

Point of View and Prospective Aspect

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APOLOGIZE FOR ANY CONFUSION THIS MAY
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Point of View & Prospective Aspect
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0. Introduction

Speaker point of view (vantage point, perspective) is known to be important in a variety of linguistic phenomena. It seems reasonable to assume that taking alternate points of view is a basic cognitive ability. In Chafe's words, "people are able to imagine themselves seeing the world through the eyes of others as well as from their own point of view, and...this ability has an effect on the use of language" (1976:54).

We know, from Talmy's and Langacker's work, that vantage point is central to the meanings of many relational expressions, such as in front of and after (Talmy 1978/88, 1983; Langacker 1987). Whether I say

- (1) The bong is behind the lava lamp. or
The lava lamp is behind the bong.

depends on, among other things, my vantage point in the room.

Shifts in point of view account for non-canonical choices of deictic elements in utterances about location or motion (Fillmore 1975; Traugott 1978). Either of the following sentences is felicitous when uttered by a speaker located in Berkeley addressing someone in Boston over the phone:

- (2) So, I'm going to New York next week.
So, I'm coming to New York next week.

Certainly the 'going' sentence is the unmarked one, but the 'coming' sentence is acceptable when the viewpoint taken is the addressee's (or perhaps the speaker's own future vantage point).

Languages apparently vary in where speakers can shift their point of view to the addressee's. Batori (1982) reports that in several instances where English and German require or at least allow a shift to the addressee's perspective, Hungarian requires that the speaker perspective be maintained.

(3) lists English renderings of 3 Hungarian examples: the speaker's vantage point stays anchored to his location in space.

(3) Hungarian

a. J: Come here!

K: I'm going!

b. J: When do you come?

K: I can't go before 8:00.

c. J: Bring the lamp here!

K: I take it.

(Batori 1982)

The perspective assumed needn't be that of either speaker or hearer, of course. Fillmore 1975 describes appropriateness conditions for establishing or assuming various perspectives in discourse. For instance, come may be used in expressions of accompaniment, such as in

(4) I'll come with you. ,

where speaker viewpoint has been dislocated to the destination or endpoint of the motion (that is, providing the speaker and addressee are making the same trip) (cf. Radden 1988).

A speaker can take the perspective of a participant in a communicative act she's referring to, as when I say

(5) She called Alvie in the middle of the night to come over and kill a spider.

Here I've taken the perspective of the desperate caller in the communicative act I'm reporting on; hence, the use of come.

Another possibility open to a speaker is to assume the point of view of, in Fillmore's terms, "the subject-of-consciousness identified via ... an 'inner world' predicator of the type THINK, WONDER, WISH, etc." (1975:377-78; cf. Rubba 1989). In the sentence

(6) Mark's probably thinkin' the package'll never come.

the speaker takes the point of view of Mark, the cogitator she's speculating about. As Fillmore points out, this is akin to the relative freedom a narrator has to select a point of view in "pure 3rd-person discourse". Witness the difference between

(7) The men came into her bedroom. and
The men entered her bedroom. (Fillmore 1975:377)

The occurrence of come in the first sentence shows that the narrator's "focus of empathy" (Kuno 1976) is with the woman whose bedroom was entered.

Talmy (1986) discusses the Yiddish Historical Present as a case of "de-coupling" of the speaker's vantage point from the *temporal* deictic center: it is a "presentation of the event as it would appear to a viewer concurrently on the scene of the event"; that is, the speaker's perspective moves back in time.

Banfield (1982) has shown in depth that a writer's point of view and related degree of empathy may affect formal characteristics of a literary work, notably the distribution of tense-aspect forms.

Reinhart's essay on point of view in parentheticals (1983) shows that whether the point of view taken is the speaker's or the subject's can have an impact on the formal, semantic, and pragmatic properties of the parenthetical.

Speakers are able to detach their perspective from its natural location in the speech event, to the point where they themselves are objects of conceptualization. When a mother says to her kid

(8) Don't lie to your mother!

we have an example of what Langacker (1987) calls "mental transfer": the speaker dissociates herself from her actual perspective point as a Speech Act Participant, to some other location, for expressive purposes.

Notice that for some of these examples the term "viewpoint" is being used metaphorically - we aren't talking about motion or location anymore (cf. DeLancey 1981). In fact, a range of things is meant by terms like "point of view" and "perspective"; I will not attempt a unified characterization here.

Viewpoint is a determining factor in the selection of voice and in so-

'When fuli comes, you're going to be circumcised.'
(lit., when we arrive at fuli,...)

