

34 *The morphodirectional sphere*

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The idea of creating a geometrical structure of directions was to show how an EGO expresses directions in his own language. In Kala Lagaw Ya a direction expression is usually a word composed of smaller meaningful parts, and these morphemes can change to show where something is and whether it is stationary or in motion, visible or invisible, and to identify gender. I invented the Morphodirectional sphere (see Figure 1) to show how directional expressions indicate place, direction, and visibility. This imaginary sphere moves with EGO, who is always at the centre. This sphere accompanies EGO even when he is indoors, as long as he knows his exact location.

It is a simple process to indicate the gender of the object referred to in a direction expression just by replacing *nu* (male) with *na* (female). All inanimate objects in Kala Lagaw Ya are female in gender; thus when saying 'The golf ball landed to the west' the sentence should be *Golf ball pinapun pudhi*. *Betty pinapunki ulayk* means 'Betty is walking on the western horizon': Betty is *pinapunki* (*pi+na+pun+ki*), but John is *pinupunki* (*pi+nu+pun+ki*); see Bani (1987).¹

The main cardinal points with this sphere are east and west. In Torres Strait the sphere changes according to the source of the wind. If it is blowing from the west then the sense of *pinupay* ('east') will change to 'west', and 'east' becomes *pinupun*. This happens only when we have the northwest winds, which blow from November to January; otherwise the southeast wind is the wind that blows all year around. I have found that the original sense [according to wind direction] does not exist today among younger people, as 'east' is always *pinupay*; it doesn't matter if a westerly wind is blowing.

Hand actions and facial expressions sometimes accompany directional words.

¹ Ed. note: The material presented here began as part of work with Alpher in the late 1970s, in which Bani also produced a four-position morpheme-order analysis of these place-and-direction adverbials. In that schema, which remains unpublished, the first position is that of *pi* 'there' (vs. zero 'not there'), the second is that of one of the gender prefixes or *pal* 'DUAL', the third is that of *ka* 'up', *gu* 'down', *ngapa* 'hither, low angle', or zero ('here'), and the fourth is that of *ki* 'moving' (vs. zero 'not moving').

Here are some examples of morphemes of direction and place and how they are put together: *ki* 'in motion', *pi* 'visible', *kidh* 'on the same plane as EGO's normal line of sight', *kay+ka* 'above and invisible' as in *Dwarf star kayka* 'the dwarf star is above and not visible to the naked eye', *pi+nu+ka* 'above and visible' as in *Moon pinuka* 'the moon is above and visible to the naked eye', *kay+gu* 'below and invisible' (for example the core of the earth), *pi+nu+gu* 'below and visible' as in *Umay pinugu plonu* 'the dog is under the floor (visible through the cracks)'.

Some other examples show that *kidh* (on the same plane as EGO's normal line of sight) is used to indicate a horizontal position of EGO's body with *kadaka* (facing up) or *muluka* (facing down), so *kadaka+kidh* is determined when EGO is lying horizontally facing up, while *muluka+kidh* is facing down. For example, *John kadakakidh yuka* 'John is lying down facing up', *Betty mulukakidh yuka* 'Betty is lying down facing down, on her stomach'. Objects are spoken of in the same manner, for example *Plate mulukagud yuka* 'the plate is lying down face down'. *Kawa* is the reference point that can be called EGO. *Kawa* moves, the sphere moves with it. *Sewa* is an arm's-length distance and stationary. If someone approaches you and you want them to stop at an arm's-length distance, you simply say *Sewa thaari* 'Stand there' or *Sewa thanur* 'Sit down there'. *Kay+pa* means 'horizontally at a distance, to infinity', *pi+nu+pun+ki* means 'towards the western horizon', *pi+nu+pay+ki* means 'towards the eastern horizon', and *pi+nu+ka* means 'above and in sight': a star is *pinaka* but an aeroplane is *pinakaki* because it is in motion.

There are actions that go away from EGO and those that come towards him: *paw+pa+kidh* 'westwards away from EGO', *pay+pa+kidh* 'eastwards away from EGO', *bal+kidh* 'away from EGO to either side (not east or west)', *kizi+pay* 'horizontally from east to EGO', *kizi+pun* 'horizontally from west to EGO', *ngapa* 'coming from any direction at a low angle towards EGO', *paw+pa* 'away to the west of EGO, not necessarily horizontal', and *pay+pa* 'away to the east of EGO, not necessarily horizontal'. If you are in an aeroplane, as usual this imaginary sphere accompanies you like an invisible force-field. Flying over Canberra, you can say *Canberra pinagu*. If you are hitting a golf ball towards the west, the flight of the ball as it curves can be described in this schema: *Golf ball pawpa*, and when it lands, *pinapun*, and vice versa to the east.

