

# SPACE IN LANGUAGE

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# FROM SPACE TO CONCESSION: A CASE STUDY IN SEMANTIC CHANGE

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

My purpose in the present paper is to trace the development of the Polish connector *mimo* from a locative preposition to a concessive connector, bringing some clarification on the possible factors determining its semantic shift to concession. As illustrated in the example below,<sup>1</sup> today *mimo* exclusively encodes factual concessive relation, that is to say, an interclausal relation based on the implicit assumption of denied causality (Latos 2006: Chapter 3, 2009: 422-423):

- (1) *Mimo spadku dochodów konsumpcja nie obniża się.*  
despite decrease:GEN incomes:GEN consumption:NOM NEG drops.PRS RFL  
'Despite the decrease of incomes, the consumption doesn't drop'.

The specialization of *mimo* as a concessive connector occurs at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In its first attested occurrences in the 15<sup>th</sup> century *mimo*, originating from the motion verb *mijać* 'to go past', has rather a locative function 'past/next to/beyond'. At the same time, the connector is used to express through inference a wide range of more sophisticated, non-spatial senses, such as temporal, comparative, exclusive or additive relations. Some of these inferential enrichments become more systematic and, as a consequence, the connector develops new semantic functions without losing its original locative meaning. In the recent history of Polish the polysemous *mimo* drops its semantic polifunctionality and specializes as a coding device for the expression of a concessive link. However, with the exception of few general remarks, the semantic evolution undergone by *mimo* has not been examined in detail yet.

As widely agreed, concessive functions evolve later than other interclausal senses (e.g. Kortmann 1997; Hopper and Traugott 2003) and derive from a multiplicity of semantic sources such as conditionality, concomitance or free-choice quantification (e.g. König 1998; Harris 1998). Spatial origins are also

<sup>1</sup> All modern Polish examples are from the National Corpus of Polish (<http://www.nkjp.uni.lodz.pl/>).

mentioned (Traugott 1982; Mazzoleni 1990), but the general SPACE-TEMPORAL > ADVERSATIVE pattern of semantic change (Traugott 1986; Heine and Kuteva 2002) has not been extensively exemplified by the evolution of concessive markers.

This paper aims at illustrating this particular cline of grammaticalization by focusing on the path of semantic development of the Polish connector *mimo* that leads from the domain of space to the concessive meaning.

In Section 2, some preliminary information on *mimo* will be given. In particular, the synchronic function of the connector, its etymology and previous diachronic analysis will be discussed. In Section 3, the three main stages of the development of *mimo* will be reconstructed and schematized along the lines proposed by Prandi (2004). The last section will propose a general reflection on the motivation of the semantic change from locative to concessive function. It will be argued that the diachronic switch results from systematic inferential enrichments based on conceptual affinities in a shared and stable system of human concepts.

## 2. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON *MIMO*

### 2.1. *Synchronic account of mimo*

In Modern Polish the connector *mimo* – syntactically, preposition in (1), subordinator composed of *mimo* + the complementizer *że/iż* ‘that’ in (2a), or anaphoric adverbial marker composed of *mimo* + the demonstrative pronoun *to* ‘this’ in (2b) – is used to encode factual concessive relations and belongs to the so-called “nucleus” concessive markers which convey direct relationships, but are unable to establish indirect or restrictive concessive links (Latos 2009: 429):

- (2) a. *Skoczył z wysokiego muru do morza, mimo że go nie gnębiły żadne kłopoty.*  
 jumped:3SG.M from high:GEN wall:GEN to sea:GEN despite  
 that him:ACC NEG oppressed:3PL.F none:NOM.PL troubles:NOM  
 ‘He jumped from a high wall to the sea, although he wasn’t in any trouble’.

- b. *Przez dłuższy czas mieszkaliśmy wszyscy w jednym pokoju, a mimo to nigdy nie miałem wrażenia, że jestem biedny.*  
 for longer:ACC time:ACC lived:1PL.M all:NOM.PL in one:LOC room:LOC and despite this:ACC never NEG had:1SG.M impression:GEN that be:PRS.1SG poor:NOM  
 ‘For a long time we all lived in one room, and in spite of this I never had a feeling that I was poor’.

