COGNITIVE VERBS IN SPANISH AND GREEK. TWO PATTERNS OF SEMANTIC EVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT
THIS ARTICLE AIMS TO PRESENT THE COGNITIVE FRAME OF VERBS WHICH DENOTE 'THOUGHT' ('UNDERSTAND', 'KNOW', 'THINK'), MAINLY IN GREEK AND SPANISH, CONSIDERED FROM A DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE. THE ETYMOLOGIC ANALYSIS AND THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THIS INVESTIGATION (I.E. COGNITIVE SEMANTICS) HELPED US IDENTIFY TWO MAIN SEMANTIC PATTERNS IN THE EVOLUTION OF COGNITIVE VERBS. THESE PATTERNS ARE BASED ON TWO CONCEPTS, NAMELY 'SIGHT' AND 'GRABBING', WHICH DEVELOPED AN ABSTRACT SENSE. THUS, UNDERSTANDING, KNOWLEDGE OR THOUGHT COULD BE CONSIDERED THE RESULT OF THE FOLLOWING SEMANTIC CHANGES: 'I SEE' > 'I KNOW' / 'I UNDERSTAND' AND 'I GOT (IT)' > 'I UNDERSTOOD'. THUS, WE CAN CONCLUDE THAT THE ABSTRACT AND COGNITIVE MEANINGS DEVELOPED FROM CONCRETE ONES, FOLLOWING A GENERAL PATTERN OF SEMANTIC EVOLUTION. INTERESTINGLY, THESE SEMANTIC SHIFTS ARE NOT ONLY DIACHRONICH. SYNCHRONICALLY, THESE TENDENCIES ARE EVIDENT IN THE CASE OF MANY VERBS AND COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS. MOREOVER, THESE TWO PATTERNS AND SEMANTIC SHIFTS, UNDERGONE BY THE VERBS OF COGNITION, CAN ALSO BE FOUND IN OTHER LANGUAGES, SUCH AS ROMANIAN, FRENCH, ENGLISH ETC., AND, THEREFORE THEY CAN BE CONSIDERED GENERAL CROSS-LINGUISTIC PATTERNS OF SEMANTIC EVOLUTION.

KEY-WORDS: VERBS OF COGNITIVE ATTITUDE, SEMANTIC CHANGES, DIACHRONIC COGNITIVE SEMANTICS, SPANISH, GREEK, EVOLUTION

1. INTRODUCTION

The present paper looks at the verbs of cognitive attitude[1] from a diachronic perspective, mainly in Spanish and Greek, and aims to describe the semantic shifts undergone by the verbs meaning 'know', 'think' and 'understand'. Moreover, our main goal is to identify common patterns of evolution which generated these particular changes and, in order to get a more clear perspective on the evolution of cognitive verbs, we shall compare our findings with the patterns in other Romance and Germanic languages, especially Romanian, French, and English. Thus, there are two questions that we shall try to answer hereinafter: (*i*) Are these changes language-specific or universal / cross-linguistic? and (*ii*) Can we identify semantic

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[1] Verbs of cognitive attitude, also known as verbs of cognition, express a wide range of psychological processes such as sensations, perceptions, thought, memory etc.

regularities and patterns, which reflect a certain cross-linguistic and cross-cultural mental structure?

The theoretical background of our investigation is represented by the diachronic cognitive semantics and theory of semantic frames[2], because along with the etymology, cognitive semantics could provide some explanations for the choices made by speakers[3] at a diachronic or synchronic level, between different forms, senses etc. Moreover, in the *Cambridge History of the Romance Languages*[4], Steven Dworkin claims that linguists should investigate vocabulary from a cognitive perspective, as the conclusions of their analysis could be more general and explain a great deal of unexplained phenomena in current bibliography, such as uncertain etymologies, semantic shifts and evolution, speakers' choices etc. From this point of view, the present study is based on the assumption that human mind is organized encyclopaedically and systematically, due to the fact that knowing and understanding a concept involve knowing a whole network of other related concepts (according to Fillmore's theory of semantic frames).

