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The encoding of space in Manange and Nar-Phu (Tamangic)

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ABSTRACT

This is an account of the forms and semantic dimensions of spatial relations in Manange (Tibeto-Burman, Tamangic; Nepal), with comparison to sister language Nar-Phu. Topological relations (“IN/ON/AT/NEAR”) in these languages are encoded by locative enclitics and also by a set of noun-like objects termed as “locational nouns.” In Manange, the general locative enclitic is more frequently encountered for a wide range of topological relations, while in Nar-Phu, the opposite pattern is observed, i.e. more frequent use of locational nouns. While the linguistic frame of reference system encoded in these forms is primarily relative (i.e. oriented on the speaker’s own viewing perspective), a more extrinsic/absolute system emerges with certain verbs of motion in these languages, with verbs like “come,” “go,” and certain verbs of placement or posture orienting to arbitrary fixed bearings such as slope. This account also provides some examples of cultural or metaphorical extensions of spatial forms as they are encountered in connected speech.

KEYWORDS

Tamangic, directional, static, dynamic, locational noun, relative, intrinsic, absolute

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The encoding of space in Manange and Nar-Phu (Tamangic)

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1 Introduction¹

In a family as large and diverse as Tibeto-Burman, it is not surprising to see this diversity manifested in the forms and semantics of spatial relations across the languages. In Kiranti languages, for example, many dimensions of space are built into the verb paradigms, they interact with the syntax, and they are a rich part of ritual language and cultural practices (Bickel 1994, 1997, 2000, Bickel and Gaenszle 1999, Schackow 2014). Beyond these accounts, however, there has been comparatively little work done on the structural and semantic encoding of spatial categories in other Tibeto-Burman languages. The goal of this paper is to add to the knowledge base of spatial concept encoding in Tamangic languages specifically, which are traditionally assumed to be comparatively less morphologically complex within the Tibeto-Burman family (ie. more isolating in morphological synthesis)². Quite to the contrary, both the morpho-syntax and the lexicon in Tamangic languages play a major role in the encoding of a variety of spatial concepts in different ways in these two languages. Furthermore, this paper shows that Manange and Nar-Phu are two closely related languages that demonstrate striking differences in the structure and functions of their spatial sub-systems.

This paper compares encodings and expressions in two closely related Tamangic languages: Manange (*Nyishang*, *Nyishangte*, Ethnologue ISO-369 nmm and Glottolog mana1288) and Nar-Phu (particularly the Nar variety, *Chyprung*, Ethnologue ISO-369 npa and Glottolog narp1239). The reason for this comparison is that the languages, while quite similar in core lexicon, can be best appreciated as distinct via their subtle variations in morphology and syntax. This is true also in the expression of spatial concepts, where both languages share almost identical resources, but employ them differently.

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² By “Tamangic” I refer to the sub-grouping of languages frequently identified by other scholars of Tibeto-Burman as TGTM, an abbreviation comprised of the initial letters of the largest ethno-linguistic groups representing the sub-grouping: Tamang, Gurung, Thakali, and Manange (see Shafer 1955 and Mazaudon 2005). Other Tamangic/TGTM languages include Nar-Phu (this account), and Tangbe (Honda 2014).

This account makes use of both elicited structures and those encodings naturally collected across a wide range of discourse genres. Many of these forms are easy enough to discover through formal elicitation, but it is through examination in discourse contexts that their structural and semantic intricacies may be more deeply appreciated, and that subtle similarities and differences across these languages may be discovered. As a preview, we see in both languages, topological relations are primarily encoded in nominal suffixal/enclitic forms or else in quasi-free root-like forms variably called “relator/locator nouns/locational elements.” Additional spatial relations are encoded in verbal lexical semantics, with some variation observed across Manange and Nar-Phu. More substantial differences can be seen between the languages in that in Manange, enclitics and a small set of these locational elements do the lion’s share of spatial encoding, while Nar-Phu makes much more productive use of locational nouns. So while both languages share the same resources, their frequencies of use are different.

The linguistic frame of reference in both languages includes a complex combination of body-based relative (e.g. “left/right”) and intrinsic (“front/back” in relation to a non-egocentric frame), and also absolute (e.g. “north,” “downhill”) patterns. These patterns are encoded lexically, within nominal morpho-syntax and also in verbal concatenations. This report is organized as follows: Section 2 provides relevant typological information about Manange and Nar-Phu. Section 3 focuses on nominal enclitics, a fertile dimension for spatial contrasts. Section 4 provides a closer look at locational nouns, which are noun-like in morpho-syntax and encode both static and dynamic motion relations. Section 5 turns to spatial encodings in verbal elements. Section 6 includes discussion on selected semantic extensions and some patterns observed through anecdotal means, and section 7 concludes.