Concessive contrast is the only function associated with *mimo* as a linking device in contemporary Polish. However, as shown in (3a-d), *mimo* is also part of few fossil collocations which developed from the prior meanings of the functional form and are not related any more to its main synchronic function:

- (3) a. *Moje słowa puszczał mimo uszu.*  
 my:ACC.PL words:ACC flew:3SG.M past ears:GEN  
 ‘He was ignoring my words’.
- b. *Mimo woli roześmiał się.*  
 without will:GEN laughed:3SG.M RFL  
 ‘He laughed reluctantly’.
- c. *Spytała Księżna mimochodem.*  
 asked:3SG.F princess:NOM out-of-walking.ADV  
 ‘The princess asked incidentally’.
- d. *Mimowiednie nakreślił swój autoportret.*  
 out-of-knowing.ADV delineated:3SG.M own:ACC self-portrait:ACC  
 ‘He delineated unconsciously his self-portrait’.

## 2.2. Etymology of *mimo*

Etymological works (e.g. Linde 1875; Brückner 1988; Bańkowski 2000) connect the origin of the form *mimo* to the domain of motion in space, suggesting its close relation with the verb *mijać* ‘to go past/by’ (> *\*mijati*, *\*minoti* > *\*mi-ti*, *\*mjje*). In particular, it can be assumed that the form *mi-mo*, composed of the root *mi-* and the adverbial suffix *-mo*,<sup>2</sup> initially arises as an adverb meaning ‘going past’ which subsequently becomes a preposition ‘past/next to/beyond’.

The common root of both verbal and adverbial forms has been compared with the O. Church Slavic *\*mei* which, as argued, for instance, by Bańkowski (2000: 188), denotes the movement of going by/past someone without

<sup>2</sup> A typical suffix of *adverbia verbalia* in Old Slavic languages.

assaulting him/her, and can be confronted with the Lat. *meāre* ‘to pass freely, without obstacles’ and the Sans. *mīyate*, *minoti* ‘to diminish, lessen, disappear, transgress’ (see also Monier 1899).

Interestingly, other Slavic languages developed analogous spatial prepositions<sup>3</sup> sharing with the Polish *mimo* the same etymological origin (see also Miklosich 1977). Nowadays such forms are used both in locative sense (‘past’, ‘next to’) and in more abstract, semantically akin, functions (e.g. ‘out’, ‘more than’, ‘except’, ‘moreover’). However, to the best of my knowledge, in none of the Slavic languages, except for Polish, a semantic switch of *mimo* to concession has been attested.

### 2.3. Earlier diachronic analysis

The development of *mimo* has been only hinted at by a few diachronic studies. In her work on the History of Polish Syntax, Pisarkowa (1984: 88) makes a short remark on the evolution of *mimo* and suggests that the concessive function of this originally locative connector evolved from its adversative usage.

In a similar, though slightly more extensive, analysis, Bańkowski (2000: 188–189) points out a series of distinct uses of the original movement preposition *mimo* (temporal ‘for/over’, spatial delimitation ‘beyond’, comparative ‘more than’) and sketches the following path of development: SPACE > ADVERSATIVITY > CONCESSION. He argues that the concessive *mimo* *że* ‘although that’ arises through the ellipsis of the demonstrative pronoun *to* ‘this’ in the oppositive expression *mimo to*, *że* ‘against this that’, but he does not provide any evidence for this omission and does not explain how the shift from the locative into the adversative, and then into the concessive meaning would have occurred.

Other works (Mayenowa 1982; Urbańczyk *et al.* 1963) mainly deal with the usage of the adverb/preposition *mimo* in Old Polish (till the 16<sup>th</sup> cent.) and enumerate various uses/interpretations of *mimo* without distinguishing the coded meaning from inferential enrichments (see Table 1).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Croatian, Czech, Serbian, Slovenian, Slovak (*mimo*), Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Russian (*мимо*). I would like to thank Aleksandra Mladenovic, Maria Pirjevec, Dagmar Roberts, Jana Sovova, Svetlana Slavkova for the information provided.

