

## Meronymy in Yurakaré (isolate, Bolivia)

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In this talk, we discuss the predominant ways speakers of Yurakaré use to locate entities in space. Yurakaré is an isolate language of central Bolivia, spoken by some 3000 people. The language has the typical American traits of being polysynthetic (though without the possibility of incorporation), agglutinating, and head-marking. Core grammatical relations as well as possession are marked on the head by means of person affixes. Peripheral roles can be marked by case enclitics, but the rich applicative system allows for a number of semantically peripheral participants to be marked on the head.

When it comes to locating entities in space, Yurakaré has a preference for using an intrinsic system, where the anchor may be the speaker (egocentric), but certainly also another object (allocentric). A typical locative expression in Yurakaré contains three basic elements: the figure, the ground, a locative verb expressing manner, and a locative relation between figure and ground. This is exemplified in (1), from field data, based on elicitation using picture series developed by Bowerman & Pederson (1992).

- (1) *sibbë a-tatta=jsha tütü-ø lëtta chajmu*  
house 3SG.P-backside=ABL be;sit-3 one dog  
'A dog is sitting behind a house.'

The utterance in (1) contains a reference to the figure (a dog), the manner of location (sit), a ground (house), and a locative relationship between the figure and the ground, encoded by the case enclitic =*jsha* 'ablative' and the (facultative) relator noun *-tatta-*.

Although we will make reference to the other ingredients of locative expressions in Yurakaré, the focus of this talk will be on the latter element, the relator noun. Yurakaré has a set of more or less grammaticalized elements that can fill this position, but the position is open to other elements, and allows for a productive use of body-part mapping onto other surfaces. Moreover, there are relator nouns that refer to parts of objects and others that refer to spaces in the immediate vicinity of ground objects.

Using the results of three director-matcher task experiments (Ball & Chair, Novel Objects locations, Novel Objects parts - see Bohnemeyer 2008), we discuss how the allocentric-intrinsic frame of Yurakaré takes shape through the productive use of these body parts as relator nouns, and how they interact with the other parts of locative expressions.

## References

- Bohnemeyer, J. (2008) MesoSpace: Spatial language and cognition in Mesoamerica, ed. by G. Pérez-Báez. New York: SUNY Buffalo.
- Bowerman, M., & Pederson, E. (1992). Topological relations picture series. In S. C. Levinson (Ed.), *Space stimuli kit 1.2* (pp. 51). Nijmegen: Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics.