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## **Toward a lexical-semantic typology of motion words in Northern Sami, compared with a few Finno-Ugric and Indo-European languages**

Starting from the observation that not only spatial deixis is rich in Sami as in many Uralic languages, but that the very notion of space is central in the Sami culture – see in N.A. Valkeapää’s poetry the symbolic connotations of the verb *johtit*, translated in LO « be in motion, move (change position) » but as « migrate » in several IE languages – this paper will present a work in progress on the lexical-semantic categorization of motion words in Northern Sami (henceforth Sami, Sa.). The characterization will proceed from a corpus-based contrastively oriented comparison between Sami and a selection of genetically and/or areally related languages (Finnish ; Swedish, Norwegian) to a more general typology based on published contrastive works between Sami and other languages (e.g. French and English). The methodology, combining several corpora of recorded conversations, secondary data sources (dictionaries, word lists and descriptions) and parallel translations of recent literature, relies also on a long practice of collaboration with informants / language experts in the Ohcejohka-Utsjoki region (Finland).

On the theoretical level, the most general questions are inspired by the huge literature available on lexical typology and spatial semantics, e.g. What is language particular vs. universal in a given phenomenon ? Which phenomena are stable, and which are subject to contact-induced change ? (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2008). The typological evolution of Sami becoming written is tackled from different angles : cognitive-semantic lexicalization patterns (satellite-framed vs. verb-framed, Talmy 1985, 1991), semantic and morphological motivation and borrowability (contact-induced lexical change vs. lexical acculturation). The discussion includes the applicability to Sami of clear-cut classifications of verbs denoting source / path / goal-oriented movements (Söder 2001). See for instance Sa. *beassat* translated in LO « slip away, be able to get away, escape, go or come to one place », which hints at an obstacle rather than a « goal ». Ex. – Sa. *Luossabivdu leai beassan juo bures álgui*, translated in Finnish *Lohetuskin oli päässyt hyvin alkuun*, in Swedish *Laxfisket hade också kommit väl igång*. And – [the young generation used to take care of] Sa. *ahte biraseatnamiid bálgát eai beassan savvot*, Fi. *että lähitiensäiden polut eivät päässeet kasvaamaan umpeen*, Sw. *att stigarna i den närmaste omgivningen*

*inte växte igen*. Noteworthy is also that the symmetry of the opposite pair, common in the neighboring FU language, Fi. *päästä* vs. *joutua*, is lacking in Sami. E.g. – Sa. *Nuba son šattai ain ohcat eará nuoraid gili olggobealde*, Fi. *Niinpä hän juotui hakemaan seuraan kylän ulkopuolelta*, Sw. *Så blev han tvungen att söka sällskap utanför byn*. Namely, the Sami equivalent of the Finnish « goal-oriented » *joutua* has the basic meaning « to be born ». Special attention will be paid to patterns of polysemy of basic language-specific verbs (Sa. *johtit*) and of the nuclear verbs (Sa. *mannat* « go »).

Different from other studies, although concentrating on simple verbs, 1. we do not exclude nouns (weak verbo-nominal polarity of the language); 2. the investigation is extended to derived words, not only « possible », but omnipresent in a natural oral corpus as well as in a literary stylised text, e.g. *gorkŋodit*, *gorgŋet*, *goargŋulit*, given as variants of *goargŋut* « climb » in a dictionary of synonyms established by a Sami native speaker (Vest 2005). Subsequent questions will be : does including derivation refutes the « neutral » nuclear verbs of motion as primitives, and implies a different categorization of the verbs of motion ?

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