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## **Accounting for directional prefixes on motion verbs in Kudar Ossetic**

### **Abstract**

This paper offers a more thorough account for the *bidimensional deictic* role of the directional prefixes on motion verbs (preverbs) in Kudar Ossetic: *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-*, *ærbə-*, *nə-* and *ær-*. Up to now, the typological explanations in the literature have been insufficient. It is demonstrated that in their prototypical use, the preverbs affix themselves to motion verbs to denote, firstly, how the actor's motion relates to space as the deictic center and, secondly, how that motion relates to the speaker as the deictic center. The literature offers no explanation for preverbs affixed to first-person verbs, in which the speaker and actor are one and the same. This question is addressed here. Moreover, it is shown that *ær-/nə-* and *a-/ra-* can take on aspectual roles and lose their prototypical definitions (of descending and exiting motion, respectively) to reflect telic and atelic distance motion, respectively.

### **Аннотация**

В данной работе предлагается более тщательная оценка *двухмерной дейктической* роли приставок глаголов движения (превербов) *а-*, *ра-*, *ба-*, *æрба-*, *ны-* и *ær-* в кударском диалекте осетинского языка. Предыдущие типологические толкования в литературе до настоящего времени являются недостаточными. Показано, что в их прототипическом использовании, превербы прикрепляются к глаголам движения для обозначения, во-первых, как движение субъекта относится к пространству, являющемуся дейктическим центром. И, во-вторых, как это движение относится к говорящему, как к дейктическому центру. В литературе не предлагается толкования превербов глаголов в первом лице, в котором говорящий и субъект являются одним и тем же. Этот вопрос рассматривается здесь. Кроме того, показано, что *ær-/ны-* и *а-/ра-* могут принимать аспектуальные роли, утрачивая при этом свои прототипические определения (нисходящего и восходящего движения, соответственно), для отражения телического и ателического движения на расстоянии, соответственно.

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### **1. Introduction**

#### *1.1 Ossetia and Ossetic*

Ossetia is a geolinguistic and geopolitical region that lies on the border of Russia and Georgia in the Caucasus Mountains midway between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. North Ossetia sits on the northern slope of the mountains and is politically part of Russia. South Ossetia is a semi-autonomous region.

The Ossetic language is the only indigenous language in Ciscaucasia that is Indo-European, specifically Eastern-Iranian. The Ossetic language is also called *Ossete* and *Ossetian*. According to UNESCO's *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*, there are approximately 550,000 Ossetic speakers, and the language is marked as “vulnerable” [Mosely 2010].

The general agreement is that there are two main dialects of Ossetic: *Iron*, which is spoken in the east, and *Digor*, which is spoken in the west. This paper draws its material from the variety *Kudar*, also known as *Kudar-Dzau*, which is considered by some to be a sub-dialect of *Iron*. However, according to the Ossetic National Corpus [2015], there is growing consensus toward treating *Kudar* as a separate third dialect.

With the relatively large number of speakers and the existence of a written literature, one would imagine that Ossetic would have garnered far more attention from linguists than it has. Surprisingly, there is only one comprehensive grammar of Ossetic [Abaev 1952; 1964], and to date, I am unaware of any forthcoming modern grammar.

#### *1.2 Ossetic directional prefixes (“preverbs”)*

The Ossetic directional prefixes on motion verbs *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-*, *æba-*, *nə-* and *ær-* (“превербы” [Abaev, 1952: 650], “preverbs” or “motion preverbs” [Thordarson 1982; Tomelleri 2009]) denote two things: the relationship between the actor’s motion and space, and the relationship of that motion to the speaker. The spatial dimension denotes inward, outward or downward motion. The speaker dimension is similar to the semantic distinction between the English “go/come”, the Germanic “hin/her” and the Georgian “mi/mo-”. Whether the former or latter is used will depend on the speaker’s relationship to the subject’s motion. For example, “he comes into the house” generally implies that the actor is moving toward the speaker (denoted by “comes”)

while also denoting illative motion in relation to “house”. “He goes into the house” generally implies that the actor is moving away from the speaker (denoted by “goes” instead of “comes”) while also denoting illative motion in relation to “house”<sup>1</sup>.

