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Diachronic Investigations of False Friends¹

A number of internationalisms originating from Latin have different meanings in English from their cognates in other European languages. This paper presents the results of an investigation of words such as *actually*, *eventually*, *etiquette*, *fabric*, *billion*, *chef*, *preservative*, *sensible*, *sympathetic*, *biscuit* in Oxford English Dictionary. All these words have retained more or less the same meaning in German, Spanish and Croatian (each taken in this research as a representative of three major linguistic branches of the Indo-European language family), whereas English shows a departure from the original meaning. The causes for the shift in meaning are explained through the cognitive mechanisms of metonymy and metaphor and a tentative period is determined when these semantic changes were under way in the course of the development of the English language.

1. Introduction

Although the topic of false friends has been exploited for almost a century (Koessler and Derocquigny 1928, Ivir 1968, Nilsen 1977, Chamizo Domínguez and Nerlich 2002)², ever since Koessler and Derocquigny gave them this name back in 1928, there is still new light that can be thrown on this topic, espe-

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- 1 This is a revised version of a paper read in the general section of the 10th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference 2007 (July 15–21) in Krakow, Poland.
 - 2 Exploring the topic of false friends also has a long tradition in Croatia. Besides Ivir, who is credited with coining the term *false pairs* (1968), and has written several articles about this phenomenon using contrastive analysis between English and Croatian (1975), Maslina Ljubčić (2000, 2002 and 2003) has written about false friends primarily between Italian and Croatian, but also contrasting other combinations of languages. Other notable Croatian authors include Franolić (1976), Jernej (1977) Spalatin (1990) and Brdar (1992).

cially with the help of concepts from cognitive linguistics. However, it must be noted that Koessler and Derocquigny only came up with the metaphorical term *faux amis*, which gained wide currency until this day, whereas the phenomenon of such linguistic interference has long been studied, with some works dating back to the 17th century. As for other terms that have been used for this linguistic phenomenon, there are *false equivalents*, *false cognates*, *false pairs*, *deceptive words*, *treacherous twins* and *belles infidèles* to name but a few.

From a synchronic point of view, the linguistic phenomenon of false friends is usually defined as a situation in which two words are the same or similar either in speech or in writing in two languages but their meaning is different. This gives rise to problems in language learning and translating. They are known to cause difficulty for students learning a foreign language because students are likely to misidentify the words due to language interference (Breitkreuz 1973). In this paper I will not touch upon the question why certain false friends create problems to language learners and translators, but focus on the question of how false friends came about.

Chamizo Domínguez (2007) classifies false friends into two groups: chance false friends and semantic false friends. The latter group is further subdivided into full semantic false friends and partial semantic false friends. Full semantic false friends are two words sharing the same etymological origin but with no overlap in meaning, whereas partial semantic false friends have at least one meaning in common, e. g. English *battery* and Croatian *baterija*, where apart from the shared meaning denoting 'a device that produces electricity', the English word can mean 'a large number of things of a similar type' and the Croatian word can mean 'flashlight' or 'torch'.

Chance false friends are always full false friends and can be illustrated with the following examples:

- (1) Italian *burro* ('butter') and Spanish *burro* ('donkey') are false cognates, i. e. false friends whose etymologies have nothing in common.
- (2) The French noun *coin* ('corner') and the English noun *coin* look exactly the same in writing because of a fortuitous diachronic process.

This overlap in sharing the same signifier can be examined cross-linguistically in some words. For example, the French noun *van* ('sieve; horse trailer') and the English noun *van* share the same spelling, but they mean completely different things. This word also exists in other languages with somewhat different pronunciations but still with exactly the same spelling, as for instance the Dutch preposition *van* ('of'), the Spanish verb form *van* ('they go', third person plural simple present tense of the verb *ir*), the Croatian adverb *van* ('outward', 'outside') or the Swedish adjective *van* ('practiced', 'experienced', 'trained'). We may consider the example of the word *van* a six-fold false friend, and I am certain that the list of languages that contain this word does not stop here. We may look upon these examples as homonymy across two or more different languages.

- (3) French: *Le paysan secouait le blé dans un van.*
(The peasant was shaking the wheat in a **sieve**.)

- (4) English: *We wanted to come here by **van**.*
 (5) Dutch: *Dit is het huis **van** mijn ouders.*
 (*This is the house **of** my parents.*)
 (6) Spanish: *¿Adónde creen ustedes que **van**?*
 (*Where do you think you **are going**?*)
 (7) Croatian: *Danas idemo svi **van**.*
 (*Today we are all going **out**.*)
 (8) Swedish: *Han är gammal och **van**.*
 (*He is old and **skilful**.*)

However, the other group is quite different. For instance, the French pronoun *personne* ('nobody') and the English noun *person* are etymologically related, so they are not false cognates, but are false friends.

- (9) French: ***Personne** ne le sait mieux que vous.*
 (***Nobody** knows it better than you.*)
 (10) English: *Do you think you are a good **person**?*

An example of a threefold full semantic false friend in the Germanic languages would be the English noun *gift*, the German noun *Gift* ('poison') and the Scandinavian adjective *gift* ('married'). Although there is an etymological relationship between the 'gifts' in the Germanic languages, it is not likely that the speakers of those languages would feel any conceptual link. The Scandinavian word is derived from the verb *to give* (Scandinavian *gi*), as being married in some languages is expressed through the metaphor of *being given to one another* or *having given a pledge*, cf. Croatian *udana* ('married', feminine adjective or past passive participle) from the verb *dati* ('give'). The German *Gift* came to mean 'poison' as a euphemism (i. e. metonymy) in a similar fashion like the English and French word *poison* sprang from the Latin word *potio*, meaning 'drink'.

- (11) English: *This was a **gift** from my parents.*
 (12) German: *Das ist wie **Gift** für ihn.*
 (*That is like **poison** for him.*)
 (13) Norwegian: *De er lykkelig **gift**.*
 (*They are happily **married**.*)

Another example is *fastidious* in English and its cognates in the Romance languages, *fastidioso* in Spanish, *fastidiós* in Catalan, *fastidieux* in French and *fastidioso* in Italian. According to Oxford English Dictionary (henceforth OED), this adjective means 'very attentive to and concerned about accuracy and detail', with its origin from late Middle English: from Latin *fastidiosus*, from *fastidium* 'loathing'. The word in Latin originally meant 'disagreeable', and later 'disgusted'. Current senses date from the 17th century. In the Romance languages, on the other hand, it basically means 'annoying, tiresome, irritating, boring' and even 'upset'.

