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QUALITATIVE CHANGES IN PHRASEOLOGY: GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND CATALYSTS*

Abstract. The article observes the qualitative change of lexical units as a natural part of language development process. The authors aspire to explicate the regularities in changes that the meaning of phraseological expressions has undergone. This is performed on the example of phrase *läheb nagu lepase reega* 'goes as on an alder sleigh' – an etymologically old and genuine phrase that is popularly used in Estonian dialectal, colloquial and literary language and which semantic meaning has been subject to the largest possible qualitative change. The reconceptualization of the motif can be explained by the context of the image's formation and the cognitive motivation of motion event.

Keywords: Estonian, aspect, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, image schema, motion event, phraseology.

Introduction

The qualitative change of lexical units is a natural part of the development process of any language and it is brought about by intralinguistic and extralinguistic factors. Compared to lexemes, phraseological expressions as language units are more cliché in contents and form and are less subject to change. Still, changes in the meaning clearly occur also in fixed phrases. We have chosen to demonstrate the regularity of changes on the example of a phraseological expression *läheb nagu lepase reega* 'goes as on an alder sleigh' for several reasons: (i) it may represent an etymologically old genuine phrase that is not known in the languages of the closest neighboring countries of Estonia or further away,¹ and this facilitates eliminating the extralin-

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¹ Traces of the view that alder is something of low quality can be found also in a North-Vepsian song: *ba'eiz' ajab koivheiz'ja kordeiz'ja, lephheiz'ja reguiz'ja* (from personal communication with Tiit-Rein Viitso; see also Lonin 2000 : 69; Melentjeva 1994 : 30). Karelians of the Tver Oblast used to say *elä pilkkua keyhän kelkkua, leppäni on oma reges* 'don't mock a poor man's sledge: your own sleigh is made of alder' (see Karjalan kielen sanakirja). In Latvian it is commonly said *viņa karjera iet lejup kā ragavas no kalna* 'his career is going down like a sleigh ~ sledge goes downhill'. (For this we are grateful to Silja Grünberg and Lembit Vaba!).

guistic factors of content changes; (ii) The phrase has been subject to the largest possible qualitative change as its original meaning 'go badly' has been replaced by a directly opposite meaning 'go well'.

The article is divided in two parts. The first part focuses on the identity of the expression: its origin, distribution, figurative mechanism, and the second part employs image schemas and conceptual metaphors in exploring the regularity in reversing the meaning of the phrase.

1. The origin and use of the phrase *läheb nagu lepase reega*

1.1. The origin of the images *regi* and *kelk* 'sleigh' and 'sledge'

The phrase *läheb nagu lepase reega* is an old authentic Estonian phrase, which precise dating continues to be rather problematic (further on this see Õim 2005). Most likely, the expression started to circulate during the period when sledges and sleighs as means of transport were adopted. Sledges may have emerged in the 13th century in order to facilitate the transportation of stones for constructing stone structures, or already in the 1st millennium BC when some vehicle was used for transporting stones for building fortified settlements. Initially, plough or harrow sledges, later also hay sledges, hind sledges, and hand sleds were used for transport. Simple runner-sledges were known among the Baltic and Finnic peoples as well as among their Germanic neighbours, while sleighs or sledges were not known in the eastern and southern Slavonic areas (Viires 1980 : 33ff).

In Baltic and Finnic languages the names for sleigh share the same root: Lithuanian *roges*, Latvian *ragavas*, Estonian *regi*, Livonian *reggõz*. The old origin of the word is emphasized by the Baltic-German *Regge*, *Ragge*, which was used to designate a local peasant sleigh (Viires 1980 : 46–47). According to Julius Mägiste (EEW 2442), the noun *regi* is of Baltic-German or Finnic origin. The diminutive form of the word, *reekene*, and the South-Estonian dialectal *riikene*, *reikene* (EKMS III 535) have been used as equivalent of the Estonian word *kelk*, 'sled', a smaller vehicle with runners of more recent origin that was used in more or less the same transport function (Viires 1980 : 39, 49). The fact that sled was equalled with a small sleigh appears to be revealed in the construct *nagu noor regi* 'like a small sleigh' (Käina parish). The word *kelk* has been derived from Swedish (EEW 767). However, Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann's "Ehstnisch-deutsches Wörterbuch" (1869) does not list the logical German words like *Schleife* or *Schlitten* (*Bauerschlitten*, *Handschlitten*) under translation equivalents for sleighs and sledges. Russian language contains various figurative expressions built upon the metaphor of winter transport vehicles, but it is not easy to determine their semantic equivalence with the corresponding Estonian metaphors; cf. for example, *в свои сани не садись* to its Estonian semantic translation equivalent *iga kingsepp jäägu oma liistude juurde* 'let not the shoemaker go beyond his last'. The difference of motifs was most likely conditioned by differences in the economic priorities of these regions. According to the Estonian ethnologist Ants Viires (1980 : 36–38), the distribution area of the word *regi* coincided with the Baltic countries, where people used simple runner-sledge, which functioned like a fork slide, and Eastern Europe, where the universal post sledge was used.

1.2. The spread of the motif in older and modern Estonian language

The motif group of *regi* and *kelk* seems to be in a state of torpor in modern Estonian literary language, the only exception are perhaps a few phrases. The dictionary of Estonian literary language (EKSS V 53) includes the phrase *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepse reega* 'goes as on an alder sleigh', whereas Estonian and foreign-language dictionaries only present the first variant. The indirect meaning of the word *regi* is not provided in this dictionary and it is only referred to in quotations (see Example 1).

- (1) *Kuid mu kooli asjus polnud Joonas küll minu ga ühel reel (= ühes nõus)* 'But as far as school was concerned, Joonas was definitely *not on the same sleigh* (i.e. agreeing) *with me*'

In the corpus of Estonian literary language of 1890–1990, compiled at the University of Tartu (<http://test.cl.ut.ee/korpused/baaskorpus/>), the number of occurrences of the phrase *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepse reega* remains a little under one hundred; there seems to be no preference for the first, more literary variant. The phrase emerges most often in the Estonian written press of the second half of the 1990s and the 2000s, while the use is more limited in earlier and stylistically more advanced texts. Also, the phrase has hardly ever been used in texts of contemporary media, such as online chatrooms, news groups, forums, and comment sections of online newspapers. The use of other phrases connected with sleigh and sledge metaphors appears even more coincidental (see Examples 2 and 3).

- (2) "*Susserdasin omaette, salamisi lootsin reele tagasi sada, meenutab ta nutuseid aegu* (newspaper Eesti Ekspress 2000) "I was dealing with things on my own, trying to get back on the sleigh (i.e. back on my feet)," he reminisces about the rainy days'
- (3) *Ta rakeda b valimiskampaania suusarahva ree ette, ja Tallinna linnajuhid annavad kirjaliku nõusoleku Nõmmele suusakeskuse rajamiseks* (newspaper Eesti Ekspress 1999) 'He's harnessing the election campaign to pull the skiing functionaries' sleigh and the leaders of Tallinn give a written consent for building a skiing centre in Nõmme'

While the dialectal corpus of Estonian language (www.murre.ut.ee/triip/murdekorpus/) does not include the phrase *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepse reega*, the database of Estonian phrases (<http://www.folklore.ee/justkui/>)² confirms the broad distribution of the sleigh metaphor in Estonian dialects (175 query results in total, see Examples 4–8). Corresponding utterances have been recorded also in the 1960s–1970s. In addition, earlier sources, including the dictionaries by F. J. Wiedemann (1869) and A. Saareste (EKMS I–IV), report these in great numbers.