This construction can express physical motion through space, but also allows an interpretation whereby the event encoded by the complement verb of -enda (the verb in the "infinitive"², -jino 'be circumcised') takes place in the future relative to the time of going, and no actual motion takes place. Likewise (11) is an example of this use of icha 'to come'.

- (11) ni i'ndí ú'chéngikoṛiá m'mbe ?
COP when u-i-cha-i-ngi-koṛ-i-a (term of respect
SM.2sg-PROG-come-INF for older male)
-OM.1sg-cook-APPL-IND
'When are you gonna cook for me, Gramps?'
(lit., when are you coming to cook for me?)

(11) similarly could have either a motion interpretation, or a future-like interpretation, of metaphorical "motion".

Ienda and icha are basic motion verbs, used all the time to express physical motion through space. This use is exemplified in the simplex sentences given in (12) and (13). Motion is directed to or from physical locations or entities located in space, encoded as NPs or locational adverbs.

- (12) basí ngá'méní ngaenda
well morning-LOC SM.1sg.CONSEC-go.to-IND

shuulé ngakoóya mshiki óko
school SM.1sg.CONSEC-find-IND sister my

'Then in the morning I went to school and found my sister.'

- (13) káchá wá'kákeehá
SM.3sg.CONSEC-come-IND SM.3pl-CONSEC-stay-IND-here

dyúma tsiwi kám.já
week two SM.3sg.CONSEC-OM.3sg-leave-IND

'(and then) he came, and they stayed here for two weeks, and then she left him.'

In the infinitival complement construction, as in (10) and (11), the two verbs take action and state predicates in the infinitive as 'goal' complements. The i- infinitive marker coalesces with the final vowels of -enda and -cha, and the stem-initial e of -enda is lost, giving the forms -nde- and -che-.

As mentioned, examples like (10) and (11) can express motion through space on the part of the subject, or not. (11), for instance, can be a question

about when the addressee will travel to where the speaker is (or will be) and then proceed to cook for her. Or, it can be a question about - in fact, this is what it was about when it was uttered - when it will come to pass that the addressee (who already is located where the speaker is) will cook for the speaker. This interpretation, of course, involves no actual coming.

Without -enda, (10) would be 'When we arrive at fuli, you are circumsised', which is not a viable Chagga sentence. (11) without -cha is still coherent. It would mean 'When are you cooking for me?', which is also a question about the future (as it is in English), but about the very near future, or the "stretched present", as one of my informants put it. With -cha (i.e., 11) the passing of time is emphasized. (14) is offered to show that the presence or absence of -che- or -nde- can have truth-conditional effects.

- (14) a. káendelea inyo wárí
 SM.3sg.CONSEC-continue-IND INF-drink beer
- kujo nai'chépfa
 that way FOC.SM.3sg-PROG-come-IND-die-IND
- 'If he continues drinking that way, he's gonna die.'
 (lit., ...he's coming to die)

- b. naípfa
 FOC.SM.3sg-PROG-die-IND
 'He's dying.'

With -nde- or -che- sentences like (10), (11) and (14) get a future-like meaning: the action or state expressed by the complement verb is understood as unrealized and is expected to happen after the moment of speech.

Strictly speaking -nde- and -che- do not mark futurity. Their appearance in an infinitival complement construction with the Progressive does not make the utterance an assertion or prediction about the complement clause event or situation occurring in the future. Instead utterances like this are used to assert that the subject of 'come' or 'go' is *at present on a certain path* which, if followed, potentially leads to a certain state of affairs in the future. This, of course, is spatio-temporal metaphor, the means by which -nde- and -che- conventionally implicate 'future' meaning in this construction.

The non-motion meanings that -nde- and -che- express in this construction strongly resemble what Fleischman has called "prospective aspect", or prospection (cf. Comrie 1976). Prospective aspect is a future-oriented type of present relevance, a subjective psychological linking of a future event to the present.

- (15) "the future action or event...is viewed by the speaker as growing out of or somehow related to the present world state" (Fleischman 1982a:96). Prospective aspect is a "[way] of viewing an event in which a non-chronological or not primarily chronological connection is established between the event and the reference point, in the case of 'present' relevance, between the event and 'now'" (Fleischman 1983:192).

The meanings of -che- and -nde- examples in the Progressive correspond closely to this concept of future-oriented present relevance. (16), for instance, is a statement about some kids' increasing tolerance for vegetables. It is the speaker's judgment of the kids' present trajectory toward a state of liking (to eat) vegetables. It is a statement about a present situation which holds potential for a possible future situation.

