Semantic parameters and geomorphic frames of reference in Kalasha

Jan Heegård
janhp@hum.ku.dk

Geographic grounding
University of Copenhagen
30-31 May 2016
Location in Kalasha

River-based
wehak ‘upstream a little bit’, wenaw ‘in or from an upstream direction’, etc.

Mountain-based
puchum ‘uphill’, puchumak ‘uphill a little bit’, etc.

Deictic
aya ‘here’, atai ‘there’, tatela ‘there’, etc.

Relational adverbs
nouna ‘under’, tharai ‘above, on top’, tada ‘next to’, etc.
Structure of talk

Some background

Outline of spatial systems in Kalasha

Description of the semantics coded in spatial systems

To suggest overall parameters in the spatial semantics of Kalasha

- inspiration from Levinson & Burenhult (2009): *seemplates*

  “within a language, some semantic or conceptual template … surfaces again and again in distinct lexical sets, say prepositions, spatial nouns, verbs of motion, and the like” (p. 153)
Background
Where are we?
The Kalasha language

INDO-IRANIAN

Iranian

Nuristani

Indo-Aryan

Farsi, Pashto, ...

Kati, ...

Kalasha

Palula

Other HK lgs

Sub-continent IA lgs

N-Kal

S-Kal

E-Kal
Kalasha dialects today
The Kalasha

- 3000-4000 speakers
- Villages of 150-400 people
- Most if not all become bililingual (+Khowar)

- Pastoralists, agriculturalists

- Non-Muslim community; polytheistic; worshipping in temples and at shrines
- Onjeṣṭa – pragaṭa (‘pure’ – ‘impure’) central concepts in world-belief and daily life

- Women more ‘free’ than elsewhere in the Hindu Kush

- Tourist attraction
Spatial systems
River-based system

we- ‘upriver’
+ -aw → wenaw ‘upriver’
+ -a → wea ‘far upriver’
+ -hak → wehak ‘upriver a little bit’

pre- ‘downriver’
+ -aw → prenaw ‘downriver’
+ -a → prea ‘far downriver’
+ -hak → prehak ‘downriver a little bit’

peran- ‘across-river’
+ -aw → peranaw ‘in a direction across-river’
+ -hak → peranak ‘across-river a little bit’
* -a → peran-a ‘far across-river’
Mountain-based system

**puchum** ‘up-mountain’ (free root)
+ -Ø → *puchum* ‘up-mountain’
+ -a → *puchuma* ‘far up-mountain’
+ -ak → *puchumak* ‘up-mountain a little bit’

**ondru** ‘down-mountain’ (free root)
+ -Ø → *ondru* ‘down-mountain’
+ -a → *ondrua* ‘far down-mountain’
+ -hak → *ondruhak* ‘down-mountain a little bit’

**bihoṭ-** ‘to cross a mountain ridge (verb stem)
+ -i → PTC (‘crossing/having crossed a mountain ridge’)

**bihoṭ-i par-aw / a-au**
cross mountain-PTC go-PST/be-PST
‘he left/is over the mountain’
Kalasha landscape
Geography-based axes of navigation in Kalasha

- Shrine
- Stables
- Graveyard
- Village
- Menstrual and birth house
Up and down the river, division of space as denoted by suffixes
Across the river, division of space as denoted by suffixes
Up and down the mountain, division of space as denoted by suffixes
Deictic adverbs (locative suffixes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of location</th>
<th>‘here’ Near</th>
<th>‘there’ Distal</th>
<th>there Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRECISE LOCATION</td>
<td>aya</td>
<td>atra</td>
<td>tara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT PRECISE LOCATION</td>
<td>and-ai</td>
<td>ał-ai</td>
<td>t-aL-ai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Deictic adverbs (locative suffixes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of location</th>
<th>‘here’ Near</th>
<th>‘there’ Distal</th>
<th>there Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOT ACROSS-EDGE PRECISE LOCATION</td>
<td>aya</td>
<td>atra</td>
<td>tara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT PRECISE LOCATION</td>
<td>and-ai</td>
<td>aļ-ai</td>
<td>t-aļ-ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACROSS-EDGE</td>
<td>anden-a</td>
<td>aļeļ-a</td>
<td>t-aļeļ-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Across an edge / boundary (locative)

mezuna  ek  putr  aau
at-table  a  son  is

ayas  aƚɛl-a
mother’s  there  across-edge

nisi  aau
sitting  is
Across an edge / boundary (ablative)

se istrizha har karikas kay aau-e

*as the woman was winning (while playing dice)*

ek mizok anen-aw ụtiki

*one mouse here-across edge-ABL jumped*

*a mouse jumped from here (: the man’s sleeves; narrator is pointing at her sleeves).*

tara tyay

*hitting there (: the playing board)*

Summary – Location and semantic parameters in Kalasha

1) Edge / boundary: Within or across a edge / boundary
   1) Lexicon (stems) + different morphology: River-based, mountain-based
   2) Morphology, ‘reduplication’: Deictic adverbs

