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J'ai couru au bar 'I ran to the bar' A purpose-oriented verb of manner of motion

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Two uses of *courir* 'run'

Tous les enfants couraient dans le jardin
'All the kids were running in the garden'

Après l'école, tous les enfants ont aussitôt couru au parc
'After school, all the kids ran straight away to the park'

Verbs with a 'goal-oriented trend' (Aurnague, 2011; Sarda, 2019)

Couler 'flow', *dégringoler* 'tumble', *glisser* 'slide'

The accomplishment use is regularly derived from the activity use

Courir à 'run to', interpreted as an accomplishment

Is it an example of this scheme ?

We noticed a specific behaviour of this construction

Is it an independent lexical entry?

Outline

Unexpected semantic changes

A locative construction with a meaning of purpose

Conclusion



Unexpected semantic changes

Manners of motion

J'ai couru tout à l'heure
'I ran earlier'

I ran in the physical sense

J'ai couru à l'opéra tout à l'heure
'I hurried to the opera earlier'

I may also have driven, taken the underground or even walked

The lexicon-grammar model: lexical entries / observable properties
Practice makes extensive use of semantic comparison between sentences
with a minimal difference (Gross, 1975a: 391-392)

Notion of haste

Aujourd'hui, j'ai couru à petite vitesse, mais plus longtemps
'Today I ran at low speed, but longer'

?* *Après l'école, les enfants ont couru au parc à petite vitesse*
'After school, the kids ran (in + to) the park at low speed'

Lexicon-grammar model: practice involves delimiting lexical entries, including when describing the behaviour of a single verb requires several lexical entries

Other verbs with a goal-oriented trend

No changes in the manner of motion

Tous les déchets de la cuve ont coulé pendant une heure

'All the waste in the tank flew during an hour'

Tous les déchets de la cuve ont coulé dans la rivière en une heure

'All the waste in the tank flew into the river in one hour'

Maybe no changes either with *courir* and the prepositions *dans, jusqu'à, sur...*

Les enfants ont couru à petite vitesse jusqu'au parc en dix minutes

'The kids ran to the park at low speed in ten minutes'

If the regular relation related *courir* (activity) with *courir à* (accomplishment), meaning would not change idiosyncratically

The process defining the verbs with a goal-oriented trend could be encoded in the lexicon-grammar of French

Courir à (accomplishment) would have to be encoded separately



A locative construction with a meaning of purpose

Courir à (accomplishment) incorporates a notion of purpose (Sarda, 2019)

?Les enfants ont couru au parc

'The kids ran to the park'

Activity or accomplishment?

Après l'école, les enfants ont couru au parc

'After school, the kids ran to the park'

Accomplishment

Après l'école, les enfants ont couru au parc s'amuser

'After school, the kids ran to the park and played around'

Expression of the site-related purpose with *courir à*

'Integrated site' nouns: *bar* 'bar', *gare* 'station'...

Context in discourse

Infinitive clause

- with *pour* 'for'
- bare

'Integrated site' nouns

J'ai couru à la (gare + pharmacie + boulangerie + poste +...)

'I ran to the (station + chemist's + bakery + post office +...)'

J'ai couru au (bar + café + bureau +...)

'I ran to the (bar + café + office +...)'

Generic reading of the determiner *le/la* in the singular (Guillet, 1984)

? *J'ai couru à une gare*

'I ran to a station'

? *J'ai couru aux gares*

'I ran to the stations'

The site appears more concrete and specific

Avant de prendre votre appel, j'ai couru à la (gare + poste + ...)

'Before taking your phone call, I ran to the (station + post office +...)'

Social routines (Vandeloise, 1988)

Je suis à la (gare + pharmacie + boulangerie + poste +...)

'I am at the (station + chemist's + bakery + post office +...)'

Je suis au (bar + café + bureau +...)

'I am at the (bar + café + office+...)'

**Fabiola est à l'armoire*

'Fabiola is at the wardrobe'

?*Fabiola courut à l'armoire* *cf. ? Les enfants ont couru au parc*

'Fabiola ran to the wardrobe'

The purpose is included in the site noun

Peux-tu courir à la boulangerie ?

'Can you run to the bakery?'