- (14) English: *Dear colleague, your speech has been extremely **fastidious**.*
 (15) Spanish: *Espero que mi discurso no les sea **fastidioso**.*
 (*I hope that my speech is not **boring** to you.*)

To illustrate what a mousetrap for communication false friends can be, Chazizo Domínguez (1999: 115) opens one of his numerous papers on the topic with an anecdote about a diplomatic incident that happened during the course of a plenary session of the Society of Nations Assembly. After a long and exhaustive discourse of another delegate, the English representative, wishing to show his approval of his colleague's words, described his speech as 'fastidious'. This remark caused a diplomatic incident as the other delegate thought that his English colleague had meant that his speech had been tiresome and boring. He was quick to say that his speech had not been 'fastidious' at all, but he had spoken clearly and accurately about the subject that they were dealing within the meeting. We can presume that the interlocutor of the English delegate was a person whose mother tongue was one of Latin origin and that was the reason why he was caught in the trap of the false friend *fastidious/fastidioso*.

The list of semantic false friends is also an endless one, so the following few pairs of examples will suffice in illustrating the combinations of the European languages prone to exhibit *false friends* situations:

- (16) English: *He says he was **molested** as a child.*
- (17) Spanish: *Por favor, no me **molestes**.*
(Please do not **disturb** me.)
- (18) English: *He's an **advocate** of equal pay for men and women.*
- (19) Croatian: *Na sudu ga je branio **advokat**.*
(In court he was defended by a **lawyer**.)
- (20) English: *There is not a single cloud in the **sky**.*
- (21) Norwegian: *Det er ikke en **sky** på himmelen.*
(There is not a single **cloud** in the sky.)
- (22) German: ***Winkel** is der innere Teil zweier sich schneidenden Linien.*
(An **angle** is the inner part of two crossing lines.)
- (23) Dutch: *Ik ga naar de **winkel** om wat eten te kopen.*
(I am going to the **shop** to buy something to eat.)

The focus of this paper will be semantic false friends – internationalisms in English contrasted with their cognates in other European languages. These semantic false friends have the same etymological origin (Latin in this paper), but have developed different meanings in English. The question that I am going to discuss in this article will be how these different meanings developed or what caused the discrepancy of meaning of words that gave rise to false friends. In other words, I am going to investigate how false friends were created. The answer to these questions we should best look for in the cognitive view of diachronic semantics.

False friends have traditionally been expounded by contrastive analysis, particularly for pedagogic purposes because language students easily confuse words that look similar to those found in their mother tongues. As false friends are essentially a result of a semantic change, theoretical frameworks in contemporary linguistics might offer a new insight into this old problem. In

traditional linguistics, semantic change (as well as semantics) was not so much in focus as it is in cognitive linguistics. Traditionally, semantic change was regarded as a haphazard process by which the meaning of a word can go in any direction. Certain patterns of change have been noted and categorized, but they were not predictable and were not felt as a system. As a consequence, false friends have been treated in a similar fashion. They have usually been approached by cataloguing them. Individual cases have been described as anecdotes that can be rather entertaining to read, but eluding scientific analysis and explanation. Recent work in cognitive linguistics, headed by Elizabeth Traugott, has pointed to predictabilities and regularities in semantic change, which enables not merely cataloguing the phenomena, but also finding constraints that govern them.

2. Methodology

2.1 Polysemy and semantic change

The examples of semantic false friends can be considered to be a cross-linguistic equivalent to polysemy, one of the core areas of study in cognitive linguistics. Taylor (1995: 99) defines polysemy as “the association of two or more related senses with a single linguistic form”. The multiple meanings of a polysemous word are related to one another by means of a variety of cognitive mechanisms such as metaphor, metonymy and generalization. Therefore, we can claim that the meanings of that polysemous word are motivated.

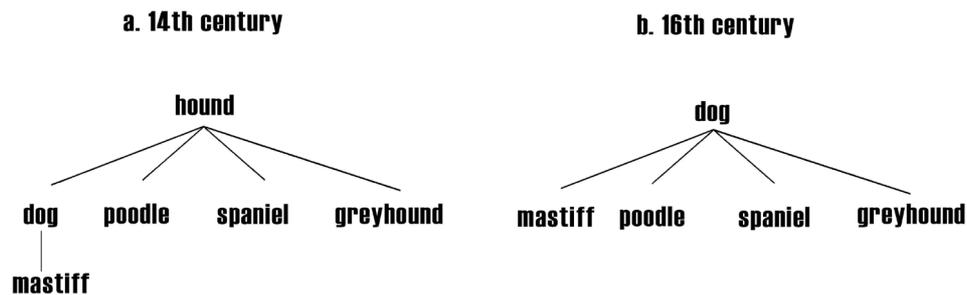
Geeraerts (1997: 6) explains polysemy in a nutshell as “the synchronic reflection of diachronic–semantic change”, while Traugott and Dasher (2002: 12) insist that “very few, if any, words in ordinary language have only one interpretation”, and that “polysemy is central to a theory of semantics and semantic change” (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 16). Polysemy is a prerequisite condition for semantic change, as is well explained in the following extract by Sweetser (1990: 9):

“Synchronic polysemy and historical change of meaning really supply the same data in many ways. No historical shift of meaning can take place without an intervening stage of polysemy. If a word once meant A and now means B, we can be fairly certain that speakers did not just wake up and switch meanings on June 14, 1066. Rather, there was a stage when the word meant both A and B, and the earlier meaning of A eventually was lost. But if an intervening stage of polysemy was involved, then all the historical data, as evidence of past polysemy relations, is an interesting source of information about the reflection of cognitive structure in language.”

In other words, according to cognitive semantics, several meanings of a word co-exist over several decades or hundreds of years, but their relationship to each other in terms of saliency may change. This will be clearly seen in all the examples of this investigation and will be shown by a schematic representation in this article.

Changes in categorization may occur, first, within the category or radial network³ or in the interaction of categories. Within the network, the items may be rearranged so that what used to be more prototypical⁴ is less so, or vice versa. An example taken from Dirven and Verspoor (1998: 216) illustrates the evolution of the words *dog* and *hound*:

(24) Change within a radial network



In the 14th century, the basic term in English is still *hound* (compare German *Hund* or Dutch *hond*). In Middle English, a *dog* is just another subtype, as is *poodle*, but probably a very frequent one, as represented by the subspecies *mastiff*. This 'dog' type of 'hound' was so frequently encountered that it became the prototype of the category "hound".

When we speak of changes within a polysemic structure, Raffaelli (2000: 125–141) shows on the example of the Croatian adjective *trudan* ('pregnant') how polysemic structures function in a diachronic perspective. In the past (and still in some Croatian dialects), this adjective was highly polysemous, including the meanings 'tired', 'hard', 'suffering' and 'sad'. It used to be conceptually linked to the noun *trud* 'effort', but as this link was fading, so the meaning of this adjective was changing. Changes between the members of lexical categories reflect the changes between conceptual categories, so the most salient meaning in the past ('tired') has been pushed to the margins of this lexical category and a new most salient meaning has emerged ('pregnant').

3 In cognitive linguistics, the range of meanings of a certain word is often represented by a structured semantic network, with each element in the network connected to another element by some kind of cognitive relationship. The network is structured around a core meaning and is called radial because the various meanings are conceptualized as radiating out from a central point. Lakoff's (1987: 83) concept of 'mother' is the most quoted example in the literature.