- (4) *Pilistvere*³ *Eks iga töö ole esti võeras, tahab harjuda, pärast läheb kui lepase reega* 'Well, every task seems unfamiliar at first; it

² 90% of material included in the Database of Estonian Phrases is obtained from manuscript sources, i.e. utterances written down from informants.

³ In this article, examples are supplemented with a reference to the historical Estonian parish or source where it was recorded.

takes time, but afterwards goes as on an alder sleigh'; Lüganuse *Lasep kui leppäse riigä, laseb juttu nii et vahet ei öleki. Mõned asjad valestab* 'Slides as on an alder sleigh, talks so much that makes no pauses in the talk. Lies about some things'

- (5) Kullamaa *See oli üks kevade — tulime metsaveost, viimane pidu oli, vaat jää tee äärde — ei jooksnud regi ega ratas* 'This happened one spring. We came from transporting wood, this had been the last party and were almost stuck there by the road — neither sleigh nor wheel would run'
- (6) Pöide *Kuidas siis su oma elu regi libiseb, kus sa nüüd oma elujärjega oled?* 'How's your own life's sleigh sliding on, how's your life going?'; *Nüüd tema kelk õieti jookseb* (= nüüd on tal palju austajaid) (Wiedemann 1869 : 288) 'Now her sledge is running as it should (= now she has many suitors)'
- (7) Jõhvi *Vea nagu vene kelku* (= midagi enda järel lohistama) 'Pull along like a Russian sledge (= drag something or someone)'; Märjamaa *Vea bikke kelku ka vahel* (= valetab) 'He does pull the sledge (i.e. lies) every once in a while'
- (8) Häädemeeste *Ta on kui kelk järel pandud* 'He has as if a sledge tied to its back'

In this light, it is particularly noticeable that compared to dialects and other colloquial use, the figurative use of the words *regi* and *kelk* is rather limited in the Estonian literary language. It remains unclear why the metaphor has not been strongly established. One reason for that may be a change in people's living conditions; the abandoning of certain objects has made words and concepts fall into oblivion. As means of transport, sleighs and sledges have largely lost their practical importance, or their function has changed: sleds are known to be more used by children and as sports equipment or simply for riding for pleasure. Thus, sleighs and sledges as such are definitely not completely unknown for modern people. It is rather possible that the words *regi*, *kelk*, etc. are now less used for marking abstract phenomena (course of life, way of thinking, human relationships, etc.) because the items are no longer as topical in practical use. That is, changes in everyday life quite soon become fixed in our ways of thinking and, thus, also in language. This, however, seems a rather arbitrary line of reasoning, especially considering that many other archaic metaphors, such as the ones employed in Biblical expressions, have survived under similar circumstances. Another argument against the hypothesis is that in Modern Estonian language, phrases built upon the sledge or sled metaphor are quite common, understood in the context and pertinent. A fine example of this would be the embellished use of language by a well-known Estonian coach, Andres Sõber (*sai me kelgu peale* 'got on the sledge', *olime kelgus* 'were on the sledge' while speaking about a successful basketball match) or the plethora of results yielded by a Google search (over 10,000 results, see Examples 9–12).

- (9) *Siis on mehel uuesti ree peale saamiseks ilmselt vajalik läbi teha* 'The man probably has got to do whatever it takes to get

back on the sleigh...'; *Ei pruugi me suuta enam selle ree peale end upitada gi* 'We may never be able to pull us back on the sleigh'; *Proovitakse riigikaitse ree peale kontvõõraks sokutada* 'They try to get them on the state defence sleigh without being invited'; *Maadevahetajate ree peale üritas hüpata ka Rein Kilk* 'Rein Kilk was also among those who tried to jump on the sleigh of lot traders'; ... *hüpanud moodsa nu-jazzi ree peale* '... has jumped on the sleigh of modern nu-jazz'

- (10) *Mart Laar tagasi reel* 'Mart Laar is back on the sleigh'; *Tolerantsuse reel Mika on usinalt õppinud saksa ja türgi keelt* 'On the sleigh of tolerance, Mika has eagerly studied German and Turkish'; *Rehepapid suurel NATO reel* 'Old Barney's on the great NATO sleigh'; *Miks Sa siis ise olid nii rahvarindelane kui eestikongreslane, igaks juhuks kahel reel?* 'Why were you then in both the People's Front and the Congress of Estonia, on both sleighs, just in case?'; *Vana hea ree peal liuglev hirmusid külvav kooliinspektor* 'Inspector of schools, sowing terror and sliding on a good old sleigh'; *Mis seal salata, eks me ole palju aastaid sõitnud Jaan Tätte "mõnusa ree" peal, tänu temale on nii mitmedki teised meie autorid suurde maailma jõudnud* 'There's no denying, we've ridden on Jaan Tätte's "comfy sleigh" for many years now — thanks to him many other authors have made it in the world outside'; *Kuulsanimel kulgul üritatakse kohalike võimukandjate ustest sisse liueda* 'People are always trying to glide in the doors of local authorities on the sledge of someone famous'; *Vaata ikka, mees, kelle kelgu peal istud* 'Look, man, whose sledge are you sitting on'; *Ega kõik või ühe kelgu peal sõita* 'Not everybody can ride on the same sledge'
- (11) *Oma riigi saamine on meil kõike nii kiirelt ja põhjalikult muutnud, et annab ikka ree peal püsi da* 'Becoming an independent country has changed everything so quickly and thoroughly that you have to work hard to keep yourself on the sleigh'; *Neil ei õnnestunud enam ree peal püsi da ja et pärast viimaseid Riigikogu valimisi langesid nad Eestit valitsevast poliitkartellist sootuks välja* 'They could no longer keep themselves on the sleigh and after the last parliamentary elections fell out of the ruling political cartel'; *Kaotajate poolel hoidis oma tiimi ree peal Martti Varusk 26 punktiga* 'Among the losing team, Martti Varusk kept the team on the sleigh with the score of 26'
- (12) *Kui keegi hakkab vahepeal ree pealt maha kolima, tekitab see kindlasti probleeme* 'When somebody is starting to get off the sleigh, it will definitely cause problems'; *Mõistsin, et ta on ree pealt maas* 'I realised that he is off the sleigh'

The chart (Figure 1) summarises the popularity of the use of the phrase *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepe reega* on the scale of time and communicative