We chose to analyse two Indo-European languages belonging to different branches, namely Greek and Spanish, as they present a few advantages for our investigation. First of all, the history of Greek, of almost four millennia, allows us investigating this semantic field diachronically. The multitude of texts and their stylistic and linguistic diversity enable the investigation of this lexical paradigm. Moreover, Greek has always been a language with a great cultural and scientific prestige. Its history, diversity and richness of texts, along with the lexical-semantic structure of Greek allowed the development, since ancient times, of a remarkable philosophical system and vocabulary capable to express abstract concepts. The lexical field we deal with fits perfectly into this philosophical vocabulary. At the same time, Greek has been a model and a source of lexical and semantic enrichment for other languages, starting from Antiquity till modern times. From the Latin philosophical and abstract vocabulary to the scientific and technical vocabulary of modern languages (medicine, arts, etc.), almost all have a Greek origin. On the other hand, Spanish is a member of the Romance languages branch and we expect it to have other patterns of evolution than Greek, due to its different origin and history.

In the following, we shall focus on the etymology of the cognitive verbs both in Greek and Spanish, by highlighting the Indo-European roots they were built on, their semantic structure and the linguistic mechanisms which led to the creation of those particular lexical items. Then, we shall try to classify them into more general semantic categories in order to identify one or more common patterns.

2. GENERAL REMARKS CONCERNING COGNITIVE VERBS

Cognitive verbs represent a large and highly heterogeneous lexical-semantic category, which has aroused the interest of many researchers from various fields (psychology, logic, philosophy, linguistics). Depending on the various perspectives, there were identified several categories of verbs that denote cognitive, mental processes, involving different degrees of abstraction. In the following, we reproduce D'Andrade's classification from a psychological

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[2] This theory was formulated by Charles Fillmore in a series of articles and studies on vocabulary and meaning.
[3] Generally speaking, semantic shifts are considered to be the result of some semantic processes, such as extension, narrowing, metaphor, metonymy etc., but linguistics does not explain the mechanisms that generated those specific changes. For other arguments concerning the advantages of cognitive semantics in analysing changes of meaning, see Răzvan Bran (Târgu-Jiu: *From sight to thought. A diachronic view on the Greek verbs of cognition*, in *Research and Science Today*, No. 2(8) / 2014, 216-217).
[4] Steven Dworkin, *Cambridge History of the Romance Languages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

perspective, proposed in 1987[5], which divides cognitive verbs into verbs designating: (*i*) perception, (*ii*) beliefs / knowledge, (*iii*) feelings / emotions, (*iv*) desires / goals, (*v*) intentions, (*vi*) decisions. The category that we are mainly interested in is represented by the verbs expressing beliefs and, especially, knowledge: 'know', 'think' and 'understand'.

Another interesting and useful conclusion reached by the researchers is that the verbs of cognition are organized in terms of a cognitive continuum, on which verbs do not have a fixed or stable position[6]. Their semantic content is rather a value on this continuum, value that may change according to the semantic and pragmatic context of utterance. That is why verbs denoting feelings and perceptions sometimes establish semantic relations with those expressing more analytical mental processes, such as thinking or evaluation. Due to this cognitive continuum, they exhibit a cluster of common attributes that explains the semantic transfer from one category to the other (for instance, 'see' is often used with the meaning 'understand').

Moreover, according to the cognitive semantic theory[7], frames have two essential characteristics. On one hand, they are characterised by fuzziness, as they do not have necessarily clear and definite boundaries. And, on the other hand, as a consequence of the blurred edges, two or more frames can share members or attributes. This is the case of the verbs denoting cognitive attitude: on the cognitive continuum mentioned above, one verb can share attributes with different verbs, which allows them developing other (abstract) meanings.

3. THE PARADIGM OF COGNITIVE VERBS IN SPANISH AND MODERN GREEK: 'KNOW' AND 'UNDERSTAND'

As we have already mentioned, Greek is the result of a long and complex process of evolution, with a tremendous cultural production. The cultural production, along with the contacts with other languages and civilizations, enabled the enrichment of the conceptual domain and lexicon, as well. It is, therefore, a language with a rich and abstract vocabulary, with extensive synonymy, and a wide range of semantic nuances. In Modern Greek, the lexical paradigm of the verbs meaning 'understand' or 'know' consists of the following lexemes: *katalavenō* 'understand', *katanoō* 'understand', *skéftome* 'think', *gnōrizō* 'know', *xerō* 'know', *theōrō* 'believe', *(mu) fenete* 'it seems (to me)', *vlepō* 'see', but also 'understand', *(to) pianō* 'grab (the idea, the meaning)'.