4 Prototypical in this paper is used as an adjective derived from 'prototype', as defined by the psychologist Eleanor Rosch in the 1970s. According to the Prototype Theory, some members of a category (or network) are more representative, more central and more salient than others. Prototype is the most representative member of a category, e. g. robin is a more prototypical bird than penguin or ostrich (Lakoff 1987: 40–45).

2.2 Metaphor

According to cognitive linguistics, metaphor is not only pervasive in everyday speech, but is also grounded in our experience and thinking, and is subject to general and systematic principles (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3). Metaphor is typically defined as understanding or experiencing one entity or domain in terms of another. Metaphorical language is the manifestation of conceptual knowledge and conceptual structure organized by a cross-domain mapping, i. e. a systematic set of correspondences between two domains. For example, the domain of vision is metaphorically linked with the domain of knowledge. This in turn gives us the conceptual metaphor KNOWING IS SEEING, which has been recognized as pervasive in the Indo-European family of languages, as the examples of Latin borrowings from *spec-* and *vid-* roots illustrate (Sweetser 1990: 34): *inspect*, *survey*, *view*, *suspect*, *revise*, *supervise*, *interview*, *observe* and so on. Sweetser (1990: 19) considers metaphor as “the major structuring force in semantic change”.

2.3 Metonymy

In the past ten years of research in cognitive linguistics, scholars have come to realize that metonymy is a cognitive phenomenon that could be even more fundamental and more common than metaphor (Panther and Radden 1999: 1). Radden and Kovecses (1999: 21) define metonymy as follows:

“Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same idealized cognitive model.”

Just as metaphor was essentially a mapping across two distinct domains, metonymy is mapping within one and the same domain. Metonymy is based on contiguity relations such as part-whole (synecdoche), cause-effect, content-container. An example of metonymy as a cognitive principle triggering semantic change in English is the word *cheek* meaning ‘fleshy side of the face below the eye’. It is etymologically derived from Old English *cēace*, meaning ‘jaw, jawbone’. After the introduction of the Old French word *joue* ‘cheek’ for *jaw*, the meaning of the English word shifted via metonymy to *cheek*. Both words come from the same domain, body parts (or facial parts, to be more precise).

2.4 Other mechanisms

As for other mechanisms of semantic change, traditional classification would first list specialization or narrowing and generalization or widening. For example, Modern English *queen* ‘king’s wife, female monarch’ is a false friend with the Scandinavian word *kvinna*, which means ‘woman’, just as in Old English the word *cwēn* did. The development of the Modern English sense of the word is a case of specialization, in which one special woman has been singled out. The process opposite to specialization is generalization⁵, with one of the most

5 Geeraerts (1997: 95) also uses the traditional classification of denotational semantic changes, which includes four basic types: specialization, generalization, metonymy and metaphor.

frequently quoted examples probably being the French verb *arriver*, originally meaning 'to reach the river's shore, to come to the bank', but now it means 'to reach any destination'. The river, or via metonymy its shore, has come to mean a destination in general, through a metonymization or metaphorization – arguments could be made for both.

Furthermore, there are processes called degeneration or pejoration (pejorization), elevation or amelioration (meliorization), hyperbole and taboo replacement (euphemism) and avoidance of obscenity (Hock 1991: 301–305 and McMahon 1994: 178–185)⁶. A good example of pejoration is the English adjective *silly*, which in Old English (*sælig*) meant 'blessed, blissful' and then changed into 'happy, innocent' in Middle English (*sely*). The metonymic shift can be accounted for by saying the most positive thing about a stupid person: he is blessed by Jesus.

An example of a word that has undergone amelioration is *knight*, meaning 'mounted warrior serving a king', or 'lesser nobility', which developed from the Old English *cniht* 'boy, servant' > 'military servant'. Saying 'bathroom' or 'WC' to avoid using the word 'toilet' is an example of taboo replacement. Shift in meaning due to exaggeration by overstatement is hyperbole and can be exemplified by words such as *terribly*, *horribly* and *awfully* standing for 'very'.

From the point of view of some cognitive semanticists⁷, all these types of semantic change are subsumed under metonymy. They can be looked upon as subtypes of metonymization, as the shifts in meaning work according to the principle of contiguity or objective associations, which are fundamental characteristics of the cognitive operation of metonymy.

2.5 The method

The abovementioned concepts from cognitive linguistics have been briefly outlined because they will serve as an explanatory tool for shedding new light on the topic of false friends. I start from the hypothesis that interpreting false friends according to these principles of semantic change will clarify what led to the phenomenon of such lexical and semantic cross-linguistic relations as we find in false friends. This was not possible in traditional semantics, as it regarded semantic change as unpredictable and irregular.

3. The Investigation

The focus of my research will be semantic false friends between English and other European languages. I will compare the meaning of ten English

6 Ullmann (1962) distinguishes between nature and consequences of semantic change. The nature of semantic change includes metaphor, metonymy, folk etymology and ellipsis, whereas the consequences are widening, narrowing, amelioration and pejoration of meaning.

7 Blank (1999: 170–171) discusses the example of the semantic change *silly* (from OE *sælig* 'blessed' to ModE *silly* 'stupid'), labelling it as metonymy. He also notes that it was intended to be a euphemistic synonym of OE *dumb*. In other words, the categorization of this semantic change ranges from pejoration to euphemism, depending on the point of view. For this reason, categorizing the semantic change of *silly* under metonymy is more neutral and objective.

words with their cognates in other languages. Most of the examples are related to a Latin etymon, and are frequently dealt with in the vast linguistic literature on false friends. To keep the comparison consistent, three languages have been selected, each representing one of the major branches of the Indo-European languages: German for the Germanic group, Spanish for the Romance group and Croatian for the Slavic group.

If we take a look at internationalisms of Latin origin and how the modern European languages adopted them into their respective vocabularies, we will quickly notice that there are a number of words that look similar but whose meanings simply do not overlap. Everyone who studies English as a foreign language wonders at some point why the meanings of English words such as *actually* and *eventually* do not correspond to their cognates in other European languages. Why is English the odd one out? Just as the English are the only ones in Europe who drive on the other side of the road, and the only ones who do not use the metric system, this bizarre phenomenon could be seen as yet another idiosyncrasy that marks their language and culture. If the comparisons with driving on the left and a disparate measurement system seemed too far-fetched, with hardly any contribution to academic advancement, then we could look for patterns that show such peculiarities within the English language itself. Which other language in Europe had so many sound changes such as the Great Vowel Shift that resulted in almost every word being pronounced differently from its spelling and more often than not – in an unpredictable manner? Which other language in Europe has a spelling system in which you basically need to learn how to spell almost every single word?

Let us now analyze some words whose meanings in English differ from their European cognates.