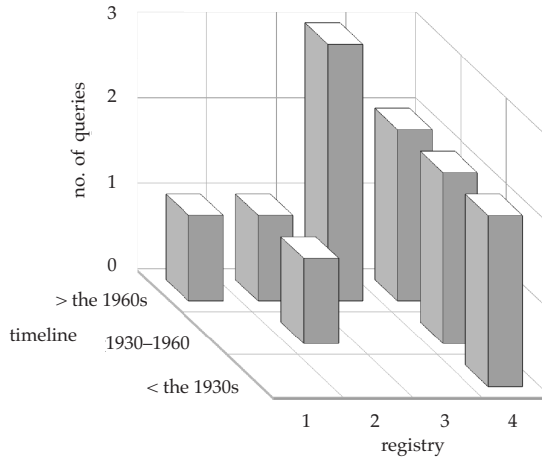


Figure 1. Popularity, time and situation of use of the Estonian phrase *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepse reega*.

situation. In order to juxtapose disproportionate absolute numbers we divided results from the corpus of Estonian literary language (<http://test.cl.ut.ee/korpused/baaskorpus/>), the database of Estonian phrases (<http://www.folklore.ee/justkui/>) and results of Google queries into three groups: (1) up to 20 results; (2) approx. 50 results; (3) over 10,000 results. According to the registry, we distinguished between four groups: (1) public written language use, esp. in academic writing and fiction; (2) written edited communication by means of the written press; (3) spontaneous written online communication; and (4) casual conversation in dialect.

Regardless of the temporal perspective, this forms a unit of predominantly colloquial speech, and next to oral communication is becoming increasingly acceptable in written form. Quite probably, this model characterizes the stratum of the earlier phraseology that is still active in Modern Estonian.

2. About qualitative shifts in the sleigh and sledge images

Phrases employing the image of sleigh or sledge tend to have a negative connotation: these are often used to refer to an illegitimate child, being in trouble, bad manners, negative attitude, etc. Characteristically enough, these phrases never entail an explicit evaluative marker. For example, outside the context, a modern language user will have problems recognizing the derogatory attitude in the expression *poeg isa kelgus* 'son on his father's sled' (EKMS I 394). Comprehension of such phrases is perhaps facilitated by learning that sleighs and sledges as year-round means of transport of a rather wide range of use implied a hard, toilsome and fatiguing work. Identification of life, hardships, similarity among members of family etc. with the image of sleigh or sledge seems to be characteristic of Estonian language only, whereas its distribution in local dialects is quite even and common.

A prototypical animal pulling a sleigh or sledge is a horse; if an animal of less power is mentioned in this context, the phrase indicates that the

work is not advancing as it should, things are going slowly or are failing. Nothing good will come of it when a man is mentioned pulling the sleigh/sledge instead of a horse (see Example 13).

- (13) Saarde *justkui kits kelgu ees* 'like a goat pulling the sledge (used to refer to a failing venture)'; Kose *Võtab hinda küll, aga sellegipärast on kits kelgu ees* (= *ta on sellegipärast vaene*) 'He bargains at a high price but even then has as if a goat pulling the sledge (= is nevertheless poor)'; Setu *nagu jänesel peräregi takah* (= *linnainimesele talutöö*) 'as if a hare is harnessed to the sleigh (= farmwork for townsfolk)'; *veab kelku* (= *valetab*) 'pulling the sledge (= telling lies')

If people follow in the footsteps of senior family members, they will become similar to them and may adopt bad manners. Taking things that belong to others or using other people's property is usually looked upon with disfavour (see Example 14).

- (14) *Pojad on isa rees, isa kelgus* (Wiedemann 1869 : 1045, 288) (= *pojad on isa sarnased halvast mõttes*) 'Sons are on their father's sleigh, on their father's sledge (= sons are like their father, in a negative sense)'; Tartu *Ega seegi regi teise ree peale ei lähe* 'This sleigh won't go on another sleigh either (referring to a young girl whose older sister is known for her lascivious conduct)'; Kullamaa *Sõidab teise kelgus, rees, saanis* (= *mugatseb, elab teise arvel*) 'Rides on someone else's sledge or sleigh (= freeloads, lives at someone else's expense)'; Kuusalu *Noorest pääst on elbul old ja teiste kelkujel mäest alla last* (= *teiste kulul elanud*) 'In youth [s/he] used to slide down the hill on other people's sleds (= freeloaded, lived at someone else's expense)'; Karksi *tõise kelgu pääl istje oleme* (= *kaval olema, tõist oma kasus tüöd tettä ja vaeva nättä laskme*) 'sitting on someone else's sledge (= being clever, exploiting someone and making the person work for one's own good)'; cf. [*kellegi*] *naha peal elama* 'living on [sb's] skin', [*kellegi*] *turja peal liugu laskma* 'sliding on [sb's] back', [*kellegi*] *selga elama tulema* 'coming to live on [sb's] back'; *Mis viga teise pükste ga tules istuda* (EV 11867) 'What's there not to like sitting in the fire in someone else's pants'; *Mis viga teiste hobuste ga sõita on* (EV 11868) 'What's there not to like riding on other people's horses'

In some cases it is not specified who or what is pulling the vehicle, but the negative connotation of the phrase is nevertheless clearly obvious (see Example 15).

- (15) Ambla *Küll ta vaene on nüüd kelgus* 'Poor him, now he's on the sledge!'; Tori *Küll ma olin saadanaga kelgus* 'How I was on the sledge with the devil'; Täna *olen kelgus* (= *täna olen omadega pigis*) (Wiedemann) 'I'm on the sledge today (= I'm in trouble)'; Olin *kaks nädalat ära ja poiss on ikka rees* (= *endiselt halvast seisus*) 'I was away for a fortnight and the boy is still on the sleigh (= still in bad shape)'; cf. *kelku*

panema (= *kihlama*) 'put on the sledge (= to be engaged)'; Kodavere *Emä tuli kodo ja ütles, Matsi-Mari p a n t i k e l k u*. *Kui kõsjad õlid ärä juadud, p a n t i k e l k u* 'Mother came home and said, Mari of Matsi was put on the sledge. When betrothal was arranged, they were put on the sledge'; Kodavere *Söüb ära, kõik p a n e b k e l k u* (= *pane b nahka*) 'Eats up, puts everything on the sledge (= devours)'; *kelgus* (EKMS I 564 (keyword HÄDAS 'in trouble')) 'on the sledge'

It is quite logical that people sitting on the same sleigh or sledge share something in common – ways of thinking, attitudes, dispositions – or are of the same age. Examples 16–18 offer more exceptional, neutral phrases.