In Spanish, this lexical field includes the verbs *saber* 'know', *conocer* 'know', *entender* 'understand', *comprender* 'understand', *pensar* 'think', *creer* 'think, believe', *coger* 'grab (the idea)', *ver* 'see, understand'. Interestingly, *saber* derives from the Late Latin **sapere*, whose original meaning was 'taste', so this semantic transfer from the domain of perceptions to the cognitive one is not singular and we can find it in the case of other senses.

As one can notice, we have also included in this paradigm of verbs denoting mental activity some lexical items that can develop a cognitive meaning and some colloquial expressions, as well. From a semantic point of view, one could distinguish two types of verbs: (*i*) verbs which have a basic intellectual meaning and (*ii*) general verbs that contextually develop secondary meaning 'understand', 'think'.

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[5] *Apud* Martin Schwanenflugel *et al.*: *The organization of verbs of knowing: evidence for cultural commonality and variation in the theory of mind*, 1999, 813.

[6] *Schwanenflugel et al.: The organization of verbs of knowing,* 814.

[7] Geeraerts, D., Grondelaers, S., Bakema, P., *The Structure of Lexical Variation. Meaning, Naming, and Context*, in (Ed.) Rene Dirven, Ronald W. Langacker *Cognitive Linguistics Research 5* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1994).

4. TWO COGNITIVE PATTERNS OF SEMANTIC EVOLUTION

Our investigation concerning the semantic evolution of the cognitive verbs ('understand', 'know', 'think') was mainly based on the etymological analysis. We also took into account the semantic structure and the semantic shifts undergone by some lexical items. After analysing this lexical field, we have identified two patterns of semantic change. More precisely, one first pattern is based on the interpretation of the meaning 'understand' as a result of the action 'catch', 'grab' (the sense, the message). The second cognitive pattern is organised on the relation 'sight' - 'thinking' / 'understanding'. As we can see, both patterns have in common the process of abstraction and the semantic transfer.

In the following two parts of this section, we shall examine the patterns mentioned above and we shall provide a great deal of examples not only from Greek and Spanish, but also from other languages which exhibit the same pattern of semantic evolution. Nevertheless, we should emphasise that not all the verbs of cognition can be included in one of the two schemes. That is why we have not included the Spanish verb *saber*, in spite of its meaning, because of its etymology (see above, in section 3) that does not fit any of the patterns we identified.

4.1. THE PATTERN 'GRAB' > 'UNDERSTAND'

A first scheme of evolution interprets the intellectual meaning as an abstraction of the concrete sense 'catch', 'grab' or 'get'. For instance, Gr. *katalavenō*, the common verb denoting the general meaning 'understand', is made up of two lexical elements: the preverb *kata-* meaning 'completely' or 'around', and the verb *lavenō < lamvanō* 'get, catch'. The lexeme under discussion appeared during the medieval period and had as a starting point another Greek verb, namely *katalamvanō*. The pair *katalavenō - katalamvanō* shows some formal differences, but, nevertheless, they exhibit several semantic differences. The formal differences are a consequence of the phonetic evolution undergone by the verb, but we also think that they mirror and emphasise the need for semantic difference. The verb *katalavenō* means, as mentioned, 'understand', while *katalamvanō* conserves its original meaning in Ancient Greek, and means 'catch' and even 'conquer, take possession of something'. The verbs in question also differ from the morphological point of view, as they have different Past Tense (Aorist) forms: *katalava* 'I understood' vs *katelava* 'I conquered'.

There are many other verbs derived from *lamvanō / lavenō* 'get', 'take', which developed metaphorical senses related to the sensorial and cognitive domain: *antilamvanome* 'perceive', *syllamvanō* 'conceive', *hypolamvanō* 'understand'. Interestingly, *syllamvanō* is bisemantical. On one hand, it refers to the act of catching or arresting somebody, so it has a concrete meaning, which reflects the etymology of the lexeme. On the other hand, it has an abstract meaning, namely 'conceive' an idea (*cf. katalavenō* vs *katalamvanō*). If we analyse the verb *hypolamvanō* from the etymological point of view, we notice that its original meaning was 'grab from beneath', so it referred to the same idea of catching (*cf.* other verbs, such as Gr. *hypothetō*, Sp. *suponer*, that have the same morphological structure: 'under' + 'put').

