

Associated motion in Rgyalrong and Kiranti languages

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Associated motion is a category first described in various languages of Australia (see [Koch 1984](#), [Wilkins 1991](#)) and more recently applied to the Tacanan languages of South America (see [Guillaume 2008](#), [Guillaume to appear](#)).

This category refers to grammatical markers that attach to verbs and “specify that the event denoted by the verb stem is associated with a motion event” as [Wilkins \(1991: 207\)](#) puts it. In some languages, the associated motion system can include up to 14 distinct affixes, distinguished by three main parameters: 1) the deixis (whether the motion is towards the speaker, away from the speaker or unspecified) 2) the syntactic role of the entity undergoing the motion (S/A vs. O) 3) the time of the motion relative to the action expressed by the verb stem (prior, concurrent, subsequent).

Rgyalrong and Kiranti languages have independently grammaticalized associated motion morphemes from motion verbs such as “come” and “go”. While the systems found in Rgyalrong and Kiranti are much less elaborate than those attested in Arandic, they nevertheless present several unusual typological phenomena.

This presentation is divided into three sections.

First, we describe the associated motion system of Japhug Rgyalrong and Khaling. The two systems are radically different. While Khaling has suffixes, Japhug Rgyalrong has associated motion *prefixes*, a typological oddity for a verb final language (see [Jacques to appear](#)). While in Japhug associated motion prefixes have lost all verbal properties, in Khaling both the verb stem and the associated motion affix receive person and tense agreement.

Second, we propose a series of scenarios to account for the grammaticalization of associated motion affixes in Rgyalrong and Kiranti.

Third, we refine the existing typologies of associated motion system by comparing the Rgyalrong and Kiranti systems with data from Arandic, Tacanan and Algonquian languages.

References

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