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Motion in Movima

Katharina Haude, January 2015

There are languages which reflect the importance of motion, whether directed or undirected, in some way in their grammar. Aymara, for instance – my first language of study, at the time when I first met Mily in Leiden (2000) – , has a large inventory of direction suffixes indicating motion of something into, out of, against, etc. something else, and it is interesting to see how these suffixes interact with different types of verb roots. Movima, the lowland-Bolivian isolate I have been studying ever since the “Lexicon and syntax” project in Nijmegen, is not like that. But since motion is a universally perceptible phenomenon, perhaps it is even more interesting to look at a language that has less spectacular ways of expressing it. This is attempted below, and I will see how far I get.

Like other languages, Movima has motion verbs as well as grammatical elements expressing motion. I will start out with motion verbs.

Motion verbs

For the purpose of this paper, I classify as “motion verb” an intransitive verb that denotes motion of an entity (expressed as the argument) from one place to another without depending on the construction or context. Thus, a verb like Movima *aschel* ‘sit (down)’ is not classed as a motion verb because its interpretation as either stative (sit) or dynamic (sit down) depends on the context. I assume that this is not the case for the following verbs:

- (1) reflexives
joy-chel ‘go somewhere; leave’

- (2) reduplication (CV~, <CV(k):>) ‘middle’
chi:~chi ‘go out’
ji<wa:~>wa ‘come’
do<wak~>waj ‘move from one place to another’
cho<nak~>naj ‘return home’
ja<vu:~>buk ‘fly’

- (3) monomorphemic (?)
a:mon ‘enter’

di:raʔ ‘travel to the village (Santa Ana)’
ja:yi ‘run’

(4) containing a “classifier”

dita:ve ‘land (with a canoe)’ (-*ve* ‘canoe’)
iyeni ‘move’ (-*ye* ‘body’)
iyekani ‘move repeatedly’ (-*ye* ‘body’ plus -*ka* ‘multiple event’)
nanduk ‘move away’ (-*duk* ‘back’)
koma:lo ‘swim’ (-*lo* ‘water’)
upa:vos ‘climb up a pole or tree’ (-*vos* ‘tree, wood’)

(5) ending in *-ete* (‘agentive’)

toj-ete ‘pass by’
wel-e:te ‘climb’

(6) containing a “classifier” plus ending *-(e)ʔ* (‘GROUND’?)

tatvo:seʔ ‘fall down’ (-*vos* ‘wood, pole’)
ajʔabaʔ ‘walk’ (-*laba* ‘earth, ground’)
ajʔimeʔ ‘walk at night’ (-ʔ*im* ‘night’)
yolmoʔ ‘stroll, take a walk’ (-*mo* ‘bush, forest’)

(7) containing a “classifier” plus ending *-te* (the applicative?)

konlo:te ‘come out of water’ (-*lo* ‘water’)
penlo:te ‘go into water’ (-*lo* ‘water’)
sowaste ‘slide on stomach’ (-*as* ??)
tokpi:te ‘cross, e.g. a river’ (-*pit* ‘half, middle’?)
weleʔba:te ‘climb up the riverside’ (-*ba* ‘round’?)

This list looks rather messy. With respect to meaning, there is no clear preference for the expression of either path or manner. The forms of the verbs do not seem to correspond to any particular semantic property. There is only one reflexive verb (1), although many Movima intransitive verb roots take the reflexive suffix in their most basic form. Similarly, middle reduplication, also very common with intransitives (indicating an “affected agent”), is only reflected marginally (2). There are a few monomorphemic verbs (3), but their exceptional

status makes one suspect that these are lexicalized forms of earlier complex elements. In this group, the verb *di:rał* is particularly striking: it means that one travels from one’s chaco or other settlement to Santa Ana, e.g. for a festivity. Classifier-like elements are common in motion verbs, as illustrated in (4); there are some that denote the moving entity, e.g. the canoe or body, but most denote the Ground with respect to which the Figure moves (some of these cases are lexicalized). Suffixes containing the phonemes *-e* and *-ł* are a complicated issue, since they seem to lose the *e* in some contexts, and it is hard to tell which suffix one is dealing with. There is an ‘agentive’ one (5), which, like reflexives and middles, marks many dynamic intransitive verbs, and which is compatible with another suffix of this type when a classifier is inserted (as in *welēbale*). In verbs containing a classifier and ending in *-(e)ł* (6), the classifier seems to denote the Ground, but then, this is not consistent. The same analysis can be proposed for the verbs ending in *-łe* (7), a suffix that, elsewhere, is quite easily identified as one type of applicative (“co-participant”) – but what is the difference with *-ł* here?

To sum up, while there is a number of motion verbs, neither the lexicon nor the derivational morphology treat them as a group or single them out in any particular way. In this domain, therefore, motion does not play a significant role in Movima.