3.1 **eventually**, adv. [vs. German *eventuell*, Spanish *eventualmente* and Croatian *eventualno* 'perhaps, possibly']

In order to exemplify this word in actual usage and how a translator can be a false friend victim, Chamizo Domínguez and Nerlich (2002: 1839) quote the contents description on a packet of a brand of Spanish gazpacho, which is given in English, German and Spanish.

- (25) English: *Ingredients: tomato, cucumber, pepper, onion, water, olive oil, wine vinegar, salt, garlic, and **eventually** [finally] lemon.*
- (26) German: *Zutaten: Tomaten, Gurken, Paprika, Zwiebeln, Wasser, Olivenöl, Weinessig, Salz, Knoblauch, **eventuell** [perhaps] Zitrone.*
- (27) Spanish: *Ingredientes: tomate, pepino, pimiento, cebolla, agua, aceite de oliva virgen, vinagre de vino, sal, ajo y **eventualmente** [perhaps] zumo de limón*

As we can see, the contents are indeed different, depending on the language which you read it in. The mistake was, of course, made in English, because the translator thought that *eventualmente* means the same as *eventually* in English.

The English adjective *eventual* and its derived adverb *eventually* were borrowed from French, where they still mean 'possibly' today, just as in other

European languages, which either inherited it from Latin or borrowed it (if they are not Romance). In other words, the semantic shift took place in English after the word was borrowed. Let us take a look at the entry *eventually* in the OED:

eventually, adv.

1. In the event of something happening.
 - (28) 1830 *Some **eventually** possible inconvenience.*
2. In order to provide against a contingency; in conditional terms. Obs.
 - (29) 1749 *So many of my letters have miscarried that I am forced to repeat the same thing over and over again **eventually**.*
 - (30) 1752 *I am sensible that they can only be met with by great accident at family sales and auctions, so I only mention the affair to you **eventually**.*
 - (31) 1785 *Not conditionally and **eventually**, but positively and authoritatively.*
3. In result (as opposed to intention). Obs.
 - (32) 1660 *I think that Hermione has but intentionally, not **eventually** disobliged you.*
 - (33) 1706 *King James was not deposed by those, otherwise than **eventually**: these were the Causes of all this.*
 - (34) 1729 *Other vices **eventually** do mischief: this alone aims at it as an end.*
4. In the event, in the end, finally, ultimately.
 - (35) 1680 *If one that shall **eventually** be shut out, may do all this, what shall become of the generality of Religious men that never do so much?*
 - (36) 1797 *Seneca endeavoured to employ every day of his life as if it **eventually** might be his last.*
 - (37) 1843 *Absentees will doubtless **eventually** disappear from Ireland.*
 - (38) 1879 *This line **eventually** became the brightest line of the whole spectrum.*

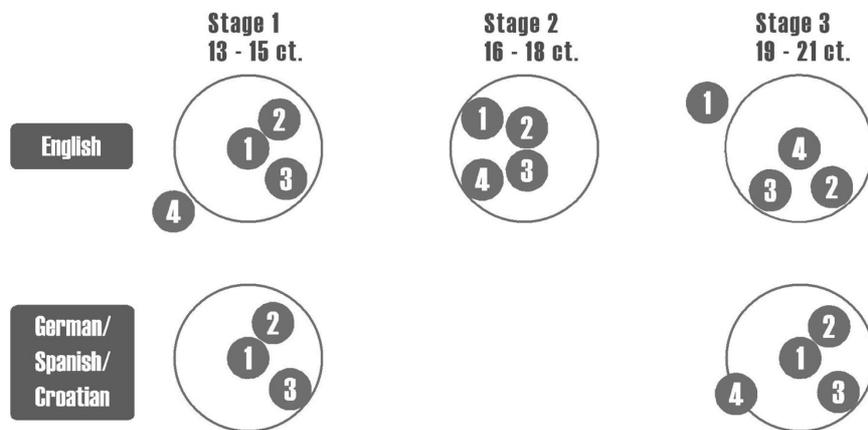
The meaning under “1” is nowadays obsolete, but it was a prototypical one in the past, just as it remained in the modern European languages. This is confirmed by the fact that it is listed as first in the entry. The OED groups the senses in chronological order according to the quotation evidence, or as the editors say “the senses with the earliest quotations appear first, and the senses which have developed more recently appear further down the entry”. However, the first attested occurrence of the meaning that we have today is from 1680 (see example 35), listed as third, whereas the one that has been abandoned, listed as first, has the first attested usage from the year 1830, as can be seen in the example 28. Even though there was a lack of evidence (i. e. attested usages) that the meaning under “1” was the first to come in chronological order, the lexicographers decided to put it in the first position. They assumed that the word in English was first used in that sense, although they could not prove it. They relied on common sense and perhaps evidence from other languages, and not the order of first attested usages when they were processing the entry ‘eventually’.

Dictionaries of current English give only one explanation for this adverb, which corresponds to the OED’s last sense. That is the third sense, but it could arguably be the fourth one because the first meaning is divided into two

subsenses. In other words, we have four senses, three of which are obsolete. They are all derived from the adjective *eventual*, which is derived from the noun *event*, whose origin is late 16th century and comes from Latin *eventus*, from the verb *evenire* 'result, happen', from *e-* (variant of *ex-*) 'out of' + *venire* 'come'. Thus we have a highly abstract adverb which travelled a long derivational journey. The word started in a spatial sense, and then developed a temporal sense (conceptual metaphor TIME IS SPACE⁸). Once the temporal sense has been established, making the temporal sense prototypical, the meanings are reset. The temporal polysemy frequently gives rise to conditional inferencing (cf. Traugott and Dasher's example of the history of '*as long as*' 2002: 39⁹). The change in meaning occurred when the adjective *eventual* was formed from the noun and the way its meaning was related to an event or events. *Eventually*₃ and *eventually*₄ developed a temporal sense via metaphor (CONDITIONAL IS TEMPORAL), and then through another metonymy (PART FOR WHOLE) further reduced to one part – its end. In other languages the meaning of the adverb is related to the noun 'event' in a conditional manner, meaning 'if it ever comes to the event', which actually corresponds to the English *eventually*₁.

The following figure is an attempt to give a schematic representation of the semantic change resulting in *false friends*. The centuries given are only rough approximations for the adverb *eventually*. Based on the years of first attested usages in the OED, we could only hypothesize when the words were actually being used in those meanings, so the centuries of the stages are rather tentative.

Schematic representation of semantic change resulting in false friends



8 In cognitive linguistics, the link between space and time is one of the fundamental conceptual links. We understand time in terms of space, which is reflected in languages across the world.
 9 In the history of the conjunction *as long as*, the original meaning relevant to the development of the temporal meaning was spatial. Once the temporal polysemy arose, the model is "reset", so that the primary meaning is temporal, which eventually gives rise to the conditional. (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 39)

The numbers in the small circles represent the different meanings of *eventually* as listed in the OED. The big circle represents a polysemic structure of the lexeme *eventually* in a given period. The prototypical or most salient meaning is always in the centre of the big circle. In the course of the development of the English language different meanings of the lexeme *eventually* are transposed, so a prototypical meaning in the initial stage becomes peripheral and can even be lost, whereas a meaning that initially did not even exist, later on becomes prototypical. The continental languages in the second row show that the polysemic structure has remained very stable. In the last stage we see number 4 entering the circle, which points to a possible situation in the future: maybe due to the influence of English as a global language, the meaning that hitherto did not exist in the continental languages (and which is primary in English) will some day be borrowed into German, Spanish or Croatian.