2 Location, status, and morpho-syntactic typology

Manange is spoken in eight villages of the upper Manang District in central-northern Nepal; Nar-Phu is spoken in Nar and Phu villages, and some residents have relocated down-valley within Manang (see Map 1)³. As Map 1 shows, Manange and Nar-Phu are in regional contact with Gurung and Gyalsumdo (a Tibetan variety). Both have communities residing in Kathmandu and abroad.

Published reports on speaker populations for Manange are conflicting. The Nepalese Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS 2012) reports under 400 speakers, while speaker self-reporting indicates somewhere between 3,000 and 5,000. In other cases, Manange is lumped in with Gurung (Gurung 1998; Tumbahang 2012) and so the numbers are inflated. More recent surveys indicate that some 2,000–3,000 active speakers are distributed across Manang, with roughly the same number living in Kathmandu and abroad (Hildebrandt et al. 2015). Not all diaspora Mananges are active speakers, so Manange could be classified as ‘threatened/shifting’.

For Nar-Phu the situation is more dire. Current estimated speaker numbers of Nar are at fewer than 400, and Phu has perhaps 200 active speakers. Observations of outward emigration from Nar and Phu villages, data from interviews, and information gleaned from autobiographical texts, suggest that Nar is ‘moribund’; the vast majority of fluent speakers are above the age of 50, and there is extreme disruption in transmission of the language to children.

³ This map was created by Brajesh Karna, Shunfu Hu, and Kristine Hildebrandt and may be accessed at <https://mananglanguages.isg.siue.edu/>. For information on the design and implementation of this map, see Hu et al. (2017).



Map 1. Map of Manang District. Manange is represented by green points and Nar-Phu is represented by purple points.

In both languages, the basic word-order in elicited structures and in most discourse-embedded clauses is verb-final, with post-positions and post-nominal modification. Relative clauses are pre-nominal; negation is prefixal or via copula suppletion. Case marking is reliably ergative-absolutive in elicitation, but the frequency of overt realization in discourse is low and is likely tied to pragmatic factors (Bond et al. 2013). Manange and Nar-Phu lack verbal indexing of arguments. With the exception of the negative prefix, noun and verb morphology is exclusively suffixing or enclitic. Verbal affixes code aspect and modality, and nominalization of main verbs is frequently encountered in discourse. However, despite the overall lack of morphological complexity in both languages, there is a wide range of strategies available for encoding different spatial concepts.

3 Spatial relations in post-nominal enclitics

Hildebrandt (2004) provides a basic overview of spatial encodings in Manange, and all elicited examples come from this sketch. More extensive examples from discourse come from narratives and conversation data collected in 2013 and 2014. Michael Noonan provided some additional semantic observations via unpublished notes on Nar Phu. The discourse examples come from narratives and conversation data recorded in 2010 and 2014.⁴ In both languages, topological

⁴ The examples come from a variety of sources. Elicited examples are un-referenced. Some forms are found in brief discourses elicited via video and images from the MPI Nijmegen field stimulus materials (<http://fieldmanuals.mpi.nl/>). The stimulus file number is included with relevant examples. Some discourse-originating examples in this account have field note reference points associated with them. In example (2a) for example, NgawalM99_F2_009 refers to a text recorded from a female Manange speaker living in Ngawal village in 1999. This is the ninth syntactic unit in the text. Some examples taken from Noonan's notes on Nar-Phu are indicated by "Noonan" beginning the text reference. Many discourses may be found in transcribed and translated form, with accompanying audio and video at the following archives:

<https://audio-video.shanti.virginia.edu/collection/manange#>,
<https://audio-video.shanti.virginia.edu/collection/nar-phu#>,
<https://audio-video.shanti.virginia.edu/collection/nar-phu#>.

relations are largely encoded via enclitics, and there is a general locative enclitic (*ri~re*) encoding a wide range of containment and support expressions (static, topological ‘IN/ON/AT’), as well as dynamic, motion towards.

(1)

a. Manange IN/AT

²²k^hi ⁵²pwal = ri ²²t̥u-pɜ ²²mo⁵
 3.SG Kathmandu=LOC stay-NMLZR COP

‘He lives in Kathmandu.’

