning D, also opens up the path, through metonymic extension, to meaning I, 'cheat'. In this case, the actor is interpreted as moving with the aim of carrying out an aggressive action (the accusative complement, nowadays lexicalised) upon another person. The victim does not consider this attack to be physical, but instead psychological. It therefore implies a lack of mutual trust, and it is from there that the idea of cheating is inferred.

4. Conclusions

Our study has allowed us to show that the polysemy of the verb *pegar,* from the synchronic point of view, does not have the same incidence in all the Catalan dialects and that many of the senses have become typical of the colloquial language. This has favoured more expressive and emphatic solutions, above all in the case of Valencian (cf. Martines 2000a). Broadly speaking, we have observed that the verb forms *apegar* and *empegar* have only partially acquired the polysemy of *pegar.* Moreover, their geographic scope is more restricted.

In relation to the etymological origin of *pegar*, the current polysemic distribution shows that a change in prototypical meaning has taken place. The meaning of 'stick' has given way to other meanings that have become more central and have generated new senses. This is the case, for example, of the sense of 'touch with a certain amount of violence or intensity, hit', which has become generalised throughout all Catalan dialects and is typical of the standard language. Finally, we have observed that the model of cognitive linguistics can provide a satisfactory explanation for the polysemy described here. Semantic changes respond to associations that are essentially based on metonymy and are part of a complex semantic network in which the meanings overlap and connect with each other to give rise to new meanings.

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24. Further studies need to be conducted in the future to investigate the possibilities of the verb *pegar* in this kind of construction. For the time being, we can point out one obvious fact: *pegar*, unlike *fer* or *donar*, is incompatible with verb complements that do not indicate an action (fear, disgust, shame, etc.; present, book, etc.) (Palancar 1999).

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