### 1.3 *Bidimensional deixis in Ossetic preverbs*

While the English examples in 1.2 use free morphemes and context to denote direction of motion and the speaker’s relationship to that motion, each Ossetic preverb has rich *bidimensional deixis* [Thordarson 1982: 253]: simultaneously denoting both the actor’s direction of motion and the speaker’s relationship to that motion at the same time. Following Vydrin [2012],

Very few (modern Iranian) languages have a preverb system similar to (the) Ossetic one (aspect+direction+deixis). One can mention Pashto preverbs which are also productive and, besides aspect and direction of the motion, they point out the location of the observer [speaker]. However, in general, the Ossetic locative-deictic semantics of the preverbs is atypical for Iranian languages, and it is plausible that it was formed because of the Caucasian (most likely Kartvelian) influence [Vydrin 2013: 4].

Tomelleri [2009] observes that Georgian and Ossetic motion verbs share many similarities, which would perhaps mean bidimensional deixis is a micro-areal feature.

In Ossetic and Georgian, preverbs, if joined to verbs of motion, preserve their original spatial meaning and seem to have no relation to the aspectual and temporal system; this is not the case in the Slavic languages, where prefixation does not distinguish lexically between verbs of motion and other classes of verbs [Tomelleri, 2009: 246].

This is an important point because Section 7 later shows that there are exceptions to Vydrin’s observation: some preverbs denote telicity in non-prototypical use.

### 1.4 *Inconsistencies in the literature*

The literature has inconsistencies when accounting for Ossetic preverbs. Abaev [1952; 1964] and Vydrin [2013] support one explanation, and Thordarson [1982] and Tomelleri [2009] support another. Table 1 represents Abaev’s explanation of the role of Ossetic motion verbal preverbs.

Abaev [1952: 651; 1964: 77] proposes that the first of the two functions is like English and represents the *actor’s* illative, elative or sublative motion in relation to that space. In other words, the act of entering, exiting, or descending will depend on the actor’s initial and final placement in relation to anaphoric space (a cafe, home, building, hill, etc.). The second function, according to Abaev, references the *speaker’s* (non-)inessivity, superessivity or

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<sup>1</sup> The pragmatics of this are obviously more complex than summarized here. See Wilkins & Hill [1995].

subessivity in relationship to that *same* anaphoric space. Therefore, the location of the *speaker* in relation to that *same space* determines whether *a-* or *ra-* is used for the actor’s outward motion from that space (or *ba-* versus *ærba-* for inward or *ær-* versus *nə-* for downward). Vydrin [2013: 4] ratifies this explanation.

**Table 1.** Abaev’s original description of motion preverbs [1952: 651; 1964: 77]

Preverb-motion verb	Translation	Location of observer(speaker)
<i>a-tsəd</i>	‘he went out’	observer(speaker) is inside
<i>ra-tsəd</i>		observer(speaker) is outside
<i>ba-tsəd</i>	‘he entered’	observer(speaker) is outside
<i>ærba-tsəd</i>		observer(speaker) is inside
<i>nə-tsəd</i>	‘he descended, arrived’	observer(speaker) is above
<i>ær-tsəd</i>		observer(speaker) is below

Tomelleri’s [2009] explanation differs from Abaev’s. He interprets Ossetic motion preverbs to operate like Georgian preverbs, denoting direction of motion but also “the position of the observer in relation to the moving object” [2009: 256-257, citing Melikišvili 2001: 41-43]. Thordarson [1982: 253] takes the same position. In agreement with Abaev, one deictic function of the bidimensional scheme operates within the dimension of anaphoric space. In disagreement with Abaev, the other function denotes the relationship of the motion *to the speaker* rather than to anaphoric space. In other words, the first dimension of the scheme has anaphoric space as its deictic center (illativity, elativity or sublativity), and the second dimension has the speaker as its deictic center, denoting whether the actor’s motion is directed toward (cislocative) or away (translocative) from the speaker.

The distinction between Abaev’s and Thordarson’s/Tomelleri’s explanations is subtle but important. In the former, the choice of preverb is implied to be a result of whether the speaker is inside, outside, above or below. In the latter, the determining factor is whether the speaker is the *destination* of the motion or not, regardless of whether this speaker is inside, outside, above or below.

