

The grammaticalization of *keep V-ing*

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the structure *keep V-ing* in English and the grammaticalization process of *keep* in this construction from a diachronic perspective. In Present-Day-English, this structure conveys a continuative aspectual meaning when the *V-ing* is characterized by an atelic Aktionsart (activities and states) and an iterative aspectual meaning when the *V-ing* is telic (accomplishments and achievements). This thesis was written from a Functional Discourse Grammar perspective (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008). Within this framework, grammaticalization is seen as the combination of contentive and formal change. Using corpus data from two historical English corpora, COLMOBAENG and COHA, comprising the Late Modern English and Present Day English periods, two stages of the grammaticalization process were observed: i. Location → Continuation, ii. Continuation → Iteration. On the contentive side, the second phase shows an increase in scope from an operator expressing phasal aspect at the layer of the Configurational property to an operator of event quantification at the layer of the States-of-Affairs. On the formal side, it has been observed that it has a very high degree of grammaticality based on Keizer's criteria (Keizer 2007). Diachronically, the most relevant formal change is the combination with *-ing* verbs.

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List of abbreviations

BYU-BCN	British National Corpus
CEMET	Corpus of Early Modern English Texts
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
COHA	Corpus of Historical American English
COLMOBAENG	Corpus of Late Modern British and American English
LC	Lampeter Corpus
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PPCEME	Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English

1. Introduction

The expression of tense, aspect and mood in English is mostly rendered by auxiliary verbs that are in charge of encoding these grammatical categories. These categories often arise from lexical sources that undergo a process of grammaticalization. Throughout this process lexical entities tend to lose semantic meaning and suffer changes in their morphosyntactic form. These items develop more abstract meanings and lose their ability to refer to things, actions or events in the real world.

This dissertation studies the construction *keep V-ing* in English and its use as an aspectual marker in Present Day English (PDE). It seems that the verb *keep* in these contexts conveys an aspectual continuative meaning and iteration. *Keep* in this use is likely to have undergone a process of grammaticalization. Indeed, some studies point out that in PDE it is an auxiliary verb (Cappelle 1999).

Although there are many studies that consider *keep* an auxiliary verb, descriptive grammars show that its morphosyntactic features do not completely match the characteristics of prototypical auxiliaries nor prototypical lexical verbs. Grammaticalization studies have been concerned with the notion of grammatical categories not being closed categories, but describe a continuum between grammatical categories and lexical items, with elements showing features from both prototypical categories and, thus, being placed in between the two extremes of the cline.

In this dissertation, a diachronic study based on data from two corpora (COLMOBAENG and COHA) will be carried out. These corpora cover the periods of Late Modern English and Present Day English, since *keep* started to combine with *-ing* forms around 1650-1700. The main aim is to describe the possible stages of the grammaticalization process from the point of view of semantic change and, also, in relation to morphosyntactic change.

This study starts from the hypothesis that a grammaticalization path can be described for *keep V-ing* that will reflect changes in the semantics and morphosyntax of the structure, which ultimately leads to *keep* becoming an auxiliary verb expressing aspect. *Keep* conveys two different meanings depending on the Aktionsart of the *-ing* verb. When *keep* combines with atelic predicates (activities ‘run’ and states ‘love’), the continuative meaning arises. When it

combines with telic predicates (accomplishments ‘paint’ and achievements ‘arrive’), the iterative meaning is intended. When *keep* combines with semelfactive *-ing* forms (i.e. verbs that can refer to a single event or a series of events, ‘hit’) the reading is ambiguous and the utterances may be understood as continuative or iterative. These different meanings may constitute different steps in the grammaticalization cline.

Thus, the following questions will be addressed in this dissertation:

1. Does *keep* first combine with a certain type of verbs (activities) to convey continuative meaning and later on with other verbs to convey iterative meaning?
2. Is the combination with semelfactive predicates an intermediate stage?
3. Is it possible to trace any other meaning?
4. Are there any morphosyntactic changes in the structure?

This dissertation is framed into the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar. This framework seems adequate to describe grammaticalization processes for two reasons: first, because in this approach categories are not seen as closed classes, and second, because of the view that changes in the semantics do not necessarily lead to changes in the formal features of the item.

The general structure of this work is as follows. In section 1.1, the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar will be briefly introduced; in section 2, the understanding of concepts as grammaticalization, aspect and Aktionsart will be discussed. Section 3 contains the review of previous key literature. In section 4 the characteristics of the corpora and the procedure to collect and classify the data are described. Chapter 5 deals with the analysis of the grammaticalization process and in chapter 6 the implications of this analysis in relation with the research question and hypothesis are discussed. Some concluding remarks close this work in 7.

1.1 Functional Discourse Grammar

This dissertation is framed within the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar (henceforth FDG) (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008). In this section, the theoretical grounds of

FDG will be presented.

FDG, as its predecessor Functional Grammar (FG) (Dik 1978, 1997a, 1997b) and other functional approaches to language, has as its centre the idea that language is a tool for communication and that it is shaped to a large extent by the communicative needs of its speakers. This theory aims to reflect the psycholinguistic evidence about language on its representation of grammar. That is, psycholinguistic studies have shown that language is a top-down process that starts with intentions and ends up with the articulation of the actual linguistic expression. Thus, FDG tries to reflect this in its organization of grammar. FDG starts with the speaker's intentions and then moves down to articulation (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 1-2).

This is translated into an organization of grammar in four levels: the Interpersonal Level, where pragmatic content is formulated, the Representational Level, which deals with semantic formulation and the Morphosyntactic and Phonetic levels, which are in charge of encoding the information given by the other two levels. Each of the levels have scope over the preceding one: thus, the Interpersonal Level has scope over the Representational and so on. The operations of formulation and encoding are basic to FDG. Formulation involves “the rules that determine what constitute valid underlying pragmatic and semantic representations of language” (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 2). The process of encoding consists of translating the pragmatic and semantic representations into morphosyntactic and phonological ones. This sequence is meant to mimic production. The basic unit of FDG is the discourse act, because many grammatical phenomena can only be interpreted in terms of units larger than the clause.

These four levels constitute the Grammatical Component, which interacts with the Conceptual, Contextual and Output Components in verbal interaction. The Conceptual component contains those cognitive aspects that are relevant for the immediate communicative intention. This component triggers language production (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008:7). In the Contextual Component, information from the context of the utterance which is relevant for certain obligatory grammatical features is stored. The short-term information in the Contextual Component is continually updated, so linguistic phenomena as, for instance, anaphora can actually be performed (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 10-11).

The general layout of FDG is presented in Figure 1, in which the interaction between the

different components is reproduced. Within this representation, circles contain operations, boxes contain the set of primitives used in operations, and rectangles contain the levels of representation (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 12).

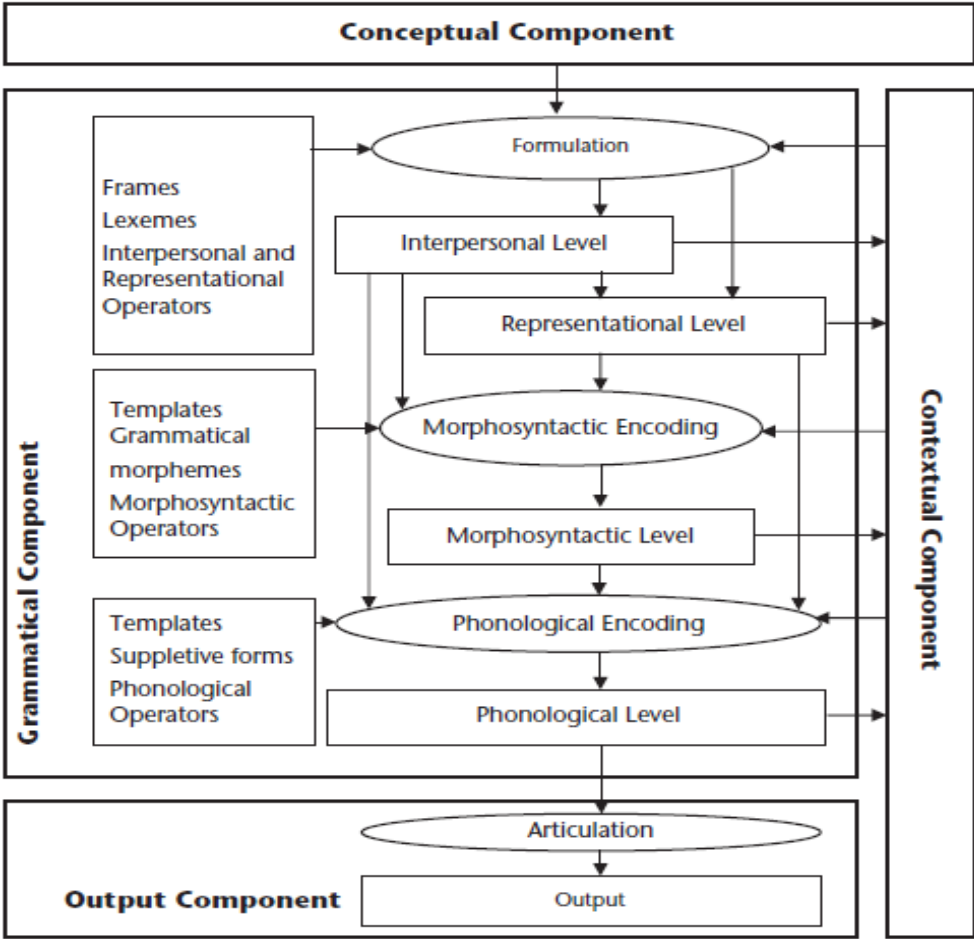


Figure 1. *General Layout of FDG* (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008:13)

1.1.2 Layers

Within the Grammatical Component, each of the four levels are internally organized in subsequent layers, which present a hierarchical relationship between each of them. The layers are restricted by a head (simple or complex), that takes a variable as its argument. The layer may be specified by an operator and carry a function. Heads and modifiers are lexical strategies, whereas operators and functions are grammatical strategies (Hengeveld &

Mackenzie 2008: 14). Operators apply only to the unit itself, to the head, and functions apply to all the units in the layer. Each of the layers have a hierarchical scope over the other layers. The layering at the Representational Level, which is of special relevance for the study carried out here, is used here as an example. The units at this level are defined in terms of the semantic categories they designate. The highest layer is that of the Propositional content (p), which refers to “mental constructs that do not exist in space or time but rather exist in the minds of those entertaining them.” They may be factual (known facts or beliefs about the real world) or non-factual (hopes and, wishes with respect to an imaginary world). Propositional contents may be qualified in terms of propositional attitudes (certainty, doubt) or in terms of their source or origin (inference, common knowledge of the world) (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 144). An example of a Propositional content is found in (1):

(1) Jenny hoped *that her mother would visit her* (from Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 144)

A Propositional content can include one or more Episodes (ep), which are series of “one or more States-of-Affairs that are thematically coherent, in the sense that they show unity or continuity of Time, Location and Individuals” (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 157). An example of an Episode can be found in the sentence in (2), in the part delimited by the square brackets. The verb *happen* introduces a series of SoAs that are located at the same Time (past), Location (the train) and Individuals (Mr Cabbage, Coleen, the train, the letter...).

(2) It so happened [that the very train that ended Mr Cabbage's life was carrying the delayed mail and in one of the mail bags was a letter from Coleen agreeing to Mr Cabbage's proposal of marriage and saying that she was coming home to her lover] (BYU-BCN, miscellanea).

Episodes have scope over States-of-Affairs, which “can be located in relative time and can be evaluated in terms of their reality status. States-of-Affairs (e) can thus be said to ‘(not) occur’, ‘(not) happen’, or ‘(not) be the case’ at some point in the interval in time”. These entities can be headed by one or more Configurational Properties (f^c), which are abstract nuclear predications formed by a predicate and its argument(s). In (3) there is an example of a SoAs headed by a Configurational Property. The structure of the predicate and its arguments is

given.

(3) Peter bought a bicycle.

(e_i: [(f^c_i): [(f_i: buy (f_i) (x_i)_A(x_j: -bicycle- (x_j))_U] (f^c_i) (e_i)]])

Leaving out operators and modifiers, the overall structure of the Representational Level is as follows (4):

(4) (p₁: (ep₁: (e₁): (f^c₁: [(v₁) ... (v_{1+n}) φ] (f^c₁)) (e₁)) (ep₁)) (p₁))

Operators, modifiers and functions belong to different layers. In table 1, operators, modifiers and functions are presented in relation to the layer to which they belong at the Representational Level. The motivation behind these distinctions can be found in Hengeveld and Mackenzie (2008).

Representational Level	Propositional Content	Episode	State-of-Affairs	Configurational Property	Property
Operators	Inference, subjective epistemic modality	Absolute tense, deduction, objective epistemic modality	Event quantification, relative tense, event perception, event-oriented modality	Phasal aspect, (im)perfectivity, participant-oriented modality	Directionality, degree
Modifiers	Propositional attitude	Absolute time	Relative time, location, frequency, reality, cause, purpose	Additional participants, manner, duration	Manner, degree
Functions	Condition, concession, reason	Cause	Purpose, consequence	Means	

Table 1. *Operators, modifiers and functions in FDG* (Adapted from Hengeveld forthc. 14)

For instance, in English absolute and relative tense operators are relevant and they are respectively expressed at the level of the episode and the SoAs, as Table 1 shows. Thus, an utterance like the one in (5) will be represented at the Representational level as in (6) (adapted from Hengeveld and Mackenzie 2008: 163-164). Thus, the whole utterance represents an Episode that is located in the past and which is headed by a configurational head consisting of five SoAs. The last verb with a past ending (*-ed*) shows that the whole episode is located in the past (absolute tense). The verb ending of the other verb forms (*-ing*) indicates simultaneity (relative tense) with respect to the absolute time zone:

(5) Coming out, stopping to check the mailbox, taking a look at the driveway and pausing to adjust his hat, he walked to his car.

(6) (past e_p : [(sim e_i : -coming out-(e_i)), (sim e_j : -stopping to check the mailbox-(e_j)), (sim e_k : -taking a look at the driveway-(e_k)), (sim e_l : -pausing to adjust his hat-(e_l)), (sim e_m : -he walked to his car-(e_m))] (e_p))

Tense operators at the Interpersonal Level trigger the instantiation of the different morphological traits at the Morphological level.

On the other hand, an example of a modifier can be found in (7). The adverb *frequently* is a modifier of frequency acting at the level of the SoAs in the following sentence. Starting from the SoAs layer, an FDG representation of this sentence is found in (8), where the episode is headed by a lexical head (*go*) of which the predication frame is given: it consists of two arguments, an individual (x_i) and a location (l_i) (8). The whole SoAs is further modified by the adverb *frequently*:

(7) Mary goes to Paris frequently.

(8) (e_i : [(f_i^c : [
 (f_i : go (f_i))
 ($1x_i$)_A
 (x_j : Paris(x_j))_L]
 (f_i^c)) (e_i): [(t_i : -frequent- (t_i)) (e_i)]])

2. Background

In this chapter, key concepts for these dissertation will be introduced: grammaticalization in relation to FDG will be discussed in 2.1 and the notions of aspect and Aktionsart will be presented in 2.2.

2.1 Grammaticalization

Generally speaking, grammaticalization is the process by which lexical items end up encoding grammatical functions (e.g. nouns becoming prepositions or discourse markers; lexical verbs becoming auxiliary verbs, etc.). For instance, Hopper and Traugott (2003: 1) define grammaticalization as “that part of the study of language change that is concerned with such questions as how lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions or how grammatical items develop new grammatical functions.” In traditional grammaticalization approaches, change is regarded as the result of a process in which four basic mechanisms or steps are at work. These mechanisms basically consist of a series of losses (Heine 2003: 579):

- i. Desemanticization (or semantic bleaching): loss in meaning.
- ii. Extension: use in new contexts
- iii. Decategorialization: loss in morphosyntactic features.
- iv. Erosion: loss of phonetic material

Bybee et al. (1994: 4-5) also give a similar definition: “grammatical morphemes develop gradually out of lexical morphemes or combinations of lexical morphemes with lexical or grammatical morphemes.” They also show a special interest in the diachronic development of these items in which a series of changes are at work. Another definition of grammaticalization sees the phenomenon as a “diachronic change by which the parts of a constructional schema come to have stronger internal dependencies” (Haspelmath 2004: 26). Most approaches to grammaticalization acknowledge that changes in the semantics of a lexical word and changes in its morphosyntactic features are closely related.