The principle of three stages of change in the saliency of meaning could also apply to other examples of false friends in this paper, but the number of meanings would be different from case to case, as well as the periods during which these changes were taking place.

3.2 **actually**, adv. [vs. German *aktuell*, Spanish *actualmente* and Croatian *aktualno* 'currently']

In the fourth chapter of her seminal book *Regularity in Semantic Change*, Traugott explores the development of adverbials with discourse marker function in English. One such adverbial is *actually* (2002: 169–173).

The adjective *actual* was borrowed in the early fourteenth century from French in the senses 'active' and 'real'. *Actually* was coined in English as an adverb of manner in the fifteenth century. Let us take a look at the OED entry under *actually*.

actually, adv.

1. In a way that is characterized by doing; with deeds; practically, actively. Obs.
 - (39) 1587 *Now, this vnderstanding is actualle* [? read – *alie*] *euerlasting, (that is in deede) and euerlastingly **actuell**, (that is doing).*
 - (40) 1651 *Christ shall come to judge the world, and **actually** to governe his owne people.*
 - (41) 1660 *Those who offend **actually**, are most grievously punished.*
2. Actively, energetically. Obs.
 - (42) 1470 *Then on foot they drew their swords, and did full **actually**.*
3. In act or fact; as opposed to possibly, potentially, theoretically, ideally; really, in reality.
 - (43) 1587 *This minde hath being and continuance **actually** and of it selfe, and euen when it is seperated from the body.*
 - (44) 1608 *He was here **actually** a Senator.*
 - (45) 1775 *Every substance that actually is, by **actually** being that thing, actual is not any other. A piece of brass, for example, actually is not an oak.*
 - (46) 1782 *I would have every man write as he **actually** feels.*
 - (47) 1868 *She sat with a fixed look, seeing nothing that was **actually** present.*

4. As a present fact, at present, for the time being.
 (48) 1663 *Workmen, **actually** employed in every work.*
 (49) 1699 *The Turks have **actually** evacuated Camineec.*
 (50) 1832 *The impeachment of the earl of Middlesex, **actually** lord treasurer of England.*
 (51) 1832 *The party **actually** in power.*

5. As a matter of fact, in truth, truly; indeed; even. Not said of the objective reality of the thing asserted, but as to the truthfulness of the assertion and its correspondence with the thing; hence added to vouch for statements which seem surprising, incredible, or exaggerated: 'He has actually sent the letter after all.'

- (52) 1762 *I had some dispositions to be a scholar and had **actually** learned my letters.*
 (53) 1849 *And this principle will be **actually** found, I believe, to guide the old workmen.*
 (54) 1863 *This woman **actually** imagines that there will be no slaves in heaven.*
 (55) 1878 *I **actually** found the door standing open.*

The five meanings listed in the OED could arguably be reduced to three distinct meanings:

- actually*₁ – 'actively' (OED meanings 1 and 2)
*actually*₂ – 'in fact' (OED meanings 3 and 5)
*actually*₃ – 'currently' (OED meaning 4)

Both *actually*₂ and *actually*₃ developed in the Early Modern English period, whereas *actually*₁ appears in the Late Middle English period. *Actually*₁ has become obsolete, and *actually*₂ has become the prototypical meaning in Modern English. *Actually*₃ still appears sporadically, but most native speakers of English are not aware of this meaning. *Actually*₃ is the meaning found in the cognate adverbs of the continental languages, which is how we get the false friends situation.

If we take *actually*₁ as the primary sense out which the other meanings were extended, it is not difficult to spot a metonymic shift ACTIVITY FOR RESULT from *actually*₁ to *actually*₂ and ACTIVITY FOR TIME in the case of *actually*₃ developing from *actually*₁.

The following examples of words printed in bold, along with their explanations, are also selected entries from the OED, printed in a different font, shortened and organized to suit the purposes of this paper.

3.3 **etiquette**, n. [vs. German *Etikett*, Spanish *etiqueta* and Croatian *etiketa* 'label']

[a. Fr. *étiquette* (:- OF. *estiquette*). The primary sense in Fr. is represented by Eng. ticket (an adoption either of the word or the synonymous *étiquet:-estiquet*): in OF. the word chiefly denotes a soldier's billet. The transition from the sense 'ticket, label' to that of 'prescribed routine' presents no intrinsic difficulty, but its actual history in Fr. is not very clear; the other mod. Romanic langs. have adapted the word from Fr. in the

secondary sense; It. *etichetta*, Sp. *etiqueta* ('a book of ceremonies hid in the king's palace', Del Pino Sp. Dict. 1763).]

1. a. The prescribed ceremonial of a court; the formalities required by usage in diplomatic intercourse.

b. The order of procedure established by custom in the army or navy (esp. with reference to promotion), in parliament, etc.

c. The conventional rules of personal behaviour observed in the intercourse of polite society; the ceremonial observances prescribed by such rules.

d. The unwritten code of honour by which members of certain professions (esp. the medical and legal) are prohibited from doing certain things deemed likely to injure the interests of their brethren, or to lower the dignity of the profession.

a.

(56) 1750 *Without hesitation kiss his [the Pope's] slipper or whatever else the **étiquette** of that court requires.*

(57) 1792 *Over head and ears engaged in ceremony and **étiquette**.*

(58) 1865 *They keep perfect time in this species of court **etiquette**.*

b.

(59) 1818 *It was to him that, in **etiquette**, the command of the expedition belonged.*

(60) 1848 *A proceeding, conducted with such minute attention to prescriptive **etiquette**.*

c.

(61) 1768 *The Letter, I was not altogether sure of my **etiquette**, whether I ought to have wrote or no.*

d.

(62) 1868 *The **etiquette** of certain professional functions prescribes that a service should be divided.*

2. A rule of etiquette; an observance prescribed by etiquette. Chiefly pl. Obs.

(63) 1771 *This diplomatic lord has spent his life in the study and practise of **etiquettes**.*

3. In the primary Fr. sense: A label. rare.

(64) 1867 *German matches with the remarkable lines, 'If you want a light, I'll shine so bright,' printed on the **etiquette**.*

The entry under *etiquette* is more than explanatory. There were two senses of the word *etiquette*:

*etiquette*₁ – 'label', 'ticket' (of which it is a clipping)

*etiquette*₂ – 'prescribed routine', 'unwritten code of honour' or 'rules of behaviour'

The OED lists the abstract meaning of *etiquette* first, not only because it is first attested in that sense, but also because it is prototypical. However, the etymological information given in the OED entry explains which sense appeared first, so we should consider *etiquette*₂ as an abstract meaning that developed from a concrete one. This is one way of justifying the semantic change – the metaphor ABSTRACT IS CONCRETE.