- (16) Saarde *Sai teise oma kelgu peale* (= *sai teise oma nõusse*) 'Got him/her on his sledge (= got his/her consent)'; Jüri Küll *teie tulete veel lõpuks minu ree peale* (= *küll teie tulete kord samale arvamisele, kui mina olen*) 'You will eventually come on my sleigh (= you will eventually agree with me)'; Maarja-Magdaleena *Tema tuleb minu ree peale* (= *toimib nagu mina*) 'He will come to my sleigh (= will follow my example)'; Kodavere, Palamuse *Teie tulete ike minu kelgu piäle, minä ei tule teie kelgu piäle mette* (= *nooredki kord vananevad ning muutuvad töövõimetuiks*) 'You will come to my sledge, and I definitely won't come on yours (= even the young become older and lose their work capacity)'
- (17) *Kui ma tema kelku sain* (= *kui ta mind halvale teele, eksiteele viis*) (Wiedemann 1869 : 288) 'When I got on his/her sledge (= when s/he mislead me, corrupted me)'; Rõuge *Kirgu-i midägi uma nuurusõga, küll tult piä mii vannu rekke* 'Don't you talk back at me in your youth, you'll come on our sledge soon enough'; *Kust sa nende kelku said?* 'How did you get on their sledge?'
- (18) *ühte kelku heitama* (= *ühte liiki või mesti heitma, ühes mestis olema*) (EKMS II 559) 'be thrown on the same sledge (= group under the same type, be on the same side)'; *Ta on ses rees* (= *ses mestis*) (EKMS II 559) 'He is on this sleigh (= in on this matter)'; *iga ree peal sõitma* (= *nina tuule järgi seadma, pärivoolu ujuma*) (Wiedemann) 'drive on any sleigh (= follow your nose, go with the flow)'; *Ta on kuruja s rees* (= *kurjas kambas*) (EKMS II 559) 'He is on an evil sleigh (= in bad crowd)'

Supposedly, the initial focus of the phrase *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepe reega* was the type of wood that the sleigh was made from. Estonians used to have rather conflicting attitudes towards alder. In Estonian folk religion alder was considered a sacred tree (cf. Pühalepa 'Sacred Alder' parish on Hiiumaa Island); magic attributed to alder was used in folk medicine and as a means of protective magic (see Hiimäe 2004 : 20ff). On the other hand, alder was criticized for being too soft and non-resistant and has been called *pasklepp* 'crap alder', *seatamm* 'pig oak'. At the same time, alder has

been valued for the softness: its carvability made it a good raw material for carving household utensils, especially milk and butter vessels, bowls, etc. Alder was good for smoking meat or fish. Its reddish bark and timber were widely used natural colorants; this quality has given Estonians words like *kalalepp* 'fish blood' (lit. 'fish alder'), *lepene* 'bloody' (lit. 'aldery'), *leppama*, *lepitama* 'dye red' (lit. 'to alder'), *lepp* 'red horse' (lit. 'alder', ESMA), *lepalind*, *lepatriinu* 'lady bird' (lit. 'alder bird'). Nevertheless, alder's useful qualities have not materialized in Estonian phraseology. Furthermore, in phrases connected with sleigh, *lepene*, *lepne* 'lit. aldery' has negative implications at least up to the second half of the past century. The negative meaning of this image is expected, because sleighs and parts of sleighs were predominantly made of stronger woods like birch, ash, oak, fir root wood (see Viires 1980 : 38–39, 60), etc. and not the relatively soft alder. For the pragmatic countryfolk, the impracticality of using alder for making more resistant items was probably an argument good enough for using alder to mark something poor, inadequate, weak, miserable, etc. (see Examples 19–20) (Vakk 1984 : 6, 7).

- (19) Vastseliina *No mis ta käu, lätt kah kui lepatse reega* 'What's there to say, it goes as on an alder sleigh'; Jöelähtme *Sai v e d a d a l e p a s e r e e g a* (= *sai pilgata*) 'Could pull on the alder sleigh (= could mock)'; Laiuse *nagu lepe reega üle sõitnud* (= *halvasti ja pealiskaudselt tehtud töö*) 'as if run over by an alder sleigh (= inadequately done work)'; *nagu lepe reega edasi minema* (= *viletsalt edasi jõudma*) (Wiedemann) 'move on as on an alder sleigh (= proceed slowly)'; Tartu-Maarja *sõidab nagu lepatse riiga halva tiiga: viis päeva ja kolm versta* 'rides as on an alder sleigh on a bad road: five days and three versts'; Märjamaa *Kui keegi teist pilkas selle kohta öeldi, v e d a s teist lepa keelguga* 'If a person mocked someone else, it was said that he pulled the other one on an alder sleigh'; Viru-Jaagupi *läks nagu lepise reega (lepa ei tee ju keegi rege ja see ei püsi, kuid võrdlusel püsib see räpase töö kohta)* 'went as on an alder sleigh (no one makes a sleigh from alder wood, and it wouldn't hold, but it is used for comparison about some dirty job)'
- (20) Kuusalu *üks kruu lepene, teine lehmasitane* (= *kelle mõistus pole täiesti korras*) 'one screw from alder, another of cow dung (= screws are loose)'; Lüganuse *On lepase kruviga* (= *puuduliku mõistusega*) 'has an alder screw (= is witless)'; Iisaku *See on ju lepase nikastanud nupuga* 'This one has a stupid alder head on his/her shoulders (referring to a simpleton who made idle conversation)'; Jõhvi *Sie õli ikke suuta leppane. Terve pere niisikesed leppased* (= *nõrga, vähese mõistusega*) 'This one was completely aldery. The whole family was aldery (= slow-witted, brainless)'

In modern times the image of the expression *läheb nagu lepase ~ lepse reega* rather focuses on the sleigh, and as noted above, the phrase now carries quite an opposite connotation 'goes well, smoothly, without problems, advances well' (see EKSS V 53; Öim 1993 : 210). The image has been reconceptualized relatively recently; this has been favoured by the aban-

donment of the folk religious worldview and changes in the collective mentality in the final decades of the 19th century, according to Mall Hiimäe (2004 : 21). Even Feliks Vakk, who has investigated the etymology of Estonian phraseology in greater detail, has not been able to cast light upon this matter on the basis of earlier linguistic theories. F. Vakk (see 1984 : 6–8) argued that the most likely reason was simply the image being abandoned in use. Folklore Archives at the Estonian Literary Museum (Tartu) store manuscript material, dated from the late 19th to early 20th century, in which the expression was used both for things going well or badly, and in some cases in its transitional stage 'quickly, though not properly'. In the first half of the 20th century, the meaning of the phrase held by Modern Estonian speakers comes to prevail; however, the original content of the phrase has been longer preserved in the South-Estonian language area (see Examples 21–13).

- (21) Iisaku (1889) *lähäb nagu leppase riega (kui üks asi õige libedast lähäb)* 'goes as on an alder sleigh (when something is going very smoothly)'; Vastseliina, Setu (1894) *lätt kui lepätse reega (= halv elokõrd)* 'went as on an alder sleigh (= poor life course)'; Tartu-Maarja (1901) *Ta sõida b n i g u l e p ä t s e r i i g a h a l v a t i i g a : v i i s p ä e v a j a k o l m v e r s t a* 'He rides as on an alder sleigh on a bad road: five days and three versts'
- (22) Paistu (1937) *läheb kui lepise reega (kui ruttu lohakat tööd tehakse)* 'goes as on an alder sleigh (when something is done quickly and sloppily)'
- (23) Hargla (1932) *Ta läts nii ku lepädse riiga (kui midagi halvasti on tehtud)* 'He went as if on an alder sleigh (when something's been poorly done)'

Attempt has been made to explain the change in connotation in the framework of cognitive linguistics: relying on the context system and the the cognitive motivation of motion event. Central in this aspect is motion and its evaluation.