- (16) wai'chéshikúnda
 FOC.SM.3pl-PROG-come-INF-OM.8-like/INCHO
 'They're coming to like them.'

At this point in time, this construction is transparent to Chagga speakers - they recognize -nde- and -che- as 'go' and 'come'. But the whole complex of phonological and morphosyntactic properties (see Emanation forthcoming) indicates that -nde- and -che- are neither fully lexical nor fully grammatical, but somewhere in-between. A number of factors are conspiring toward the re-analysis of -enda and -cha as grammatical markers of prospective aspect - *in this construction*. It wouldn't be surprising if they continued developing into full-fledged aspectuals and maybe eventually into grammatical 'futures'.³

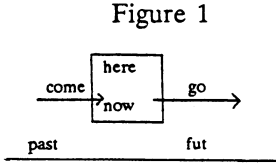
2. The Anomaly of 'Come' Acquiring FUTURE Semantics

It is interesting that in Chagga both verbs, which after all are opposite in their direction of motion relative to deictic center, are acquiring future-like semantics. 'Come', for motion towards the deictic center, has acquired a past tense meaning in various languages (e.g., French), but in others (e.g., Sicilian), a future meaning. 'Go', for motion away from the deictic center, has acquired a future meaning in some languages (e.g., Spanish), while in others (e.g., Catalan), it has developed a past meaning (Fleischman 1982b, 1983; Bybee, Pagliuca & Perkins 1988ms). There are some languages in which both 'go' and 'come' have become grammatical markers of futurity; for example, Lotuko, a Nilotic language of Sudan (Heine & Reh 1984).

How is it that both verbs can come to mean 'future', when only 'go' is for motion *away from* the here and now? In other words, a 'come' future looks odd: if events proceed from past, to present, to future, how can 'come' be used to express metaphorical motion away from now, toward the future, when its basic use is for physical motion *toward* the deictic center?

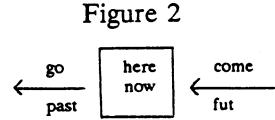
Fleischman (1982b) offers an answer. She argues that 'come' futures and 'go' futures each involve a different "model" of temporal relations. 'Go'

involves a "moving-ego" model, where we actors move into the future, which is a stationary medium; see Figure 1.



Moving-Ego Model

(based on Fleischman 1982b)



Moving-Time Model

'Come' involves an alternative model, of "moving-time", as in Figure 2; in this model, the future moves, toward us, anchored at the present moment. This seems to be a reasonable and elegant solution to the puzzle, particularly since the two models have linguistic manifestations beyond grammatical futures from 'go' or 'come'. For instance, as many people have noted, English has expressions like in the weeks to come, in which the future moves, in addition to expressions like as we approach the turn of the century, which is based in the "moving-ego" model. There are similar examples from Spanish: de aquí en adelante 'from now/here to ahead' (i.e., 'henceforth') vs. en los tiempos venideros 'in time to come'.

It is not clear however that this hypothesis actually works for grammatical futurity.⁴ It does not in any case account for the polysemy of 'come' in Chagga. I have a different proposal, which uses only the "moving-ego" model for both verbs, plus a shift in speaker vantage point with 'come'. What I'd like to argue is that in this construction 'come' and 'go' may implicate a 'future' interpretation of their complement verb through metaphor; specifically, by expressing present "motion" of the actor on a path of events through time, directed toward the future. This, of course, is the "moving-ego" model.

With -nde- 'go to', movement is directed away from the deictic center, which, temporally, is the moment of speaking. The subject "moves" along a conceived time line, from the present toward the future. Example (17) for instance, is a statement about the subject's present motion toward a future state, death.

- (17) mndu chu naindelupfiia
 person this FOC.SM.3sg-PROG-go.to-INF
 -OM.1pl-die-APPL-IND
 'This person is going to die on us.'

Figure 3 is a graphic representation of the metaphorical temporal use of -nde- for cases where it occurs with the Progressive (as it does in 17).

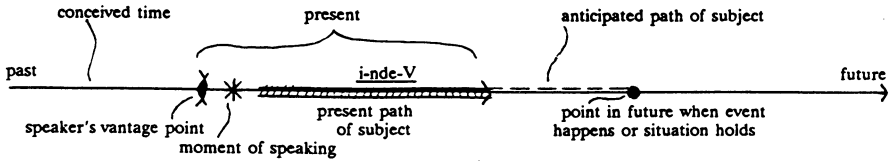


Figure 3: i-nde- 'PROG-go.to'

The viewpoint of the speaker is anchored to the speech event. The speaker, as we can see from her utterance, conceives the subject as moving away from her, heading toward the future. -nde- can be used as long as the subject's location is anywhere along a path between present location (now) and the time in the future when the proposition will be true. The subject's further motion along the path must be anticipated, and the path itself must be projected to end at or pass through a point where the situation expressed by the complement verb will hold.