<p><i>Mayenowa (1982):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. indicates a place, person or object being passed by and sited in direct proximity to, on the side of or close to;</li> <li>2. indicates a person or fact that should have been considered but has been omitted;</li> <li>3. with a concessive shade of meaning;</li> <li>4. besides, outside;</li> <li>5. beyond, more;</li> <li>6. before, earlier;</li> <li>7. not considering;</li> <li>8. adverb of place: nearby/ close to;</li> <li>9. adverb ahead, forward.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Urbańczyk et al. (1963):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. comparative: more than, beyond, super, ultra;</li> <li>2. beyond the temporal limit: longer than, plus;</li> <li>3. out, outside, extra;</li> <li>4. close to, near, circa;</li> <li>5. besides, moreover, except;</li> <li>6. against, contra, counter to;</li> <li>7. in addition: indicating unexpected or additional events, ultra, super.</li> </ol>
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Table 1. *A variety of uses of mimo in Old Polish*

Except for the above mentioned studies, the semantic development of the connector *mimo* and, in particular, its change from space to concession have not been addressed in the literature. In the next section, I will reconstruct the stages of the evolution of this connector, trying to identify its main semantic function (meaning) and examining the process through which the inferential improvements of the coded meaning of *mimo* have produced the alteration of its semantic range. The following analysis is based on the texts from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Text Sample).

### 3. THE THREE-STAGE PATH OF GRAMMATICALIZATION OF MIMO

In Old Polish texts from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, *mimo* is attested as a preposition (see (4)-(5)) and as an adverb (see (6)-(7)). However, within the total of 361 tokens, only 37 adverbs are identified. This seems to confirm an almost complete syntactic-semantic shift of *mimo* from a movement adverb to a more general locative preposition.

- (4) Rozmyślenia Przemyskie (c. 1450)
- K temu drzewu przyszedł miły*  
to this:DAT tree:DAT came:3SG.M dear:NOM  
*Jezus i poszedł mimo je.*  
jesus:NOM and went:3SG.M past it:ACC  
‘Dear Jesus came to this tree and went past it’.

- (5) Jan Mączyński, *Lexicon latino-polonicum* (1564), 200a  
*Wisła ciecze mimo Warszawę.*  
 vistula:NOM stream:3SG past Warsaw:ACC  
 ‘Vistula floats past Warsaw’.
- (6) *Kodeks Świętosławów* (1449-1450)  
*Mimo-śmy żeglowali.*  
 ahead - we sailed:PL.M  
 ‘We sailed forward’.
- (7) Szymon Budny, *Nowy Testament* (1572)  
*A mimo chodzący bluźnili go.*  
 and past walking.PART.PL.M blasphemed:PL.M him:ACC  
 ‘And passersby blasphemed him’.

The coded meaning is clearly spatial, but the original function of the adverb related to the movement in space ‘GOING PAST/AHEAD’, extends to the more locative, both motion and non-motion related, meaning of the preposition ‘PAST/NEXT TO/BEYOND’. The interpretation depends on the semantics of the main verb and can be paraphrased as ‘past/ahead’ when the preposition is used with motion verbs (*chodzić mimo* ‘to go/walk past’,  *płynąć mimo* ‘to stream/swim ahead’, *biec mimo* ‘to run ahead’), and as ‘next to/beyond’ when the preposition is used with non-motion verbs such as *mieć* ‘to have’, *być* ‘to be’, *dać* ‘to give’.