A functionalist definition of grammaticalization is given by Harder and Boyer (2005: 63): “[g]rammaticalization is the diachronic change which gives rise to linguistic expressions that are coded as discursively secondary.” The linguistic expression becomes discursively secondary in the sense that it loses its lexical meaning to convey a grammatical meaning (e.g. tense, aspect or mood). Thus, whereas lexical expressions may be discursively primary or secondary, grammatical expressions are only discursively secondary.

They also point out that all possible cases of grammaticalization carry out a process of constructionalization, that is, as a consequence of the change a larger grammatical construction of which the grammatical element is now a part is created (Harder & Boyer 2005: 64). As Harder and Boyer (2005: 64) emphasise, a functionalist approach to grammaticalization seeks to combine the two tendencies observed in grammaticalization studies, that is, a loss of semantic meaning and a progressive increase of grammatical functions —what Hengeveld (2011, forthc.) defines as a combination of contentive and formal change. Moreover, the candidate to undergo grammaticalization must fulfil certain prerequisites, namely, it has to be useful in a discursively secondary role. In other words, the lexical candidates to become grammaticalized must have some property that makes them useful as ‘assistants’ of lexical ‘host’ expressions. In addition, this candidate must be in competition with some other lexical item with which it can compete for discourse prominence (for instance, periphrastic constructions with two lexical verbs, in which these two verbs are competing to be at the centre of the discourse or, in other words, to convey the lexical information). The grammaticalized item should lose the competition (Harder & Boyer 2005:65). In the example in (9a), *have* is used as discursively primary with a lexical meaning of possession, whereas in the example in (9b), it is an auxiliary verb and it is discursively secondary. The verb participle *written* in (9a) is a secondary predicate, in (9b) the possessive verb *have* has grammaticalized as an anterior tense marker and the secondary predicate becomes primary, now expressing the lexical content of the predicate:

- (9) a. I have [a letter] [written].
b. I [have written] a letter.

FDG does not see these changes as parallel, it may be the case that an item loses its

semantic meaning but its grammatical features remain unchanged for a longer period. That is, contentive and formal change may be correlated, but do not have to occur at the same time (Hengeveld forthc.: 24).

Within FDG, grammaticalization is seen as a combination of contentive and formal change, which follows a predictable direction. On the content side, change requires a systematic increase in scope and, on the formal side, a systematic decrease in lexicality is observed. As seen in section 1.2, in FDG, scope relations are defined in terms of hierarchical multi-layered structures that are pragmatic and semantic in nature. Thus, changes on the content side interact with changes on the formal part; the idea is that, as elements move up along the contentive scale, they may move up along or stay where they are at the formal scale (Hengeveld forthc.: 11).

2.2.1 Contentive change

When an item undergoes a process of grammaticalization, there may be changes in both meaning and form, although they do not necessarily occur at the same time. Changes in meaning always lead to a widening of scope.

Regarding the grammaticalization of Tense, Mood and Aspect, diachronic developments will go from lower to higher scope (Hengeveld 1989: 142). Thus, categories will move in the direction shown by the scale in (10):

(10) configurational property > states-of-affairs > episode > propositional content (Hengeveld forthc.: 15)

This increase in scope is not restricted to semantics, but it may also affect pragmatics. That is, a grammaticalized item may move up across layers within the Representational or Interpersonal level, or they may pass from the Representational to the Interpersonal level. However, these changes are unidirectional, since items are not likely to move down the cline. As the items move up the contentive scale, they lose their lexical properties, that is, their ability to refer to an entity or a property in the real world. In Figure 2, the possible pathways of contentive change are illustrated (Hengeveld forthc.: 21):

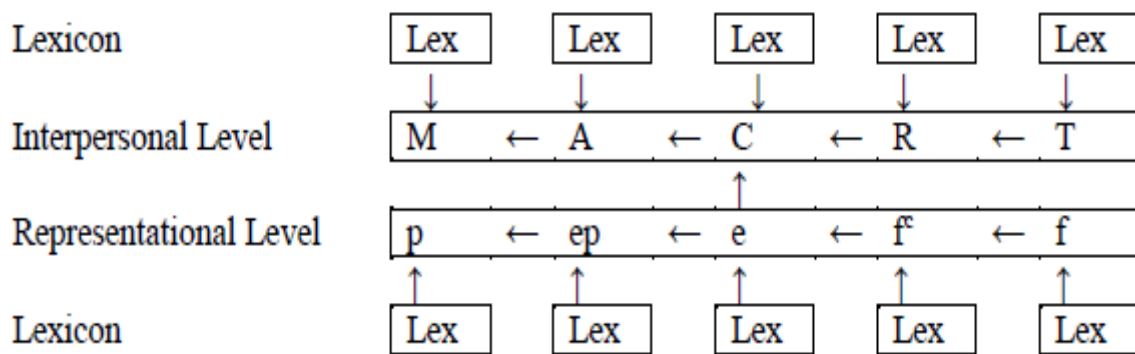


Figure 2. A model of contentive change¹

2.2.2 Formal change

Regarding formal change, grammaticalized items can gradually lose their lexical properties and gain more grammatical ones by undergoing the aforementioned mechanisms (desemanticization, extension, decategorization and phonetic erosion). Keizer (2007: 38) suggests that the source of grammaticalization must be found in a change in use, rather than in a change in the semantics of the item or construction. Thus, she puts emphasis on the extension mechanism, which deals with pragmatics, although she does not label it as extension, but as change in use. In other words, in any grammaticalization process, a change in the pragmatic or discourse function of an element may also be observed. Concretely, in FDG terms, the item loses its ability to express a Subact of Ascription at the Interpersonal Level² (Keizer 2007: 39). Within FDG, these four mechanisms are adequate for a

¹ The letters at the Interpersonal Level stand for the different layers that constitute it. Since the characteristics of these layers are not relevant for the study carried out here, the details will not be explained further. For an explanation of each of these layers see Hengeveld & Mackenzie (2008: chapter 2).

M stands for Move; A for Discourse Act; C for Communicated Content; R for subact of Ascription and T for subact of Reference.

² A subact of Ascription is “the Speaker’s attempt to ascribe a semantic category”. For example, in (i) the Property ‘rain’ is ascribed (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008:108-109):

- (i). It is raining
(C₁: (T₁) (C₁))

grammaticalization process, since the four levels distinguished by the theory are at work.

Another important characteristic of grammaticalization processes, and also acknowledged in most studies, is the gradualness of these changes. However, Keizer (2007: 39) points out a problem in most of the studies: the existence of distinct categories is continually implied labelling items as lexical or grammatical, but without specifying when a lexical item stops being lexical and enters the inventory of grammatical elements.

The process of change is normally represented in clines. This means that forms do not abruptly change from one category to another, but they undergo a series of changes. On one end of the cline there are prototypical content items and, on the other, inflectional affixes. The cline is normally represented as in (11):

(11) content item > grammatical word > clitic > inflectional affix

Nonetheless, grammaticalization studies like the ones by Hopper and Traugott (2003:7) emphasize the difficulty to establish strict boundaries and they recognize that grammaticalization studies arise partially out of this difficulty. Within a formal model as FDG, some boundaries are required in order to give the representations behind the structures and there is a need for a boundary between the two areas. In order to do this, concrete criteria are needed to test the degree of lexicality of the different words. These criteria correspond to the mechanisms listed before and they are related to the four levels recognized by FDG. The higher the number of criteria fulfilled by the item, the higher its degree of grammaticality. Thus, according to Keizer (2007: 44) the criteria needed for English are found in Table 2:

Type	Criteria
Pragmatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No ascriptive function. • Increased frequency. • No focus/emphasis.
Semantic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no semantic content. • Interpretation of meaning is highly dependent on context. • No predicate formation: only lexical predicates can be input to a predicate formation rule (such rules normally apply to verbal, nominal and adjectival predicates).
Morphosyntactic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutually exclusive, that is, the item cannot co-occur with other elements of the same class. • Fixed position of occurrence. • Not modifiable: grammatical items cannot be modified by lexical elements. • They belong to a closed class. • They belong to a regular syntactic paradigm.
Phonetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonetically reduced. • Fusion with other morphemes that ultimately lead to affixation

Table 2. *Lexicality/Grammaticality criteria for English*

Within this approach, Keizer (2007: 49-50) provides a new scale of formal change that contains three categories: lexemes, lexical operators and operators. Lexemes are fully lexical and operators fully grammatical. Lexical operators show both lexical and grammatical characteristics, occupying an intermediate position. The new cline of formal change is thus defined as (12):

(12) operators < lexical operators < lexemes

The advantage of this cline versus the one traditionally presented in (11) is that it accounts for any class of language, whereas the traditional one cannot account for isolating languages. Moreover, the cline in (11) refers to certain form classes, but the one in (12) contains categories that refer to a specific grammatical behaviour (Hengeveld *forthc.*: 25) and, thus, it is more suitable for typological and crosslinguistic studies.

2.2 Aspect and Aktionsart

The structure studied in this dissertation is intrinsically linked to these two concepts since it expresses an aspectual meaning. Moreover, as it will be described later, it seems that the categories of aspect and Aktionsart play a crucial role in the final interpretation of sentences, as their combination may bring out different meanings.

There has been a fierce debate among scholars on the concepts of aspect and Aktionsart, both on how these concepts should be defined and whether they should be considered separately or just as a single concept with different encodings³. It goes beyond the aim of this dissertation to look at this extensive debate about aspect, but the definitions followed here will be provided.

2.2.1 Aspect

Traditionally, linguists have been distinguishing three basic verbal categories: tense,

³ For an insight on the debate on Aspect, see Sasse (2002).

aspect and mood.

Most scholars agree that aspect—together with tense—is a category related to time. A traditional definition of aspect is the one by Comrie (1976: 3) who characterizes this category as the internal temporal constituency of a situation. This definition is followed by most scholars working on aspect categories. Aspect differs from tense in the sense that the latter is a deictic category, that is, a situation is located in time (Comrie 1976: 5).

Freed (1979: 10), in line with Comrie, defines aspect as the feature that “describes the temporal quality or condition of an event with respect to itself.” Tense refers specifically to the “chronological ordering of events in the real world”, being the time of reference the moment of speech. Thus, tense can be absolute (past, present, future) or relative (anterior, posterior, simultaneous), that is, a situation may be located at a certain time-point with present as the reference point (absolute time) or it may be located at a certain time-point with relation to another situation (relative time). However, aspect refers to the internal temporal constituency of the situation in the sense of whether a situation is about to happen, or whether it is happening at a certain reference point.

Another important point concerning aspect is the difficulty of separating the “inherent aspectual meaning” from the context in which the item appears (Dahl 1985: 27), an issue that has been relevant in this study, since many of the possible interpretations of the construction arise directly from influence of contextual elements.

Within FDG, aspect is defined in a similar fashion to that of Comrie, but with a specification of the layer at which this feature is at work: “Aspectual distinctions specify the internal temporal constituency of a State-of-Affairs, and therefore operate at the layer of the Configurational Property characterizing that State-of-Affairs” (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 210). This means that aspect is encoded at a very low layer, taking into account the hierarchy described at the Representational Level (see section 1.1).

2.2.2 Aktionsart

Together with aspect, Aktionsart has been part of the fierce debate on aspect. Some scholars prefer not to distinguish this category from aspect (for instance Croft 2002), whereas others prefer to separate them. Those who distinguish both categories refer to Aktionsart as the

inherent aspectual meaning of verb lexemes (Dahl 1975: 26; Comrie 1976: 41). As it can be seen, aspect is included in the definition. Thus, the basic distinction lies in the fact that Aktionsart is included in the semantic meaning of predicates, whereas aspect is normally encoded in the grammar by morphemes or auxiliaries.

Brinton (1988: 3) signals that aspect expresses the point of view of the speaker in a particular context and thus, it is subjective. On the contrary, Aktionsart is objective because it concerns the given nature of a concrete event. As it can be inferred from this definition, the difference is quite subtle. However, here, both categories will be distinguished in that fashion, since it is evident that the interaction between the aspect expressed by *keep* and the semantic aspectual component of the *V-ing* may lead to different readings. Thus, it turns out necessary to distinguish both categories and, for the sake of simplicity, it seems better to maintain the different labelling.

Within Functional Grammar and Functional Discourse Grammar, the distinction is maintained, but in their approach, the traditional Vendlerian classification of verbs into states, activities, achievements and accomplishments is not followed. Aktionsart is the term used to refer to a number of features that predicates have. These features are dynamicity, telicity, control and momentaneity (De Groot 1995: 33; Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 211). Those categories may interact with aspect affecting the final meaning of utterances. Both FG and FDG consider two kinds of aspectual categories: the traditional distinction between perfectivity/imperfectivity⁴ and phasal aspect (De Groot 1995, Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 210), where the latter refers to the relation between the temporal reference point and a phase internal to the development of the State-of-Affairs. For example, an action can be about to happen with respect to the temporal reference point (Prospective Aspect) or have happened before (Resultative Aspect). The structure discussed here belongs to this phasal aspect category. As mentioned, the presence of an aspect operator may change or cancel an inherent feature of the Aktionsart of a predicate. For instance, a stative predicate (*someone knows someone*) may become dynamic when combined with an ingressive aspect operator (*someone*

⁴ Perfective aspect is when the State-of-Affairs is seen as a whole and imperfective aspect is when it is viewed from within.

gets to know someone) (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 211) as the examples in (13) and (14) illustrate. In other words, the application of an ingressive aspect operator to a stative predicate triggers a dynamic reading of the same:

(13) *John knew his colleagues quickly (–dynamic)

(14) John got to know his colleagues quickly. (+dynamic)

In this dissertation, the Vendlerian terminology for Aktionsart (states, activities, accomplishments and achievements) will be followed (Vendler 1957), but including the category of semelfactive (added by Comrie 1976). However, an emphasis will be put into the different features that characterize these categories, especially telicity, which refers to actions or events that have an end point. When actions or events are not complete, it can be said that these are atelic.

Moreover, although the focus will be on the relationship between *keep* and the following *V-ing*, it will be shown how contextual elements may change the reading of the sentence or may cause ambiguity.

Thus, each of the Vendlerian categories are characterised as follows:

- i) Activities are atelic predicates, which have duration and are dynamic (i.e. that the verb describes a process that may change over time).
- ii) States are atelic predicates, which have duration but are stative, that is, the action described by the verb stays the same over time.
- iii) Semelfactives can be telic or atelic predicates in the sense that they can refer to a single event or a series of events, they are characterized as punctual, that is, it takes a moment in time to perform these events. They are also characterized as dynamic.
- iv) Accomplishments are telic predicates, which show duration and are dynamic. The endpoint is reached when a certain result is realized.
- v) Achievements are telic predicates that are punctual and dynamic. A certain change or result marks the endpoint of this kind of predicates.

Thus, in this study, whenever a predicate is given one of these labels, it is considered to

have the features just described.

2.2.3 Continuative aspect

Among the literature dealing with aspect, it is not easy to find an accurate definition of continuative aspect. Frequently, continuative aspect is associated with many other aspects such as progressive, habitual or continuous. Comrie (1976:26) defines continuousness as “imperfectivity which is not habituality”. The definition provided seems rather vague, first, because it uses two other aspects to define a third one and, secondly, it does not describe how this aspect characterizes the internal temporal constituency of the event itself. It is true that imperfectivity is a feature of continuative aspect in the sense that the situation described is looked at from inside. However, this definition does not capture the whole meaning of it, since it only excludes habituality from its meaning.

Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca (1994: 125) consider continuatives as related to progressive aspect, together with iteratives and frequentatives. They define continuative aspect as including progressive meaning — “a dynamic situation is ongoing”—, but it adds the meaning that the situation is under control of the agent who deliberately keeps the action in progress. They relate this meaning with English expressions as ‘keep on doing’ or ‘continue doing’ (1994:127). This definition captures better the meaning of the construction, since it refers to the control of the agent. However, some important features are not mentioned, as we will see below.

Brinton (1988: 5) is critical regarding the frequent association of continuatives with other aspectual categories. She points out that these constructions are often studied together with progressive or durative ones. In spite of her criticism, she also labels continuatives in a rather ambiguous way as continuative/iteratives. She remarks that the event would be characterized as continuative or iterative depending on the Aktionsart of the lexical verb accompanying the aspectualizer. She describes continuatives as situations that are continuing rather than ending (Brinton 1988: 53) and, although incomplete still, it is a better definition.