2) Distance, near-distal-absent, by use of morphology
   1) Morphology: Mountain- and river-based adverbs
   2) Lexical + morphology: Deictic adverbs

3) Precision, by use of morphology (deictic adverbs)
   1) Lexical:
   2) Morphology: Free forms vs suffixation
Perspectives
Other boundary systems?

Boundary in other ‘systems’ (pace Levinson & Burenhult)?

"within a language, some semantic or conceptual template … surfaces again and again in distinct lexical sets”

‘Carry’-verbs:

Not across / within boundary:

*kuɁim karik* ‘carry in one’s arms’

*uchunyak karik* ‘carry in upright position against the body’ (lit. ‘bsssom do’)

*aʃ karik* ‘carry on shoulders’ (lit. ‘shouder do’)

*kuʃki dyek* ‘carry by holding to one’s body’

Across boundary

*wazik* ‘carry across (a river, ..)’
Relevance of cultural boundaries?

Levinson & Burenhult (2009):

“in most cases semplates have a much richer, more configurational semantic content reflecting an underlying template that may often play a role in native cosmological ideas” (p. 166)

“underlying templates often have deep cultural resonance” (p. 168)
Typology of cultural boundaries in the Kalasha community

(Maggi 2001; Fentz 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area behind fireplace (up-mountain)</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(onjeṣṭa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High pastures (onjeṣṭa)</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High stables – highest roofs (onjeṣṭa)</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High irrigation channels (onjeṣṭa)</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrines up-mountain / upriver (onjeṣṭa)</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>No go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village temples (‘mixed world’)</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashali (menstrual and birthhouse; pragaṭa ‘ritually impure’)</td>
<td>No go – no touch!</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graveyards (pragaṭa ‘ritually impure’)</td>
<td>No go</td>
<td>No go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

Kalasha has a multi-faceted system for talking about place and direction

Multi-faceted system involves terms referring to geography/landscape + ‘deictic’ frame of reference

Within system, three parameters are at work: boundary/edge, distance, preciseness in location

‘Boundary’ seems to be a crucial parameter, perhaps a candidate for a semplate (pace Levinson & Burenhult), also in ‘carry’-verbs – and important feature of religious concepts

To be explored, for example:

- (Interacting) domains of usage (‘the altar is upriver/upmountain/over there/..)
- Interaction with relational adverbs (the house is down-mountain from the stables vs. the house is under the stables)
- Boundary and relational adverbs
- ‘Derived usage’: the man looks upriver from the tree (= away), ‘a woman pulled me uphill (= up from the water)
Literature


Animacy in Kalasha as a semantic template

Oblique case endings
-on: animates in -a: suda ‘child’: sud-on hatya ‘for the children’
-an: inanimates in -a: daria ‘river’: daria-an hatya ‘for the rivers’
(and other animates: pay: pay-an hatya ‘for the goats’)

‘Bring’-and-’take’ verbs
haliik ‘bring s.th. animate’ nik ‘take or carry s.th. animate’
ónik ‘bring s.th. inanimate’ hárik ‘take or carry s.th. inanimate’

Copula verbs (and auxiliaries in periphrastic tenses)
moc tara aau ‘the man is there’
dur tara shiu ‘the house is there’
## Demonstrative, 3rd person pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Near</th>
<th>Distal</th>
<th>Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3s.nom</strong></td>
<td>ia</td>
<td>asa</td>
<td>se</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3s.acc</strong></td>
<td>ama</td>
<td>ała</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3sobl</strong></td>
<td>isa</td>
<td>asa</td>
<td>t-asa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3p.nom</strong></td>
<td>emi</td>
<td>ełi</td>
<td>te</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3p.acc</strong></td>
<td>emi</td>
<td>ełi</td>
<td>te</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3pobl</strong></td>
<td>isi</td>
<td>asi</td>
<td>t-asi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data