- (8) *Kodeks Świętosławów* (1449-1450)  
*Mimo to gdzie żak albo kapłan*  
 near this:ACC where abecedarian:NOM or priest:NOM  
*byłby żabiti.*  
 was:3SG.COND.M killed.PART.SG.M  
 ‘Near to the place where the abecedarian or the priest was killed’.
- (9) *Księga Grodzka Poznańska* (c.1435)  
*Wawrzyniec nie miał nowego działu z*  
 wawrzyniec:NOM NEG had:3SG.M new:GEN division:GEN with  
*Janem mimo stare granice.*  
 jan:INS beyond old:ACC.PL borders:ACC  
 ‘Wawrzyniec didn’t arrange a new division with Jan outside of old borders’.

The use of *mimo* as a locative preposition with non-motion verbs allows for a wide range of more complex non-spatial, and frequently ambiguous, inferential enrichments. First of all, the spatial ‘beyond’ is often used as a temporal metaphor, i.e. EXCEEDING TEMPORAL BOUNDARIES > ‘LONGER THAN/OVER’, as in (10):

- (10) Księgi ziemskie Pyzdr (1420)  
*Hanka była żywa mimo trzy*  
 hanka:NOM was:3SG.F alive:F:NOM.SG beyond three:ACC.PL  
*lata po snym mężu śmierci.*  
 years:ACC after her:INS husband:GEN death:GEN  
 ‘Hanka lived over three years after her husband’s death’.

The locative ‘beyond’ occurs also in comparative constructions (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2002: 123, EXCEED (to defeat/to surpass) > COMPARATIVE (than) pattern) receiving comparative ‘more than’, as in (11), and superlative ‘more than all’, as in (12), interpretations:

- (11) Psalterz floriański, Psalm, (c. 1490-1500), Psal 50, 9  
*Mimo śnieg ubielon będę.*  
 beyond snow:ACC whitened.PART.SG.M be:1SG.FUT  
 ‘I will be whiter than the snow’.
- (12) Psalterz Puławski (c.1490)  
*Krystus cerkwie swojej mimo wszystkie*  
 christ:NOM church:ACC his:GEN beyond all:ACC.PL  
*israelskie kościoły miłował.*  
 israeli:ACC.PL churches:ACC loved:3SG.M  
 ‘Jesus Christ loved his church more than all Israeli churches’.

Additionally, the comparison between two entities ‘one beyond the other’, presupposing in general the coexistence of the juxtaposed entities, can acquire in certain negative contexts an exclusive shade of meaning ‘except’, as exemplified in (13):

- (13) Biblia Szarospatacka (1455), 48, 22  
*Dam tobie coś jednego mimo*  
 give:1SG.FUT you:DAT.SG something:ACC one:GEN beyond  
*twoich braci.*  
 your:ACC.PL brothers:ACC  
 ‘I’ll give something to you (and not to) excluding your brothers’.

Depending on the propositional contents, the inferential exclusive contrast, based on the spatial exceeding, i.e. GO BEYOND > OMIT/LEAVE OUT, develops a variety of opposite readings such as ‘out’/‘without’ (e.g. *mimo wiadomości* ‘without being informed’, *mimo pozwolenie* ‘without getting a permission’), ‘to the disadvantage of’, ‘against’, as illustrated below:

- (14) Rozmyślania Przemyskie (c. 1450)  
*Soltystwa nie może nikt kupić*  
 village-administration:NOM NEG can:3SG nobody:NOM buy:INF  
*mimo pańską wolę.*  
 beyond lord's:ACC will:ACC  
 ‘Nobody can buy the position of village administrator without (→against) the lord’s will’.
- (15) Stanisław Orzechowski, Rozmyślania (1563)  
*Iż on chleb święty mimo poczciwe małżonki*  
 that he bread:ACC saint:ACC beyond honest:ACC.PL wives:ACC  
*i dziatki ich na psotę się obraca.*  
 and children:ACC their:ACC on joke:ACC RFL turn.3SG  
 ‘That he squanders the Saint bread to disadvantage of their wives and children’.