In Freed (1979: 88), *keep* is included among the aspectualizers that refer to the nucleus of the event. In her study, she distinguishes among aspectualizers that refer to the onset, the nucleus and the coda of the event. She considers *keep* and *continue* as imperfectivizers. Freed

also points out (1979: 91-92) that *keep* in combination with an *-ing* complement confers a durative or serial reading on the sentence, depending on the Aktionsart of the *-ing* verb. She makes a distinction between *keep* and *continue* in the sense that the latter presupposes the prior initiation of the event, whereas *keep* expresses a consequence. This definition is in line with the one given by Bybee et al. (1994).

As already pointed out, none of the definitions above captures the complete meaning of continuative aspect. A better definition is given by Mortier (2010) in a paper in which she studies continuative expressions in Dutch and French (*blijven V_{inf}* and *continuer à V_{inf}*, ‘continue V-ing, keep V-ing’). The definition arises from an exhaustive study of both structures from a synchronic point of view: “continuative aspect represents the state or event as taking place ‘on the spot’, without progress being made along the way. [...] [C]ontinuative [...] does much more than presenting the subject as involve in the activity [...], it does focus in some way on the ending of the activity viz. by cancelling an implicit, event-internal endpoint and by postulating instead an external, unspecified and unachieved endpoint” (Mortier 2010: 430). This definition reflects the actual meaning of continuative expressions better because it captures an essential part: the fact that the situation lasts longer than was supposed or expected to. Therefore, it is different from a progressive construction which focuses on the ongoingness of the action. In a continuative expression, the situation is not only in progress, but it has also been in progress for longer than expected. That is, the endpoint of the situation has been surpassed and the event has been extended into the future without any further specification. The definition given by Brinton sketches this idea. However, Mortier provides a more precise characterization of it.

Moreover, Mortier (2010: 213-248), establishes a semantic field of continuation in which she includes as related values Spatiality, Progression, Stativity, Iteration and Counter-Expectation. These related values correspond to the different interpretations of the verbs examined in her study in different contexts. Thus, Spatiality corresponds to a locative sense like staying or remaining in a certain place or position; Progression refers to an ongoing situation; Stativity to a situation that remains unaltered; the meaning of Iteration arises when a situation is repeated at various points in time and Counter-Expectation is when the speaker expresses its surprise towards the continuation of the event in spite of what was expected. In Figure 3, we can see the representation of the semantic field proposed by Mortier.

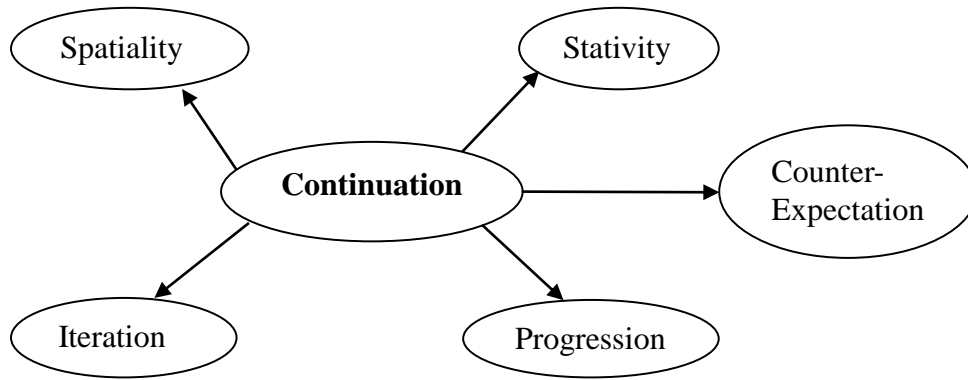


Figure 3. *Semantic field of continuation and related values* (from Mortier 2010: 428)

Finally, it is interesting to mention that Mortier outlines two possible paths of grammaticalization on basis of this semantic field (15), but she suggests that there is need for a more in depth diachronic study (Mortier 2010: 434). Since this dissertation is taking a diachronic perspective, it will be interesting to see if these paths are reflected in the data examined.

(15)

1. Spatiality → Continuation → Iteration
2. Continuation/ Iteration → Counter-Expectation

3. Previous studies about *keep V-ing*

In the literature, the structure *keep V-ing* is dealt with in a number of studies. The character of these studies differs in nature, from descriptive grammars to synchronic and diachronic studies. Most studies address the question in a similar fashion by looking both into the semantics and the syntax of it.

3.1 Descriptive grammars/works

Most descriptive grammars classify the structure *keep V-ing* as catenative (e.g. Palmer 1974; Quirk et al 1985). The term catenative is based on the possibility of combining in the same sentence two or more of the verbs belonging to the category. However, semantically these verbs cover a wide range of meanings and do not necessarily behave syntactically in a homogeneous way. Thus, it seems that the category catenative has been reserved for a variety of verbs which do not behave in a prototypical way and, therefore, are difficult to classify.

Palmer (1974: 166) includes *keep V-ing* among the catenative constructions. He suggests that these structures are composed by two full verbs (i.e. two lexical verbs). These constructions allow more than two verbs as long as all the verbs present are catenatives (16), with the exception of the last one. Although he admits that these verbs share characteristics with the primary and modal auxiliaries, he claims that their syntactic behaviour is that of a complex phrase, where a main clause hosts a subordinate clause. Regarding the semantics of the expression, Palmer (1974: 204) classifies *keep V-ing* as a verb of process, but he does not point out the fact that it may convey a certain aspect. The main point of his discussion is on the syntactic relation between the main verb and the *V-ing*. He also considers the structure *keep NP V-ing* as the same kind (17), even if the meaning of this one is clearly different, closer to that of a causative (i.e. making someone/something to do something for a period of time), and *keep* selects the arguments.

(16) I don't *want to have to be forced to begin to try to make* more money (Palmer 1974: 166)

(17) The dentist *kept me waiting* for a long time.

He also suggests that the *V-ing* complementing *keep* is to be analysed as adjectival in nature and that sentences like the ones in (18) must be compared (Palmer 1974: 176):

- (18) a. He kept talking.
b. He kept quiet.

The problem with Palmer's approach is that he looks at auxiliary and lexical verbs as two closed categories where no intermediate stages exist. Even if he acknowledges that catenatives do not behave completely as prototypical lexical verbs, he still classifies them as such, because they share a larger number of characteristics with those than with auxiliary verbs. However, his study sets the basis for later studies that will show that there is indeed a gradual scale between auxiliary and lexical verbs, since they will partially rely on the same auxiliarihood tests (*do*-support for negation; freely marked for tense; passivization; pseudo-clefting; independency of subject) (Palmer 1974: 169-181).

The work by Quirk et al. (1985:137) distinguish four intermediate categories between a prototypical auxiliary verb and a prototypical full lexical verb: marginal modals (*need, ought to*), modal idioms (*had better, would rather*), semi-auxiliaries (*be going to, be willing to, etc*) and catenatives (*appear to, happen to, get passive, keep V-ing*). They consider the following auxiliary-main verb scale (Figure 4).

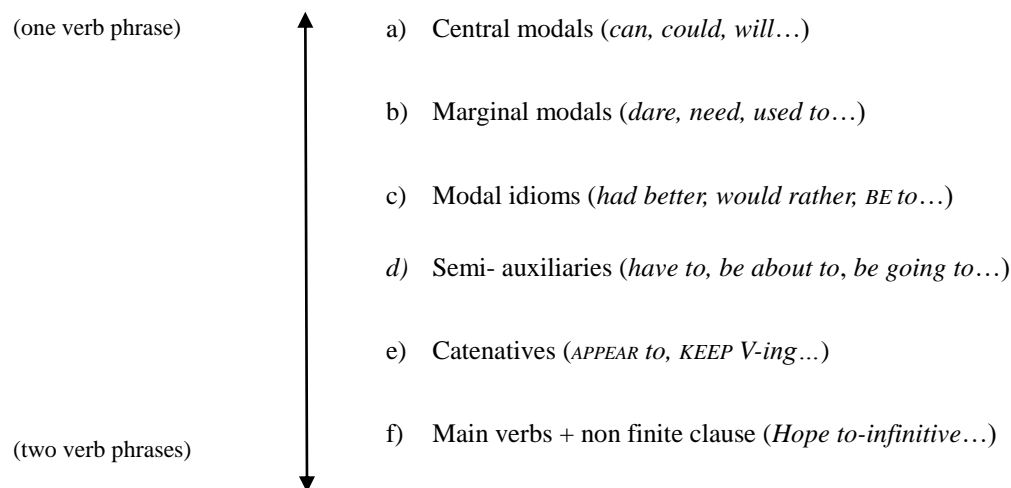


Figure 4. *Auxiliary-main verb scale* (adapted from Quirk et al. 1985: 137)

As we will see, catenative verbs share part of their features with prototypical lexical verbs and part with auxiliary and modal verbs. However, these so called catenative verbs cover different semantic meanings, like modality (19), aspect (20) or even negation (21):

(19) She *seemed to* care about the environment (Epistemic modality)

(20) They boys *started* playing basketball last summer (Ingressive aspect)

(21) The bomb *failed to* explode = The bomb didn't explode (Negation)

Their classification as catenative is based on twelve formal features (see Table 3) that they consider for auxiliary verbs and for modal auxiliaries. This classification is based on the number of characteristics the different constructions match: the higher the number of features, the higher the degree of auxiliarihood. Central auxiliaries present all the characteristics, whereas catenatives show only some, and lexical verbs behave completely different with respect to these features. Of these, it seems that not all of them are equally relevant. For instance, the so called 'abnormal time reference' for auxiliaries is not completely accurate. Although certain auxiliaries do express time and can be marked for tense (as *be* or *have*), modal auxiliary forms like *could* or *would* primarily express modality and not tense, that is, they are only formally tensed. Their interpretation as tense markers is highly dependent on contextual elements (e.g. adverbs of time or other time expressions, co-occurrence with other

tense markers, sequence of tense...). As can be seen in the example in l) in the table below, *could* is located in the present/immediate future by means of the preposition phrase *this evening*. In Table 3, the twelve formal features are listed with examples of the two extremes of the cline.

Auxiliary criteria	Auxiliary	Main verb
a) Operator in negation	He <i>cannot</i> go	*He [hopes not] [to go]
b) Negative contraction	<i>Can't</i>	* <i>hopen't</i>
c) Operator in inversion	<i>Can</i> we go?	* <i>Hope</i> we to go?
d) Emphatic positive	*Yes, I <i>DO can</i> come	Yes, I <i>DO hope</i> to come
e) Operator in reduced clauses	I can come, if you <i>can</i>	*I hope to come, if you hope
f) Position of adverb	We <i>can always</i> go early	We <i>always hope</i> to go early
g) Position of quantifier	They <i>can all</i> come ?They <i>all can</i> come	?They <i>hope all</i> to come They <i>all hope</i> to come
h) Independence of subject	Ann can do it. It can be done by Ann.	He hopes to do it. *It hopes to be done by him.
Modal Auxiliary Criteria	Modal Auxiliary	Main verb
i) Bare Infinitive	I <i>can go</i>	*I <i>hope go</i>
j) No nonfinite forms	* <i>to can/ *canning/ *canned</i>	<i>To hope/ hoping/ hoped</i>
k) No -s form	*She <i>cans</i> come	She <i>hopes</i> to come
l) Abnormal time reference	You <i>could</i> leave this evening	You hoped to leave this evening.

Table 3. *Criteria for auxiliary verbs* (adapted from Quirk et al. 1985: 137)

The group of verbs that classify as catenatives do not match all these features. Thus, according to their classification, catenative verbs match only with the following criterion of auxiliarihood: they only comply with the independence of subject criterion (i.e. there are no selection restrictions on the subject). Some expressions take a *V-ing* as complement instead of the bare infinitive (Quirk et al. 1985: 146-147). Thus, these verbs are closer in form to prototypical lexical verbs than to auxiliary verbs. The number of formal characteristics of *keep*

V-ing will be exhaustively examined later on in this work (see section 5.2.1 below).

Another descriptive grammar of English is Huddleston and Pullum (2002). In this work, verbs like *begin*, *stop* or *keep* when followed by a non-finite verb are classified as lexical aspectual verbs (Huddleston 2002: 121). Here, they present an analysis based on the syntactic behaviour of the constructions also labelled as catenative. The use of the term catenative is based on the fact that the construction can yield concatenation of verbs. Also, a better definition of the catenative construction is given: “a large class of constructions where a verb has a non-finite internal complement” (Huddleston 2002: 1177). This work is grounded on the generative grammar tradition and therefore, their analysis relies on the principles of this theory.

Among the verbs that are followed by a gerund-participial, they distinguish among those taking an ordinary subject (i.e. the inflected verb selects it) like *enjoy*, and those that contain a raised subject like *keep*. They point out a number of tests to show the different syntactic behaviour of the subjects (voice, selection restrictions of the subject, dummy subjects allowed, extraposition...) (Huddleston 2002: 1198-1199). Huddleston concludes that auxiliaries and catenatives show the same structural position within the tree (for details see Huddleston 2002: 1218).

3.2. Synchronic studies

A study by Cappelle (1999) compares *keep* and *keep on* in PDE. He suggests that *keep* is only able to render aspectual meaning when combined with an *-ing* form. *Keep on* shows a similar meaning, however, it is considered inherent to the verb itself. Thus, Cappelle concludes that *keep V-ing* has a further grammaticalized status than *keep on*, which is an independent lexical verb. He studies a number of features to show the different status of these two verbs. That is, although Cappelle does not use these labels, it could be said that using the terminology introduced in section 2.2, *keep V-ing* is a sequence in which *keep* conveys aspect, while in the case of *keep on* this meaning is part of its Aktionsart. This difference in meaning is reflected also syntactically since Cappelle argues that *keep* when followed by *-ing* forms is an auxiliary verb, whereas *keep on* is a lexical verb.

Cappelle observes that *keep* and *keep on* behave significantly differently in certain

contexts. *Keep* cannot occur on its own with the meaning of ‘persevere, carry on’, but *keep on* can (22). He suggests that *keep V-ing* forms a single VP whereas a construction of *keep on* followed by an *-ing* form is constituted by two VPs (Cappelle 1999: 3).

(22) I think after the initial check’s been made it’s important to *keep on* (**keep*) and maintain a check on it (Cappelle 1999: 3).

He also argues that *not* between *keep* and the *V-ing* is a disfavoured syntactic configuration and it is not frequently found. His reasoning is based on the idea that *not* intervening between *keep* and the *V-ing* forces the VP to split into two VPs, which is ruled out for *keep* because of its strong link with the other verb to become grammatically isolated. Nonetheless, there are examples in which intervening elements appear between the two verbs as various adverbs, *sort of*, etc. (Cappelle 1999: 6-7). It seems to me that these elements are modifiers of the lexical verb following the auxiliary *keep* (23).

(23) I *keep sort of hearing* it mentioned (Cappelle 1999: 7).

A third piece of evidence presented by Cappelle (1999: 8) is the fact that the sequence *be keeping V-ing* is not frequently found. Cappelle links this to the defectiveness in the paradigm normally displayed by auxiliaries. He points out that *keep on* is not very likely to be used in the progressive form and that this may be an incipient sign of it entering the grammaticalization cline (24). There may be another explanation to the same effect, namely the fact that continuative aspect includes progressive in its meaning. Thus, these two verbs are not very likely to appear in the progressive form for semantic reasons.

(24) *She *is keeping/keeping on running* every day.

Also, it is argued that the *V-ing* in combination with *keep* cannot be an accomplishment, that is, a telic durative verb. He argues that *keep* expresses constancy, while accomplishments denote change. Therefore, there is a semantic clash between the two meanings. The only possible reading in combination with accomplishments is the iterative

one, that is, a situation that repeats for a period of time (25). *Keep on* with accomplishments is still possible under the continuative reading which may be due to its independent status as formed by two different verb phrases (VPs)⁵ (26) (Cappelle 1999:10-11). This means that *keep V-ing* forms a single VP, headed by the *V-ing*, while in the structure *keep on V-ing*, *keep on* is the head of its own VP that takes another VP (the *-ing* verb) as its complement. In any case, it is not that *keep* cannot be followed by a predicate of the type of accomplishments, but in that case the continuative meaning is cancelled and the iterative reading is implied.