Demonstratives

The system of demonstratives, which can be used as predicates and as pronouns, is highly elaborate in Movima. First of all, demonstratives distinguish sex and animacy (i.e. singular forms for female humans, masculine humans, non-humans vs. one plural for all these categories). Secondly, they distinguish proximity to speaker vs. hearer, absence, and ceased existence. Entities that are in sight, but not near to either speaker or hearer, are specified for their position as standing, not-standing, or elevated, and their relative distance. This category also contains sets for entities that are approaching or retreating, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Motion demonstratives (DEM)

	hum. male (M)	hum. female (F)	non-human (N)	plural (PL)
approaching (APPR)	<i>kula'wa</i>	<i>kila'niwa</i>	<i>kola'wa</i>	<i>kila'wa</i>
retreating (RTR)	<i>kulro'</i>	<i>kilno'</i>	<i>kolro'</i>	<i>kilro'</i>

The examples (8) and (9) illustrate the demonstratives for approaching and retreating entities, respectively. In (8), the demonstrative serves as the predicate. In (9), the demonstrative is used as a pronoun, i.e. it cooccurs with a predicate, occupying the same position that can otherwise be occupied by a free personal pronoun.

- (8) *jela, jankwa=∅, łat kila'wa=s juyeni*
 come! say=1SG EVID DEM.APPR.PL=DET person
 ‘Come, I said. Look, there are people coming.’

- (9) *kulro' joychoy joy-chet n-as Peru, jankwa=∅ łat inła*
 DEM.RTR.M probably go-REFL OBL-ART.N Perú say=1SG EVID I
 ‘He (moving away) is probably going to [the village of] Perú, I said [in my dream].’

The “motion” demonstratives can also be used with stative verbs, as shown in (10). Here, they imply that the movement ends in the state denoted by the verb.

- (10) *kulro' en-chet nosde: n-as chora:da*
 DEM.RTR.M stand-REFL there OBL-ART.N street
 ‘He is going over there to stand in the street.’

Verbs of directed motion (like ‘come’ and ‘go’ or ‘bring’ and ‘take’) can only cooccur with these demonstratives when the direction corresponds to the direction indicated by the demonstrative term, as in (11a). Otherwise, the combination is ungrammatical, as shown by (11b).

- (11) a. *kola'wa jiwa-łe-na='ne as aswawanra:ni*
 DEM.APPR.N come-APPL-DR=F ART.N seat
 ‘She is bringing the seat.’
- b. **kola'wa joy-a-łe='ne*
 DEM.APPR.N go-DR-APPL=F

Thus, in the system of demonstratives, motion has the same status as a standing or a non-standing static position. One might wonder whether exophoric reference demands much more: one looks ahead for something standing, on the ground for something sitting or lying, and one may have a different way of searching for something that is moving.

Durative particles

The three Movima durative particles, which, like most Movima particles, cover the same positional categories as the demonstratives for visible entities: standing, nonstanding, and moving. Like most other particles, they can occur anywhere in the clause (even inside an NP).

- (12) *ena* 'standing'
da(ya) 'non-standing (sitting or lying)'
buka 'moving'

The particle which is of interest here, *buka*, can cooccur with any verb, not only one expressing a motion event. In line with its aspectual, atelic meaning, it does not imply directed (i.e. telic) motion. Its main sense seems to be that the referent does not carry out an activity at one single place.

Example (13) illustrates the particle in combination with a motion verb (the -- symbol indicates a particular kind of cliticization).

- (13) *jayna buka it joy-chet--iy'ti joy-chet--iy'ti*
 already DUR.MOVE 1INTR go-REFL--1PL go-REFL--1PL
 'Then we were moving on, moving on.'

In (14), *buka* occurs with a non-motion activity verb ('chew'), indicating that the activity is carried out while moving. Example (15) contains a static verb (*batukni* 'stay put'), with the particle *buka* indicating that the referents are located at different places.

- (14) *inla rey juyeni di loy rey jirampoj-wa=Ø*
 I pues person REL not pues like-NMLZ=1SG
n-as buka dan-et-wa=Ø n-as chora:da
 OBL-ART.N DUR.MOVE chew-AGENTIVE-NMZ=1SG OBL-ART.N street
 'I am a person who does not like to be walking around in the street chewing.'

- (15) *kiro'* *batukni kis* *buka'* *e:ʔa=is* *ney*
 DEM.PL.AB(SENTIAL) stay_put ART.PL.AB DUR.MOVE name=3PL.AB here
 'Their names are still here (i.e., in a book at the Cabildo).'

When cooccurring with a demonstrative for visible entities, the durative particles are in concordance with the categories expressed by the demonstratives, as shown by (16) and (17).

- (16) *kulro'* *buka'* *no-kos* *bi:si=us*
 DEM.RETR.M DUR.MOVE OBL-ART.N.AB bike=3M.AB
 'He is moving away on his bike.'

- (17) *kola'wa=s* *mi:chi ʔat* *buka'a*
 DEM.APPR.N=DET cat EVID DUR.MOVE
 'Look, there is a cat coming!'

In the current Movima corpus of about 26,000 sentences, there are over 500 occurrences of *buka'*. It would be interesting to make an inventory of all the verbs that the particle actually occurs with, in order to see if there are any preferences (e.g. for motion verbs), and how the particle is interpreted in combinations with different types of non-motion verbs or in different contexts.

Conclusion

Thus, in the verbal lexicon, motion does not play a particular role: there is nothing that sets apart motion verbs from other intransitive verbs. In the domain of exophoric reference, there are two distinct sets of demonstratives, which distinguish between approaching and retreating motion. Finally, there is an aspectual particle which simultaneously indicates duration and motion (or non-permanent location). The conclusion I draw from the data presented here is that even though different types of motion (such as direction or manner) are not strongly diversified, motion as such is a grammaticalized category in Movima.