Morphemes

<i>bal</i>	to the side	<i>na</i>	FEMININE
<i>gu</i>	below	<i>ngapa</i>	coming from any direction (except above or below) towards EGO
<i>ka</i>	up, above	<i>nu</i>	MASCULINE
<i>kadaka</i>	facing up	<i>pa</i>	away from EGO
<i>kawa</i>	EGO	<i>paw</i>	west
<i>kay</i>	invisible	<i>pay</i>	east
<i>ki</i>	in motion	<i>pi</i>	in sight, visible
<i>kidh</i>	horizontal/vertical: on same plane as EGO's normal line of sight	<i>pun</i>	west
<i>kizi</i>	hither, horizontally	<i>sewa</i>	at arm's length
<i>muluka</i>	facing down	<i>wa</i>	stationary

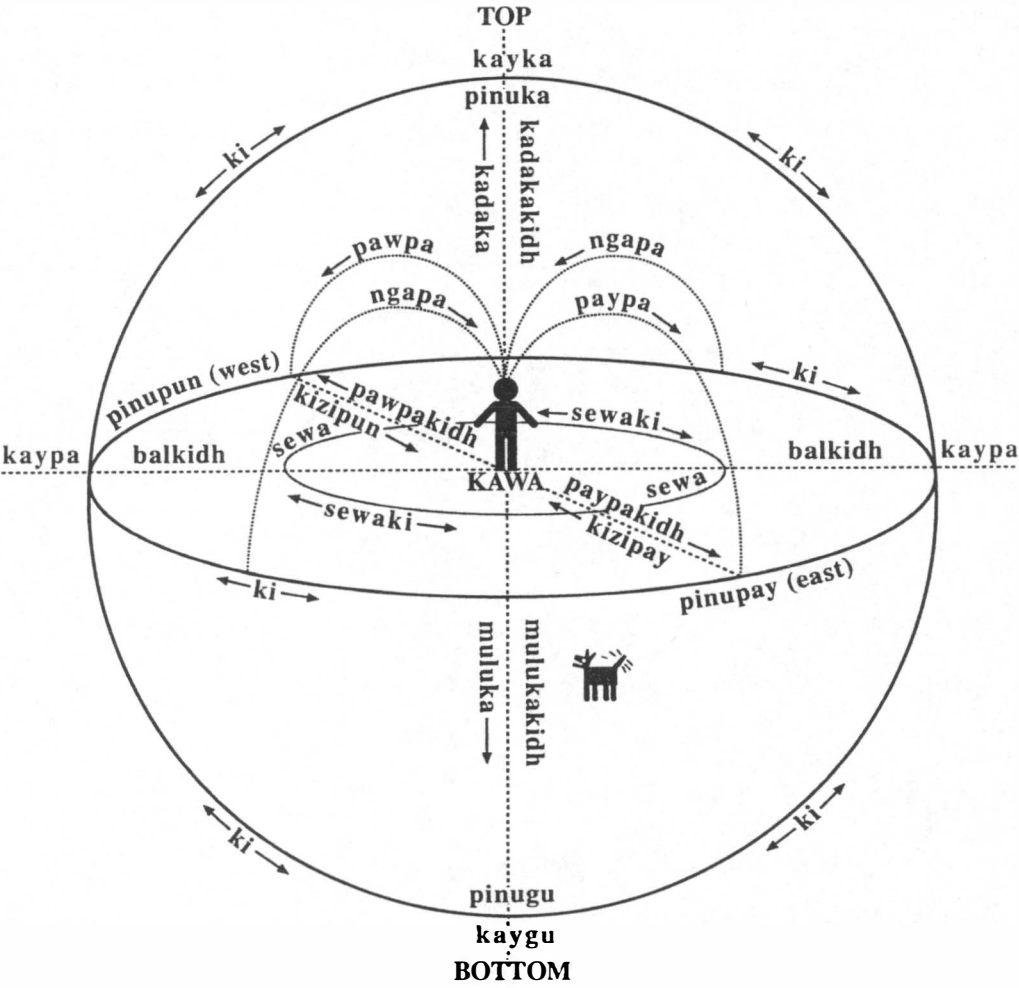


Figure 1: Morphodirectional sphere

Wordlist (forms shown in the Chart, and a few others)

<i>balkidh</i>	on either side (not east or west) of EGO	<i>ngapa</i>	towards EGO
<i>kadaka</i>	facing up	<i>pawpa</i>	westwards and above, away from EGO
<i>kadakakidh</i>	facing up, from a horizontal position	<i>pawpakidh</i>	westwards away from EGO, at eye level
<i>kawa</i>	position of EGO (reference point)	<i>paypa</i>	eastwards and above, away from EGO
<i>kaygu</i>	below and out of sight	<i>paypakidh</i>	eastwards away from EGO, at eye level
<i>kayka</i>	above and out of sight	<i>pinugu</i>	vertically below EGO
<i>kaypa</i>	on the same plane as EGO and out of sight	<i>pinuka</i>	vertically above EGO
<i>ki</i>	in motion at a constant distance from EGO	<i>pinukaki</i>	in motion above EGO
<i>kizi</i>	from EGO	<i>pinupay</i>	stationary in the east
<i>kizigu</i>	towards EGO from below	<i>pinupayki</i>	in motion in the east
<i>kizika</i>	towards EGO from above	<i>pinupun</i>	stationary in the west
<i>kizipay</i>	from the east towards EGO	<i>pinupunki</i>	in motion in the west
<i>kizipun</i>	from the west towards EGO	<i>sewa</i>	stationary at arm's length
<i>muluka</i>	facing down	<i>sewaki</i>	circular motion at arm's length around you
<i>mulukakidh</i>	facing down, from a horizontal position	<i>sipa</i>	established destination
		<i>sizi</i>	towards EGO

Reference

Bani, Ephraim, 1987, Garka a ipika: masculine and feminine grammatical gender in Kala Lagaw Ya. *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 7/2:189–201.