(25) *I kept painting* the picture = I reproduced the same picture over and over again (Cappelle 1999: 10)

(26) *I kept on painting* the picture = I continued working on the same picture (Cappelle 1999: 10)

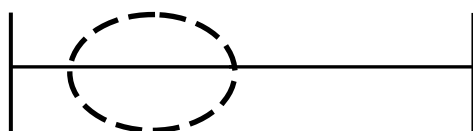
In a study by Freed (1979) about the semantics of English aspectualizers, she points out that *keep* refers to the nucleus of the event. That is, it refers to that part of the event that it is ongoing. She claims that the presence of *keep* does not presuppose the prior initiation of the event and that it normally conveys either durative or a serial reading. The durative reading is normally activated when the *-ing* form is an activity, whereas the serial reading is triggered by the presence of an achievement or an accomplishment with an object noun in the plural. In the case of an iterative, *keep* refers to the entire activity and not only to the nucleus of the same. The prior initiation of the event is included as part of the reference (1979: 95). She also suggests that *keep* is ruled out in a number of syntactic contexts, such as ellipsis. She points out that states are ruled out with aspectualizers (1979: 99).

In a Functional Grammar analysis by Boland (2005), it is argued that *keep* functions as an operator at two different levels. She points out that aspectual operators allow the speaker to select different parts of the temporal structure of a property to focus on (Boland 2005: 322). Boland also notes that aspectual operators are only at work when the property of which something is predicated is delimited by temporal boundaries, thus, permanent states cannot be

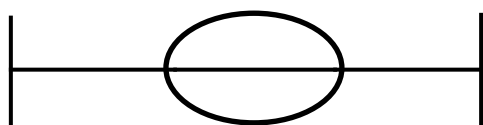
⁵ Cappelle (1999) seems to understand the term Verb Phrase in the traditional sense of a verb plus its object(s).

subject to aspectual operators. Moreover, contextual elements (arguments and other participants) are crucial to determine the temporal boundaries of the predicate. Aspectual operators modify the temporal structure of the properties. Regarding the use of *keep V-ing* as continuative aspect, the focus is laid on a subinterval of the temporal structure, and the initial boundary is specified by the expression (27). The figure in (27) expresses that the arguments of *keep writing* have started their activity and still continue it (Boland 2005: 324). This is different from the progressive in that this one is only centred on a subinterval of time and the initial or terminal boundaries are not considered, as the schema in (28) represents.

(27) Keep writing



(28) Progressive: Be Writing



Phasal aspectual operators may be lexical or grammatical; Boland suggests that *keep* is a grammatical operator, but ingressive or egressive meanings (e.g. *stop*, *begin*, etc.) are expressed lexically in English (Boland 2005: 322-324). She considers an expression as lexical if i) the verb presents an intransitive use (*stop*, *begin*); ii) the verb or expression have a passive counterpart (*be obliged to*, *be allowed to*); iii.) the verb or expression can be partially modified (*be just about to*) and iv) that they are raising constructions (*it seems that he.../ he seems to*). When an expression does not show selectional restrictions on the arguments (i.e. the verbal expression is able to determine the semantic content of its arguments), it is considered grammatical, which is the case of *keep* (Boland 2005: 348).

When *keep* co-occurs with telic SoAs, a frequentative reading is triggered, that is, the SoAs is repeated several times. Now, the verb is used as an event quantification operator which has scope at a higher level. Interestingly, she points out that, when a telic SoAs is

characterised as particularly momentaneous or punctual (i.e. the Aktionsart of the predicate is semelfactive), the reading may be ambiguous and both the frequentative and continuative reading may be available (29). In order to distinguish both readings, she uses adverbial expressions of duration, such as *for an hour*, which is good with a continuative interpretation, and *over and over again* for the frequentative reading. Under the frequentative meaning, the speaker refers to a range of SoAs (Boland 2005: 342-343).

(29) His brake lights *kept flashing on* for an hour/over and over again (Boland 2005: 343).

3.3 Diachronic studies

In the classical work by Visser (1973), *keep V-ing* is classified among a class of structures in which the first verb is used to aspectually or modally qualify the second. He classifies these combinations of verbs as syntactic units of slight subordination⁶, because the degree of subordination of the second verb to the first is not always easy to evaluate (Visser 1973: 1888). He quotes a Middle English forerunner of *keep* (30), but dates its spreading to the second half of the seventeenth century. He also suggests that it may have been considered non-standard during the eighteenth century based on the example in (31) (Visser 1973: 1898), although what is considered a vulgarity in the sentence may also have been the use of the imperative form and not the combination of the two verbs:

(30) *Kep bydding ay, and lyf clenly.*

Keep praying ever and live cleanly

“Always keep praying, and live a clean life” (How good wife taught her daughter (Skeat), 135)

(31) Some contemptible vulgarity, such as: ‘That’s your sort’; ‘what’s to pay’; ‘keep moving’

⁶ It is unclear what slight subordination means for Visser. He suggests that degree of subordination is difficult to assess. The verbs included under this section collocate with an *-ing* form, which sometimes may be adjectival in nature. Visser also points out that, although the first verb tends to convey a less prominent meaning, an extra stress on it may shift its prominence to be discursively primary (Visser 1973: 1888).

(William Gifford 1794, *The Baviad*).

However, some people cast doubt on the example in (30) and suggest that in this context the verb *keep* means ‘respect, abide by’ (De Smet 2013: 204).

A study by Brinton (1988: 135) argues that continuative aspectualizers in English derive from original stative verbs of location or possession. She dates the arising of continuative aspectualizers as *keep* or *continue* during the Middle English period. However, she points out that *keep V-ing* becomes more frequent during the Modern English period and that the examples found in Middle English are scarce. Therefore, it is better to date its grammaticalization in the Modern period (Brinton 1988, 137-138). In line with some of the aforementioned grammaticalization approaches, she argues that semantic changes and morphosyntactic change do not necessarily occur in a parallel way, but that a shift on the semantic meaning goes first. She even suggests that changes in the semantic are the cause of changes on the morphosyntax of the items (Brinton 1988: 237).

In a study by De Smet (2013: 204) on complementation patterns, it is shown that *keep* starts to co-occur with a subject-controlled *V-ing* form by the end of the seventeenth century. The first instances in which *keep V-ing* can be interpreted as clausal that he quotes are found in (32), (33) and (34).

(32) *We kept walking* to keep us warm (1683, CEMET).

(33) You *keep soaking* in Taverns, and come and make such Complaints to me (1687, OED).

(34) When we walk’d, he *kept Cringing* on his Larboard Quarter, not presuming to go Cheek by Jowl with one of the Representatives of the Nation (1700, LC).

De Smet (2013: 205) argues that the copulative use of *keep* was crucial for its later occurrence with *V-ing* forms. Within this copulative use, the verb links the subject to a predicate, which may take the form of an adjective (35a) or a prepositional phrase (35b). The sense is similar to that of ‘be, stay or remain.’ This copulative use is first attested around 1600 and corresponds to the uses in (35):

(35) a. This seruitude makes you to *keepe vnwed* (1590, OED).

b. after diner I went about the house, and *kept with my Maides* till all most night (1599-

1601, PPCEME).

This copulative use allows for the presence of adjectives ending in *-ing* (36), which creates a perfect environment for the later presence of verbal participles ending in *-ing* by analogical extension (De Smet 2013: 205). *Waking* in the example below is an adjective with the meaning ‘that remains awake, that keeps watch’, according to the OED entry.

(36) It will concern him then to *keep waking*, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinels about his received opinions (1644, CEMET).

Indeed, De Smet (2013: 205-206) quotes a number of forms ending in *-ing* that co-occur with *keep*, either following it or being close to it. For instance, De Smet quotes gerund clauses with *from* (37) or the existence of the causative construction (38) among others. These constructions may have also influenced the presence of verbal *-ing* forms after *keep*.

(37) However, I could not keep from *peeping* at them, and there I saw him again. (1722, DEFOE)

(38) The Factor will let them have no more money then what will suffice to *keep* their Trade *going*. (1681, LC)

Another feature influencing the use of copulative *keep* is the verb *continue* with which it shares a number of characteristics. *Keep* has certainly influenced the appearance of object-controlled participial construction with *continue* (39). Therefore, De Smet presupposes that the influence may have gone the other way around and that the use of subject-controlled *-ing* complements may have followed the model of *continue* which was attested earlier. The adjectival or participial status of the complements with *continue* was sufficiently uncertain to lead to analogical extension with *keep* (De Smet 2013: 206).

(39) This Lady Sands *continues* her Clack *going* ever since. (1650, LC)

4. Methodology and data collection

In this section, the sources of data will be described together with the methodology used for its collection and classification.

4.1 Corpora

In order to determine which corpora could be useful for the present thesis, a preliminary research was carried out on the Oxford English Dictionary (OED). The entry in the OED shows that *keep* starts combining with *-ing* forms around 1800. As seen above, De Smet (2013) dates the co-occurrence of these two forms a little bit earlier, to C. 1650. Thus, taking into account this evidence, it could be assumed that the grammaticalization of *keep* took place during the Late Modern English (1700-1900) and it may have continued during the whole twentieth century until today. Thus, it turned out to be necessary to look at data that covered this particular period of time. For this purpose, two different corpora were selected: The Corpus of Late Modern British and American English (COLMOBAENG) and the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA (Davies 2010)). The COLMOBAENG is a small corpus and it covers the whole Late Modern English period from 1700 to 1879. The COHA is a larger corpus and it covers the period from 1800 to the first decade of 2000. The combination of data from both corpora gives a complete picture of the characteristics of the item under study through time, especially for American English. The examples presented in this dissertation come mainly from these two corpora; when they were found in a different corpus this is indicated. When there is no indication of the source of the example, it should be interpreted as an example constructed by me or a native speaker consulted.

4.1.1 COLMOBAENG

As mentioned above, the COLMOBAENG covers the period from 1700 to 1879. It contains a total of 1,700,000 words from different prose texts. It was compiled at the

Universidad of Santiago de Compostela, with Teresa Fanego as the head of the project. The sources of the texts are both electronic and printed sources and they are both fictional and non-fictional. The authors of the texts are both British and American, accordingly both dialects are represented in the corpus.⁷

This corpus is useful because it was created with the purpose of researching syntactic developments throughout the Late Modern English period (Fanego 2012: 114). Thus, it was considered suitable for the present investigation. Also, the COHA does not contain data from 1700s, therefore, the picture would have been incomplete without the data from the COLMOBAENG. Moreover, it was freely accessible under request. The materials are gathered on the form of texts documents. Searches were done manually text by text using the search tool provided by Microsoft Word.

4.1.2 COHA

The COHA is a corpus of American English that covers the period from 1810 to the early 2000s. It contains 400 million words and it was compiled by Mark Davies at Brigham Young University, in Provo (Utah, USA). It is accessible online. The corpus is annotated and it is possible to do different types of queries (lemmas, basic syntax, parts of speech, synonyms, customized word lists and combining words). Searches in the COHA also provide information about frequency or collocations, among other things.

The COHA hosts a number of texts from different genres, namely fiction, popular magazines, newspapers and non-fiction books.

This corpus was suitable for the research carried out here, because it allows for easy queries in a friendly interface and it is available for free online. Also, in combination with the COLMOBAENG, it was easy to gather data from all the relevant periods studied here.

⁷ For a complete description of the texts see Fanego (2012).

4.2 Data collection and classification

A preliminary search in both corpora was carried out in order to get a general picture of the situation. Simple searches for *keep V-ing* were done. The form of the verb *keep* was not taken into consideration for this preliminary search. It was observed that till 1850 the frequency of the construction was quite low in both corpora. Since this search in the COHA provides a huge number of examples, a selection criterion was established to make a subset that facilitated the investigation.

Thus, only singular present forms of *keep* were taken into consideration. Also, only examples in which the *-ing* form was intransitive or the object was singular were studied. This decision was made in order to have a number of coherent variables when analysing the data.

Nevertheless, it must be noticed that these criteria were not followed for the first period (see below) since the number of examples is already quite reduced. The COLMOBAENG contains only 17 tokens of the construction for the whole period from 1700 to 1879. The COHA contains a higher number of tokens from 1800 to 1900 (approximately 2451 tokens)⁸ but, if followed the criteria, the analysis of the data for the first 100 years would have been quite limited.

In order to carry out the diachronic study, the time lapse covered by the two corpora was subdivided in five periods:

- i) The first division was from 1700 and 1820 with examples both from the COLMOBAENG and the COHA. The examples quoted by De Smet (2013), and already cited before, have been added to the data from this period, thus, the first period covers the time lapse from 1680 to 1820. In total, there are 18 examples.

Then four subperiods of 50 years have been established:

⁸ Notice that these numbers are raw and examples of the passive form of the causative construction may be included in the count (e.g. *Keep someone waiting; someone was kept waiting*).

- ii) from 1820 to 1870, with examples from both corpora;
- iii) from 1870 to 1920;
- iv) from 1920 to 1970;
- v) a period of 40 years from 1990 to 2000s.

The last three periods contain examples only from the COHA, since the COLMOBAENG does not cover this period.

For each of these periods, 30 examples with the characteristics mentioned above were randomly selected. Then, it was checked whether the example was compatible with the continuative meaning or with the iterative one and which was the *Aktionsart* of the *-ing* verb. In order to diagnose this, some of the tests developed by Dowty (1979: 60) were applied. More concretely, it was verified whether the sentences were compatible with adverbial expressions of the kind *for a long time* or *over and over again*. This test was useful to check the telicity of the verbal predicates, as the examples below show, where (40) presents an atelic predicate and (41) a telic one. If the predicates were grammatical under both readings, the *-ing* was classified as semelfactive (42). Another useful test to check the telicity of the verb is to see if the predicates are compatible with the expressions *in an hour* (telic) in contrast with *for an hour* (atelic). This test was not applied to the structure *keep V-ing*, but to the predicates in isolation as in (43), where a telic predicate is found.

(40) They're going to say whatever they have to so the money **keeps coming** *for a long time/*over and over again* (2009, COHA).⁹

(41) I **keep hearing** **for a long time/over and over again* that sex has been removed from the moral hierarchy... that it just is' now, neither moral nor immoral (1973, COHA).

(42) My left ear **keeps plugging up** *for a long time/over and over again*, like I have water in it from swimming (1994, COHA).

(43) He **keeps climbing** the tree and he will always go up and up to where there is no more

⁹ The text in italics is not part of the original examples retrieved from the corpus, but was added by the author of this dissertation.

tree (1970, COHA) → He climbs the tree in an hour/ *for an hour.

Once predicates were classified as telic or atelic, it was necessary to distinguish accomplishments from achievements and states from activities. Only accomplishments are complements of both *stop* and *finish* and achievements are bad with both verbs, so this test was used to distinguish between both categories, as the examples in (44) and (45) illustrate. In (44), the predicate *write her poetry* is grammatical as a complement of *finish* and *stop*, therefore, the Aktionsart of the verb is that of an accomplishment. On the other hand, in (45), the predicate is classified as an achievement because *forget* is unacceptable as a complement of *stop* and *finish*. The acceptability of this was checked with native speakers. The construction was also searched for in the COHA to see if there were any diachronic differences. These tests were applied to the predicates in isolation.

(44) “But you said her poetry was funny,” said Polly, as softly as Rose had spoken. “It IS” declared Rose, “but she *keeps writing* it all the time.” (1911, COHA)

→ She stopped writing her poetry.

→ She finished writing her poetry.

(45) “I *keep forgetting* exactly what it is you've gone back to get your PhD. in,” Paul says. (2000, COHA).

→ *I stopped forgetting what...

→ *I finished forgetting what...

States show certain co-occurrence restrictions; therefore, it was checked whether the predicates were compatible or not with adverbs like *carefully* or *deliberately* (only non-statives appear with these adverbs). Likewise, their compatibility with verbs as *force* or *persuade* was tested (again, only non-statives are complements of these verbs) (Dowty 1979: 55-56). The example in (46) illustrates the unacceptability of these tests with the predicate *want*, which is a state. In contrast, in (47) there is a predicate (*talk about*) whose Aktionsart is that of an activity. This predicate is compatible with both tests. Once again, these tests were applied to the predicates in isolation, not within the *keep V-ing* structure.

(46) The door's open. I **keep wanting** to turn around (2001, COHA).

→ *I *carefully/ deliberately* want to turn around.

