

**Where am I standing and which way is up?
Verbs of motion and orientation in Kubokota men-and-tree games**

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In Kubokota, an Austronesian language of the Solomon Islands, motion verbs express both geocentric (absolute frame of reference) and egocentric (relative frame of reference) information to describe a path of motion or orientation. In the men-and-tree photo matching game, speakers vary in the extent to which they use these two information types, depending on how they themselves are oriented. Speakers facing along the coast are more likely to refer to speech act participants as landmarks, and to use ‘come’ verbs to describe the orientation of a figure towards themselves. Speakers facing inland are more likely to refer to absolute geographic landmarks such as the sunrise and sunset, and ‘go’ verbs which orient the figure with regard to geocentric axes such as inland and seaward, even where the figure is oriented towards themselves. The difference may be a consequence of the fact that, on the local geocentric scale, ‘up’ and ‘down’ terms are used for paths of motion oriented inland and seaward, whereas the geocentrically neutral ‘come’ and ‘go’ terms are used to differentiate the transverse (coastal) axis. This study highlights the importance of contextual and socio-cultural information in understanding linguistic systems.