Another example is provided by the colloquial register, where we can trace the tendencies and the changes in a language, mirroring the need for expressivity and the process of renewing the language. The colloquial register, used by speakers in less formal situations, does not follow all the norms and the standard imposed by linguists. That is why it enables the semantic and grammatical shifts. The example that we are referring to is Gr. *to 'piasa* (neuter clitic pronoun in Accusative + verb 'catch', 'grab' in Past Tense): 'I got it', that is 'I understand'. This expression, based on a metaphor, corresponds to the Romanian colloquial expression *m-am prins* ('I got it'), equivalent to *am înțeles* ('I understood'). In Spanish, the verb *coger* 'grab', 'take' can also denote a cognitive attitude. Let us compare the following examples in different languages:

Sp.   (1) a. *No he cogido el chiste[8]. No he comprendido*

          b. *Creo que no he pillado la broma.*

Rom. (2) a. *Nu am prins gluma. Nu am înţeles gluma.*

          b. *Nu s-a prins[9]. Nu a înţeles.*

Eng.   (3)   *I didn't get it. I didn't understand it.*

Thus, we can find the same pattern in Greek, English, Romanian and Spanish, based on the same semantic transfer from the concrete sense to the domain of mental activity.

Moreover, other verbs have the same etymology in various languages, as well. For example, Eng. *comprehend* and Fr. *comprendre*, which have a close semantic relation with the French verb *prendre* 'take', follow the same etymological pattern as *katalavenō*. They are based on metaphors (transfer) governed by the same mental pattern, namely the mind as a container, as a hand that grabs the information.

In Romanian, we find the same pattern in many semantic lexemes belonging to the cognitive vocabulary. This is the case of the noun *gând* formed from the radical IE **ghend-* 'catch'. The same root is found in other lexical items, such as Eng. *hand*, Germ. *Hand*, Gr. *chandanō* ('take'; 'be able'), Lat. *praehendo* ('catch', 'take hold of'), Eng. *get*, *for-get*, etc. Consequently, the semantic evolution of the lexemes *gând*, *gândi* etc. reflects a concrete image of 'grabbing the sense, the idea' as if the human mind were a container with an active role.

Furthermore, there is a wide range of verbs expressing a cognitive attitude that denote another concrete image: 'to grab from beneath': the Sp. *suponer*, *comprender*[10], Fr. *comprendre*[8], Gr. *hypolambanō*, *hypothetō*, and Eng. *under-stand*. To our examples listed here, we could add some more provided by S. Dworkin: "To use an oft-cited example, in many languages the verb meaning 'seize, grasp' has metaphorically evolved the sense 'understand' (e.g., Lat. *capere* 'grasp, seize' > It. *capire* 'understand'; It. *afferrare* 'grasp' > 'understand', Lat. *compraehendere* 'take firmly, seize' > Fr. *comprendre*, Sp. *comprender* 'understand', Sp. *coger* 'grasp, seize (an idea)'; in contemporary colloquial Spanish *pillar* 'to seize, grasp' is undergoing the same evolution."[11]

Nevertheless, Dworkin[12] claims that these semantic shifts are only unidirectional, from concrete to abstract, not vice versa: "Such changes tend to be unidirectional: 'grasp, seize' > 'understand', but never 'understand' > 'grasp, seize'. In like fashion other words for the notion 'to understand' originally denoted other types of physical action: e.g., Fr. *entendre*, Sp. *entender* < Lat. *intendere* 'to stretch', as well as the metaphor underlying Eng. *to understand*, Ger. *verstehen*." Thus, diachronically, not only the pattern under discussion ('catch' > 'understand') is functional, but also other patterns concerning spatial representations that imply the evolution of concrete senses into abstract ones.

Consequently, in both Greek and Spanish, we can identify a pattern of verbs denoting a concrete sense ('catch', 'grab', 'get') which evolved a cognitive one ('understand', 'conceive'). Interestingly, this pattern is functional not only at a diachronic level (Gr.