²²ŋɜ = tse ²²ʃɜ = ko ⁴²ʃoʃo = ri ⁴²ts^hor-tsi
 1.SG=ERG meat=DEF paper=LOC wrap-PFV

‘I wrapped the meat in the paper.’

b. Manange ON

²²ŋɜ ²²t^han = ri ²²t̥u-tsu ²²mo
 1.SG ground=LOC stay-PROG COP

‘I am sitting on the ground.’

c. Manange TO/TOWARDS

⁵²mi = ko ⁵²jul = ri ⁴⁴kaŋ ⁴²k^hja = ro ⁴²p^hro-tsi
 person=DEF village=LOC mountain place=ABL walk-PFV

‘The person walked to the village from the mountain.’

d. Nar-Phu IN

tʃû = re tʃhæ mû
 DIST=LOC tea COP

‘There’s tea in this (container)’ (Noonan elicitation notes)

e. Nar-Phu ON

p^hoto kaŋ = re k^he-tse
 photo wall=LOC put-IPFV

‘(Someone) puts a photo on the wall.’ (MPI put_028)

⁵ Numerals before Manange words indicate tone categorization. See Hildebrandt (2005) and Hildebrandt and Bond (2017) for more information on Manange tone. In Nar and Phu [fi] is not a segment, but rather indicates murmur on the following vowel. A diacritic on the vowel indicates a falling tone. See Noonan and Hildebrandt (2017) for more information on Nar-Phu tone.

f. Nar-Phu IN/AT

ŋæ tʰosor **pfâlpe = re** mû
 1.SG now **Kathmandu=LOC** COP

'I'm in Kathmandu now.' (Noonan elicitation notes)

g. Nar-Phu TO/TOWARDS

tʰupruŋ-se JM **pfâlpe = re** ni-tʃi mû
 Nar.village=ABL JM **Kathmandu=LOC** go-PST EVID

'JM went from Nar to Kathmandu.' (Noonan elicitation notes)

One difference between the two languages is that in Manange discourse, most topological encoding is with the enclitic =ri. In contrast, in Nar-Phu, the locational nouns are more prolific (see Section 4), but noun-plus-enclitic encodings are found in Nar discourse too, illustrated in (2).

(2)

a. Manange IN

²²kəjɜ = ri ⁴⁴prin ²²lɜ, ²²tʰe ²²jɜ-tsi
 pot=LOC put do, keep go-PFV

'Putting (yeast) in a pot, it is cooked...' (NgawalM99_F2,_009)

b. Manange IN/AT

²²tiŋi ²²ŋi piɜŋ ⁵²jul = ri ²²ŋɜ ⁴²lo ⁴²ŋɜtsju epɜ = ko ⁴²lo
 day 1.PL Pisang **village=LOC** 1.SG year five.ten age=DEF year

⁴²ŋɜ tĩ bairɜ ²²tʃu-tsi
 five class outside sit-PFV

'Today, we (are) in this Pisang village, as I was about to become fifty years old, I lived outside for five years.' (PisangM2013_M2_007)

c. Manange TOWARDS/UNTIL

tilits^ho ⁴⁴kju ²²mi = ko ⁴²kjomtso = ri ⁴⁴je-pɜ
 Tilicho water source=DEF **sea=LOC** return-NMLZR

'Tilicho lake (the source is in Manang) flows towards the ocean/goes to the ocean.'
 (KhangsarM13_M1_030)

d. Nar IN/AT

ŋæ fɟonten **pfwej = re** tʃhâŋ-tʃi
 1.SG education **Tibet=LOC** study-PST

'I was educated in Tibet.' (Noonan, The Three Brothers)

e. Nar ON

fɔtʃu = re p^hæ tsam khjeta pʃrâ-pɛtæ pʃrâ-pe
this=LOC iron bridge cattle walk-NMLZR horse walk-NMLZR

‘On this, iron bridges, cattle walk, horses walk.’ (Noonan, Contemporary Nar)

f. Nar IN/INSIDE

paŋ = tʃuke = reâpe phruŋ-pe
pen=PL=LOC excrement defecate=NMLZR

‘In the pens, (the animals) defecated.’ (Noonan, Contemporary Nar)

Very rarely in Manange, location is marked only with a locational noun, without the locative enclitic, as in (3).

(3) Manange

⁴⁴pu ⁵²naŋ ²²ts^haŋ-tsi
clay.pot inside put-PFV

‘I put (yeast) inside of the clay pot.’

These examples illustrate a “relative” frame-of-reference system at work in both Manange and in Nar (Bickel 1994; 1997; Levinson 2003; Levinson and Wilkins 2006; Bowerman 2007). In other words, the location of an object is expressed in relation to both the viewpoint of the perceiver (speaker) and the position of another referent.

It is unclear why in discourse Manange speakers so frequently make use of only the enclitic while Nar speakers primarily make use of encliticized locational nouns. At this point, no syntactic or semantic factors emerge that align with this preference, but it is a difference that deserves further investigation.

Within the category of relative encodings, both Manange and Nar-Phu have lexemes for “left/right,” as shown in (4) and (5), and these forms are also noun-like in their morpho-syntax.