→ *Someone forced me to want to turn around

(47) One is about that disease everyone **keeps talking** about, the cholera morbus, but the second one sounds far more promising (2001, COHA).

→ Everyone talks *carefully/deliberately* about that disease.

→ Everyone was forced to talk about that disease.

4.3 Characteristics of the data

Having classified all the examples in the corpora, it was possible to observe the distribution of meanings (continuative and iterative) and the combination of *keep* with predicates with different types of Aktionsart through the whole period studied. First, the results regarding the distribution of meanings will be presented for each period. An overview of the number of examples for each type of predicate will follow, also organized according to each of the subperiods.

For the first subperiod established (1680-1820), there are 14 examples compatible with a continuative meaning out of a total of 18¹⁰. None of the examples can be solely interpreted under the iterative meaning and 4 of the tokens are ambiguous and interpretable in both senses.

The period between 1820-1870 contains 18 examples with a continuative meaning; 6 tokens are only interpretable with an iterative sense and 6 are ambiguous.

The data that covers the period from 1870 to 1920 presents 17 tokens with a continuative meaning, 4 with an iterative one and 9 that can be read under both meanings.

The fourth subperiod (1920-1970) contains 16 examples interpretable as continuative,

¹⁰ The data collected for this dissertation is found in the Appendix.

11 tokens with an iterative meaning and 3 that can be understood under both meanings.

In the last period (1970-2000s), there are again 18 tokens with a continuative meaning, 8 with an iterative meaning and 4 examples that show ambiguity. These numbers are gathered in Table 4 for an easy understanding.

Period	Continuative	Iterative	Ambiguous	Total
i) 1680-1820	14	0	4	18
ii) 1820-1870	18	6	6	30
iii) 1870-1920	17	4	9	30
iv) 1920-1970	16	11	3	30
v) 1970-2000s	18	8	4	30

Table 4. *Distribution of aspectual meanings*

Regarding the Aktionsart of the *-ing* predicates, the data shows the following results for each period:

- From 1680 till 1820, most of the predicates are activities, with a total of 13, and only 5 predicates can be classified as semelfactive.
- The second period (1820-1870) contains 14 predicates whose Aktionsart is that of an activity, 10 are semelfactives, 5 are accomplishments and 1 is an achievement.
- From 1870 till 1920, there are 17 tokens classified as activities, 9 as semelfactives, 2 as accomplishments and 2 as achievements.
- The period from 1920 till 1970, contains a total of 15 activities, 3 semelfactive predicates, 10 accomplishments, 1 achievement and 1 state.
- From 1970 to 2000s, the data collected shows 15 activities, 4 semelfactives, 6 accomplishments, 2 achievements and 3 states.

These data are graphically represented in Table 5 below.

Period	States	Activities	Semelfactives	Accomplishments	Achievements	Total
i) 1680-1820	0	13	5	0	0	18
ii) 1820-1870	0	14	10	5	1	30
iii) 1870-1920	0	17	9	2	2	30
iv) 1920-1970	1	15	3	10	1	30
v) 1970-2000s	3	15	4	6	2	30

Table 5. *Classification of predicates according to their Aktionsart*

The mismatch between the intended reading of the sentences and the type of predicate is due to cases with semelfactive predicates in which contextual elements like adverbs help interpreting the sentence as continuative or iterative. In (48), the *-ing* verb is a semelfactive predicate. However, the intended meaning of the sentence is that of a continuative since this meaning is reinforced by the presence of the phrase *all the while*.

(48) When I write politics to ladies, Apollo **keeps twitching** me *all the while* by the ear; but I thought any other subject to-day would be impertinent (COHA, 1838).

5. The grammaticalization of *keep V-ing*

In this section, the data will be assessed in relation to the grammaticalization theory previously presented. First, changes on the semantic side will be presented (contentive change), after which changes on the formal side will be looked at.

5.1 An assessment of contentive change

5.1.1 From location to continuation

The data studied here covers a period in which *keep V-ing* already expresses continuative aspect. However, it could be posed that the continuative meaning arises from an original locative sense of *keep*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the verb *keep* was first attested in the Late Old English period as *cépan*, but its original meaning is difficult to determine. It is suggested that the original meaning may have been ‘lay hold (with the hands)’ and that it later developed the abstract meaning ‘lay hold (with the attention)’, i.e., ‘keep an eye, watch’. Interestingly, during the 11th century *keep* was taken to render Latin *observare* ‘to watch, to keep an eye upon, take note of’. It also renders the meaning of *servare* ‘watch’ and the compounds *conservare* ‘to save or keep from danger’, *praeservare* ‘to keep in a certain state or condition, to preserve, to make endure’, *reservare* ‘to keep for future use, hold in reserve, retain’. It seems that Latin had a major influence on the later development of the meaning of the verb.

This locative sense corresponds to the use of *keep* as a copulative verb noted by De Smet (2013: 205). Copulative sentences are still found in PDE and exemplified by sentences as the one in (49), although a causative meaning is implied. In Early Modern English, this structure was already productive in sentences as the ones presented in (35) above. (35a) is repeated here as (50) for the sake of convenience.

(49) Mary *keeps* her door *unlocked*.

(50) This seruitude makes you to *keepe vnwed*. (1590, OED)

In these two examples *unlocked* and *unwed* are adjectives modifying a noun or pronoun. *Keep* has a copulative use, with a meaning close to that of a locative. That is, to preserve something or someone in a certain state or condition. Also, the spreading of the *-ing* form could have been a second factor influencing the rise of this structure. As De Smet (2013: 204) points out, adjectival *-ing* forms co-occur within the structure as in the example in (36), repeated here as (51). In this example, as in the ones above, the meaning is that of location: to stay in the state of being awake.

(51) It will concern him then to *keep waking*, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinels about his received opinions (1644, CEMET).

Once adjectival *-ing* forms start co-occurring with *keep*, other *-ing* forms, such as gerunds, could easily enter in this construction. Indeed, as it was mentioned above, De Smet (2013: 205-206) describes a series of contexts in which *-ing* forms of various types appear close to *keep*. This can be considered the context where the preconditions of the grammaticalization are set. These kinds of contexts have been defined by Diewald (2002: 103) as ‘untypical contexts’, in which the lexical unit (the candidate to grammaticalize) appears in environments where it did not occur before.

The data from the first period studied here (1680-1820) shows a major number of examples expressing continuative aspect, in which the *-ing* verbs are activities. A closer look of the data shows that till 1770, all the examples (a total of 9) are constituted by activity verbs; an example is presented in (52). Thus, it could be said that it is in this period when the grammaticalization of continuative aspect takes place. The other four periods established show a majority of predicates of the type of activity, which can be taken as evidence of its extension in use and progressive increase in frequency.

(52) They *kept walking* together, and benevolence grew the topic of discourse (1771, COLMOBAENG).

The continuative meaning arises from metaphorical extension of the locative meaning of *keep* ‘to be, to preserve in a place’: it is first extended to constructions with adjectives ‘to

be, to preserve in a state' and then, with the same meaning, it is extended to verbal constructions. This is in line with what Mortier (2010) observed for French and Dutch. This could be represented in a cline as the one in (53).

(53) Location → continuation

In an FDG analysis, this means that the lexical verb *keep* starts its grammaticalization process at the Configurational property layer, which is the layer at which phasal aspect is expressed (Hengeveld forthc.: 14). This could be graphically represented as in (54), where lexical *keep* is represented as entering the grammatical system at the layer of the Configurational property:

(54) Propositional Content ← Episode ← States-of-Affairs ← Configurational Property
↑
Lexicon: *keep*

5.1.2 From continuation to iteration

As has been mentioned before, when *keep* is followed by a telic *-ing* predicate, the sentences are intended in an iterative sense. That is, an event is repeated several times rather than continuing for an indefinite period of time.

The data collected in this study show that telic predicates enter the *keep V-ing* structure later than atelic predicates. This is understood here as evidence for the postulation that the iterative meaning arises as a later development in the grammaticalization path of *keep* and follows the grammaticalization of continuative aspect.

Before predicates of the type of accomplishment or achievement appeared with *keep*, semelfactive predicates entered the construction, triggering ambiguity. This would be the 'untypical context' that sets the scenario for a further grammaticalization, using Diewald's (2002) terminology. This would correspond to the first period (1680-1820) studied here, where there are four predicates classified as semelfactive. These sentences can be read both in the continuative sense or in the iterative sense, but it is interesting that the environment in

which they appear is one in which *keep V-ing* has a primary function of expressing continuation.

The data from 1820 to 1870 contain not only semelfactive predicates, but also a number of accomplishments and one achievement. It could be suggested that it is during this period that the grammaticalization of iterative meaning takes place, what Diewald (2002: 103) calls the 'critical context'. In this context, there are too many different elements causing ambiguity in meaning and allowing for alternative interpretations, which eventually leads to grammaticalization.

Moreover, through a search in the COHA for examples of *keep continually V-ing* and *keep on V-ing*, it was observed that the first attestations belong to the decade of 1820 for the former (55) and 1830 for the latter (56). The adverbial particle *on* expresses a meaning of continuation as well. This may be considered a mechanism of reinforcement of the continuative meaning. Indeed, some scholars have suggested that the phrasal verb *keep on* arises as a case of degrammaticalization by reinforcement in the context of *keep* becoming an auxiliary (Van der Auwera 2002: 24-25). Reinforcement of the previous meaning is a common strategy used by speakers in early stages of a grammaticalization process. Also, Cappelle (1999: 11-12) suggests that *keep on* is in charge of expressing continuation with any type of predicate, including accomplishments and achievements. This also supports the idea that *on* was first used as reinforcement of the continuative meaning of *keep* in a context in which iterative meaning started to grammaticalize. In the example from PDE in (57), *keep on* and *keep* appear in the same context. *Keep on* is followed by an accomplishment and *keep* by an activity. This case illustrates how these two verbs are in charge of expressing continuation. Contrary to *keep*, *keep on* is able to convey this meaning in combination with achievements and accomplishments.

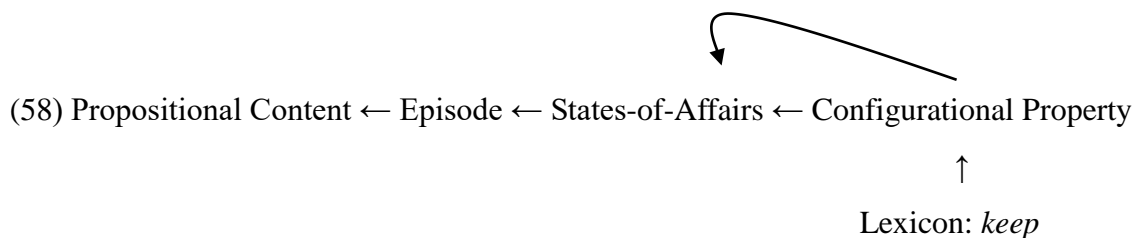
(55) He seemed to have no settled principles of action -- no aim -- no object, except an indefinite one, that *kept continually shifting*. (1823, COHA)

(56) I rose to go, but she did not appear to observe it; for she *kept on talking* as if she thought me still at her side. (1830, COHA)

(57) you don't think it dishonorable, or mean to father, for me to *keep on seeing* Nelson, do you? Father *keeps ordering* me not to, but I never say I won't. (1921, COHA)

The other three periods contain a higher number of predicates with a continuative meaning, but the number of examples with an iterative meaning is significant enough to consider it as grammaticalized.

From an FDG point of view, this second shift of meaning is reflected in an increase of scope within layers as well. When a predicate is characterised as iterative, the intended meaning is that the event is repeated several times. Therefore, *keep* is not in charge of conveying phasal aspect anymore, but quantification of the event. Quantification of the event takes place at a higher level within the Representational level, at the layer of the State-of-Affairs. Therefore, *keep* moves one layer up as represented graphically in (58).



In light of these data, a new cline of the grammaticalization process of *keep V-ing* can be presented (59), again in line with the one hypothesised by Mortier (2010):

(59) Location → continuation → iteration

5.2 An assessment of formal change

In order to determine whether there is indeed formal change, it is necessary to present the morphosyntactic characteristics of the structure *keep V-ing* in Present Day English. A comparison between the lexical use of *keep* and its use as an auxiliary in the structure studied here will be presented. Then, the features of the *keep V-ing* structure will be related to the criteria established by Keizer to detect formal change. By doing so, it becomes possible to determine what the current status of *keep* is regarding its formal features. Finally, a comparison with the early periods will be presented to see if the structure exhibits changes as well.

5.2.1 A comparison between *keep* and *keep V-ing*

Lexical verb *keep*

Keep as a lexical verb with a meaning of location ‘to stay in a particular place or condition’ or possession ‘to have or continue to have in your possession’ (Cambridge Dictionary Online) is characterised as a transitive verb that takes a nominal object as its complement, as the examples in (60) and (61) illustrate. As can be seen in (60), in the locative sense, a prepositional phrase of location is frequently found as well. In both senses, the verb selects both the subject and the object. The subject must be an animate entity. Also, it takes an -s in the third person singular of the present tense.

(60) My grandmother *keeps the plates and glasses on the kitchen’s cupboard*.

(61) Everyone *keeps photographs of their holydays as a souvenir*.

In this sense, *keep* patterns as prototypical lexical verbs and takes *do*-support in all possible contexts, that is, negation (62), interrogative sentences (63), positive emphatic (64) and operator in reduced clauses (65):

(62) She *didn’t keep* any of the presents she got on her birthday.

(63) *Do* you still *keep* that old green couch?

(64) They *do keep* all their plants in good condition.

(65) Ann keeps her books in her desk and John *does* too.

Lexical *keep* also appears in all its non-finite forms (*to* infinitive, past participle and gerund) as the examples below show in (66), (67), and (68):

(66) They need *to keep* all the bills till they declare taxes.

(67) My parents had *kept* a family album since I was born.

(68) She is *keeping* all the stamps for her collection.

Adverbs and quantifiers precede *keep*, as (69) and (70) illustrate. *All* in (70) must be understood as a quantifier of the subject; as a quantifier of the object, the second sentence would have to be grammatical:

(69) They *always keep/ *keep always* their keys on the same place so they can find them easily.

(70) They *all keep/* keep all* their equipment in the lockers at the gym.

Keep V-ing

The structure studied here, *keep V-ing*, shows the following morphosyntactic features: first, it is not followed by a nominal object, but by a verbal gerund ending in *-ing*. Moreover, the element responsible for selecting the arguments is this verbal gerund. Therefore, within this structure, *keep* loses the ability of selecting its own arguments. Indeed, animate and inanimate entities fill the subject position, as (71) and (72) exemplify, and *keep* is also found in existential constructions with *there*, as in (73).

(71) *He keeps reminding* me how long he waited to find me (1994, COHA).

(72) *The song on the radio keeps playing* (2001, COHA).

(73) [...] *there kept growing* in me a dreadful need for some word, some news of what was happening there (1959, COHA).

As can be seen in (71), *keep* takes an *-s* for the third person singular. Not only the semantics of the subject help verify that it is not an argument of *keep*, but also its passive counterpart. As can be seen, it is the *V-ing* that undergoes passivization (72). This can be compared to the passive version of the sentence in (60) above, presented in (73), where *keep* undergoes passivization.

(72) The plane *keeps being delayed* (by the company) = The company *keeps delaying* the plane.

(73) Plates and glasses *are kept* on the kitchen's cupboard (by my grandmother).

Keep patterns with *do*-support in all possible contexts when followed by an *-ing* form: negation (74), interrogative sentences (75), emphatic positive (76), and operator in reduced clauses (77). Nevertheless, this construction is not frequently found in the negative. Native speakers consulted would rather use a sentence with *stop* or *quit V-ing* to negate a sentence with *keep V-ing*. This is confirmed by the data contained in the COHA, where a simple search for *keep V-ing* preceded by negation gives a total of 56 examples which is a very small number in contrast with the 23, 093¹¹ examples that are retrieved when looking for *keep V-ing* in the corpus.

(74) I am in your life to make sure that you *do not keep going* on emotional buying binges. (2007, COHA)

(75) “Why *do you keep looking* out the window?” I asked. (2001, COHA)

(76) “Well, I'll grant you that. You *do keep hoping*.” O'Byrne laughed. (1965, COHA)

(77) Mary keeps running in the park and Judy **keeps/ does too*.

Within the *keep V-ing* structures, *keep* also occurs in all its non-finite forms (*to* infinitive, participle and gerund) as exemplified by (78), (79), and (80).