Finally, the spatial ‘beyond’ can also be inferentially improved with the sense of addition of another “exceeding” unit which extends the content of the first states of affair (hereinafter referred to as SoA): ‘BEYOND’ > ‘IN ADDITION TO’. Unlike exclusive enrichments, these additive ‘besides’/‘moreover’ readings require the spatio-temporal coexistence of two SoAs:

- (16) Michał Górnicki, Dworzanin Polski (1566)  
*Mimo rycerskie główne rzemiosło, tak ówiczęni*  
 beyond gallant:ACC main:ACC art:ACC so trained.PART:INS.PL  
*w rozmaitych rzeczach byli.*  
 in diverse:LOC.PL things:LOC were:3PL.M  
 ‘Besides the art of being gallant, they should be skilled in diverse things’.

The additive ‘beyond’ interpretation can also assume a discursive function, when the first statement, anaphorically referred to by the demonstrative pronoun *to* ‘this’, is metaphorically exceeded by the second statement. In some contexts, the addition of the second SoA, somehow unexpected in the light of

the first propositional content, creates a light concessive sense ‘and still’, see the following examples:

- (17) Rozmyślania Przemyskie (c. 1450)  
 <Beth> *po grecku mieni sie dom po łacinie.*  
 beth in greek:DAT change:3SG RFL house:NOM in latin:LOC  
*Mimo to jeszcze jest wątplenie (...).*  
 beyond this:ACC still be:3.SG doubt:NOM  
 ‘The Greek ‘Beth’ changes to ‘house’ in Latin, in addition to this it is still doubtful (if..)’.
- (18) Michał Górnicki, Dworzanin Polski, (1566)  
*Jeśli białogłony są skłonniejsze do grzechu niż*  
 if women:NOM are susceptible.COMP:NOM.PL to sin:GEN than  
*mężczyźni, a przed się mimo to wszystko więcej*  
 men:NOM and before RFL beyond this:ACC all:ACC.SG more  
*się strzymują od złego niż mężczyźni.*  
 RFL refrain:3PL from evil:GEN than men:NOM  
 ‘(Even) if the women are more susceptible to sin than the men, they still refrain themselves from evil more than the men do’.

In syntactic terms, the locative preposition *mimo* regularly governs names in accusative, that is, the case frequently expressing locative relations in Slavic languages. Yet, one of the first occurrence of the preposition with the pronoun in genitive, which subsequently substitutes accusative, is already attested in the 15<sup>th</sup> century within the sentence of comparative ‘more than’ reading:

- (19) Rozmyślania o żywocie Pana Jezusa (c. 1500), 568 Jo 15 3  
*Większej miłości mimo tej nikt nie*  
 bigger:COMP.GEN love:GEN beyond this:GEN nobody:NOM NEG  
*może mieć.*  
 can:3SG have.INF  
 ‘Nobody can have more love (than we do)’.

In the texts from the 17<sup>th</sup> until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the preposition *mimo* has three main functions: locative ‘past’, exclusive ‘without’ and additive ‘besides’. The exclusive and additive meanings cannot be considered as the mere result of inferential improvements of the coded spatial meaning, since in certain contexts the locative interpretation is not available (see examples (22)-(26)). Therefore, at this stage *mimo* can be defined rather as a polysemous connector encoding three distinct relational senses.

As shown in (20) and (21), the preposition preserves its original locative meaning. The locative uses are still constant, though restricted to motion verbs such as *ić* ‘to go’, *przejść* ‘to walk/to cross’.

- (20) Jan III Sobieski, Listy do Marysieński (1665)  
*Od tego Szczecina pójdziemy mimo Filek,*  
 from this:GEN Szczecina:GEN walk:1PL.FUT past Filek:ACC  
*stamtąd mimo Koszyce do Eperies.*  
 from-there past Koszyce:ACC to Eperies:GEN  
 ‘We’ll walk from Szczecin past Filek, and then past Koszyce to Eperies’.
- (21) Jędrzej Kitowicz, Opis obyczajów (1740-41)  
*Przeszedł mimo generała-inspektora.*  
 went:3SG.M past general-commandant:ACC  
 ‘He went past the commandant’.

