Background

In my thesis paper, working with a native speaker, I addressed how motion is expressed in Tagalog. I explored how Tagalog encodes Manner and Directionality according to Talmy (1985), and further, how that fits the semantic typologies that have been established by such linguists as Slobin (1996) and Huang and Tanankingsing (2005). I also explored in depth the expression of ground elements such as location, goal and source in Tagalog directed motion events. In this presentation, I will briefly present general concepts associated with the study of motion verbs and then report on my own study of the expression of path in Tagalog.

Semantics:

The semantic expression of motion events involves the use of very basic components, which have been presented in detail by linguists such as Leonard Talmy and Ray Jackendoff. Talmy discusses the encoding patterns of different languages, explaining how in motion events MANNER or PATH can be encoded in the verb, while other elements are left to be expressed in various satellites or adjunct phrases. Manner of motion indicates how a motion is done (examples in English are run, jump, swim, fly), while path indicates the direction of the motion (English enter, exit, ascend, approach, leave).

Motion + Manner: the rock rolled (down the hill)

Motion + Path: the teacher entered the room

Talmy also discusses the concepts of FIGURE and GROUND. He defines figure as a “conceptually movable object whose path is at issue”, with ground as the reference frame for that figure. So, in the sentence the dog ran through my yard the movable object or figure is the dog and the reference frame or ground is my yard. The ground is made up of reference objects, which can be a LOCATION, SOURCE, GOAL, or PATH. Examples of these follow:
She swam in the lake.

*the lake* is an example of LOCATION; it is the setting in which the figure (*she*) is moving.

She fell off the dock into the lake.

*the dock* is the SOURCE from which the figure moved to the GOAL *the lake*.

She swam along the shoreline.

*the shoreline* is the reference object that expresses the swimmer’s PATH.

Ray Jackendoff defines different path types, two of which are BOUNDED PATHS and DIRECTIONS. BOUNDED PATHS include source-paths and goal-paths using TO or FROM, respectively. For example, in *Tom walked to school* and *Tom left work early*, *school* and *work* are a goal and a source respectively, at which the figure *Tom* was physically present. In DIRECTIONS the reference object (source or goal) is not contained within the path, that is, the figure does not ever have to be present at the goal or source, and so is only moving in a given direction TOWARD or AWAY-FROM a referent. For example, in *she went toward the house* the figure does not actually reach the house, but is merely traveling in the direction of the house, possibly indefinitely. Directions need not reference a ground element at all, as in *they flew south for the winter*.

Different languages have different syntactic capabilities and employ different strategies for expressing complex paths. Talmy delineates how languages can use satellites to express elements like path, path and ground combined, figure and ground combined, and sometimes even manner of motion. A classic example is the Spanish *la botella entró a la cueva (flotando)* ‘the bottle entered (moved-in) the cave, floating’. Spanish, a VERB-FRAMED language, encodes path in the verb, leaving manner to be expressed in a satellite. In contrast, English, a SATELLITE-FRAMED language, encodes manner of motion in the verb, and says *the bottle floated into the cave*, leaving path to be specified in a satellite, or prepositional phrase. In English, satellites most often
express path alone, as in *He ran in*. These often are paired with prepositions, as with *He ran in to the house*.

At first glance, Tagalog ground expressions can have various interpretations: a figure can be running *at* a place, or *to* or *from* a place; the exact semantic meaning is derived from context. My research has revealed that even though Tagalog lacks different terms for expressing *to* and *toward*, it does have strategies for expressing the semantic difference between the path types of *bounded path* and *direction*.

The most important concepts to remember are those of simple path: Source and goal define the boundaries of a path, and so a bounded path cannot be defined without reference to either a source or goal. Directions on the other hand do not require the expression of source or goal, but are very flexible in that they can be expressed with any ground expression: source, goal, location, or none of the above. In English we can say *He walked away from the store, He walked away down the road*, or simply *He walked away*.

**Tagalog:**

In Tagalog normally the verb is sentence-initial with a noun phrase, followed by locative phrases, or other additional information.

(1) tumakbo ang palaka sa tubig

> jump GM-frog GM-water

> ‘the frog jumped into the water’

Otherwise a system of grammatical markers (marked by ‘GM’ in the glosses), *ang, ng,* and *sa*, marks the grammatical and pragmatic role of phrases in the sentence; this allows the order of noun phrases to be relatively flexible. In example 1, *ang* marks agent and *sa* location;
however, the location phrase is not semantically specific. *sa tubig* here can mean ‘into the water’ (goal), ‘out of the water’ (source) or ‘in the water’ (location).

**Presentation**

In this talk I will focus on the *pa*-construction relevant to motion events. The construction affixes *pa-* to the root of a path verb in a sentence where a manner verb takes verbal markings. The affix itself seems to most accurately mean ‘going (in the direction indicated by the verb root)’. For example, the verb root *alis* ‘go away’ can appear as a main verb *umalis* (a), or in this *pa*-construction as *paalis* (b). The issue of categorization becomes more complex however, with “verb roots” such as *labas*, which, like *alis*, can appear as *lumabas* (c) or *palabas* (d), but can also appear without verbal markings in location phrases, such as *sa labas ng bahay* ‘(at) outside the house’ (e). An important issue that was not made clear in the studies I have read is that of defining verb categories. Generally speaking, Tagalog categories are difficult to clearly define, as many of its lexical items can change categories fairly easily. For this reason, I will leave open the classification of the construction that is of primary interest in this study, the *pa*-path construction.