However, I would argue that there is metonymy at play here too. Those rules were written on a piece of paper, such as a ticket, and then that paper has come to stand for the rules themselves (OBJECT FOR FUNCTION). As a result, the saliency of this word's meanings has changed positions in English. The primary meaning in English is *bonnes manières*, the formal rules for polite behaviour in society, and dictionaries as a rule do not list the meaning of 'label' anymore. In other European languages both meanings exist, but the most salient meaning is the concrete one, that of the label. Therefore, dictionaries usually list it as first, but always list the other meaning too. This means that it still exists as part of the semantic structure, although native speakers need not be aware of it.

3.4 **fabric**, n. [vs. German *Fabrik*, Spanish *fábrica* and Bosnian *fabrika* 'factory']

[a. Fr. *fabrique* (= Pr. *fabriga*, It. *fabbrica*, Sp. *fábrica*), ad. L. *fabrica*, f. *faber* worker in metal, stone, wood, etc. See *forge* n.]

I. A product of skilled workmanship.

1. An edifice, a building.

(65) 1483 *He had neuer studye in neue **fabrykes** ne buyldynge.*

(66) 1538 *Gibbes the last Prior spent a great summe of Mony on that **Fabrike**.*

(67) 1666 *The august **fabriq** of Christ Church.*

(68) 1664 *Men inspired to erect the **Fabrick** of the Church.*

(69) 1788 *Force of genius sufficient to shake the Aristotelian **fabric**.*

2. A contrivance; an engine or appliance. Obs.

(70) 1596 *When here that **fabrique** utterly did faile.*

3. Any body formed by the conjunction of dissimilar parts' (J.); a frame, structure.

(71) 1633 *Lord, dost thou some new **fabrick** mold Which favour winnes leaving th' old Unto their Sinnes?*

4. A manufactured material; now only a 'textile fabric', a woven stuff.

(72) 1753 *We are every day making new **fabrics**.*

(73) 1791 *Working up its [silkworm's] productions into a variety of elegant **fabrics**.*

(74) 1837 *The woollen **fabric** manufactured in these establishments.*

(75) 1883 *The people in Nagasaki are fast going back to their old practice of spinning this class of **fabric** for themselves.*

III.8. A building erected for purposes of manufacture; a place where work is carried on; a factory, manufactory. rare.

(76) 1656 ***Fabric**, a shop or work-house wherein any thing is framed.*

(77) 1777 *The Marquis has established a **fabrick** of woollen cloth.*

(78) 1844 *The first **fabric** of liqueurs which had any extensive renown was that of Montpellier.*

Once again we see that 'fabric' in the meaning of 'factory' does exist in English, though its usage is rare, as 'factory' has taken over. Through the metonymy PRODUCER FOR THE THING PRODUCED, 'fabric' has come to mean the product produced in factories, which has further been reduced (specialized) to a certain

kind of product, namely textile. *Fabric* in the sense of 'factory' must have been abandoned because of being a synonym with *factory*. As other senses of *fabric* were emerging, the word *factory* ousted the sense of 'factory' from the word *fabric*. It would be interesting to investigate when and how *factory* took over the meaning of 'factory', but that might take us off the topic.

It is also worth pointing out here that the examples 65–68 clearly show that it is impossible to perform a good search of the historical corpora of the English language because of all the inconsistencies in spelling. This word is spelled differently each time, and we would not obtain accurate results of the number of tokens if we entered *fabric* in the search engine.

To sum up, the highly polysemous lexeme *fabric* has lost the meaning 'factory', and through metonymy developed a new one ('textile'), thus creating a false friend with the German *Fabrik* or Spanish *fábrica*.

3.5 **billion**, n. [vs. German *Billion*, Spanish *billón* and Croatian *bilijun* 'trillion']

1. orig. and still commonly in Great Britain: A million millions. (= U. S. trillion.)

(79) 1690 A **billion**, or the square of a million.

2. In U. S., and increasingly in Britain: A thousand millions.

(80) 1864 in Webster s. v. Numeration.

The OED points to a rather confusing situation in the English language. Is a billion a thousand millions or a million millions? To make matters worse, there was another word in circulation, *milliard*, which is today used by most other European languages to denote a thousand millions, but apparently it has become obsolete in English. However, the confusion remains, if a French/Spanish/German billion is trillion in English, how much is the English trillion? Is everything each time shifted by a thousand?

If you look up the entry 'milliard' in the OED, you will find the following:

milliard

[a. F. milliard, f. mille thousand.] A thousand millions.

(81) 1793 *I may state their extra resources, from the regal and ecclesiastical plunder, at four **milliards**.*

(82) 1823 *I'll bet you millions, **milliards**.*

(83) 1874 *All those untold **milliards** of human beings.*

There is a note saying that the term is largely superseded by *billion*. However, again we have a word existing in English in the meanings found in the other continental European languages, but in this case the word in English has fallen out of use. Ivir (1968: 152) mentions this example of false friends, classifying it under 'different frequency of use'.

Comrie (1996) explains that there are two systems. In one, *billion* is 10^{12} and in the other 10^9 , which gave them the names 12-system and 9-system. The 12-system is also referred to as the German system and its spread across much of continental Europe is ascribed to German influence. The 9-system is

sometimes called the French system, although it is not used in France today because in 1948 French shifted to the 12–system. The United States took over the 9–system in the 19th century, and in recent years British usage has increasingly accommodated itself to US usage, which confirmed the status of *billion* as false friends.

This example does not exhibit any semantic changes that have caused the words being false friends between English and other languages. It is simply a situation in which there were two synonyms for the same numeral in English. Naturally, as is paradigmatic for synonyms, they could not continue to co-exist, particularly in the contemporary times of hyperinflation when this numeral is used more frequently than ever before.

The word *milliard* was coined at the end of the 18th century in France, using the word *mille* 'thousand' and the augmentative suffix *-ard*, which is ultimately of Germanic origin (as found in the words *coward*, *drunkard* or *wizard*, but also related to the English word *hard* and is found in Frankish compound personal names, e. g. *Bernard*).

The word *billion* was coined at the end of the 17th century and is a blend of the prefix *bi-* ('second power') and *million*. *Million* was coined in the 14th century in a similar manner like *milliard* (*mille* 'thousand' + augmentative suffix *-one*).

Large numerals are formed on the pattern of blending a prefix for power (*bi-*, *tri-*, *quadri-* etc.) and *million*. In the European system another adaptation of the word for 'thousand' was inserted (*milliard*) before following the same pattern that is used in the US.

This is the only example of false friends in this paper that is not a result of semantic change. It is the result of lexical change: a new lexical item was introduced which caused a systematic shift in meaning.