(4)

a. Manange: ²²tor ~ ²²ja ²²tortse ‘left ~ left hand’, kje ~ ²²ja ²²kjetse ‘right ~ right hand’

b. Nar-Phu: tôr ‘left side’, ke(n) ‘right side’

(5) Nar

tepe kap kal = ri nɦ̃aŋ = ri,
again cup like=LOC inside=LOC,

kɦ̃rɦ̃ tʃʰaŋ-tse pʰjaŋ = ri tɦ̃r
one is.kept-PFV top=LOC left

ken = ri lɦ̃ tɦ̃en-tse mo mɦ̃
right=LOC do put-PFV COP EVID



‘Again, that (wooden object) being put inside the cup, it is (also) put on top to the left and right (of the cup).’ (MPI Classifier_009)

In addition to relative, both languages also encode absolute systems, with lexemes for ‘north/south/east/west.’ These are not encountered in any discourse. In elicited use, the form *aŋse* ‘side’ follows the direction word. The forms are listed in (6) and shown in elicitation in (7) through (9).

(6) Cardinal Directions

	Manange	Nar
North	⁵² tʃaŋ	tʃɦ̃aŋ
South	⁴² lo	lɦ̃
East	⁴⁴ ʃer	ʃɦ̃r
West	⁵² nu	nɦ̃up

(7) Manange

²²ŋʒ ⁵²tʃaŋ aŋse(= ri) ²²ʒʒ-tsi
1.SG north side(=LOC) go-PFV

‘I went north.’

(8) Nar

ŋɦ̃ tɦ̃im ʃɦ̃r aŋse(= ri) mo
1.SG house east side(=LOC) COP

‘I’m at the east side of (my) house.’

(9) Nar

ŋɦ̃ amrika nɦ̃up aŋse(= ri) ni-tʃɦ̃i
1.SG America west side(=LOC) go-PST

‘I went west to America.’⁶

⁶ In Phu there is slight variation; the word for ‘side’ is *tʃʰo*, as in *ŋɦ̃amrika nɦ̃up tʃʰo(=ri) ja-tʃɦ̃i* ‘I went west to America.’

4 Locational nouns

In Manange and Nar-Phu topological relations are productively encoded by what I previously termed as “locational roots” (2004), but what I term here as “locational nouns.” In Nar-Phu, these forms were never explicitly discussed by Michael Noonan, but these forms are also noun-like in their morpho-syntax. Like ‘typical’ nouns in both languages, these forms host the locative enclitic, they carry their own lexical tone, and they carry concrete (if spatial) semantics. However, unlike ‘typical’ nouns, these forms never occur alone as the head of a noun phrase.

In both languages, these forms encode both static (akin to ‘basic locative’ expressions as discussed by Levinson and Wilkins 2006) and dynamic (motion) relations. These are easy enough to elicit in Manange, and they are of course also encountered in discourse, but they are far more frequently encountered in Nar-Phu discourse than in Manange. Examples are provided in (10) and (11).

(10)

a. Manange ⁵²naŋ ‘inside’

⁴⁴ tsu	⁴² ja	⁴² ru	⁵² naŋ = ko = ri	²² kɜru	⁴² p ^h lu	⁴² ŋɜ	⁴⁴ prin-tse	²² lɜ-tsi
PROX	yak	horn	inside=DEF=LOC	barley	seed	five	hit-CC	do-PFV

‘Inside of the (dead) yak’s horn, (the lama) put five barley seeds.’ (GhyaruM2013_M1)

b. Manange ⁴⁴litse ‘behind,’ ²²pɜr ‘in between,’ ²²ti ‘near’

⁴⁴ tsu	²² t ^h jɜ-pɜ	ku	⁴⁴ sẽ	⁴² ts ^h aŋ-tse	⁴⁴ litse = ri	²² mo-pɜ
PROX	big-NMLZR	idol	three	put-CC	behind=LOC	COP-NMLZR

²² t ^h e-tsi.	⁴⁴ u	ku = ko	²² pɜri = ri	²² ti = ri	⁴⁴ u	²² lɜ-tse
keep-PFV	DIST	idol=DEF	between=LOC	near=LOC	DIST	do-CC

⁴⁴ u = ko = ri	⁵² sɜ-ni	²² lɜ-tse	⁵² mi	⁵² ŋjo-pɜ	⁴⁴ u	⁴⁴ tsu = ko
DIST=DEF=LOC	nice-ADV	do-CC	person	look-NMLZR	DIST	PROX=DEF

‘Having made three idols, those there *in the back*, those were made/kept...having done like this, (those) *in between/near here*, having done well, people look there (at them)/regard them.’ (BragaM13_M3_028-30)

(11)

a. Nar: ^{p^h}jaŋ ‘top’ stative

nôkju = ten	êle = cɛ	pfiomi	^{p^h} jaŋ = re	t ^h an-tse
dog=COMIT	boy=DEF	shoulder	top=LOC	keep-PFV