Although I have seen the *pa*-affix on verbs of manner, it is clear that this is dispreferred, at least in expressions of directed motion. The one instance I saw of a *pa*-manner construction (2) occurred as an alternative sentence structure to the “English translation” style sentence structure (which places manner in a sentence final clause, an atypical production for a native speaker) (3). Of the two, the sentence with the *pa*-manner construction was greatly less preferred.

(2)  
?ang babay ay patakibong umakyat ng bundok (61b.)

GM-woman ay pa-run-LK ascend GM mountain
‘the woman ran up the mountain’

(3) ang babay ay umakyat sa bundok na tumatakbo (61a.)

GM-woman ay ascend GM-mountain LK run

‘the woman went up the mountain (while) running’

Although Tagalog speakers will accept a *pa*-manner construction, it is clearly an exception to the rule; speakers much more commonly place the manner verb in typical verb position and affix *pa* to a path verb, as in 4:

(4) lumipad ang eroplano pababa (42)

fly GM-airplane pa-descend

‘the plane flew down/descending’

With manner in the main verb, path must be expressed in a *pa*-path construction, as seen in 4; the construction is formed by simply prefixing the *pa*-affix to a verb “root” which occurs without the markers typically seen on verbs.

All of the path verbs noted in Table 1 can occur in a *pa*-construction. However, my Tagalog speaker seems to distinguish between verbs of BOUNDED PATH and verbs of DIRECTION, as noted in table 1 (LIST). While both can occur in a *pa*-path construction with manner in the main verb, these different verb types have different requirements for the ground expressions they take. This verb type distinction becomes clearest when path is expressed in the *pa*-construction.

**Table 1:** Verb type determines what type of ground expression may accompany the verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Type: verb root</th>
<th>Ground Expression</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manner:</strong> gapang ‘crawl’, langoy ‘swim’, lipad ‘fly’, takbo ‘run’, talon ‘jump’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direction:</strong> akyat ‘go up’, baba ‘go down’, pasok ‘go in’, labas ‘go out’</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bounded Path:</strong> punta ‘go to’, alis ‘go from’</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In expressing motion events, the necessity for reference to source or goal depends on the verb. It seems that verbs expressing directionality generally do not take source or goal (only location, optionally), whereas verbs expressing bounded path require a goal or source. These general trends are displayed in Table 1.

Without explicit expression of source or goal, it seems that any manner + path construction can only encode a general directionality. If a bounded path (rather than a mere direction) is to be expressed, the ground elements defining that path must be explicitly expressed. Therefore, there are difference in the *pa*-path construction with different verb types. Only verbs expressing general direction can occur here without source or goal, as in 7b, where *pababa* expresses direction downward, and so does not require a source or goal.

\[(7)\] b. lumangoy ang palaka pababa (F17b)

- *swim* GM-*frog* pa-*go down*
  
  ‘the frog swam down’

On the other hand, 5a is not a complete utterance because the verb *alis* ‘leave/go from’ expresses bounded path and so requires a source. To become acceptable, 5a must include an expression of source, as in 5b.

\[(5)\] a. *gumapang siya paalis (F13b)*

- *crawl* 3S pa-*go away*
  
  ‘he crawled from/leaving’

b. gumapang siya paalis ng bahay (F13a)

- *crawl* 3S pa-*go from GM-house*
  
  ‘he crawled from/leaving the house’
In clarifying this point, I discovered that there is a semantic difference between *alis* and *labas* that allows 6a to remain acceptable where 5a is not. *Alis*, like *punta*, expresses bounded path, and has a meaning of ‘motion from’ [+X ground element]; *labas* more closely expresses directionality of exiting or moving outward, which can take a ground element or not.

(6) a. ang bata ay gumapang palabas (F14b)

   GM-child ay crawl pa-go out

   ‘the boy crawled out’

b. ang bata ay gumapang palabas ng bahay (F14)

   GM-child ay crawl pa-go out GM-house

   ‘the boy crawled out of the house’

When *labas*, or any other directional verb, does take an apparent ground element, as in 6b, it far less clear that the ground element is a source or goal; it may be more of an object or theme of the *pa*-construction rather than a source or goal. Therefore, the noun phrase here that we would have identified as a source, *ng bahay* ‘house’, may actually be the theme or general location of the outward motion of *palabas* ‘go out/exit’.

There are some exceptions to the pattern seen in 6. For example, some directional verbs seem to not be able to take ground expressions or simple location. 7a is unacceptable because of the ground expression *sa tubig*. Note that 7b, having deleted the ground expression of 7a, is acceptable.

(7) a. *lumangoy ang palaka pababa sa tubig (F17)

   swim GM-frog pa-go down GM-water

   ‘the frog swam down in the water’

b. lumangoy ang palaka pababa (F17b)
swim          GM-frog  pa-go down

‘the frog swam down’

In general, my findings are supported by previous research in Tagalog: though manner is not normally expressed, when it is, it occurs as a main verb; when path and manner are both expressed in the same sentence, path is placed in a *pa*-construction. Beyond the established categorization of motion verbs into manner and path, I have found that Tagalog shows evidence of having further division into directional and bounded path verbs. This tripartite division between manner, direction, and bounded path is based on the semantic meanings of the verbs, as well as what ground elements the verbs in each class take. With only the rarest of exceptions, bounded path verbs require the expression of a source or goal, whereas directional verbs, in accordance with Jackendoff’s semantic definition, are far more flexible and may take location, source, goal, or no ground expression.