(78) You were supposed to use the mirror *to keep* checking out your form on the exercises (1993, COHA).

(79) Since then the devastation *has kept rising* while support for the war has fallen lower and lower (2001, COHA).

(80) The infantry forgot where it was going in the urgent immediate problem of getting there, of *keeping going* without dropping out (1962, COHA).

¹¹ These numbers are not exact, that is, some examples may not correspond to the continuative/iterative meaning studied here. For instance, passive examples of the causative construction may be included in the count (i.e. *we were kept waiting*). The number of examples on the negative is accurate, since it was verified that the sentences correspond to the structure under study.

Regarding the position of the adverbs, they may precede (81) or follow *keep* (82). These adverbs tend to follow prototypical auxiliaries (83).

(81) I *always* kept thinking about that as I was making it (1958, COHA).

(82) A ceiling fan was kept *always* running, moving at its lowest, laziest speed (2009, COHA).

(83) She is *always* wearing that red jacket.

Whereas prototypical auxiliaries and modals can be inserted between the subject and a quantifier like *all*, *both* or *each* (84), this is ruled out for *keep V-ing* (85).

(84) My friends *will all* come to the party.

(85) *My friends all* / **My friends keep all* playing football on the same team.

Thus, from this description, it can be concluded that *keep* as a lexical verb and *keep* followed by a *V-ing* form have a number of features that distinguish them (namely, *keep* followed by *V-ing* does not select its own arguments and adverbs may follow or precede *keep*), but they also share some other features (*do*-support, *-s* for the present tense third person singular form, the quantifier cannot be inserted between *keep* and the *V-ing*, complete paradigm of non-finite forms). A summary of these features is presented in Table 6.

Lexical <i>keep</i>	<i>Keep V-ing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do</i>-support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>-s</i> morpheme for third person singular present • Position of quantifier (close to the subject) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete paradigm non-finite forms 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It selects its own arguments • Adverbials precede 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No argument selection • Position of adverbials (precede or follow)

Table 6. *Common and distinguishing features of lexical keep and keep V-ing.*

With this distinction in mind, the criteria presented in chapter 2 to determine the grammatical status of an item will be applied to *keep V-ing* in the following section.

5.2.2 The grammatical status of *keep V-ing* in Present Day English

Keep V-ing relates to the criteria presented in chapter 2, section 2.2.2 as follows:

Pragmatic criteria and frequency

Within the *keep V-ing* structure, *keep* has lost its ascriptive function. It does not ascribe the property of location or possession to some referent in the world as the lexical sense does. However, it is still available for focus as its co-occurrence with emphatic *do* proves. Nonetheless, this is a characteristic shared with modal verbs (Keizer 2007: 44). These characteristics are located at the Interpersonal Level within FDG, which deals with pragmatic content.

Another piece of evidence for grammaticalization is the increase in frequency of the items undergoing the process. This is the case of the structure studied here, the combination of the two corpora shows a progressive increase of examples. If the COLMOBAENG contains only 17 examples for the period it covers, the numbers in the COHA are notably higher and show this increase in frequency. A simple search for all the examples of *keep V-ing* in the COHA retrieves 6 examples for the decade of 1810 and 3,350 for the decade of 2000s, with a progressive growth for each decade. Although some of the examples contained in these numbers may not correspond to the structure studied here, but to a passive form of the causative construction with *keep*, the figures are significant enough to consider this criterion as fulfilled.

The chart below (Figure 5) illustrates the increase of frequency for each of the periods established. The numbers of tokens for each period are the following:

- i) 1683-1820: 18 tokens. These data belong to the COLMOBAENG and the COHA, with the examples from De Smet (2013) included.

- ii) 1820-1870: 804 tokens. These numbers are retrieved from the COHA.
- iii) 1870-1920: 2382 tokens. These data are from the COHA.
- iv) 1920-1970: 8711 tokens, retrieved from the COHA.
- v) 1970-2000s: 11189 tokens. These data belong to the COHA.

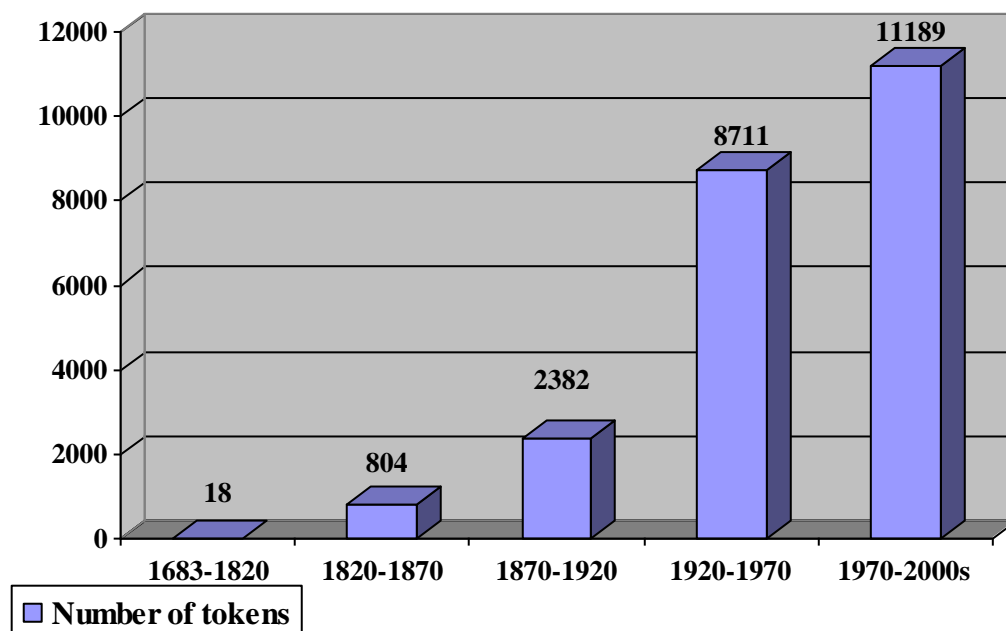


Figure 5. Increase of frequency of keep V-ing

Semantic criteria

As was already seen in section 6.1, when *keep* starts its grammaticalization process it loses its locative meaning and develops an abstract meaning, which is the expression of continuative aspect. Another piece of evidence showing that *keep V-ing* is different from lexical *keep* is that sentences like the one in (86) are possible in English, where the aspectual auxiliary *keep* modifies lexical locative *keep*.

(86) I was out of control. I was menopausal, screaming at everybody. Yet he *kept keeping* me there (2012, COCA).

Moreover, as it becomes more grammatical and new kinds of predicates —with

different types of Aktionsart— enter the construction, its interpretation is more dependent on the context. The only way to determine whether *keep* expresses continuative or iterative meaning is by looking at the Aktionsart of the *V-ing* predicate. In the case of semelfactive predicates, their interpretation may depend on the addressee's choice, unless some adverbials or other expressions specify the meaning. The example in (87) contains a semelfactive predicate, *pop up*, which could be interpreted both in a continuative and iterative sense. However, contextual elements (i.e. the adverbial *continually*) reinforce the continuative meaning over the iterative one. Thus, interpretation is highly determined by contextual factors.

(87) When the idea is a trivial one and *keeps popping up continually*, it becomes tiresome (1907, COHA).

Interestingly, in what was identified here as the critical context for the grammaticalization of iterative meaning (1820-1870), there are some examples in which adverbials such as *continually* appear to reinforce the continuative meaning of the expression when predicates such as accomplishments and achievements collocate with *keep* creating ambiguity. In (88) and (89), the predicate *shift* is an accomplishment which, in principle, should trigger an iterative meaning. However, in a critical context in which this iterative meaning just started to appear, it is not surprising to find adverbials as *continually* or *on* reinforcing the continuative meaning¹².

(88) A tree, when in full leafage, drops a great deal of refreshment; but in a little while the sun strikes through, and *you keep shifting* your position, until, after a while, the sun is set at such a point that you have no shade at all (1847, COHA).

(89) He seemed to have no settled principles of action -- no aim -- no object, except an indefinite one, that *kept continually shifting* (1823, COHA).

¹² Notice that Cappelle (1999: 11-12) suggests that *keep on* is in charge of expressing continuation with any type of predicates, including accomplishments and achievements, as mentioned in section 5.1.2.

Also, *keep* does not form its own predicate¹³: as shown before, the arguments of the sentence are selected by the *V-ing* rather than by *keep* (see 5.2.1, examples (71-73)).

Morphosyntactic criteria

In PDE, *keep* cannot co-occur with items of the same class: for instance, this structure is ruled out in the progressive aspect construction (*be V-ing*) (90). This is due to a semantic clash, since progressive meaning is already contained in the *keep V-ing* construction. Regarding other phasal aspect expressions in English, a search for *keep* in combination with other aspectualizers (e.g. *start V-ing*, *stop V-ing*, *begin to*, etc.) in the COHA did not retrieve any result. Thus, a sentence like the ones in (91) and (92) is not possible in English. This is probably due to the impossibility of expressing different phasal aspectual meanings at the same time. In other words, if there is a marker of ingressive aspect in the sentence, it is not possible for the action to simultaneously be about to end or be in progress. Hence, if we consider aspectualizers as a class, this criterion is fulfilled, but more research may be needed to confirm this.

(90) *I *am keeping running* every day.

(91) *She *starts keeping running* every day.

(92) *She *stops keeping running* every day.

Keep appears in a fixed position in sentences. The syntactic ordering of the categories tense, aspect, and mood reflects the scope relations between these elements within the Representational level. Consider examples (93):

(93) But I *could have kept driving* for weeks. (2003, COHA)

¹³ Within Functional Grammar and Functional Discourse Grammar, predicates are only lexical elements (verbal, nominal and adjectival) (Keizer 2007: 41). In FDG, predicate formation takes place at the Representational level. This is thus a semantic criterion.

In (93), the modal verb *could* is triggered at the layer of the Episode by an operator of objective epistemic modality. Then, the word *could* is instantiated at the Morphosyntactic level when copying the information given at the Representational Level. Then, *have*, which is a relative tense marker of anteriority, is triggered by an operator at the layer of the States-of-Affairs. Finally, there is *kept* which encodes phasal aspect and it is located at the layer of the Configurational property. Each of these layers have scope over the other, and as we can see, the syntactic ordering of the elements in the sentence reflects this scope relationship. When combined with other tense or mood markers, aspectualizers are always preceded by mood and tense auxiliaries due to this hierarchical relationship.

Keep cannot be modified by lexical elements like adverbs. Thus, a sentence like (94) is not possible if *slowly* is understood as modifying only *kept*. If the adverb intervenes between the two elements, it must necessarily be understood as a modifier of the *V-ing* (95).

(94) *They *slowly* kept running.

(95) They kept *slowly* running.

Another criterion is that grammatical elements belong to a closed class. However, this criterion may be problematic, as Keizer (2007: 42) points out, since that would mean that the distinction between lexical and grammatical features is applied to classes rather than to individual members. As indicated in various parts of this dissertation, *keep* does not behave like a prototypical lexical verb and neither like a prototypical auxiliary. This also holds for modal verbs since not all of them share the same properties. Thus, it is difficult to decide what is a closed class and how *keep* relates to that. As mentioned above, *keep* may belong to a class of aspectualizers, but this requires further research.

Another criterion is that of paradigmaticization as Lehmann (1985: 305) calls it. Paradigmaticization may refer to two different phenomena. Firstly, a grammatical unit, like a noun, may shift from belonging to an open category to a close category (e.g. a preposition). Secondly, a change of paradigm may refer to the phenomena in which function words undergoing a grammaticalization process eventually become part of the inflectional system (Norde 2012: 83). It is evident that *keep* did not undergo the second type of paradigmaticization, but it did enter the paradigm of auxiliary verbs in the sense that it came

to express more abstract notions as tense, aspect, or mood. Although it may not pattern as a prototypical auxiliary verb as mentioned already, it exhibits morphosyntactic characteristics that distinguish it from its lexical counterpart. One of them is the obligatorification of being followed by an *-ing* verb when *keep* expresses continuative or iterative meaning. Thus, this criterion is fulfilled.

Phonological criteria

Regarding the phonological and phonetic criteria, none of them apply to the item under examination. *Keep* preserves its whole phonological weight along its grammaticalization path. Often grammaticalized items lose segmental material and their length is reduced or they become clitics (Bybee et al. 1994: 6), as in the case of *gonna* for *going to*, or the reduced forms of certain auxiliaries and modals like *'ll* (will) or *'d* (would).

When cliticized or reduced, grammaticalized items become more dependent on the surrounding elements, which ultimately may lead to fusion with other morphemes or affixation (e.g. in the illocution marker *let's*, the original word *us* becomes an affix and is ultimately reduced to a phoneme (Keizer 2007: 45)). These criteria do not apply to *keep* either, but it is not surprising considering the behavior of other English auxiliary and modal verbs. Many of them preserve their phonological weight when grammaticalized, although they often show fusion of morphemes in the negative. It seems that except for the past form *-ed*, English tends to express tense, aspect and mood analytically. Therefore, it is not surprising that *keep* maintains its full phonological form when grammaticalized.

A summary of the relationship of *keep V-ing* with these criteria can be found in Table 7:

Criteria	<i>Keep V-ing</i>
No ascriptive function	+
No focus/emphasis	+
Increased frequency	+
Little or no semantic content	+
Mutually exclusive	+
Fixed position	+
Not modifiable	+
No predicate formation	+
Closed class	+?
Syntactic paradigm	+?
Phonetically reduced	-
Fusion	-

Table 7. *Lexical-grammatical criteria for keep V-ing*

The higher number of pluses, the more grammatical an item is. Thus, taking into account the number of criteria matched by *keep V-ing* (a total of 8), it could be said that in PDE it is a highly grammatical aspectual auxiliary. If we look at the cline in (12), repeated here as (96), this means that *keep* reached the end of the cline and became an operator.

(96) operator < lexical operator < lexeme

This means that at the Representational level, a continuative or iterative operator would be instantiated at the corresponding layer. Then, at the Morphosyntactic level, this information would be encoded by the form *keep*. The order in which operators are encoded at the Morphosyntactic level reflects the hierarchical order of these operators at the Representational Level (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 90). Therefore, other operators co-occur with *keep*, like absolute or relative tense and different types of modality. If these operators are present, they always precede *keep* because they are situated in higher layers at the Representational level (see Table 1, section 1.2 above).

5.2.3 A diachronic view of formal change

The data from the Late Modern English period do not show significant formal differences with respect to PDE. The arguments of the sentence are selected by the *-ing* verb, and inanimate subjects are also found quite early within the construction as (97) exemplifies. It must be noted that the subject of this sentence refers to a part of the human body and, as such, its inanimacy may not be so straightforward. A better example is found in (98), where *the boats* is definitely an inanimate subject.

(97) [...] whilst her active limbs *kept wreathing and intertwisting* with his in convulsive folds. (1749, COLMOBAENG)

(98) [...] the boats *kept going* until all that is beat out in your district is carried. (1821, COHA)

There are no examples of sentences with existential *there* in this period. The first attestation in the COHA is from 1909 as (99) shows.

(99) At Sumter's *there kept coming and going* by twos and threes, from all along the officers' line, a succession of sympathetic callers [...]. (1909, COHA)

Although further investigation may be needed, the fact that inanimate subjects and existential constructions appear later with *keep V-ing* could be taken as evidence for a gradual loss of lexical properties. It could be posed that, at the beginning, *keep* influenced the kind of verbal predicates entering the construction to a certain extent (i.e. verbal predicates with animate subjects controlling the action) and eventually lost this influence resulting in all kinds of predicates being allowed.

It also patterns for *do*-support in all possible cases; for instance, in (100) there is an example of a negative clause. This is not surprising, since this should be an initial stage of grammaticalization and more lexical features are expected to be present. However, there may be another explanation for the preservation of *do*-support in PDE in contrast with prototypical

auxiliaries and modals. The grammaticalization of *keep* takes place at a later period than that of auxiliaries and central modals, which start to grammaticalize in the Old English period already (Fischer & Van der Wurff 2006: 146-155). This means that these items started to change from lexical verbs to grammatical verbs before dummy *do* became obligatory in interrogative and negative sentences. Roughly speaking, the spread of *do*-support took place between late Middle English and the second half of the sixteenth century (Fischer & Van der Wurff 2006: 155), and core modals were already quite grammaticalized by the end of the Middle English period (Fischer & Van der Wurff 2006: 146-152). Thus, the fact that *do*-support was already a well-established system in Late Modern English could have prevented *keep* from losing this feature by analogy with the other auxiliaries.