‘The boy kept/held the dog on his shoulders.’ (Noonan, Grammar notes 5:5)

b. Nar: *p^hjaŋ* ‘top’ dynamic

êle = ce = ten nôkju = ce tŋoŋpe rfiul-pi **p^hjaŋ = re** krê-tse
 boy=DEF=COMIT dog=DEF tree spoil-NMLZR **top=LOC** climb-CVB

‘The boy and/with the dog, having climbed to the top of the fallen/rotting tree...’ (Noonan, Grammar notes)

c. Nar: *nhâŋ* ‘inside/into’

nôkju = ten êle = ce kju tʃ^hô **nhâŋ = re** pi tê-tʃi
 dog=COMIT boy=DEF water lake **inside=LOC** go.fast fall-PSt

‘The dog and the boy accidentally fell into the lake.’ (Noonan, Grammar notes)

d. Nar: *p^ho* ‘beside’

njûku bâksa **p^ho = re** mô mu
 pen box **beside=LOC** COP EVID

‘The pen is beside the box.’ (Noonan, Grammar notes)

Most of these locational nouns convey a relative frame of reference, but ‘front/back’ seems to be absolute (i.e. the location of the object is defined in relation to arbitrary or fixed bearings). This is in (12) and in another MPI stimuli response in (13).

(12) Manange (Hoshi 1986: 198)

⁴²t^hi ²²ŋwontse = ri ⁴⁴tʃpɜ ⁴⁴kɜtti ²²mo ²²mu
 house **front=LOC** monk many COP EVID

‘There are many monks in front of the house.’

(13) Nar-Phu

pjuŋ ŋwontɛ **ŋwontɛ** p^hriâ-tse
 man front **front** walk-CVB

ni-tʃi
 go-PST

‘The man, in a walking manner, goes forward.’
 (MPI Set1_105ET)



Nar speakers confirm that these forms encode ‘front/back’ no matter where the speaker is in relation to the location or movement of the referent. ‘Front/back’ in reference to the speaker is encoded lexically as separate body part terms. Consider the Manange words ⁵³tenje ‘back of body,’ ²²ku ‘chest/front of torso’ and Nar-Phu *r^hôte* ‘lower back side,’ *thwêku* ‘upper front or back side,’ and *mæko* ‘lower front torso side.’

These forms are reminiscent to what are termed “relator nouns” in other Tibeto-Burman languages (see DeLancey 1997 for Tibetan; see Watters 2002 for Kham). These are described as

(partially) grammaticalized locational post-positions of nominal origin. Similarly to Manange and Nar-Phu, in these languages, they are not classed as “typical” nouns, by virtue of various morphological and syntactic properties. In Kham in particular, these forms frequently carry a locative suffix (-*lə*) and also possessive marking as part of their morphological structure (Watters 2002: 129). And, as in Manange and Nar-Phu, in Kham they function to specify further stative and dynamic locational relations, for example, inessive (‘inside’, ‘underneath’, ‘between’, etc.), adessive (‘edge of’, ‘at a place’), superessive (‘on top of’, ‘above/in line with’), and a metaphorical extension of ablative (‘for the sake of’).

5 Dynamic spatial relations encoded in verbs

A small set of verbs in both Manange and Nar gives evidence of a second, extrinsic, frame-of-reference system at work in the language, although they are limited to those shown in (14). In Manange, the verb ‘descend’ is part of larger compounds for weather and environmental phenomena, as in (15).

(14) Select Motion Verbs in Manange

²²jə ‘go’
²²k^hə ‘come’
²²ju ‘descend’⁷
⁴⁴je ‘ascend/return’ (distinct from ²²kre ‘climb’)

(15) Manange weather/environment verbs

⁵²mo ²²ju-pə ‘to rain’ (lit. sky descend)
⁴²k^hi ²²ju-pə ‘to snow’ (lit. snow descend)
²²hi/²²sə ²²ju-pə ‘to have a landslide/an avalanche’ (lit. ground/slope descend)

(16) Manange ²²ju ‘descend’ in discourse

⁵² mo	²² a-ju-pə-ko	əni	eka = ri	²² ju	iten
sky	NEG-descend-NMLZR-REP	then	Yarka=LOC	descend	and.then

‘If there is no rain, we go down/descend to Yarka (to worship).’ (PisangM13_M1_014)

(17) Manange ⁴⁴je ‘ascend/return’ in discourse

⁵² siki	²² ta	²² tsə-tse	²² lɔ-tse	²² aŋaŋ = tse	⁴⁴ je-pə
food	what	eat-CC	do-CC	uncle=PL	return/ascend

²² k ^h imi	⁴² t ^h i = ri
3.PL	house=LOC

‘After the feast/whatever foods being eaten, the uncles return, to their own homes.’ (TengkiM13_M1_025)

⁷ It is likely that ²²ju/hju ‘descend’ in Manange/Nar is syncretic with ⁵²nu/nhup ‘west’ in both languages, with *yuk the reconstructed form for ‘descend, sink, set’ in Proto-Tibeto-Burman (Matisoff 2003: 620).