3. The conceptual domain of the phrase *läheb nagu lepass ~ lepse reega*

3.1. Spatial relations and motion

It is common knowledge that one of the most basic movements of a human is moving one's body on the vertical and/or horizontal axis. For instance, prototypical walking starts with standing up, resting on two feet, means walking around in the room and ends by arriving to the destination and standstill (see also, e.g., Lemmens 2004 : 5).

Concepts based on spatial relations are located in the core of our conceptual system (further on this in Estonian see Luuk 2008 : 954ff). These are applied by means of perceptual and conceptual systems but, of course, are perceived quite differently than one would perceive physical objects. Most spatial relationships are complex; the elementary structure of spatial relationships involve image schema, source, trajectory and landmark, i.e. figure and ground (see e.g. Lakoff, Johnson 1999 : 30, 31). For instance, the basis of the numerous meanings of Estonian adpositions *üle* 'over, across' and

peale 'above' are the possible image schemas of ROAD, COVERING, and VERTICAL perspective (see Veismann 2004; 2006).

Spatial logic is also characteristic of SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema which enables us to understand our own motion or the motion of any other object. The spatial relations have been implicitly incorporated in the schema:

- if you traverse a route, you have been at all locations along the route;
- if you travel from A to B and B to C, you have travelled from A to C;
- if you can go directly from A to B and you are moving along the path towards B then you are approaching B;
- if X and Y are travelling along a direct route from A to B and X passes Y, then X is further from A and closer to B than Y is;
- If X and Y are driving directly from A to B and X passes Y, then X is further away from A and closer to B than Y. (Lakoff, Johnson 1999 : 33ff; see also Johnson 1990 : 113, 114)

While our conceptual system most likely employs the important parts of our sensorimotor processes (Lakoff, Johnson 1999 : 38, 39) then according to Srinivasan's (1997) motor schemas, the model of aspect and metaphor, all motor schemas share the same high-level structure. Any higher level motor activity involves

- enabling,
- inception process,
- (imminent or ongoing) in-process,
- possibility of completion,
- possibility of reiteration,
- possibility of resumption,
- monitoring the achievement of goal,
- completive process,
- completion.

In principle, the model characterizes the semantic structure or aspect of events. The same nerve patterns that control motion may characterize the conceptual structure of aspect. The same nerve mechanisms that control physical motion may help drawing logical conclusions on our actions in general (Lakoff, Johnson 1999 : 41, 42; 581, 582)

Depending on the diachronically earlier but also later meaning of the phrase *läheb nagu lepase reega*, the focus of this article is not only the image schema of PATH but also the schema HORIZONTALITY (which for an individual is perhaps most clearly manifest in laying down (see Lemmens 2006 : 266ff)) and the clear boundaries of the activity (see Example 24). Since there is sensory and motor correspondence between the terrain of landscape and the physical balance of the mover, the expression also requires understanding BALANCE.

(24) *Esimese päeva jooks reedel oli lühike ja kiire: 10 kilomeetrit s u j u s t ä n u k o d u s e l e t o i d u l e j a h ä s t i l ä b i m ö e l d u d t r e e n i n g u l e n a g u l e p a s e r e e g a* 'On Friday, the race of the first day was short and rapid: ten kilometres passed thanks to homemade cooking and carefully planned training as on an alder sleigh'; *Väljas on pea +7, lumi läheb nagu lepase reega üle Eesti, ehk*

Haanja peab ainsana vastu 'It's nearly +7 degrees outside; the snow goes as on an alder sleigh across Estonia, and perhaps Haanja is the only place that upholds'; *Meie lombine asfalt kipub päris tihti hilissügisel ööseks jäätuma ja siis läheb nagu lepase reega* 'Here, the puddles on asphalt often freeze in late autumn nights and then it goes as on an alder sleigh'; *Kui kasutusel on uuem Windows ja Internet Explorer, peaks kõik sujuma automaatselt nagu lepase reega* 'If you're using more recent Windows and Internet Explorer, then everything should go automatically, as on an alder sleigh'; *Enne valimisi ei olnud mingit sisulist debatti siseturvalisuse üle, kõik oli kuidagi korras, rahulik ja vaikne ning läks justkui lepase reega*. 'Before the elections there was essentially no debate over internal security; everything was somehow fine, peaceful and quiet and went as on an alder sleigh'

In this case, HORIZONTALITY is manifested first and foremost by means of GOAL and PATH. Quite naturally, humans have an immense experience of continuous motion on the horizontal direction: on this direction the activity may last, change, reverse, which in Estonian, for example, is confirmed by the abstract meanings of adverbs of horizontal direction (see Veismann, Trigel 2008 : 521ff). This does not mean, however, that the horizontal direction lacks the possibility of aspect. Even though the expression *läheb nagu lepase reega* seems to mainly refer to an on-going progress, the semantic context often implies effectiveness or completion. In Estonian language, the result of activity can be expressed by embedded instruments of different levels of language, for instance, causativity: *nuttis end magama* 'cried himself to sleep', *laps karjus end higiseks* 'the child cried until it sweated', with a verb valence: *töötati õhtuni* 'they worked until late nights', *raamat lagunes kapsaks* 'the book read to rags', *tõusid kõrgele* 'rised high', *asetas taha* 'put behind', *mattis kinni* 'buried in' (Эслон, Пихлак 1993 : 50, 51).

3.2. Event evaluation

Perception and interpretation of events very often involves a tacit evaluation of the quality or results of an activity. All our actions can be attributed an aim: the aim of a career is to get a good job and earn a lot of money, the aim of a competition is to win, and so on (Langlotz 2006 : 144). Actions as well as the chosen MEANS and METHODS help to achieve or at least approach a set goal. If these means and methods are adequate and the performance is of quality, the activity can become successful. Whether the activity results in SUCCESS, PROGRESS or FAILURE is determined by additional positive or negative factors, such as HELP and SUPPORT, PROBLEMS and INTERFERENCES, also the EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES of the activity.

SUCCESS and FAILURE evaluate the result of the activity or the status achieved through it. If the goal has been reached, we will be successful; if not, we have most likely failed. PROGRESS, STAGNATION and REGRESSION evaluate the temporal movement of the activity. If we are approaching the aim, things are going well; if not, we speak about stagnation or regression. Since progressing activity is likely to lead to a positive result, progress is conven-

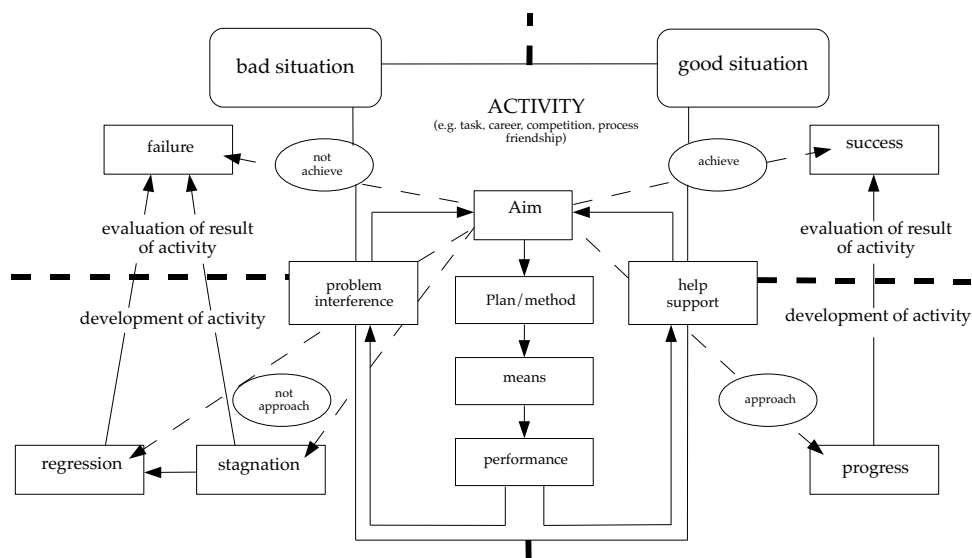


Figure 2. The conceptual ontology and structure of the SUCCESS, PROGRESS and FAILURE domain (Langlotz 2006 : 146).