(100) She *did not keep slipping off* as she used to do before Mr. Bond's illness [...] (1856, COHA).

Also, as pointed out before, the fact that the construction does not appear often in negation may have had an influence on *keep* not functioning as a negation operator.

Other small elements can intervene between the two verbs. The first attestation in the data used here is from 1774, in (101). Again, it seems that these elements are modifying the verb *-ing* rather than *keep*.

(101) [...] my cries were put up to my Heavenly Father for preservation that in an humble dependence on him my soul might be strengthened in his love and *kept inwardly waiting* for his counsel. (1774, COLMOBAENG)

Generally speaking, it is difficult to track significant formal changes. It seems that the most important formal change was the co-occurrence of lexical *keep* with adjectives ending in *-ing* (as *waking* in (50), section 5.1.1) and its later co-occurrence with verbal gerunds. At least with the data used in this dissertation, it is difficult to establish the intermediate status of the form between operator and lexeme, that is, that of a lexical operator. It should probably be dated around the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, but

further research should be carried out to verify this.

6. Discussion

This dissertation started from the hypothesis that, in PDE, *keep* within the structure *keep V-ing* is an auxiliary expressing continuative aspect and that it became such by means of a grammaticalization process, in which its status changed from lexical to grammatical verb. Moreover, it was assumed that by looking at diachronic data the different stages of this grammaticalization process would be observed. Four research questions were posed:

1. Does *keep* first combine with a certain type of verbs (activities) to convey continuative meaning and later on with other verbs to convey iterative meaning?
2. Is the combination with semelfactive predicates an intermediate stage?
3. Is it possible to trace any other meaning?
4. Are there any morphosyntactic changes in the structure?

From the analysis of the data presented in chapter 5, it can be stated that there is indeed a grammaticalization process and that different stages can be identified. Firstly, it has been observed that there is a change from a lexical locative meaning into a continuative one when predicates characterized by an atelic Aktionsart (mainly activities) enter the construction. This may be dated between the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. In this period, there are changes on the contentive side as well as on the formal side. The major change on the formal side is the combination of *keep* with this verbal gerund. By the end of the seventeenth century, semelfactive predicates, which can be understood both as telic and atelic, start to appear in combination with *keep* causing ambiguity and creating a new possible reading of iteration of an event.

Following from this, on the contentive side two different stages of grammaticalization were found:

- i) From location to continuation (approximately end of 17th century/beginning of 18th century)
- ii) From continuation to iteration (approximately between 1820-1870)

From an FDG point of view, it has been observed that on the contentive side there is increase in scope. Continuative aspect is expressed at the layer of the Configurational Property where phasal aspect takes place and iteration is expressed one layer up, at the States-of-Affairs layer, where quantification of the event takes place.

Remarkably, these three meanings of *keep* (lexical locative, continuative aspect and iteration) co-exist in PDE, that is, lexical meanings are not necessarily lost when new grammatical meanings arise. This is called layering (Hopper & Traugott 2003: 124) and it has been observed in many grammaticalization processes. Layering does not only refer to the coexistence of the different stages of the grammaticalization processes, but also to the coexistence of forms with similar meanings, as in the case of *keep on* and *keep V-ing*.

The second question was whether the combination of semelfactives with *keep V-ing* could be identified as an intermediate phase of the grammaticalization process. In the previous section, it was recognized as an ‘untypical context’ in Diewald’s terminology. In this environment, ambiguity is caused that will eventually lead to the intervention of other telic predicates pushing *keep* further into the grammaticalization cline. This stage was probably reached around 1800.

The aim of the third research question was to investigate if other possible meanings could be traced. In the semantic field of continuation posed by Mortier (2010), the following meanings were included: Spatiality, Progression, Stativity, Iteration and Counter Expectation. Of these, four have been identified in English: i) Spatiality (location); ii) Progression and iii) Stativity. Both progression and stativity are expressed within continuation, since under the continuative meaning the event remains in progress and without change for an indefinite amount of time. v) Iteration is expressed by *keep* in combination with telic predicates, as has been pointed out. However, Mortier also includes Counter-Expectation among the meanings related, which refers to the speaker’s surprise of the event continuing in spite of what was expected. In the sample examined here, it cannot be posed that this Counter-Expectation meaning is grammaticalized into *keep*. The structure *keep V-ing* is likely to appear within sentences where this idea of an event continuing longer than expected is expressed. It often appears within clauses with *although*, *but*, or conditional clauses as (102) shows, but it seems to be the combination of these discourse markers with *keep* that brings out the meaning of

Counter-Expectation, rather than this meaning being inherent to *keep*. Thus, Counter-Expectation cannot be considered a further stage of the grammaticalization of *keep*.

(102) By the way, you *keep using* that term as if it were some kind of dirty word. Just what does it mean? What is a Naturalist, in your book? (1958, COHA)

The final research question dealt with morphosyntactic change. As shown in the previous section, *keep V-ing* shows a series of formal features that are different from *keep* as lexical and, as such, it can be considered an auxiliary verb in charge of expressing continuative or iterative meaning. Furthermore, it meets a high number of the criteria established by Keizer that indicate an item's grammatical status. Adopting these, *keep* has been classified as an operator of phasal aspect and quantification. However, from a diachronic perspective no significant differences have been observed, except for the combination of *keep* with *-ing* forms. An intermediate status as lexical operator could not be identified. Further research should be carried out to see whether this stage is found for *keep*, but considering the data used here, this stage may have taken place around the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that the grammaticalization process of *keep V-ing* confirms the prediction by Hengeveld (forthc.) that contentive change and formal change are not necessarily parallel and that items may move up the contentive chain and stay the same on the formal chain. In this case, it seems that *keep V-ing* became an operator quite quickly and still then the iterative meaning was developed. Thus, *keep* has moved up the contentive chain, while staying the same at the formal chain.

Another interesting remark to be made is that predicates with the Aktionsart of activity may also convey iterative meaning when the subject or object of the sentence is pluralized, which demonstrates that other contextual elements may change the primary meaning of sentences (103). Thus, the example in (103) may be ambiguous to a certain extent: it could refer to a single action that is ongoing in time, or to a series of actions repeated for a period of time.

(103) The Nazis, they said, *could keep going* for some time by mulcting their Jews, especially

after they had acquired Austria. (1939, COHA)

Moreover, it is interesting to notice that in spite of the suggestion that state predicates do not appear within the structure *keep V-ing* (Freed 1979: 59-61), the data used in this study show a few examples with states (104). Generally speaking, it can be said that, under the continuative reading, activities are the most frequent type of predicate, but non-permanent states may enter the construction as well. This is illustrated by the case of *feel* below.

(104) I could write most of this book about this, but I *keep feeling* that I must hurry, so I can only outline the subsequent years. (1966, COHA)

7. Concluding remarks

The main points discussed in this dissertation can be summarised as follows:

The general aim of this work was to study the grammaticalization process of *keep V-ing*. In PDE, when followed by *V-ing*, *keep* is in charge of expressing continuative aspect or iteration. Continuative aspect is defined as an event that is in progress in the moment of speaking for a longer period than it was expected, of which it is unclear when it will end. Iteration is the repetition of an event in time. It was shown that these two different meanings are closely related to the Aktionsart of the *V-ing*. Continuation arises with activities and states and iteration is linked to accomplishments and achievements. Semelfactive predicates can be understood under both meanings.

The diachronic study of this structure has shown that on the contentive side two stages can be described. The first one is dated around the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. In this stage, *keep* starts combining with *V-ing* predicates with an Aktionsart of an activity by the analogical influence of other forms ending in *-ing* (namely, adjectives). Thus, a change was observed from its original locative meaning to a continuative meaning. The second stage is dated at the beginning of the 19th century. Iterative meaning is triggered by the presence of telic predicates (achievements and accomplishments). Contentive change is observed from the expression of continuation to that of iteration of the event, with scope increase from the layer of the Configurational Property to the layer of the States-of-Affairs.

From the point of view of formal change, it has been observed that in PDE, *keep* followed by *V-ing* has certain features that distinguish it from lexical *keep*, but it does not pattern completely as a prototypical auxiliary or modal verb. By applying Keizer's (2007) criteria of grammaticality, it has been observed that *keep*, when preceding an *-ing* verb, behaves as an operator that conveys aspectual meaning to the verb or quantifies it. Diachronically, no significant formal differences have been found and it was not possible to identify an intermediate stage in which *keep* is a lexical operator. It is very likely that this intermediate stage happened around the beginning of the 17th century. However, further data and research are necessary.

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Appendix

Data 1683-1820

Examples	Year/Corpus	Aktionsart V-ing	Meaning
1) <i>We kept walking</i> to keep us warm	1683, CEMET	Activity	Continuative
2) You <i>keep soaking</i> in Taverns, and come and make such Complaints to me	1687, OED	Activity	Continuative
3) When we walk'd, he <i>kept Cringing</i> on his Larboard Quarter, not presuming to go Cheek by Jowl with one of the Representatives of the Nation.	1700, LC	Semelfactive	Continuative
4) [...] she retorted his thrusts with a just concert of springy heaves, keeping time so exactly with the most pathetic sighs, that one might have number'd the strokes in agitation by their distinct murmurs, whilst her active limbs <i>kept wreathing and interwisting</i> with his in convulsive folds	1749, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative
5) when leaving him to pursue his delights, she hid again her face and blushes, with her hands and pillow, and thus stood passively and as favourably too as she could, whilst he <i>kept laying</i> at her with repeated thrusts, and <i>making</i> the meeting flesh on both sides refound again with the violence of them.	1749, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative
6) This night the young men getting into liquor, <i>kept shouting and singing</i> till morning.	1751, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative

7) Thank God, thank God, the baronet <i>kept repeating</i> for some time, and the governor was the first who took any notice of the but at the close of the speech, and inquired after the health of the lady.	1770, COLMOBAENG	Semelfactive	Continuative
8) They <i>kept walking</i> together, and benevolence grew the topic of discourse.	1771, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative
9) I felt like a little child; and my cries were put up to my Heavenly Father for preservation that in an humble dependence on him my soul might be strengthened in his love and <i>kept inwardly waiting</i> for his counsel.	1774, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative
10) [we] <i>Kept running</i> along shore to the west and south=west in soundings, taking care to keep without six fathoms, till we opened a little bay on the east point of which we saw a number of huts and many heaps of salt, which convinced us that it was assuredly the isle of May- before this we had our doubts.	1778, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative
11) he went on pretty gaily in the planting way, and brought his narcotic weed into great repute, by sending a present of a quantity of it to his old master, who grew excessively fond of it, and <i>kept calling</i> for more.	1792, COLMOBAENG	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
12) However, Bull continued to supply him with cash, and he <i>kept making attempts</i> .	1792, COLMOBAENG	Activity	Continuative
13) Accordingly, the patient Harby (who all this while, <i>kept penciling</i> in his mind these capricious of man, when “drest in a little brief authority”) began to read.	1810, COHA	Activity	Continuative
14) For, altho' I <i>kept pursing up</i> my lips with all the nerve I was master of, I could hardly refrain from bursting into a fit of laughter.	1810, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative

15) Oh, as for me, knowing there was enough I snack'd as I <i>kept running</i> on the road	1811, COHA	Activity	Continuative
16) You <i>keep calling</i> , tell me directly, Solomon, but, sir, you don't let (hic) me know what it is I am to tell you	1815, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
17) Master Greenowl, <i>kept eating</i> so (hic.) enormously, that two or three times he snapped at the letter.	1815, COHA	Activity	Continuative
18) Then he'll be a perpetual motion; as I intend to <i>keep moving out</i> of his way; and under cover of this disguise, I hope soon to be out of every one's way.	1817, COHA	Activity	Continuative

Data 1820-1870

Example	Year/ Corpus	Aktionsart V-ing	Intended Meaning
1) Do you not hear him? He <i>keeps saying</i> , death is near! death is near!	1823, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
2) I wonder who -- Count Gualandi thinks -- would go near it, when such a wicked tyrant as, they say, Count Ugolino is, is shut up there, and <i>keeps frightening</i> the whole country, as he does, with his horrible shouts.	1830, COHA	Activity	Continuative
3) And in this manner the credit <i>keeps circulating, performing</i> , in every stage, the office of money, till it is extinguished by a discount with some person who has a payment to make to the bank, to an equal or greater amount.	1831, COHA	Activity	Continuative
4) And I've minded tu it most always <i>keeps going round</i> _one way;	1833, COHA	Activity	Continuative
5) I'm pretty much out of money now, and the man that I board with <i>keeps dunning</i> me for pay	1834, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
6) At the first office you are set down with a motley crew upon a bench, and there you sit, like one of those Virtues in front of the " Palais Bourbon, " often an hour or two, until your name is called; and when it is called you don't recognize it, and you <i>keep sitting on</i> unless provided with an interpreter.	1836, COHA	Activity	Continuative
7) The royal tiger, the beautiful, the untamable, <i>keeps pacing</i> his narrow cage with a haughty step, unmindful of the spectators, or recalling the fierce deeds of his former life, when he was wont to leap forth upon such inferior animals, from the jungles of Bengal.	1837, COHA	Activity	Continuative

8) When I write politics to ladies, Apollo <i>keeps twitching</i> me all the while by the ear; but I thought any other subject to-day would be impertinent.	1838, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative
9) But they will alarm me, sir, if you <i>keep looking at</i> me so earnestly with them,	1843, COHA	Activity	Continuative
10) The funeral bell <i>keeps tolling, keeps tolling, keeps tolling</i> for the dead	1845, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative
11) But come, we must go down to Tom; hark how the old hound <i>keeps bawling!</i>	1845, COHA	Activity	Continuative
12) How can this bleeding heart <i>keep beating on</i> , while thine responds no more?	1845, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative
13) I declare you've set my head whirling, and my brain <i>keeps whizzing</i> like the in'ards of a clock in a quinsy.	1846, COHA	Activity	Continuative
14) He does not give the creature time to eat, wears out on him so many whip lashes, and <i>keeps jerking</i> perpetually at the reins.	1847, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative
15) Error, it is true, is continually starting up, in one form or another, but it does not prevail; nay, it <i>keeps starting up</i> for the simple reason that it can not prevail;	1847, COHA	Achievement	Iterative
16) A tree, when in full leafage, drops a great deal of refreshment; but in a little while the sun strikes through, and you <i>keep shifting</i> your position, until, after a while, the sun is set at such a point that you have no shade at all	1847, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
17) "Mrs. Landa, whateva you do I don't ca'e to know it; and if you talk to me again about this I shall go home. I would stay with you as long as you needed me, but I can't if you <i>keep bringing this up.</i> "	1848, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative

18) The more she studied the portrait, the more convinced she became that it looked like her mother, though there was something about it which was as unlike her as anything could be. "What makes you <i>keep looking at me?</i> " said Katy to herself, or rather to the lady on the canvas.	1850, COHA	Activity	Continuative
19) What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing is it; what cozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me; that against all natural lovings and longings, I <i>so keep pushing</i> , and <i>crowding</i> , and <i>jamming</i> myself on all the time;	1851, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative
20) he should be taken! And you seem to have so little feeling for me, and <i>keep bringing it up</i> to me so carelessly, -- when you know how it overcomes me! I suppose you mean well; but it is very inconsiderate, -- very!	1852, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
21) My heart <i>keeps dancing</i> within me, and all the foolish things which you see me do are only the motions of my heart.	1852, COHA	Activity	Continuative
22) "The water <i>keeps saying</i> , 'Whether or no! whether or no! Hark!' do you hear it?" asked Caleb, with a sickly gleam in his haggard face.	1854, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
23) But when any thought <i>keeps singing</i> in my ear, just like a bee, I do write it down, and it comes in rhyme.	1858, COHA	Activity	Continuative
24) You <i>keep talking</i> about my being afraid of my mother, and all that sort of stuff. I'm not afraid of her, and I don't like to be told that I am.	1860, COHA	Activity	Continuative
25) That man <i>keeps shaking</i> his hat to us. "Who do you think it is?" "It looks like Captain Littleton."	1860, COHA	Semelfactive	continuative/iterative