These verbs are similar to an extrinsic frame-of-reference in their spatial encoding in that the location of an object/referent is calculated on a fixed coordinate (in this case, slope). However, one is just as likely to encounter generic ‘come/go’ plus a locative root in discourse to express the same frame of reference, as in (18).

- (18) Manange ⁴⁴*kaŋro* ²²*k^hɜ* ‘come up/ascend’
²²lake ⁴⁴**kaŋro** ²²**k^hɜ-pɜ** ²²*ŋjaŋ* ⁵²*pi*
 again upward come-NMLZR we say
 ‘Again, saying, we came up (to Pisang village from Kathmandu).’ (PisangN13_M3_046)

In Nar-Phu, the situation is a bit different.

In Nar, there are also verbs that orient along slope, as in (19).

- (19)
jê ‘ascend/return/go back’
ŋjû ‘descend’

Additionally, in Nar there are also directionals that combine with ‘come/go’ and include slope as well as orientation of movement with respect to the speaker (towards or away from), as reported by Noonan’s notes, shown in (20) and (21).

- (20)
- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>mâr</i> ‘down towards the speaker’ | <i>tor</i> ‘up towards the speaker’ |
| <i>kŋjuru</i> ‘down away from the speaker’ | <i>k^henro</i> ‘up away from the speaker’ |
- mâr khê* ‘referent comes downward towards the speaker’
mâr ŋjû ‘referent comes/descends downward towards the speaker’
tor khê ‘referent comes upward towards the speaker’
kŋjuru ni ‘referent goes downward away from the speaker’
k^henro ni ‘referent goes upward away from the speaker’ (Noonan, Grammar notes)

- (21) Nar *mâr* and *tor*
- | | | | | | | |
|------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| tor | kho | <i>pfi-pa</i> | <i>a-fi-ne,</i> | mâr | njo | <i>pfi-pi</i> |
| up | come | say-NMLZR | NEG-stay-ADV | down | go | say-NMLZR |

mfi = ce *su* *a-re*
 person=PL who NEG-COP

‘Many (people) tell us to **come up**, not to settle; nobody says “you settle (lit. **go down**).”’
 (KotoN13_F1_139-140)⁸

⁸ One interesting (and perhaps significant) anecdotal observation with Nar speakers is that when in the Kathmandu metropolitan area, when Nar people gather and speak their mother tongue, they do not make use of slope words like those

In Manange (and contra to Nar), a couple of transport verb concatenations are what may be termed satellite-framed (Slobin 2004) in that the manner of transport is encoded in the first element and the path is encoded in the second. These include ⁵²*por* ²²*jɜ* ‘take’ and ⁵²*pu* ²²*kʰɜ* ‘bring.’ These are semi-lexicalized in that they are a single lexical unit in citation and in most texts, although the manner element may occur independently, as in (22).

(22) Manange ⁵²*por* ‘take’
⁴²*tʰi* ⁴⁴*tsʰana* ⁵²**por-tsi**
house all take-PFV

‘All of the houses were taken (swept away in the avalanche).’ (PisangN13_M2_56)

Almost the opposite pattern is evident in Nar, where the same spatial concepts *phiæk* ‘bring’ and *phior* ‘take (away), take (with), accompany’ are verb-framed. These meanings are elicited as single elements, and if path/direction is expressed in a larger utterance, it is done so in an adverb clause construction, as in this negated structure in (23).

(23) Nar *phiæk* ‘bring’
JM = se hleke **fa-phiæk = ne** khæ-tse mû
JM-ERG book NEG-bring=ADV come-CVB EVID
‘JM came without a book.’ (Noonan, Grammar notes)

It is not currently clear why such closely related languages have such different strategies for encoding transport. These satellite-framed concatenations (also termed serialization, or versatile verbs in Matisoff 1973) are common in Sino-Tibetan. In a sample of 29 Tibeto-Burman languages examined for the verbal encoding of space, nine languages have versatile/serial-type verbs in the same spirit as Manange. However as with Nar, in other languages in this sample, transport is lexically encoded/verb-framed.

As mentioned, this strategy is virtually unattested in Nar. A rare exception to this is found in discourse in (24), where the verb *khæ* ‘come’ follows *phiæk*.