Coming back without bread would require an explanation

In discourse

Explanation (Asher & Sablayrolles 1995)

Jean a couru dans le jardin. Il a vu le chat par la fenêtre et a voulu l'attraper.

'John ran into the garden. He saw the cat through the window and wanted to catch it'

The discourse relation and the relation between the purpose and the site trigger the goal interpretation of *dans le jardin*

Les enfants ont couru au parc. Il y a un chameau en liberté.

'The kids ran to the park. There's a camel running free there'

vs. ?*Les enfants ont couru au parc*

'The kids ran to the park'

The site-related purpose makes *au parc* acceptable

***Pour* 'for' and an infinitive clause**

Le garçon courut au mur pour tirer sur le lierre
'The boy ran to the wall to pull the ivy'

The site-related purpose makes *au mur* acceptable

Pour tirer sur le lierre, le garçon courut au mur
'To pull the ivy, the boy ran to the wall'

This adjunct is compatible with *courir* (activity)

Le garçon a couru dans le jardin pendant une heure pour se défouler
'The boy ran inside the garden during one hour to let off steam'
Pour se défouler, le garçon a couru dans le jardin pendant une heure
'To let off steam, the boy ran inside the garden during one hour'

With a bare infinitive clause

Le garçon courut au mur tirer sur le lierre
'The boy ran to the wall and pulled the ivy'

**Le garçon a couru pendant une heure se défouler*
lit. 'The boy ran during one hour let off steam'

**Tirer sur le lierre, le garçon courut au mur*
lit. 'Pull the ivy, the boy ran to the wall'

Il a couru à la pharmacie acheter ses médicaments mais il n'y en avait pas
'He ran to the chemist's to buy his drugs but there weren't any'

(cf. Sandfeld, 1965: 153)

The infinitive clause is nuclear, not peripheral (Lamiroy, 1983: 49)

***Courir* with a bare infinitive clause and no goal PP**

Le garçon courut tirer sur le lierre
'The boy ran and pulled the ivy'

Same semantic features

Haste, possibility of other means of locomotion than running

?**Après l'école, les enfants ont couru à petite vitesse s'amuser*
'After school, the kids ran at low speed to play around'

Jean court acheter le journal ≠ *Jean va acheter le journal en courant*
'Jean hurries and buys a newspaper' 'Jean goes and buys a newspaper running'
(cf. Lamiroy, 1983: 88)

Relationship between *à Nloc* and *V-inf*

Same paradigm? (Gross, 1975b; Lamiroy, 1983)

Où l'enfant a-t-il couru ?

'Where did the kid run to?'

— *Jouer au ballon*

'— To play with a ball'

Distinct arguments?

L'enfant a couru au jardin jouer au ballon

'The kid ran to the garden and played with a ball'

No coordination

No prosodic marker of an apposition

Without any expression of purpose?

Let us imagine a story that begins this way:

*Il y avait un garçon dans un jardin entouré d'un mur. *Le garçon courut au mur.*
lit. 'There was a boy in a garden enclosed with a wall. The boy ran to the wall.'

French speakers miss an indication of purpose

Il y avait un garçon dans un jardin entouré d'un mur. Le garçon courut vers le mur.
'There was a boy in a garden enclosed with a wall. The boy ran towards the wall.'

No purpose is required with *courir* (activity)

Other accomplishment verbs with *à Nloc* and *V-inf*

No changes in the manner of motion

Le train a foncé de Montereau à Lyon
'The train sped from Montereau to Lyon'
Luc a foncé acheter des cigarettes
'Luc dashed and bought cigarettes'

Luc est parti
'Luc left'
Luc est parti acheter des cigarettes
'Luc left to buy cigarettes'

If a regular relation related *courir à Nloc* and *courir V-inf* to another construction of *courir*, meaning would not change idiosyncratically

Conclusion

Idiosyncrasies of *courir à* and *courir V-inf*

Changes in the manner of motion
Requirement of a purpose

Other verbs with a goal-oriented trend

The process observed for *couler, dégringoler, glisser...* does not account for these idiosyncrasies

Other accomplishment verbs with *à Nloc* and *V-inf*

The processes observed for *foncer, partir...* do not account for these idiosyncrasies

This construction requires a separate description as a distinct sentential frame and lexical entry

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