tionally associated with success, then stagnation and regression imply failure (Langlotz 2006 : 145). Andreas Langlotz has studied on the basis of the Collins Cobuild Dictionary of Idioms 600 idioms from the Corpus of British English which meaning referred to success, achievement or failure. Most of these phrases can be related to six general source domains: COMPETITION, STRUGGLE, LIFE, EATING, PHYSICAL MOVEMENT and MACHINE, the specific structures and ontologies of which are mapped onto the SUCCESS, PROGRESS and FAILURE target domain in order to structure, conceptualize and concretize it. The following general domain presented in Figure 2 thus works as an abstract conceptual base relative to which the concepts of SUCCESS and PROGRESS versus FAILURE, STAGNATION and REGRESSION derive their semantic values (Langlotz 2006 : 145).

3.3 Possible motivation and structure of motion event

Expressions such as *nagu lepase reega* and others belonging to the same part of spatial and motion system are clearly motivated by conceptual metaphors CHANGE IS MOTION and PROGRESS, DEVELOPMENT IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT, which may be shaped by metonymic links, emblematic associations⁴ and conceptual blending (see Langlotz 2006 : 148). Any human interpretation of events and causes is mainly based on the complex metaphor EVENT STRUCTURE. At the same time, events and aspects of it (activities, causes, changes, conditions, aims, etc.) may be conceptualized through locations or objects (see Examples 25 and 26, respectively).

(25) *Kaotajate poolel hoidis oma tiimiree peal Martti Varusk
26 punktiga* 'Among the losing team, Martti Varusk kept the team on the sleigh with the score of 26'

⁴ On differentiation between worldly knowledge and cultural knowledge, see e.g. Piirainen 2008.

- (26) *Võtta teinering. Eestis näib valitsevat arvamust, et meie talupidajatel õnnestub Euroopa Liidus ellu jääda ainult suurtootmise abil* 'Take another train. The prevalent opinion in Estonia seems to be that our farmers would survive only by being involved in major production in the European Union'

Here the numerous experience and knowledge that we have about moving in a space become useful. In both cases, primary metaphors CAUSES ARE POWER and CHANGE IS MOTION are used (Lakoff, Johnson 1999 : 178, 179). According to LOCATION EVENT STRUCTURE metaphor:

- states are locations (bounded regions in space);
- changes are movements (into or out of bounded regions);
- causes are forces;
- actions are self-propelled movements;
- purposes are destinations;
- means are paths to destinations;
- difficulties are impediments to motion;
- expected progress is a travel schedule;
- a schedule is a virtual traveller, who reaches pre-arranged destinations at pre-arranged times;
- external events are large, moving objects;
- long-term, purposeful activities are journeys (Lakoff 2006 : 204; Lakoff, Johnson 1999 : 178, 179).

What specific conclusions can be drawn from this? It is commonly known that achieving success first begins by departing from the starting point (see Example 27; about the encoding of the starting point of motion in Estonian see Pajusalu, Kahusk, Orav, Veismann, Vider, Õim 2008 : 7–11). The start of an activity can be difficult and lead to failure because the chosen method or direction of development is wrong or too ambitious. Therefore it is often advisable to start slowly (Example 28) (Langlotz 2006 : 157, 158).

- (27) *Riigikaitsemudeli kujunemisküsimustest taasiseseisvumise stardipakkul* 'On development problems of the state defence model on the starting block of regaining independence'
- (28) *Sõi selle ära ja ääri-veeri küsis, et kas äkki oleks veel* 'He ate all this and hesitantly (lit. 'hedged') asked if he could have more'

From this point on, the success of the activity depends on the chosen path, which, in turn, is closely intermingled with manner (see Pajusalu, Kahusk, Orav, Veismann, Vider, Õim 2008 : 11). The source concept PATH structures two distinct dimensions in the target domain of DEVELOPMENT: the DIRECTION and the QUALITY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES in which a given configuration develops. Clearly, a path that leads to the desired destination is favourable to the successful development of the configuration, otherwise inefficient or counterproductive (cf. Examples 29, 30) (Langlotz 2006 : 158).

- (29) *Torma Naiseisa avitas ta õtsa piiale. Nüüd tal omal loomakari laadas* 'Father-in-law helped him [get] to the start. Now he has his own herd of cattle in the barn'

- (30) *Efekttiivsuse suurendamine pole iseenesest vale, aga ainult sellele keskendumine on pikas perspektiivis u m m i k t e e* 'Enhancing effectiveness is not exactly wrong, but focusing only on it is a d e a d e n d (lit. 'dead end path') in the long run'

Proceeding from the logic behind this metaphorization, it becomes clear that in Example 31 the agent is deviating from the right path, i.e. the cause of failure (see further Öim 2007). Keeping oneself on the path expresses successful development and the likelihood of positive development in choosing a new path (see Examples 32, 33). (Langlotz 2006 : 158)

- (31) *Lugu allakäinud maadlejast, kelle elu r ö ö b a s t e l t m a h a o n s õ i t n u d* 'A tale of a run-down wrestler, whose life has f a l l e n o f f t h e t r a c k s'
- (32) *Sebastien Loeb j ä t k a b ka pärast teist võistluspäeva k u r s i l* *Küprose ralli võidu suunas* 'After the second day of race Sebastian Loeb c o n t i n u e s o n t h e c o u r s e of victory on Cyprus rally'; *Seni andsimel abi rea peal seismiseks, nüüd koolitus enam tulevikku suunatud.* 'Until now we have aided people to s t a n d o n t h e r o w, whereas now the course is more oriented to the future'
- (33) *Peamine stiimul tõusuks saadi asjaolust, et musta kulla hind p ö ö r a s o t s a r i n g i* 'The main impetus for the rise came from the fact that the price of black gold t u r n e d a r o u n d'

To concretize the favourable or unfavourable circumstances in which an activity takes place, the quality of the path is highlighted: a smooth constitution of the path marks progress and guarantees success (see Example 34). Development is impeded and failure is likely to occur if the path is difficult, dangerous or unpleasant and calls for an action to ensure success (Examples 35, 36) (Langlotz 2006 : 158).