(24) Nar *phiæk khæ* ‘bring + come’
tarten mfilan tʃulatʃuli tarijan mfiataje kfijer = je
like.this black mix if.the.case mix Kathmandu=GEN

chwe **phiæk** **khæ**.
color **bring** **come**

‘...And if it’s the case that it’s (the fabric) mixed black and white, then it’s been brought from Kathmandu.’ (NarN10_M_13)

in (20). This is something that they themselves have confirmed when asked by the author; they simply say that such terms are not useful for locational referencing. This suggests a contextual dependency for this aspect of Nar grammar, and also the importance of gathering data in mother tongue-local, and locally relevant, environments (Harrison 2006; Jukes 2011).

6 Semantic extensions

This area of spatial encoding is less well understood and is worthy of more study, but some interesting semantic extensions beyond physical space with the use of the locative =*ri* have been observed in conversational discourse and are worth including here. The locative enclitic (and also locational nouns) locate referents not only in space and time, but they may also locate ideas or more abstract concepts in relation to each other. This is shown in (25) for Manange.

(25) Manange ⁵²*naŋ=ri* ‘inside’

²² <i>ʒtse</i>	²² <i>mo</i>	⁵² <i>pi-tse</i>	²² <i>lɜ-tse</i>	<i>kɜrtʃa</i>	⁵² <i>naŋ = ri</i>
like.this	COP	say-CC	do-CC	holy.book	inside=LOC

²² <i>ʒle</i>	²² <i>mo</i>	²² <i>mu</i>
like.this	COP	EVID

‘We say like this, (the history of Braga village) is contained inside of the temple/in its scriptures.’ (a gentleman remarking on the relationship of the Braga Gompa to the history of the village) (BragaM13_M3_040)

In both languages, the locative optionally appears when people elaborate on their ages, as shown in (26). In this case, the speaker expresses his sixtieth year of age as a temporal point of reaching or arriving.

(26) Nar

<i>ŋɦačũ</i>	<i>ŋɦiar</i>	<i>kɦiu</i>	ɦukčũ = ri	lɦio = ri	<i>a-jo-pɛ</i>
fifty	CONJ	nine	sixty=LOC	year=LOC	NEG-reach-NMLZR

‘I’m fifty-nine, one year shy of sixty.’ (KotoN13_M1_005)

Locative structures also relate spaces (in this case, agricultural) to people’s lives, as in (27) and (28). The locative-marked word for ‘field’ in (27) (a place from which food comes) is employed as the source domain to which the conceptual mapping of sufficient food supplies is mapped.

(27) Nar

<i>čɛpɛ</i>	<i>ɦuŋpɛ</i>	<i>sagsəbdzi</i>	<i>tɛ</i>	<i>to-ri</i>	<i>rɦɛ</i>	bari = ri	<i>mo</i>
food	drink	vegetable	what	need-SUBORD	self	field=LOC	COP

‘Whatever we need to eat or drink, we have it right here.’ (Koto1N3_F1⁹)

In (28) the locative-marked word for ‘animal’ indicates it as the source from which Nar resident livelihoods are made possible.

⁹ In addition to the nominal enclitic =*ri*, there is also a verbal subordinator -*ri*, which may be diachronically related to the nominal enclitic. See Hildebrandt (2004) for a fuller discussion of the nominal and verbal morpho-syntax of Manange.

(28) Nar

tonri =re phaita the-tse mo mu
animal=LOC benefits be.big-IPFV COP EVID

‘We get many benefits from (the presence of) our animals (such as yaks).’ (NarN10_M_1)

Manange and Nar are once again different in how verbs of emotion, sensory, desire and cognitive recall are encoded. In Manange, the semantic extensions of directional verbs indicate that these feelings and emotions move towards or away the experiencer. Verbs like ²²*somle* ²²*jə* ‘forget,’ ⁴²*phass* ²²*kʰə* ‘smell an odor,’ ⁵²*saj* ²²*kʰə* ‘desire/want,’ and emotion verbs like ⁴²*tuk* ²²*kʰə* ~ ²²*phalun* ²²*kʰə* ‘be sad,’ ⁵²*ki* ²²*kʰə* ‘be happy/be comfortable,’ ⁵²*su* ²²*kʰə* ‘feel/be in pain,’ and ²²*kole* ²²*kʰə* ‘have hardship’ are concatenations where the first element(s) encode the affect or experience, and the second element is a locational verb (rarely ²²*jə* ‘go,’ more frequently ²²*kʰə* ‘come’). An example of this is in (29).

(29) Manange ⁵²*ki* ²²*kʰə* ‘happy + come’

⁴⁴ta ⁵³pi-le sahajob ²²lɔ-tse ⁵²ki ⁴⁴k^wẽ ²²k^hə-tsi
 what say-ADV help do-CC happy really come-PFV

‘Saying like this, if we give help (to others), (the gods) become very happy.’ (PisangM13_M2_36)¹⁰

In contrast, in Nar, these concepts are encoded in a single verbal lexeme, e.g. *tfiuke* ‘hardship,’ or else in concatenations, where the emotion concept is the second element, and the first element means ‘mouth,’ suggesting bodily containment as emotional state, as in (30).