The locative function coexists with the other two relational meanings of *mimo* (‘out’ and ‘besides’) which become more frequent during the 17<sup>th</sup> and particularly widespread in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. While the exclusive function of *mimo*, illustrated by (22), (23) and (24), is often enriched with the oppositive ‘against’ sense and gradually disappears between the end of 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, surviving only as part of few fixed expressions (e.g. *mimo woli* ‘without one’s consent’), the additive function tends to be systematically improved with concessive readings, as illustrated in examples (25) and (26).

- (22) Szymonowic, Sielanki (1614)  
*Daly się dobrowolnie unieść mimo wolę ojcowską*  
 gave:3PL.F RFL voluntarily carry:INF without will:ACC father’s:ACC  
 ‘They were, of their own free will, carried away without father’s consent (→ against father’s will)’.
- (23) Jędrzej Kitowicz, Opis obyczajów (1740-41)  
*Czasem mimo potrzebę, jedynie dla umizgów kupujących*  
 sometimes without need:ACC only for caprices:GEN buyers.PART.GEN.M  
 ‘Sometimes without any need, just for the buyers’ caprice’.

- (24) Mikolaja Doświadczyńskiego, Przypadki, (1778)  
*Drudzy skarżą się na zdradę, że mimo*  
 others:NOM complain:3PL RFL on betrayal:ACC that without  
*ich wolą manuskrypt ich był porwany.*  
 their:ACC will:ACC manuscript:NOM their:GEN was:3SG.M stolen.PART.SG.M  
 ‘Others complain that without their consent (→ against their will) their manuscript was stolen’.
- (25) Mikolaja Doświadczyńskiego, Przypadki (1778)  
*Mimo naturalną z przyszłej swobody satysfakcją*  
 besides natural:ACC from future:GEN freedom:GEN satisfaction:ACC  
*wczułem żal prawdziwy z tej straty.*  
 felt:1SG.M sorrow:ACC true:ACC from this:GEN loss:GEN  
 ‘Besides a natural feeling of satisfaction, I felt a deep sorrow of this loss (→ all the same)’.
- (26) Krasicki Satyry (1779)  
*Droga jest zawsze droga pomimo wygody.*  
 way:NOM be:3SG always way:NOM besides commodity:GEN  
 ‘The journey is always a journey above and beyond (→ despite) commodities’.

Sentences like (25) and (26) encode additive relations, but are ambiguous between an additive and a concessive reading, inferable on the basis of the propositional contents, e.g. the feeling of satisfaction is generally incompatible with the feeling of sorrow. However, both interpretations make perfect sense, and it is rather the hearer’s task to improve the additive content with a concessive value.

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the occurrences of *mimo* ‘without’ (fossilized in few collocations) and ‘past’ (almost exclusively in archaic stylized texts) are extremely rare. By contrast, the systematic inferential improvement toward concession becomes the coded meaning of *mimo*. As showed below, the additive function of the preposition is not available any more, and its only consistent meaning is the concessive ‘despite’:

- (27) Maria Wirtemberska, Malwina, czyli domyślność serca (1812)  
*Mimo moje starania dowiedzieć się i ja*  
 despite my:ACC.PL efforts:ACC find-out.INF RFL and I.NOM  
*nie mogłem.*  
 NEG could.PST:1.SG.M  
 ‘Despite my efforts, I wasn’t able to find out anything’.

- (28) Adam Mickiewicz, *Dziady*, (1823)  
*Mimo deszczu, mimo chłodu, zawsze płonie!*  
 despite rain:GEN despite cold:GEN always burn:3SG  
 ‘Despite the rain, despite the cold it keeps burning’.

There is an interesting temporal coincidence between the alteration of the semantic meaning of *mimo* and the change of its syntactic pattern of case agreement. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the accusative case, the last trace of the spatial origin of the preposition, is ultimately substituted by the genitive case which, after having incorporated the proper ablative function, indicates in Polish various semantic relations other than possession and is used in many prepositional constructions (e.g. ‘from’, ‘to’, ‘without’, ‘than’).