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[8] *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* (DRAE), *s.v. coger.*

[9] Here, the verb is used in the Refflexive form.

[10] They are both related to the Lat. *compraehendere*.

[11] Steven N. Dworkin, *Recent Developments in Spanish (and Romance) Historical Semantics*, in *Selected Proceedings of the 8th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium* (Sommerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, 2006), 52.

[12] *Dworkin, Recent Developments in Spanish,* 52

katalavenō, Sp. *comprender*), but also at a synchronic one (Gr. *syllamvanō*, *to 'piasa*, Sp. *coger*, *pillar*). Moreover, synchronically, we notice that these concrete verbs, denoting 'grabbing', are polysemous and conserve the close link between the two concepts they express, included in their semantic structure.

Thus, apart from the general pattern of evolution (from concrete to abstract), some concrete verbs meaning 'catch', 'grab', 'get' develop an intellectual sense. At an abstract level, our mind 'grabs' the meaning or the idea, being considered an abstraction of the concrete image of a hand that grabs an object. There are some studies that have shown that in speakers' cognitive representations mind can be interpreted as a container of the information (verbs such as 'know') or a mechanism that processes the information ('think', 'understand', 'explain' etc.). However, as S. N. Dworkin claims, "it cannot be predicted with absolute certainty that all verbs meaning 'seize, grasp' will at some point in their history necessarily undergo this development."[13]

4.2. THE PATTERN 'SEE' > 'KNOW' / 'UNDERSTAND'

We often say 'I see' when we actually mean 'I understand', with an abstract sense. And this does not happen only in English. In many other languages, the verb 'see' develops this intellectual meaning (*cf.* Spanish, French, Romanian, Greek etc.) and it mirrors the general pattern concrete > abstract. In the following, we shall investigate other verbs that engender the same semantic development, mainly in Spanish and Greek.

The cognitive relation between 'see' (concrete and sensorial) and 'know' / 'understand' (abstract and intellectual) is a lineal one, as the development of the abstract meaning expresses the result of the previous action of seeing: 'I have seen, so (now) I know and I can understand'. From a psychological point of view, this relation reflects our cognitive mechanisms, because through sensations and perceptions we get information from the environment (input) and we interpret it through thought, a more abstract process (output). Thus, this conceptual relation (input - output) could explain the development of an abstract and cognitive meaning. Knowledge and understanding are a result of getting information from the extra linguistic reality (the environment) in order to understand and 'conquer' it. So senses are also included in the general scheme of understanding and thinking. Moreover, the lexicon and the meaning, in other words mental representations of the real world, are made up of larger and complex networks (or conceptual frames), which establish relations of hierarchy and inclusion, so some members of a given frame can share some attributes with other verbs.

First of all, we shall focus on two Modern Greek verbs: *vlepō* 'see' and *theōrō* 'believe, consider', both with a complicated etymology, as more interpretations have been proposed so far[14]. The first one, *vlepō*, is the common verb used to express the general meaning 'see' in Modern Greek and it is believed to derive from the root *$g^w lep$-* / *$glep$-*[15] (*cf.* Slavic *glipati* 'see', Russian глаз 'eye', взглиануть 'watch' etc.). In addition, *vlepō* is used with a more abstract meaning 'think, consider'.

(4) *Opos vlepo ego ta pragmata, to provlima den ine poli sovaro.*
'As I see it, the problem is not so serious.'

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[13] *Dworkin, Recent Developments in Spanish,* 52
[14] We shall not discuss all these interpretations and for more details, *vide* Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1968-80), *s.v.*; Julius Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Bern: Francke, 1959).
[15] Gheorghios Babiniotis, *Λεξικό της Νέας Ελληνικής Γλώσσας* (Athens: Kentro leksikologias, 2005), *s.v.*

The verb *theōrō* appeared in Ancient Greek and, according to one etymological interpretation, it is the result of *théa* 'view' + *horáō* 'see'. *Theōrō*, whose original meaning was 'I observe (attentively)', was employed by the philosophers with the epistemic meaning 'think', 'observe' and then borrowed into Modern Greek with the same sense 'think, consider'[16]. As shown, both verbs have a certain relation with the concept of 'sight' and both can denote a cognitive attitude: *vlepō*, apart from its common, concrete and sensorial meaning, can also mean 'I understand'; *theōrō*, in spite of its etymology and original, specialised sense ('I am a *theōros*'), nowadays it has a cognitive meaning.