- (34) *Tema e l u t e e o n o h n u d ü s n a s i l e* (EKSS V 462) 'His l i f e ' s p a t h has been rather s m o o t h'
- (35) *Kuusalu Kui mõni sandiste loeb, see l ä h e b n a ü l e k ü n g a s t e p u h a* 'If one cannot read very well, it is a b u m p y r i d e'; *Kodavere Mõne lugemine on n õ n n a g u s ö ö d i k ü n m i n e, mukko jajatab* 'Some person's reading is l i k e p l o u g h i n g a f a l l o w f i e l d, only bumps along the path'; *Saarde nagu regi liiva peal kinni* (= *kinnine või saamatu oma töös või teos*) 'as a sleigh stuck in sand (= self-contained or inadequate in work or activity)'; *See on tüüpilise emotsionaalse liialdaja käekiri, kes loogiliste argumentide puudumisel on a s u n u d demagoogia libedale teele* 'This is a typical pattern of someone whose excessively emotional and with a lack of logical arguments has s t e p p e d o n t h e s l i p p e r y p a t h of demagogy'; *Ei see kristlase tee pole s i l e ja sirge* 'The path of a Christian is n e i t h e r s m o o t h or straight'
- (36) *Kõik see sillutab Linuxi teed UNIXi asendamisel* 'All this p a v e s L i n u x ' s r o a d to replacing UNIX'; *Liikmesriikide kohustus kõrvaldada takistused elektrooniliste lepingute kasu-*

tamisel 'The obligation of Member States is to remove hurdles from using contracts in electronic form'

Movement along the path towards the destination implies approaching the goal. The more distance is covered the closer success becomes, even if special efforts have to be made (see Example 37). If the movers are very fast and competitive (see PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS A RACE) they may arrive at the destination long before others. And conversely, development stagnates or regresses if the agent is not moving forward or moves in circles (Example 38) (Langlotz 2006 : 158, 159).

- (37) *Pärnu Finantskonverents on lähedal, täpsemalt nädala pärast 17.–18. aprillil* 'Pärnu Financial Conference is close, more precisely, in a week on 17–18 April'; *Tänu kaubanduse jõudsale arengule loodavad ehitajad, et investering teeb end tasa kahe-kolme aasta ga* 'Owing to the remarkable progress in commercial activities, building contractors hope that the investment will make up (i.e. will be remunerated) within two or three years'
- (38) *Ja võib arvata, et ka Ekspressi aktsia teeb algul vähikäigu, ning siis tammub pagal* 'One may think that the stock of Eesti Ekspress will start with a step backward and then stamps on the spot'; *See on pannud ka mind mõtlema, kas olemetaga si Moskva ajas* 'Also this has made me think whether we are back in Moscow's period'

From the agent's viewpoint, success is ensured by the constitution of the limbs or coordinated movement. In Example 39 metaphoric transfer (DEVELOPMENT IS WALKING FORWARD) is combined with metonymic transfer (LEG/FOOT FOR ABILITY TO WALK). Failing is understood as stumbling, failing or uncoordinated movement (Example 40).

- (39) *Torma Seda, et ta oli kerge jalgaga, võeti arvesse ametisse kinnitamisel* 'It was taken into consideration at job application that she had a light foot'; *Iisaku See majapidamine lonkab küll kahe jalgaga* 'This household limps on two lame legs'
- (40) *Lüganuse Ninda aigased nied suvitajad, ei jõuva päist jalgu mitte kuhugi* 'The vacationers are so slow that won't get anywhere from head to feet'; *Minu meeskond sebis nagu kanad takus* 'My team was fussing around like hen in to w'; *Kuna vahepeal takeerdu sid detailplaneeringu koostaja otsingud ...* 'Since the search for the planning engineer impeded in the meanwhile ...'

A traveller depends on footwear or can make use of a vehicle to support his or her getting on. Some idioms make explicit reference to certain VEHICLE domains, depending on the concrete JOURNEY frame underlying a given idiomatic construction. This source domain is mapped onto conceptual elements (efficient MEANS or METHODS, HELP or FAVOURABLE SITUATIONS) in the target domain that are conceived as supporting successful progressing. The resulting metaphor SUPPORTING BASIS OF DEVELOPMENT IS A VEHICLE thus concretizes the idea that the development becomes more efficient if it is

aided by favourable external influences. Boarding or not boarding the vehicle correlates with taking or not taking an opportunity (see Example 41). Once the vehicle is in motion, plenty of distance can be covered in a short time and thus progress is guaranteed; whereas successful development is impeded when the vehicle stops moving properly or effectively (Example 42). Therefore, it is necessary to adapt the vehicle to the external conditions rather than to spoil one's chances of success by taking inappropriate or inefficient means or methods, problems or developmental situations, or else the vehicle must be abandoned (Example 43) (Langlotz 2006 : 159, 160).

- (41) *Kohvitehas surfas taas lainele* 'The coffee plant resurfaced on the wave'; *Kes on aidanud paljudel sõitlastel tagasi reepedale saada* 'He who has helped many addicts get back on the sleigh'; *Kuigi Euroopa Liit meenutab pahatihti varjuteatrit, oleme lunastanud pileti stabiilsesse mõnusa sserongis ja paanikaks pole põhjust, leiab Martin Kala* 'Even though EU often evokes the image of a shadow theatre, we have obtained a ticket on a stable cosy train and there's no need to panic, Martin Kala argues'; *Leedu jääb Schengeni rongist maha* 'Lithuania is missing the Schengen train'
- (42) *Tõstamaa ei lähe enam regi ega ratas (sandi tee aegas)* 'not the sleigh nor wheel will run (on a bad road)'; *Kuusalu ei veere vanker ega jookse regi* 'no carriage will ride nor sleigh will run'; *Rapla, Märjamaa ei see kelk joose jaanipäevase jää peal* 'the sleigh won't run on Midsummer ice (about he who wants to convince others into believing him)'
- (43) *Kruuda ja Kangur tõmbasid Aava MM-sõitudele piduri pedale* 'Kruuda and Kangur put the brake on Aava's world championship races'; *Mõistlik oleks rong peatada* 'It would be wise to stop the train'

In addition to the poor quality of the road, uncoordinated movement or the inefficient use of a vehicle, the direct path to the destination may be impeded by obstacles, obstructions and danger. Obstacle concepts are mapped onto the target domain to mark problems: PROBLEMS ARE OBSTACLES. A dangerous journey, for example, is a sea voyage, where a ship is endangered by storms, underwater rocks and tides. The conceptual identification of WATER with INSTABILITY/INSECURITY turns the crossing of an ocean into a risky endeavour. This knowledge is contained in phrases which characterize problems or difficult situations as potential dangers occurring on a sea voyage (see Example 44). MACHINE partly overlaps with transport VEHICLE in terms of evoking machine-powered vehicles as models for progress (Example 45) (Langlotz 2006 : 160, 161).