The termination of semantic shift allows for the formation of a new syntactic variant of the concessive *mimo*. Through the addition of an emphatic prefix *po-* to the old form, the semantically parallel *pomimo* preposition arises. Both concessive linking forms coexist in Modern Polish till nowadays.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS: PRAGMATIC OR SYSTEMATIC PERSPECTIVE ON SEMANTIC CHANGE?

The question on the nature of motivation of semantic change is recurrently raised by numerous studies. With few exceptions, the pragmatic perspective seems to prevail (e.g. Hopper and Traugott 2003; Traugott 2004). In such a view, grammaticalization is seen as a gradual process of meaning change which in its early stage is activated by the context and hence motivated pragmatically (associatively). Accordingly, semantic shifts crucially depend on the contingent, thus occasional, context of discourse and arise through the conventionalization of Gricean conversational implicatures (e.g. König and Traugott 1988; Traugott and König 1991).

The data discussed here suggest the contrary, namely, that semantic development results rather from systematic inferential enrichments of coded meaning which are relatively independent of contingent discourse contexts and emerge by virtue of preformed conceptual affinities. Consequently, the driving force of semantic change should be searched for not in the specific speech context, but in the conventional meaning of a linguistic expression, or, in Gricean terms, in its conventional implicature (Prandi 2004: 417-420). Such a perspective focuses on conventional meanings encoded in linguistic form and assumes that their systematic inferential improvements are consistent with the system of long-lasting independent concepts.

To summarize, I have showed that the Polish *mimo*, first an adverb and then a preposition, derives from the domain of space. In particular, its semantic source is the motion verb *mijać* ‘to go past’. The verb lexicalizes the horizontal front/back progressive movement of a figure (“focal element”) with respect to the adjacent ground<sup>4</sup> which is “surpassed” and, as a consequence, left behind by the figure. The ahead/behind semantic opposition in the location of two entities represents, in my view, the salient property of the denoted spatial meaning and allows for a series of additional inferential interpretations by the hearer.

I have identified three main stages of the semantic development of *mimo*. In the first period, the preposition encodes locative relations ‘past > near to/beyond’. Depending on propositional contents, the coded meaning is synchronically improved with more abstract senses such as temporal ‘over’, comparative ‘more than’, oppositive ‘without’ and additive ‘besides’. All enrichments evoke a more basic reciprocal relation (ahead/behind) of two entities located sequentially in a space (cf. Traugott’s remarks (1982) on *but* (< be utan ‘at the outside’) or *besides* (< OE ‘be+ side’)).

In the second period, the preposition extends its semantic range by integrating in its coded meaning the semantic contents of two inferential enrichments: ‘without’ and ‘besides’. The polysemous *mimo* still conserves its original spatial sense, but the locative content of the connector becomes weaker and bound to few motion verbs. Conversely, the exclusive function, presupposing a semantic relationship ‘in absentia’ between two SoAs, and the additive function, requiring the spatio-temporal continuity or simultaneity of two SoAs, are in increase.

In the presence of suitable propositional contents, the new functions of the temporary polysemous preposition license divergent semantic enrichments. While the exclusive meaning is regularly enriched with the oppositive sense ‘against’ and ends by being “encapsulated” in few expressions such as *mimowolnie* ‘involuntarily’ or *mimowiednie* ‘unconsciously’, the additive meaning develops, through inference, another contrastive sense, that of concession.

In contrast to the previous studies, according to which the concessive meaning of *mimo* derives from its earlier oppositive function (see § 2.3), I suggest that the paths of development of these two semantically different senses are as follows:

1. SPATIO-TEMPORAL > EXCLUSIVE > OPPOSITIVE
2. SPATIO-TEMPORAL > ADDITIVE > CONCESSIVE

<sup>4</sup> For a figure/ground distinction see Talmy (2000:180-214).

The first path, originating in the spatial ahead/behind relationship, focuses on the back entity which is located behind and remains out of the field. This allows for a metaphorical extension toward the semantic exclusion ‘without’, and the subsequent oppositive enrichment ‘against’.

