

**THE SEMANTIC DEVELOPMENT
OF WORDS FOR "WALK,
RUN" IN THE GERMANIC
LANGUGES; A DISSERTATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649459568

The Semantic Development of Words for "Walk, Run" in the Germanic Languages; A
Dissertation by Roscoe Myrl Ihrig

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Cover @ 2017

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The University of Chicago

**The Semantic Development of Words
for "Walk, Run" in the Germanic
Languages**

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND LITERATURE
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(DEPARTMENT OF GERMANIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES)

BY
ROSCOE MYRL IHRIG

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LINGUISTIC STUDIES IN GERMANIC, No. IV
(Copyrighted 1916 by the University of Chicago)

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PUBLIC
749062
AT THE OFFICE OF THE
1915

~~Geo. Banta Press~~
GEORGE BANTA PUBLISHING COMPANY
MENASHA, WISCONSIN

1915

PREFACE

As will be seen from the following study, 'walk, run' may come from many different meanings. These primary meanings describe the attitude or manner of the walker. Thus they may describe how he carries his body, whether erect or stooping, stiff or swinging; how he moves his legs, whether striding or mincing, with leaps or in glides; whether his motions are graceful or ungainly, sturdy or feeble, prim or boisterous, etc. Every accompanying gesture is described. Thus arise the various words for 'go on foot,' in most cases still retaining their descriptive force, but often, especially in the words that had in pre-Germanic come to mean 'go,' no longer preserving the original meaning describing the manner of the walking. Hence such words as *go, fare, step, walk* are now colorless; but *stride, dash, slouch, sink, strut, swagger, reel, toddle, etc.*, describe the manner of the walk with more or less vividness.

Inasmuch as the meanings of words shade off into various other meanings, related words may be classified in different groups. Thus 'swing, sway' may describe the walk of the feeble, the intoxicated, or the pompous. So some words appear in different groups.

These words have been classified according to the meaning which directly gave rise to the meaning 'walk, run.' Any older meaning that any given word may have had is, consequently, disregarded in the classification. The succession of the various groups has been determined largely by the closeness of the relationship of the meanings regarded as starting points in the semantic development.

In this study are considered only such words as mean 'walk' or 'run.' Words denoting 'move about,' 'hurry' are consequently left out of account, unless they have definitely developed in some Germanic language the particular meaning of 'go on foot.'

The words in each group are given in alphabetical order according to the Germanic consonants, without reference to the vowels. In this arrangement words beginning with vowels come first, then each word in its regular order according to the initial consonant or group of consonants. But the order of succession for medial or final consonants is as follows: Labials, *b, f, p*; dentals, *d, t, s*; gutturals, *g, h, k* (*c, q, etc.*); liquids and nasals, *l, r* (including *r* from *x*), *m, n*.

The sources of the words are listed in the Bibliography. All the branches of the Germanic family have been considered and each of these at the different periods (old, middle, and new). Special importance is given to dialect forms.

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