(30) Nar emotion concatenations

kham fiwo ‘feel sick’ (lit. ‘mouth + nausea’)
 kha(m) nfî ‘feel sad’ (lit. ‘mouth + sad’)
 kha kar ‘feel happy, smile.’ (lit. ‘mouth + happy’)

One noted exception found in Michael Noonan’s unpublished glossary is ‘angry’ *fyetan khâ* ‘anger come’. These strategies suggest that differences in the two languages are found not in their lexical inventories in a strict sense, but rather in how these concepts are incorporated into the respective morpho-syntactic systems. They also hint at a more complex use of spatial encodings in daily and ritual practices (as elaborated for Kiranti in Bickel 2000, in Gurung in Pettigrew 1999 and Tamang in Hófer 1999). Truly conventionalized metaphorical uses of locational structures in Manange and Nar Phu so far remain elusive.

7 Summary and concluding remarks

The strategies and forms for the encoding of space in Manange and Nar-Phu can be summarized and compared in Table 1.

¹⁰ Further evidence of the semi-, but not completely, lexicalized nature of these concatenations is found in (29), where ⁴⁴*k^wẽ* ‘really’ is inserted between the two pieces of the concatenation for ‘happy.’

	Form(s)	Relation Type	Example(s)
Stative/Topological			
Manange	=ri LOC	Relative	1a-b
Nar-Phu	locational nouns		1d-e
Dynamic			
Manange	=ri LOC	Relative & Extrinsic	1c, 13
Nar-Phu	locational nouns		1g, 11b
Cardinal Directions			
Manange	locational noun(=ri)	Absolute	7-9
Nar-Phu			
Left-Right			
Manange	locational noun(=ri)	Intrinsic	4-5
Nar-Phu			

Table 1. Spatial encoding strategies in Manange and Nar-Phu

As Table 1 illustrates, it is in the Stative/Topological and Dynamic spatial encodings where differences between the two languages emerge, particularly in free discourse usage, and it is in the absolute and intrinsic relations where the two languages show similarities. In stative/topological and dynamic expressions, Nar-Phu makes much more productive use of locational nouns, while Manange more commonly exhibits simple locative encliticization. Locative-marked locational nouns again emerge in Manange (as in Nar-Phu) for other spatial expressions, particularly for cardinal directions and in left-right relative directions.

In other Tamangic languages, spatial encoding information is scattered across publications, or else not described in great detail. One exception is Owen-Smith (2013), which reveals two spatial deictic systems in the Indrawati Khola dialect of Tamang (Sindhupachok District, Nepal). These are analyzed as (nominalized) deictic adverbs and are divided into a speaker-vs.-addressee-centered system and an environmental system. Of particular comparative interest is the set of slope/orientation (non-demonstrative) directionals in Nar-Phu (discussed in Section 5, examples 20-21). Cognate forms (adverbs) are also found in Tamang, and in Tamang, unlike with demonstratives, there are no restrictions on the deictic center conveyed: “They indicate only general areas which are fixed by the location of the interlocutors, which constitutes a deictic centre but only in “absolute” terms on a vertical axis” (Owen-Smith 2013: 227). The semantics of these forms in Nar-Phu warrant further investigation.

Other than in Bickle and Gaenszle (1999) or else gleaned from individual descriptions and accounts, there is still a gap in easily available information on family-internal accounts and comparisons of the spatial domain. This paper shows that even a cursory examination of this topic reveals interesting patterns and differences across closely affiliated systems. We see in Manange the use of both enclitics and locational nouns for static/topological and dynamic movement, indicating relative, absolute, and intrinsic frame-of-reference situations; On the other hand, we see in Nar-Phu that locational nouns are more frequently encountered in discourse, while Manange speakers make more use of locative enclitic =ri. We also see that Manange and Nar-Phu are obviously closely related within the Tamangic sub-grouping of Tibeto-Burman, and that they demonstrate a great deal of lexical and grammatical overlap, but that striking differences between the two languages may be uncovered in how spatial sub-systems operate. This comparative account will hopefully lead to

additional comparative attempts within Tamangic semantics and morpho-syntactic patterns, and will also hopefully become a part of a larger cross linguistic comparison of the ways that grammars in this family encode space.

ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person	GEN	genitive
3	third person	IPFV	imperfective
ABL	ablative	LOC	locative
ADV	adverbial	NEG	negative
CC	clause chain	NMLZR	nominalizer
COMIT	comitative	PFV	perfective
COP	copula	PL	plural
CVB	converb	PROX	proximal
DEF	definite	PST	past
DIST	distal	SG	singular
ERG	ergative	SUBORD	subordinator
EVID	evidential		

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