Another verb that we should take into discussion is the Gr. *horáo*. In Ancient Greek, the verb *horáō* 'see' had more forms in the Perfect Tense: *ópōpa* / *heóraka* 'I have seen' and *oída*, lexicalised for the meaning 'I know' (< 'I have seen'). First of all, as known, the Perfect aspect of the verbs expresses the present result of a past action or a completed action. That is why *oída* could develop an abstract and epistemic meaning, as knowing something can be interpreted as the result of seeing it previously. Moreover, *oída* derives from the IE radical *weid-* / *woid-* 'knowledge'[17], so diachronically this semantic development is fully explainable. Interestingly, thought, the same root with an abstract meaning ('knowledge') developed diachronically not only an abstract meaning, but also a concrete one. Speakers relate the concepts of 'sight' and 'thought', consequently, due to their common attributes, they belong to the same semantic frame. In other words, these semantic shifts were possible due to the cognitive attributes shared by both concepts and their close relation from a psychological and logical perspective.

Diachronically, the case of the Gr. *sképtome* has a very interesting evolution from the semantic perspective. More precisely, *sképtome* derives from the IE radical *spek-*[18], meaning 'watch (attentively), observe, examine'[19]. In Ancient Greek, it preserved its original concrete meaning ('I look attentively, I observe')[20], but in Modern Greek it means 'I think', with the same evolution like *theōrō*, for instance. Once again, the two conceptual frames, which are closely linked in speakers' mind, interwave and this interaction engenders the semantic shift 'sight' > 'thought' (concrete / sensorial > abstract / intellectual, epistemic). Due to the features of the frames, namely fuzziness and attributes sharing, some of the members of the frame of 'sight' get some attributes from members of the frame of 'thought'.

Nevertheless, this close relation between 'sight' and 'thought' or 'understanding' is not specific to Greek. In many other languages (Spanish[21], Romanian[22], French, English, etc.), the common verb 'see' also develops the metaphorical sense 'understand' or 'think':

(5)   a. *Veo que nos equivocamos al juzgarle.*
        b. *I see what you mean.*
        c. *Din ceea ce îmi spui, văd că au apărut unele probleme.*

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[16] *Cf. theoría*, *theorēma* and other abstract lexeme denoting mathematical or philosophical concepts.

[17] *Cf.* other descendants of the same IE root, with a sensorial meaning: Lat. *video* 'see', Gr. *eídon* 'I saw' etc.

[18] The root of the verb (*skep-*) was reconverted from *spek-*.

[19] *Cf.* Gr. *skopos* 'aim, purpose', *skopeō* 'observe, aim', Lat. *specio* 'watch', *perspicio* 'observe carefully, scout', *adspicio*, *auspex*, *haruspex*, *extispex*, *specula*, *speculor*, *speculator*; Umbric divinity *Speture;* Old Germ. *spehōn* (> Fr. *espie*); Skr. *páçyati* 'see, watch', etc. (Julius Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch,* Bern: Francke, 1959; Carl Darling Buck: A *Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

[20] Interestingly, Plato, in his philosophical works, uses this verb with the meaning 'look in order to find out'.

[21] In DRAE, *s.v.*, *ver* has these meanings, as well: *considerar*, *advertir o reflexionar* and *conocer*, *juzgar*.

[22] ***Dicţionarul Explicativ al Limbii Române*.

These verbs of 'sight' can develop relations of synonymy with other cognitive verbs, due to their sensorial semantic structure, the cognitive continuum (mentioned above) and the close link between senses and other psychological processes. Sensorial verbs are polysemous lexical items that belong to general lexicon, and that is why they can easily change their meaning or form a great deal of idiomatic expressions.

Thus, we should classify these verbs into two categories. Firstly, we could identify a category of verbs that develop abstract and figurate senses, but they still conserve their basic concrete and sensorial sense. This is the case of common polysemous verbs, with general meaning, 'grab' or 'see', that can be uttered with the meaning 'understand'. The verb 'see' did not passed into another conceptual frame and remained in its sensorial frame, but it covers a fuzzy interference area between the two cognitive frames.