3.6 **chef** [vs. German *Chef*, Spanish *jefe* and Croatian *šef* 'boss']

[Fr.; = 'head, chief'; used absolutely for chef d'office or chef de cuisine.]

The man who presides over the kitchen of a large household; a head cook.

(84) 1842 *The **chefs** peace of mind was restored, And in due time a banquet was placed on the board.*

(85) 1860 *You have finally decided on the menu with your **chef**.*

The meaning of the English noun *chef*, whose etymology can be traced to the French noun denoting *head*, means the head of the kitchen in English today. This is a classic example of anthropocentric metaphor: other domains are compared to the human body, so 'head' in the sense of 'chief person in an organization' is a metaphorical extension of 'head' meaning 'upper part of the body'. The English *chef* has also undergone a metonymy GENERAL FOR SPECIFIC, so 'an organization' has been specialized into 'a kitchen'.

There are no examples in the OED that show how the meaning has become specialized from that which the modern English word 'boss' signifies today. The German word *Chef* or the Croatian word *šef* (both borrowings from French) mean 'head' in general, but they can also mean a specific head – the head of the kitchen. Spanish uses *chef* just like English, but the word for *boss* in Spanish is 'jefe', which is derived from the same Latin word.

Speaking of heads, it is interesting to note that German and French did not inherit their primary word for 'head' from their mother languages (Proto-Germanic **haubiþa* and Latin *caput*), but recruited a Latin word which denoted a container for liquid such as a pot, vessel or jug. The French noun *tête* derives from Latin *testa* and the German noun *Kopf* is an adapted loan word from Latin *cuppa*, whose English cognate is *cup*. Even the Croatian *ćup* is a loan word borrowed ultimately from Latin, via Turkish and Arabic. The Romans used the cup as a metaphor for the upper part of the head. This points to a fascinating interplay of metonymy (PART FOR WHOLE) and metaphor (body part is object). We also know that both the Germans and the Celts used a 'skullcap' as a drinking vessel during a ritual of honouring the enemy. This in turn gives rise to another metonymy – one part of the body (used as a drinking vessel) – the skull for another part of the body – the head (PART FOR PART).

3.7 **preservative** [vs. German *Präservativ*, Spanish *preservative* and Croatian *prezervativ* 'condom']

Although the OED does not list the meanings found in the contemporary continental European languages, Kruck (1981: 18) notes that it was used as a euphemism in the 18th century in the meanings corresponding to those found on the continent. The original meaning in English, listed in the OED as first but obsolete usage is "a medicine or other agent that gives protection from disease or infection".

This meaning was most likely the same in other languages, and there was obviously a later extension to cover the meaning of the 'agent that protects from pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases', but it did not survive in English. This confirms the pattern from previous examples. A polysemic structure underlies this word, one of which meanings has died out. It has come to mean what other European languages call *conservante* (in Spanish), *Konservierung* (in German) or *konzervans* (in Croatian) a chemical substance or preparation used to preserve things subject to decomposition, as perishable food-stuffs.

What is being preserved in one language is health, and in another is food. Therefore, we have a metonymy here by which one function replaces another (FUNCTION FOR FUNCTION). In one language what is protected against is unwanted pregnancy and contracting a sexually transmitted disease, whereas in another it is the decaying of food.

3.8 **sensible** [vs. German *sensibel*, Spanish *sensible* and Croatian *senzibilan* 'sensitive']

The OED lists a plethora of meanings. However, for our purposes the following selection will suffice:

I. That can be felt or perceived.

1. a. Perceptible by the senses. (In Philos., opposed to intelligible 3: in this use now rare.)

(86) 1374 *For it [intelligence] knoweþ þe uniuersite of resoun and þe figure of þe ymaginacioun and þe **sensible** material conseiued.*

a. Of material things or substances, esp. of instruments of measurement, as a balance, a thermometer: Readily affected by physical impressions or influences, sensitive. Const. to. Now rare.

(87) 1661 *Like the **sensible** plant, when the hand of flesh does touch it, she shrinks in all her leaves.*

IV. 14. a. Endowed with good sense; intelligent, reasonable, judicious.

Stigmatized by Johnson 1755 as used only in 'low conversation'. In some of the early instances the sense may perh. be rather 'capable of mental perception'.

(88) 1584 *If they were **sensible**, they would saie to the diuell: Whie should I hearken to you?*

(89) 1781 *A moral, **sensible**, and well-bred man Will not affront me, and no other can.*

c. Of clothing, footwear, etc.: practical rather than attractive or fashionable.

(90) 1888 *Nice, large, **sensible** shoes for all couples to stumble over as they go into the verandah!*

The meaning that Johnson tried to stigmatize has since become prototypical. In contemporary English, most speakers would say that the primary meaning of 'sensible' is 'reasonable, practical, and able to judge things well'. However, other languages have kept the meanings that correspond more to 'sensitive' as their prototypical meaning. Hence the false friend: *sensible* in Spanish, *sensibel* in German, *senzibilan* in Croatian. Note that both English and Spanish have kept the meaning 'noticeable' usually listed as the last meaning in their contemporary dictionaries.

In the adjective formed from the noun 'sense', we arrive at the primary meaning 'that which is able to feel'. If this ability is emphasized or intensified, we can easily account for the extension of meaning 'that which is easily affected by extraneous stimuli', i. e. 'sensitive'. This is a metonymic shift, as we have one feature augmented, which is the capacity to feel.

The central meaning present in English is accounted for through synaesthetic metaphor. It is a strongly synaesthetic metaphor (FEELING IS THINKING) as both the source and the target domain are perceptual. In other words, 'sensible' in English comes to mean 'capable of mental perception'.

3.9 **sympathetic**, adj. [vs. German *sympatisch*, Spanish *simpático* and Croatian *simpatičan* 'likeable, friendly, nice']

The following selection from the OED is relevant for our investigation:

2. a. Agreeing, harmonious, befitting, consonant, accordant (obs.); according with one's feelings or inclinations, congenial. (Now only as coloured by or transf. from 3.)

(91) 1673 *Thou thyself instead of coarse drugget shalt wear **sympathetick** silk.*

(92) 1875 *My imagination refused to project into the dark old town and upon the yellow hills that **sympathetic** glow which forms half the substance of our genial impressions.*

2. b. Tending to elicit sympathy (senses 3 b, d) or to induce a feeling of rapport; also loosely, pleasant, likeable. Cf. *sympathique* a.

(93) 1900 *The true Don Juan is not a '**sympathetic**' part.*

(94) 1926 *Macbeth is not made **sympathetic**, however adequately his crime may be explained & palliated, by being the victim of a hallucination.*

(95) 1965 *Being a lover of the south, I personally found it [sc. a novel] more **sympathetic**.*

(96) 1976 *It was not a **sympathetic** house and the furnishing and pictures were ugly.*

3. a. Feeling or susceptible of sympathy; sharing or affected by the feelings of another or others; having a fellow-feeling; sympathizing, compassionate. (With various shades of meaning: cf. sympathy 3 a_d.)

