

## **Shua spatial language and cognition: A prolegomenon**

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This paper is concerned with one aspect of the linguistic representation of spatial relations in Shua (Khoe-Kwadi, Northeastern Botswana): frames of reference (FoRs), the coordinate systems used for providing angular specifications of figures with respect to grounds. There are two main aims. The first is to outline the range of FoRs available in the language and their usages; it is revealed that, contrary to expectations, speakers of Shua employ a range of different FoRs within the same-“sized” spatial domains. The second is to make some preliminary remarks on the styles of spatial cognition employed by speakers of the language. I focus on a set of standard rearrangement tasks in which speakers are requested to replicate arrangements on one table onto another table that is oriented at 90° or 180° to the former. The results of the latter investigation do not yield support for Whorfian effects of the Shua language on spatial cognition of its speakers. Rather, the results lend support for the notion that speakers deploy various linguistic strategies – a range of different FoRs – to convey the spatial meanings they opt to make.