-che-, as we have seen, can also indicate futurity through metaphorical motion. In the metaphorical reading of (16), the subject referents are moving toward some point in time, after the moment of speech, when it will be the case that they like vegetables if they continue on their present course. 'Come' of course expresses movement toward the deictic center. For -che- to have this future-like interpretation, it is necessary to conceive the speaker's perspective to be at some point in the future. The point that the subject referent 'comes' toward is the point at which the proposition expressed by the complement will be true. In other words, I am claiming that in examples like (16), the speaker's viewpoint is shifted toward the future, and no longer coincides with the default, the deictic center. The speaker takes the perspective of someone located in the future, observing the subject's progress, 'coming to' that point where they will like vegetables.

In Figure 4, which depicts cases of -che- with the PROG, the speaker's viewpoint is coupled to that future location (or point in time) where the proposition is realized.

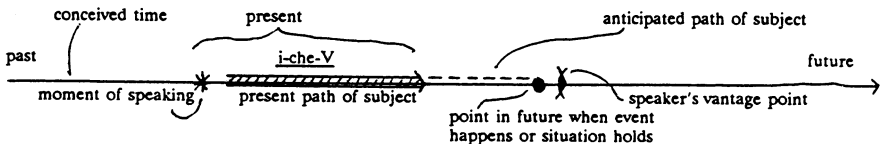


Figure 4: i-che- 'PROG-come.to'

The subject is conceived as moving *toward* the speaker, which is to say, *toward* that future realization point: in (16) it is the 3rd p pl (human) subject that 'comes'.

In other words, I am saying it is **not** the case that the temporal use of Chagga 'come' has as its basis the "moving-time" model, of Figure 2.

place (non-perfective aspect of the source construction has also been identified as necessary). A striking pattern in their data is that, of all the conceivable motion verbs that meet this criterion (like 'arrive at', 'enter', 'move to', 'approach'), by far the most common sources of futures are 'go' and 'come'. Of course these are basic verbs, and extremely common in their spatial uses. Another feature which distinguishes them from these other verbs is that they are deictic. Why should it be that among motion verbs, it is the deictic verbs that are the most common sources of futures?

The Chagga situation presents us with a clue. The fact that the motion is deictically anchored gives a single point of location in both space and time. And this provides a take-off point for metaphorical usage. Perhaps more importantly, deictic elements have the unique property of being employable when the speaker's vantage point is decoupled from the deictic center. The flexibility this gives speakers appears to be as communicatively useful in the domain of time as in the domain of space.

Notes

1. Chagga (Chaga, KiChaga, KiChaka) is an Eastern Bantu language of Tanzania. The data for this study comes from text analysis and elicitation with speakers of the KiVunjo dialect of Central Kilimanjaro.

Orthographic conventions include: sh [ʃ]; ch [tʃ]; y [j]; j [dʒ]; ɽ retroflex flap; r alveolar trill; and ɹ slightly fricated alveolar approximant. High tone ˊ, falling tone ˆ, and downstep ˊ are marked; low tone is left unmarked.

Abbreviations include:

APPL	Applicative	INCHO	Inchoative
CONSEC	Consecutive	OM	Object Marker
CONT	Continuous	SM	Subject Marker
FOC	Focus		

Numbers following SM or OM in examples refer to Noun Class.

2. "Infinitive" is the conventional term for what more accurately is a Class 5 nominal prefix, or a verb nominalized by this prefix. In the construction focussed on in this paper, a verb marked with the "infinitive" i- (a form unique to Chagga - Nurse 1979) serves as object complement of 'go' or 'come'.

3. In fact there is some evidence from Proto-Bantu that this may have already happened. The regular inflectional Future in KiVunjo Chagga is -chi-. -chi- comes from Proto-Bantu *yij 'come', and has the reflexes -che- or -she- in the other Chagga dialects (Nurse 1979). We therefore appear to have a case of renewal.

4. The examples of grammatical 'come' Futures adduced in support of Fleischman's moving-time analysis do not in fact support it. In Luganda and Efik for example, the subject prefixes on 'come' are Noun Class 1, 2, or 3, human: they refer to the actor, and not to the future itself nor any temporal unit. The actor 'comes' to do X, not the "highway of time".

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