Unlike the first path, the second pattern is based on the coexistence of two reciprocally referential entities located in a space (*I am ahead because you are behind and vice-versa*). The spatial coexistence gives rise to a series of abstract relations ‘in presentia’ such as more complex additive and, finally, concessive relations. The explanation goes as follows.

Concession requires the factuality of two SoAs. In other words, the events or facts related through a concessive link must be entailed, that is, presented as SoAs which actually take place (Latos 2006). The entailment of the linked SoAs, a necessary condition for the consistency of a concessive relationship (Prandi *et al.* 2005: 98), implies that two generally “incompatible” SoAs coexist or co-occur in a space or time.

Therefore, the expressions signalling remarkable concomitance or co-occurrence of two events can be subject to systematic inferential improvements toward more complex concessive meaning and, as argued by König (1988) and others (e.g. Harris 1998; Heine and Kuteva 2002), regularly become semantic sources for concessive connectors.

The indication of coexistence of two events can be significant, and thus remarkable, if they are, for instance, not expected to co-occur: ‘*Normally if p, then not q*’. This is why by saying that a SoA occurs “in addition” to another SoA, the speaker often creates a concessive sense. This is the reason, on the other hand, why this kind of systematic enrichment can become part of the coded meaning of an additive connector, provoking its semantic change toward concessive contrast, as in the case of the Polish *mimo*.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person	INS	instrumental
2	second person	LOC	locative
3	third person	M	masculine
ACC	accusative	N	neuter
ADJ	adjective	NEG	negation
ADV	adverb	NOM	nominative
COMP	comparative	PART	participle
COND	conditional	PL	plural
DAT	dative	PRS	present
F	feminine	PST	past
FUT	future	RFL	reflexive
GEN	genitive	SG	singular

## TEXT SAMPLE

- 15<sup>th</sup>: *Księgi ziemskie Pysdr; Księga Grodzka Poznańska, Rozmyślenia Przemyskie; Kodeks Świętosławów; Kodeks Działyńskich; Najstarsze staropolskie tłumaczenie Ortyli magdeburskich; Biblia Szarospatacka; Kodeks Świętosławów; Wyroki Sądów Miejskich czyli Ortyle; Psalterz Putanski; Książeczka Nawojki; Psalterz floriański - Psalm.*
- 16<sup>th</sup>: *Rozmyślenia o żywocie Pana Jezusa; Marcin Bielski Żywoty Filozofow; Stanisław Orzechowski Rozmyślenia; Jan Mączyński Lexicon latino-polonicum; Michał Górnicki Dworzanin Polski; Mikołaj Rej Żywot Człowieka Poczciwego; Szymon Budny Nowy Testament; Szymon Budny Nowy Testament; Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski O Obyczajach. O Prawach. Fragmenty. Przekład Cypriana Bazyliska; Ambrosius Calepinus Dictionarium decem linguarum; Jan Kochanowski Pieśni.*
- 17<sup>th</sup>: *Mikołaj Sęp Szarzyński Rytmu Abo Wiersze Polskie; Szymon Szymonowic Sielanki; Jan Andrzej Morstin Wybór Wierszy; Jan III Sobieski Listy Do Marysienki.*
- 18<sup>th</sup>: *Jędrzej Kitowicz Opis obyczajów; Benedykt Chmielowski Nowe Ateny albo akademia wszelkiej sciencyi pełna; Mikołaja Doświadczyńskiego Przypadki; Franciszek Zabłocki Firycy w żalotach; Krasicki Satyry, Bajki; Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz Powrót Pości.*
- 19<sup>th</sup>: *Józef Pawlikowski Czy Polacy mogą się wybić na niepodległość?; Maria Wirtemberska Malwina, czyli domysłność serca; Adam Mickiewicz Dziady III, Pan Tadeusz; Józef Bohdan Dziekoński Sędziwoj; Maria Konopnicka Utwory Wybrane; Eliza Orzeszkowa Nad Niemnem.*

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