On the other hand, there is another category of verbs, formed by verbs that originally and etymologically are sensorial verbs but they do not belong anymore to this frame. They undertook some semantic changes and changed their meaning and got a strictly intellectual and abstract meaning. The processes that led to these semantic changes include either a total change, or the verb is new and formed on the basis of a root with a concrete sense (*cf. theōrō, skéftome*).

In the evolution of this semantic field, we noticed that the Indo-European radical *weid- / *woid-*, which originally denoted the sense 'knowledge', in some historic dialects (Ancient Greek and Latin, for instance) developed a sensorial meaning, namely 'see' (*cf.* Lat. *video* 'I see' and Gr. *eídon* 'I saw'). Interestingly, in Ancient Greek, the Aoristic radical *(e)id-* (< IE *weid-*) was employed by philosophers to express abstract senses and concepts (for example, Gr. *idéa* 'idea', *eídēsis* 'knowledge'). Moreover, we should take into account *oida*, derived from the same IE radical and mentioned above. We can claim, therefore, that in some cases there is a cyclic evolution of the sense, but these are quite rare, unpredictable and the period of time during which these changes took place was quite long. During a few millennia's time, the IE root under discussion underwent these (cyclic) semantic shifts in small steps and in two different stages: (*i*) abstract and cognitive meaning > concrete and sensorial meaning and (*ii*) concrete > abstract.

A concluding remark of this section is that the evolution of sense follows the pattern bellow[23]:

> (1) 'see' → (2) 'watch' / 'look' → (3) 'observe' / 'examine'
> → (4) 'know' → (5) 'understand' → (6) 'think' / 'consider'

Fig. 1. - Sensorial verbs and the development of abstract meanings

This pattern or semantic frame presents the stages in the evolution of the verbs denoting concrete and sensorial senses ('see', 'watch', 'look', 'seem') that develop abstract and mental meanings. Thus, as shown, there can be identified "small steps" in the evolution.

5. FINAL REMARKS AND CONCLUSIONS

One first remark is that the lexical-semantic paradigm of cognitive verbs establishes a close relation with the verbs denoting perception ('see', 'watch', 'notice') and grabbing ('get', 'catch', 'grab'). Moreover, this relationship can be identified both diachronically and synchronically, not only in Spanish and Greek, but also in other Indo-European languages.

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[23] Răzvan Bran (Târgu-Jiu: *From sight to thought. A diachronic view on the Greek verbs of cognition*, in *Research and Science Today*, No. 2(8) / 2014, 220).

Synchronically, some cognitive verbs are at the interface of two conceptual frames, sharing attributes of both frames (*cf.* 'see': Sp. *ver*, Gr. *vlepō*, and 'get': Sp. *coger*, *pillar*, Gr. *pianō*). So these are diachronic tendencies that we are able to witness at the synchronic level of language evolution.

Another remark is that there could be identified a general evolution from concrete to abstract by means of metaphor or metonymy. For instance, the mental and linguistic representation of time is often a mere abstraction of space. Although we can identify some patterns of semantic evolution based on these two processes, we cannot predict precisely other changes of meaning that a certain word or lexical field would undergo. Nevertheless, these semantic shifts undergone by some lexical items entail the enrichment of the conceptual domain related to cognitive processes.

We could also claim that, diachronically, only in some cases the semantic relation established between two semantic frames is bidirectional, namely 'see' ↔ 'think'. More precisely, although most of the verbs follow the pattern concrete > abstract, we could identify some lexical items denoting cognitive processes that changed their meaning and developed a concrete one (*cf.* the IE root **weid-* > Lat. *video*). This happens as a consequence of their unstable position of the verbs on the cognitive continuum and of the fuzzy boundaries of frames that implies that words can belong to various fields simultaneously.

In conclusion, the evolution of cognitive verbs presents similar semantic patterns in different languages (Greek, Romance and Germanic languages). Our investigation could be extended to languages belonging to other families in order to identify the universality of these patterns as a consequence of some mind sets. Are they cross-linguistic and do they reflect some cognitive frames that allow them to develop this meanings?

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