26) “You <i>keep cutting</i> me off just as I am saying how I” – “You need go no further, Sir,” said Miss Newt, coldly, rising and standing by the table [...]	1861, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
27) I try to sometimes, but the sight of their wretched ways <i>keeps coming</i> to me, and it's no use to try and put it away.	1863, COHA	Activity	Continuative
28) And then she <i>keeps telling</i> me ' her little sister never behaved like me.' I asked her where her little sister was, and she said she'd gone over Jordan. I'm glad of it! I wish Mahala would go too! “Mrs. Gartney smiled, and Faith could not help laughing outright. Hendie burst into a passion of tears.”	1863, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
29) " Mr. Markham, that fellow <i>keeps laughing at</i> me, sir.	1864, COHA	Activity	Continuative
30) When he is here, I <i>keep saying</i> to myself, “Too smooth, too smooth!”	1869, COLMOBAENG	Accomplishment	Iterative

Data 1870-1920

Example	Year/ Corpus	Aktionsart V-ing	Intended meaning
1) I do hope she won't go on kissing me so much with her big mouth! how fast she does twist it about! and then her front teeth stick out so! and she <i>keeps shoving</i> that great black ear-trumpet at me, whenever she thinks I want to speak; and her eyes are as pale and watery as they can be, and they look all around you and never at you.	1873, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
2) I know she's smart. I mean to like her. I do it on purpose. But I don't love her, with a can't help it, you see. I feel as if I ought to; I want to have my heart go out to her; but it <i>keeps coming back</i> again. I could be happy with you, Aunt Blin, in your up-stairs room, with the blue milk out in the window-sill.	1873, COHA	Achievement	Iterative
3) Do you hear how the thunder <i>keeps bellowing</i> down yonder, under that dark line crossing the south?	1875, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
4) I am almost inclined to think that this Joan is going to win a place, however; <i>she keeps standing at</i> the door in a haunting kind of way, and looking in.	1877, COHA	Activity	Continuative
5) After the muslin is washed it is soft and clinging, but Madame s veil being ne'v, is stiff as a board, stands out in all directions, and <i>keeps slipping off</i> her head.	1878, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
6) “Your mistrust <i>keeps rising</i> to the surface; you can't rid yourself of the suspicion that at the bottom of all things she is hard and cruel, and you would be immensely relieved if some one should persuade you that your suspicion is right.”	1880, COHA	Activity	Continuative
7) I <i>keep thinking</i> the whole time of what we were talking about yesterday. I never could have dreamed of a priest's disbelieving; but now I can't dream of anything else.	1882, COHA	Activity	Continuative

8) but if the cow is one of those communists, and has to be tied to the manger, and you have to hold one leg to keep her from kicking over the pail, and she tries to run a horn into you, and <i>keeps stepping around</i> , and her tail knocks your hat off and gets in your eyes, [...]	1882, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
9) Mr. Latimer talks to her and finds her a great improvement on Marcia, but the German <i>keeps thinking</i> over her poor little story.	1883, COHA	Activity	Continuative
10) Just at this moment Baba tripped over some small object on the ground. A few steps farther, and he tripped again. "There is something caught round his foot, Alessandro," said Ramona. "It <i>keeps moving</i> ."	1884, COHA	Activity	Continuative
11) MISS REED: "That's because you <i>keep fussing</i> about so. Why don't you be quiet, if you want to hear?" She lifts her voice to its highest pitch, with a pause for distinctness between the words	1884, COHA	Activity	Continuative
12) THE ELEVATOR BOY: "Seemed to be going kind of funny all day!" He <i>keeps tugging</i> at the rope.	1885, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/ iterative
13) She had taken it home and nursed it so carefully that it was now a healthy little Jersey, whom she called Nannie.' A funny name for a cow,' Harold had said, and she had replied: ' Yes, but it <i>keeps repeating</i> itself in my brain.	1886, COHA	Activity	Continuative
14) they <i>keep moving in and out</i> among one another, and long strings of animals suddenly start out from the herd at a stretching walk, and are turned back by the nearest cowboy only to break forth at a new spot.	1888, COHA	Activity	Continuative/iterative
15) "I know what I shall wish, then," said Harry, "and <i>keep wishing</i> it as long as I live till I get it, though I am afraid I shall never have it. I'll tell you what my wish is, Frank, if you will tell me yours."	1889, COHA	Activity	Continuative
16) I do not see my way very clearly. I <i>keep hoping</i> , and something seems to hold me to this position in spite of myself.	1891, COHA	Activity	Continuative
17) I <i>keep wondering on</i> which side to turn it, so that, when I hold it up, you may see it shine.	1894, COHA	Achievement	Iterative

18) If you <i>keep thinking</i> how hard it is, and wishing you had somebody else to do it for you, and fretting and fuming, and pitying yourself, you are sure to have a horrid time.	1896, COHA	Activity	Continuative
19) But, for all that Max said, papa can't seem to get to the end of his work; he writes and re-writes, and <i>keeps making</i> changes all the time.	1896, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
20) But the anger <i>keeps rising up</i> in me till it seems as if my heart would burst; the blood rushes to my face, my eyes flash -- then -- I strike, and think of nothing.	1897, COHA	Activity	Continuative
21) Gordon pointed to where the white walls of the palace rose above the other white walls about it. "That is it," he said. "All the roads lead to it. You <i>keep going up</i> hill."	1898, COHA	Activity	Continuative
22) Oh, I can't help thinking that God feels sorrier this very minute for Polly, who fights and fights against her temper, like a dear sunbeam trying to shine again and again when a cloud <i>keeps covering</i> it up,	1899, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
23) remember that she is to marry him because he pays her millions, and the word prostitution <i>keeps haunting</i> my memory; when I try to define it, I find that the millions do not alter it in the least.	1901, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
24) I've a partner, a first-rate man -- he is in Europe now -- who attends to most of the buying. And the business <i>keeps spreading out</i> , and needs more care.	1904, COHA	Activity	Continuative
25) Whether the cup with sweet or bitter run, The wine of life <i>keeps oozing</i> drop by drop, The leaves of life <i>keep falling</i> one by one. " Away went Jimmy.	1907, COHA	Activity	Continuative
26) I guess we can be thinking about hitting the trail for home pretty soon now. The river'll break up if <i>this keeps going</i> a week.	1907, COHA	Activity	Continuative
27) When the idea is a trivial one and <i>keeps popping up</i> continually, it becomes tiresome	1907, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative

28) “But you said her poetry was funny,” said Polly, as softly as Rose had spoken. “It IS” declared Rose, “but she <i>keeps writing</i> it all the time.”	1911, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
29) Both women then kneel upon a large mat laid beside the mortar; the one holding the winnowing pan <i>keeps throwing</i> the grain into the air with a movement which causes the heavier grain to fall to the back of the pan, while the chaff and dust is thrown forward on to the mat.	1912, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
30) But what am I going to do if you <i>keep tormenting</i> me like this! " she added plaintively.	1913, COHA	Activity	Continuative

Data 1920-1970

Example	Year/ Corpus	Aktionsart V-ing	Intended meaning
1) But of course I may move into Mother's room, after awhile, although -- isn't it funny? - <i>I keep thinking</i> that she may come back.	1920, COHA	Activity	Continuative
2) "I wonder," said you, "why everyone <i>keeps talking about</i> that play?"	1921, COHA	Activity	Continuative
3) He <i>keeps tryin' to be</i> buttery and sweet, but his real feelin's come out sometimes.	1921, COHA	Activity	Continuative
4) you don't think it dishonorable, or mean to father, for me to keep on seeing Nelson, do you? Father <i>keeps ordering</i> me not to, but I never say I won't.	1921, COHA	Activity	Continuative
5) So, as it was a glorious day and my doctor <i>keeps telling</i> me to forget business occasionally, I started alone. I didn't leave town until nearly eleven, had some motor trouble, and didn't reach here until almost five.	1921, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
6) "The other side of the island was rockier, though, and the bushes were thicker. Still, Meg and Bobby managed to scramble though, and half an hour's steady tramping brought them to the Harley shack. It <i>keeps falling apart</i> ," mourned Meg; and indeed the place looked worse every time they visited it.	1929, COHA	Activity	Continuative
7) Polly stands tense as Dominic lifts the receiver. She <i>keeps edging toward</i> the door.	1930, COHA	Activity	Continuative
8) So I <i>keep asking</i> myself: Why do people drink? And what can you say to them? What's the right way to go at it?	1931, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
9) That fellow that can't let my pants alone. He <i>keeps writing</i> that they are too long.	1932, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative

10) “Look how the snow <i>keeps coming down</i> -- like a world full of feathers,” Mr. Layton said.	1935, COHA	Activity	Continuative
11) I reckon Luke is thinking of me at this moment, that's why I <i>keep calling</i> you his name.	1935, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
12) Coming from your bedroom, I ought to have said the fourth door to the right. It's a puzzling house, because my uncle <i>keeps adding to</i> it from year to year.	1936, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
13) The only reason I've got champagne is because he <i>keeps ordering</i> it all the time.	1939, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
14) I <i>keep wondering</i> where she is and what she is doing.	1941, COHA	Achievement	Iterative
15) One point that <i>keeps cropping up</i> in these New England reports (and in other reports as well) is that of “humps” or “bunches” on the back of the animal.	1941, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
16) “It doesn't work... It's getting worse... I <i>keep going</i> faster and faster.” “Well, go slower then,” he said. Maizie threw her head back and looked at the skyful of stars.	1942, COHA	Activity	Continuative
17) You just <i>keep squawking</i> to the bookkeeping department and you'll get further than coming up against the Old Man.	1947, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
18) “I'd suggest we <i>keep circling</i> the planet until I have a chance to form a few definite conclusions,” Ren said. “If that can't be done I'd suggest we retreat far enough so we can.”	1949, COHA	Activity	Continuative
19) We talk about his having somewhere to go and I <i>keep remembering</i> the way he said pleasure. Pleasure? That hurt. I've never heard anybody say anything that way before.	1950, COHA	Activity	Continuative
20) “Um,” said Mr. Haycox apathetically. “What do you <i>keep working</i> so smoothly?” Doctor Pond smiled modestly. “I spent seven years in the Cornell Graduate School of Realty to qualify for a Doctor of Realty degree and get this job.”	1952, COHA	Activity	Continuative

21) “The center of curvature has to fall somewhere between. You <i>keep shifting</i> the block. At the exact center of curvature, the mirror will suddenly go black over its entire surface. That is, it will if it has perfect spherical curvature.”	1956, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
22) By the way, you <i>keep using</i> that term as if it were some kind of dirty word. Just what does it mean? What is a Naturalist, in your book?	1958, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
23) Hungry, thirsty, confused, hurt, a bump on my head that <i>keeps beating out</i> the time [...]	1961, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
24) It was the sort of loneliness that settles in your bones and <i>keeps working</i> at you.	1960, COHA	Activity	Continuative
25) I <i>keep telling</i> you guys; I went to nothing but the finest universities.	1962, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
26) he just <i>keeps telling</i> me all the work he has with four houses, and I say well what about me and I'm a darn sight older than you and I manage to...	1963, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
27) The unknown ingredient is Vietnam. If it <i>keeps building up</i> , we could lose those marginal and even Republican districts where we made gains last year.	1965, COHA	Activity	Continuative
28) I could write most of this book about this, but I <i>keep feeling</i> that I must hurry, so I can only outline the subsequent years.	1966, COHA	State	Continuative
29) The convoy <i>keeps moving</i> straight for Cambodia. Near Trang-Bang there are holes in the road where a military convoy was blown up by Viet Cong mines.	1968, COHA	Activity	Continuative
30) [...] the country <i>keeps getting</i> more and more crowded, people step on each other's toes and get on each other's nerves [...]	1968, COHA	Activity	Continuative

Data 1970-2000s

Example	Year/ Corpus	Aktionsart V-ing	Intended Meaning
1) He <i>keeps climbing</i> the tree and he will always go up and up to where there is no more tree.	1970, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
2) I <i>keep thinking</i> they're going to tip and fall into the room, but I guess they won't really.	1970, COHA	Activity	Continuative
3) He <i>keeps wandering</i> around the neighborhood with that bum knee and he gets hungry, anybody who wants some cheap information can buy him right off the sidewalk.	1970, COHA	Activity	Continuative
4) "I <i>keep remembering</i> Julius. If he had just had a little more resolve in dealing with his enemies."	1972, COHA	Activity	Continuative
5) "I <i>keep hearing</i> that sex has been removed from the moral hierarchy... that it just is' now, neither moral nor immoral."	1973, COHA	Achievement	Iterative
6) She falls against my boy joyously; they hug each other with immense delight and go staggering wildly all about my study, bumping into us and each other and into the superfluous chairs my wife <i>keeps sneaking in</i> when she has no better place to put them.	1974, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
7) I <i>keep reassuring</i> her that we are doing splendidly, paying off the mortgages, and that, in fact, the Inn-Tavern is mortgage-free.	1980, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
8) Harry can't tell if she is pleased or displeased by the gallantway he <i>keeps mentioning</i> the baby, that everybody else wants to ignore.	1981, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative

9) "I <u>keep hoping</u> it's just a passing phase," he said. She looked at him, waiting in the soulful, non-directive Rogerian way that had been popular at the time. "And then there's the fact that we've got kids," he said.	1982, COHA	State	Continuative
10) the way it <i>keeps saying</i> it again and again and again, until it's pretty fucking obvious you want us all in chains!	1988, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
11) He <i>keeps mentioning</i> that Charlemagne was crowned in Rome.	1989, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
12) I clean up after you. I fold your laundry. But you still <i>keep turning over</i> in your sleep. I try not to listen, but I can't help it. I can't help hearing you turn over and over and then get up in the morning and grunt to the kitchen and grunt out the door.	1991, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
13) I just <i>keep trying</i> not to speak for you.	1991, COHA	Activity	Continuative
14) My left ear <i>keeps plugging up</i> , like I have water in it from swimming. It doesn't actually hurt, it just makes me feel a little further away.	1994, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
15) He <i>keeps reminding</i> me how long he waited to find me.	1994, COHA	Activity	Continuative
16) I <i>keep blaming</i> it on not having enough early training, but if I were talented, if I had a gift	1999, COHA	Activity	Continuative
17) Shirl shrieks with terror and <i>keeps shrieking</i> as she flees.	2000, COHA	Activity	Continuative
18) I <i>keep forgetting</i> exactly what it is you've gone back to get your Ph.D. in, " Paul says. " Women's Studies, " Liz says.	2000, COHA	Achievement	Iterative
19) Yeah, I <i>keep wanting</i> to turn around.	2001, COHA	State	Continuative

20) One is about that disease everyone <i>keeps talking about</i> , the cholera morbus, but the second one sounds far more promising.	2001, COHA	Activity	Continuative
21) And if you <i>keep waiting</i> for somebody to come around and hand you a good life, you're going to wake up and find you've missed out, child.	2002, COHA	Activity	Continuative
22) I can't concentrate because I <i>keep expecting</i> him to come bursting in here with some other bizarre way we can improve the business. "	2003, COHA	Activity	Continuative
23) He started a tall man. Months pass, carrying that load, and Holton's bent over, half my size. And he <i>keeps getting</i> shorter until one day he dropped one of those ladles right where we were stood to dip.	2004, COHA	State	Continuative
24) Although her grandmother <i>keeps telling</i> Emma that, ideally, marriage shouldn't have anything to do with lining one's pocket at the expense of being stuck with a belching, scratching buffoon who probably ingests cabbage for breakfast.	2004, COHA	Accomplishment	Iterative
25) Mr. Updike <i>keeps emphasizing</i> just how powerful Sanford Compton is, a man of great influence with politicians and lawyers alike, and he's forever reminding me about the sordid details of my background.	2004, COHA	Activity	Continuative
26) Even when we get close, and we can hear the barking, she doesn't bother to look up and just <i>keeps chomping away</i> .	2004, COHA	Activity	Continuative
27) Mama said to me on one of those days that start right and just <i>keep heading</i> toward perfect until you go to sleep, " when you're done with the dishes, you can go play. Daddy and I are going to be working till dinner.	2006, COHA	Activity	Continuative
28) The song on the radio <i>keeps playing</i> .	2006, COHA	Activity	Continuative
29) My entire life <i>keeps flashing</i> before my eyes.	2007, COHA	Semelfactive	Continuative/iterative
30) They're going to say whatever they have to, so the money <i>keeps coming</i> .	2009, COHA	Activity	Continuative

