Krishna Parajuli

Motion events in Nepali: Theory, observation and typological implications

Languages vary in the way the spatial information is conveyed (see for example, Talmy, 1985, 1991; Slobin & Hoiting, 1994, Slobin, 2004; Kopecka, 2004, 2010; Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2019. inter alia; cf. Aske, 1989). The focus of this talk is to show how this information is expressed in Nepali, an Indo-Aryan language spoken in Nepal, based on descriptive (a.k.a. experimental) and narrative (a.k.a. naturalistic) data. After highlighting the conceptual elements in this domain (e.g., figure, motion, and path), I will explain the methodology and present the main results. These include the lexical diversity of verbs (such as rakhnu 'put' nikalnu 'take out' in caused Motion events and chirnu 'enter', aunu 'come' in spontaneous Motion events) in the main verb slot (descriptive data) and semantic distinction between/among these verbs, lexicalization patterns (Verb-framed (Talmy, 2000) vs. reverse-Verb-framed (Pourcel, 2004b; Pourcel & Kopecka, 2005; Parajuli, 2021)), and distributed spatial semantics (Sinha & Kuteva, 1995). The typological implications of these results with reference to Nepali and in relation to Motion event typology will also be discussed during the talk.