- (44) *Simuna Nii elulaev vahest karile jooksebki (= vahel läheb halvasti)* 'So the ship of life is sometimes on the rocks (= sometimes you don't succeed)'; *See on vaikus enne tormi: maja müüakse kiiresti ja vaikselt Tallinna Hambapolikliinikuga ühes majas asuvale Kaarli Hambapolikliinikule* 'This was silence before storm: the house is sold, quickly and quietly, to the Kaarli dental

clinic which is located in the same building than the Tallinn dental clinic'

- (45) *Põlevkiviga köetav auruvedur kõrvalteele lükata, moodsa ja kiire elektrirongiga edasi sõita* 'Push the coal-burning steam engine to the side tracks, travel forth on a fast and modern electric train'

The very basic image schemas serve as a source for making such structurally poor target domains as SUCCESS, PROGRESS or FAILURE concrete. Schemas of VERTICALITY, BALANCE etc. help to construct evaluative concepts such as GOOD or BAD, POSITIVE or NEGATIVE in terms of basic bodily experiences like spatial orientation and bodily equilibrium. In bodily experience, the sensory and motor sensation of equilibrium and disequilibrium is naturally correlated with the success or failure of a given activity. This serves as a fundamental basis for the metaphor POSITIVE/NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENT IS BALANCE/IMBALANCE. The BALANCE metaphor is closely linked to the DEVELOPMENT IS MOVEMENT metaphor. When we walk, our physical balance is directly influenced by the constitution of the terrain on which we move. This sensory and motor correlation partially motivates the constructs SECURITY/STABILITY IS SOLD GROUND; INSECURITY/INSTABILITY IS WATER; INSTABILITY/UNCERTAINTY IS AIR (Langlotz 2006 : 161ff)

Conclusion

The Estonian phrase *läheb nagu lepase reega*, which development may be dated according to the adoption of the corresponding vehicle in Estonia, is highly common in Modern Estonian, both in oral and written communication. Originally, the phraseological image probably focused on the material that the sleigh was made from and the phrase had a negative connotation ('go badly, fail' or similar) like most other sleigh-related idiomatic phrases. Within a relatively short period of time, the image has come to focus on the vehicle and the meaning has become positive ('go/proceed well, succeed' etc.). Attitudes towards alder have definitely influenced the reconceptualization of the phrase, but we have attempted to search for the reasons for this change in meaning from the image formation context and the motivation of motion event.

The vertical and/or horizontal movement of human body or any other object can be conceptualized through the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL image schema arranged according to a clear spatial logic. Since people arguably use important parts of their sensorimotor system for constructing conceptual system, it is possible that all motor schemas have the same high-level structure. The same nerve structures that control motion may characterize the semantic structure of event. Perception and interpretation of events according to the EVENT STRUCTURE metaphor may entail a tacit evaluation of the quality or results of the activity. Performing an activity serves to achieve a set goal or develop towards it. The outcome of the activity, whether it results in SUCCESS, PROGRESS or leads to FAILURE, may be influenced by the used MEANS and METHODS, HELP and SUPPORT, and PROBLEMS and INTERFERENCES that one may encounter in the process.

The relatively clear motivation of the Estonian phrase is triggered by conceptual metaphors CHANGE IS MOTION and PROGRESS, DEVELOPMENT IS FORWARD MOVEMENT. Proceeding from the PATH frame that the phrase is based on, the model explicitly employs TRANSPORT VEHICLE domain, which is mapped onto the conceptual target domain elements supporting progress: MEANS or METHODS, HELP or FAVOURABLE SITUATIONS. Development is enhanced by a supporting factor; thus, SUPPORT OF DEVELOPMENT IS TRANSPORT VEHICLE. Movement of the transport vehicle enables us to cover a long distance in a short period of time and this, in turn, guarantees progress; if the movement of the vehicle is impeded, then progress stops. Since achieving the goal or moving towards it is generally attributed positive value, then the negative meaning of the phrase analyzed in this article has been specially marked by an extension. The connotation of the modern conceptualizing of the phrase has once again reversed and this suggests that the extension of the noun is subject to a dominant interpretation, one that proceeds from the structure of motion event. These changes may have been influenced by the fact that the described and highly transparent motivation is rarely employed in Estonian language. TRANSPORT VEHICLE as a perhaps too concrete, poorly structured and rather ineffectual source domain concept has such a large semantic field that it holds sufficient space and possibilities for fundamental changes in meaning. Therefore, we can agree that the development of the phrase *läheb nagu lepase reega* in time has been completely systematic and reasonable. The presence of the finality aspect in the phrase in modern Estonian language confirms that the development of the phrase does not end here.

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Abbreviations

EKMS — A. Saareste, Eesti keele mõisteline sõnaraamat I–IV, Stockholm 1958–1963; **EKSS** — Eesti kirjakeele seletussõnaraamat I–VII, Tallinn 1988–2007; **ESMA** — Emakeele Seltsi murdearhiiv (Dialectal archive of Estonian Mother Tongue Society); **EV** — Eesti vanasõnad I–V, Tallinn 1980–1988.

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КАЧЕСТВЕННОЕ ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ ВО ФРАЗЕОЛОГИИ: ОСНОВНЫЕ ПРИНЦИПЫ И КАТАЛИЗАТОРЫ

В статье рассматривается качественное изменение во фразеологии как естественная составляющая процесса языкового развития, обусловленная внутри- и внеязыковыми факторами. Закономерность изменений, которые происходят в значениях фразеологизмов, выясняется здесь на примере исторически старого генинного выражения *läheb nagu lepase reega* букв. 'идет словно на дровнях из ольхи', хорошо известного в эстонских диалектах, разговорной речи и литературном языке. Значение этого фразеологизма претерпело наибольшие из возможных качественных изменений. Изначально в фокусе его образа был, вероятно, материал, из которого изготовлены дровни, и потому значение было негативным ('дела идут плохо' и т. п.). За сравнительно короткий промежуток времени выражение приобрело позитивное значение ('дела идут хорошо' и т. п.). Сравнительно ясную мотивацию фразы *läheb nagu lepase reega* обеспечивают понятийные метафоры ИЗМЕНЕНИЕ И

ПРОГРЕСС, РАЗВИТИЕ — ЭТО ДВИЖЕНИЕ ВПЕРЕД. Исходя из фрейма ПУТИ-ДВИЖЕНИЯ, лежащего в основе рассматриваемого фразеологизма, здесь эксплицируется ТРАНСПОРТНОЕ СРЕДСТВО. Названная область исхода переносится на элементы области направления, которые поддерживают прогресс: СРЕДСТВА или МЕТОДЫ, ПОМОЩЬ или БЛАГОПРИЯТСТВУЮЩИЕ СИТУАЦИИ. Поскольку достижение цели или движение к ней вообще оценивается позитивно, здесь анализируется специальное маркирование (с помощью определения) в данной конструкции негативного значения. Сегодня это выражение вновь известно нам и с противоположным значением, т. е. имеет место подчинение существительного — второстепенного члена предложения — доминирующему толкованию, обусловленному структурой движения как события. Может быть, этим изменениям способствовало то обстоятельство, что в эстонском языке описательная, прозрачная мотивация в качестве оценочной применяется крайне редко. То есть транспортное средство как, пожалуй, слишком конкретное и обладающее скромной структурой исходное понятие в данном семантическом поле оставило достаточное пространство для столь принципиальных изменений значения.

Развитие описанного выражения еще не закончено, и свидетельствует об этом сопряжение значения ограниченного аспекта с данным фразеологизмом в современном эстонском языке.