(97) 1718 *Your **Sympathetic** Hearts She hopes to move.*

(98) 1875 *You have faith in a friend when you know he is unselfish, and truthful, and **sympathetic**.*

The meanings listed under 2 have become obsolete. However, it is precisely this meaning that the continental languages have retained: *simpático* in Spanish, *sympatisch* in German, *sympathique* in French and *simpatičan* in Croatian, all meaning 'nice, pleasant', and not 'compassionate and understanding' like in English.

The adjective 'sympathetic' and its cognates all originate from the noun *sympathy* (Greek *syn* 'with + *pathos* 'feeling'), meaning 'feeling with another'. When it means 'feeling sympathy' (listed under 3a), the adjective derived from the noun *sympathy* actually preserves the original meaning. In the case of these false friends, the semantic change occurred in the continental languages. The metonymy in operation here is arguably AIM FOR CAUSE, and there is a reversal of roles of who is the one who is feeling sympathy. Conversely, he/she is the one who is liked.

This is the only example in this investigation that showed that English did not depart from the original meaning but remained faithful to the etymon, whereas the continental languages changed the meaning, thus creating another false friend.

3.10 **biscuit**, adj. [vs. German *Biskuit*, Spanish *bizcocho* and Croatian *biskvit* 'cake']

Beside a most interesting etymological journey that this word has travelled, the OED offers a rich array of forms that have been documented in the history of English:

4 besquite, 5 bysqwyte, –cute, 5_6 bysket, 6_8 bisket, 8_ biscuit. (Also, casually, 6 biskett, –kette, –ked, –kitte, –kott, –ky, –quette, –quite; 6_7 bisquet; 7 bisquett, biscot, –coct.)

[a. OF. 12th c. bescoit, 13th c. bescuit, 16th c. biscut, mod. F. biscuit, a common Romanic word (= Pr. bescueit, Cat. bescuyt, Sp. bizcocho, Pg. biscuto, It. biscotto) on L. type *biscoctum (panem), bread 'twice baked,' from the original mode of preparation. The regular form in Eng. from 16th to 18th c. was bisket, as still pronounced; the current biscuit is a senseless adoption of the mod. French spelling, without the Fr. pronunciation.]

Different forms of this word show that each culture has adapted it to suit their own needs. For this reason, biscuit has become a false pair, and so Croatian *biskvit* is soft and serves as a basis for cake, whereas in English it is hard and crunchy, and can be a synonym for 'cookie'.

The metonymy at work in this example is ACTIVITY FOR RESULT or ACTIVITY FOR PRODUCT. The process of preparing this type of baked product has given the name *biscuit*. But as the ingredients were slightly modified at different times and different cultures, the exact meaning varies markedly in different parts of the world.

4. Conclusion

In this paper my intention has been to point out to a pattern in the English vocabulary that gives rise to the situations of *false friends*. When certain international words of Latin origin used in English are compared cross-linguistically, the meaning in English is different. However, they are not conceptually unrelated. In most examples a shift in meaning is identified, which is explained through the cognitive mechanisms of metonymy and metaphor.

All these examples have shown that all semantic false friends arise from polysemy, a natural capacity and tendency of words to have numerous meanings that are all related through various metonymic and metaphoric connections. The semantic changes that caused false friends analyzed in this paper have shown a more significant influence of metonymy than metaphor. This confirms the hypothesis postulated by cognitive linguistics in the past decade that metonymy is a more fundamental cognitive process and that it is more present in language than metaphor.

This paper showed that cognitive linguistic theoretical and methodological basis could shed new light on the links between false friends. It has also showed that lexemes that share the same etymon, borrowed from one language to another, extend meanings through metonymic and metaphoric shifts.

The prototypicality of meanings of words shared by different languages vary from language to language, and some meanings become so marginal that speakers almost neglect them, are not aware of them, or do not even know

that they have died out, thus creating pairs of words across languages that share the same *signifiant* and etymology but not the same *signifié*, to use the Saussurean terms.

As for why prototypicality changed in English, the only *sensible* reason I can *eventually* think of is *actually* the result of a merger of the Germanic and the Romance vocabularies during the Middle English period. In order to avoid cases of near synonymy, words inevitably changed their meanings within a few centuries.

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Dijakronijska istraživanja lažnih parova

Lažni parovi, tj. parovi riječi u dva ili više jezika koje su slične ili istovjetne u pisanju ili izgovoru, a različita su značenja, već su dugo vrijeme vrlo popularna tema u lingvistici (Koessler and Derocquigny 1928, Ivir 1968, Nilsen 1977, Chamizo Domínguez and Nerlich 2002). Poznati su po tome što stvaraju teškoće pri učenju stranih jezika jer zbog jezične interferencije (Breitkreuz 1973) može doći do pogrešnog prepoznavanja riječi. Kad prevodimo ili uspoređujemo dva različita jezika, lažni parovi mogu nastati na više načina kao što su homonimija, pseudoanglicizmi, srodne riječi i frazemi (Chamizo Domínguez 2006).

Postoje mnoge engleske riječi koje dijele istu etimologiju sa sličnim riječima u drugim europskim jezicima, ali imaju različito značenje. Riječ 'eventually' na engleskom znači konačno, dok u većini drugih europskih jezika (njemački 'eventuell', španjolski 'eventualmente', hrvatski 'eventualno') znači 'moguće'. 'Actual' ne znači 'aktualan' na hrvatskom, 'aktuell' na njemačkom ili 'actual' na španjolskom, već 'stvaran'. Ti primjeri pokazuju kako je došlo do značenjske promjene kod određenih riječi u engleskom koje imaju svoje srodne parnjake u drugim europskim jezicima. Za primjere u kojima dolazi do lažnih parova između engleskog i drugih europskih jezika u ovom istraživanju odabrani su njemački, španjolski i hrvatski kao predstavnici triju velikih jezičnih grana indoeuropske jezične skupine. Ovaj članak istražuje internacionalizme u engleskom, kao što su *actually, eventually, etiquette, fabric, billion, chef, preservative, sensible, sympathetic i biscuit*. Najbolji historijski korpus za to istraživanje pokazao se Oxford English Dictionary koji bilježi primjere

prvih i najpoznatijih uporaba riječi, navodeći pritom i izvor i godinu sve do samih početaka engleskog jezika.

Uzroci značenjskih promjena tumače se pomoću kognitivnih mehanizama metonimije i metafore, a ponuden je i jedan od mogućih razloga zašto je do promjene došlo. Vokabular suvremenog engleskog nastao je spajanjem germanskog i romanskog leksika pa su tako značenja bila podložnija promjenama radi izbjegavanja bliskoznačnosti.

Key words: false friends (linguistics), internationalisms, diachronic semantics, cognitive linguistics

Ključne riječi: lažni parovi (lingvistika), internacionalizmi, dijakronijska semantika, kognitivna lingvistika