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A typological study of Deixis in motion description

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Introduction

Deixis is not a component of Path (Morita 2011, Matsumoto *et al.* 2017, Seifen *et al.* 2021)

→ How can we include Deixis in a typology of Motion-events ?

- How typologically frequent is Deixis in motion descriptions ?
- How is Deixis encoded ?
- Do other variables affect the expression of Deixis ?

Data from 55 languages (20 families)



Frequency of Deixis

50,78 % of utterances have a deictic component (N=644)

Wide disparities across languages :

- Few expressions of Deixis in Austronesian languages of the Philippines, as well as Slavic, Bantu, and Saharan languages (< 10 %)
- Numerous expressions in Naduhup, Hmong-Mien, Tai-Kadai, Japonic, and Sino-Tibetan languages (> 75 %)

→ Presence of **complex predicate constructions** (SVC, clause-chaining, bi/tripartite verbs) seems to be correlated with widespread expression of Deixis.

Most languages allow for the co-expression of Deixis and Manner, although in smaller proportion than Deixis alone or Manner alone

→ Here again, complex predicate constructions seem to be correlated with widespread expression of Deixis and Manner

Encoding Deixis

I. In an **adverbial**:

- Static (here, there)
- Dynamic (to here, from there)
- Verbal (omnipredicativity) (1.)

II. In a personal **pronoun** within an adpositional phrase (2.)

The case of Dynamic Deixis : “direction along an axis defined by its relation to the deictic center (or viewpoint)” (Lamarre *et al.* 2022)

III. In a **finite verb**:

- Sole verb (2.)
- Auxiliary verb (3.)
- Complex predicate (serial verbs (4.), bipartite verbs, clause-chaining, multiclausal construction (5.))

IV. In a **satellite**:

- Simple deictic satellites
- Complex Deixis-Path satellites (6.)
- Associated Motion satellites (7., 10.)
- Non-finite verb (9.)

V. In **multiple strategies** (2., 10.)

Abbreviations

AV active voice, COME&DO preceding centripetal motion, CONN connective, CRS current relevant state, DC deictic center, DEM.PROX proximal demonstrative, DO.GOING concomitant centrifugal motion, IPFV imperfective, M masculine, NPST non-past, PFV perfective, PRS present, PTCP participle, REAL realis, SUB.TPS temporal subordinate, SUBJ.FOC subject focus

Examples

1. Ilokano (Austronesian, Northern Luzon; Philippines)

nagpa-kastoy

AV.PFV-DEM.PROX(here)

‘He came here.’ (he ‘here-d’) (Klimenko 2012)

2. French (Indo-European, Romance; France)

Elle vient vers moi

she comes towards me

‘She comes towards me.’ (Seifen p.c.)

3. Dutch (Indo-European, Germanic; Netherlands)

Een vrouw komt uit het maïsveld gelopen

a woman comes out the cornfield walk.PTCP

‘A woman comes out of a cornfield walking.’ (Vermeir p.c.)

4. Central Thai (Tai-Kadai, Southwestern Tai; Thailand)

pʰû:cʰa:j dɔːn kʰâ:m sàʔpʰa:n paj

man walk cross bridge go

‘The man walks across the bridge [away from DC].’ (Seifen p.c.)

5. Burmese (Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burmese; Myanmar)

kaʊN²le³ laN³faʊ[?]=Pyi³ θwa³=Tɛ²

young.man walk=SUB.TPS go=REAL

‘A young man walks [going] away [from DC].’ (Vittrant 2015)

6. Warlpiri (Pama-Nyungan, Western; Australia)

maliki ka yuka-mi kaninja-rra

dog IPFV enter-NPST down-thither

‘The dog is going down into (something).’ (Bavin 2004)

7. Ese Ejja (Tacanan; Bolivia)

yoyo-besa-poki-ani

row-cross-DO_GOING-PRS

‘We cross rowing [away from DC].’ (Vuillemer 2012)

9. Sandawe (Isolate, former Khoisan; Tanzania)

hèwéʔgâ-à kèuto^{-à} |i-à tʰâ

and.so-3SG.M pig-SUBJ.FOC come-CONN run

‘And so the pig came running.’ (Eaton 2010)

10. Mandarin Chinese (Sino-Tibetan, Sinitic; China)

wǒ lǎogōng lái jiē wǒ=lai le

my husband come pick.up 1SG=COME&DO CRS

‘My husband came to pick me up.’ (Song 2022)

Other variables

Boundary-crossing (Slobin & Hoiting 1994): Deixis less likely to be used if a boundary is crossed (weak, yet significant effect)

- $\chi^2(1, N = 642) = 8.38, p = .004, V = 0.16$

Types of **vector** (source, median, goal) and **verticality** (up, down, level) do not affect deixis.

Towards a typology

- Typology of deictic *loci* (dynamic and other types of Deixis)
- Scaled typology of Deixis frequency in languages
 - With or without co-expression of Manner
 - Depending on the Path (boundary-crossing)

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