None of the aforementioned literature reports on what preverb is used when the motion verb is in the first person when both the actor and the speaker are the same person. The phrase “I am leaving the room” is neither cislocative nor translocative, making the above explanations insufficient.

### 1.5 *Structure of this paper*

Section 2 describes the data source and collection process. Sections 3-

5 provide a functional account for *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-* and *æba-*. This includes accounting for verbs in the first person and accounting for situations where speaker deixis is challenged by a third person. Section 6 provides a functional account for *nə-* and *ær-*. Section 7 describes how *nə-* and *ær-* deviate from the prototypical bidimensional scheme to denote motion telicity. Section 8 summarizes all results, and Section 9 discusses the implications of the discovery that *ær-*'s speaker-deictic dimension is weak.

## 2. Method and data

The analysis and conclusions presented here are based on fieldwork conducted in 2011 at the Endangered Language Alliance of New York City in partnership with Founder and Executive Director Daniel Kaufman. I conducted interviews with a male speaker from North Ossetia who had resided in New York City for approximately one year. He was 25 years old, spoke Kudar as his home language, and had close and regular ties to family and friends in Ossetia. By 2017, the speaker had returned to Ossetia, and I contacted and interviewed him a second time. Both the 2011 and 2017 interviews rendered consistent results, presented below.

## 3. Preverbs *a-* and *ra-*

The preverb *a-* is elative translocative. It refers to outward motion where the motion's goal is *not* the speaker; i.e., the actor will not meet the speaker upon completing the motion. The preverb *ra-* is elative cislocative. It refers to outward motion where the motion's goal *is* the speaker; i.e., the motion's actor will meet the speaker upon completing the motion.

### 3.1 First person present and future

In first-person situations, the actor and speaker are the same person. Per the above rules, this would imply that the use of *ra-* perhaps would be preferable (since actor and speaker never separate). However, this is not the case for the present and future tenses. Both *ra-* and *a-* are interchangeably correct and have the same meaning:

- (1a) *Ofis-æj*            *a-tsaw-dzən-æn*  
office-ABL        EL.TRAN-go-FUT-1.SG  
'I will walk out of this office.'
- (1b) *Ofis-æj*            *ra-tsaw-dzən-æn*  
office-ABL        EL.CIS-go-FUT-1.SG  
'I will walk out of this office.'

### 3.2 First person past

In contrast to the present and future tenses, only *ra-* is possible in the past tense (2b). This is also semantically logical because the speaker's present location is the destination of the prior motion performed by the prior self:

- (2a) \**Ofis-æj*      *a-tsəd-t-æn*  
office-ABL      EL.TRAN-go-PST-1.SG
- (2b) *Ofis-æj*      *ra-tsəd-t-æn*  
office-ABL      EL.CIS-go-PST-1.SG  
‘I walked out of the office.’

### 3.3 *Second and third person*

The second and third person are more semantically straightforward in regards to bidimensional deixis because the speaker and actor are different people. The choice of preverb is the same for past, present and future tenses. Where the outward motion results in the speaker and actor not meeting, *a-* is used. Where the speaker is the goal of the actor’s outward motion, *ra-* is used:

#### *Imperative singular*

- (3a) *Ofis-æj*      *a-ts-u*  
office-ABL      EL.TRAN-go-IMP  
‘Walk out of the office.’ (speaker and actor will *not* meet each other)
- (3b) *Ofis-æj*      *ra-ts-u*  
office-ABL      EL.CIS-go-IMP  
‘Walk out of the office.’ (speaker and actor will meet each other)

#### *Second person singular*

- (4a) *Ofis-æj*      *a-tsaw-dzən-æ*  
office-ABL      EL.TRAN -go-FUT-2.SG  
‘You will walk out of the office.’ (speaker and actor will *not* meet each other)
- (4b) *Ofis-æj*      *ra-tsaw-dzən-æ*  
office-ABL      EL.CIS-go-FUT-2.SG  
‘You will walk out of the office.’ (speaker and actor will meet each other)

#### *Third person singular*

- (5a) *Ofis-æj*      *a-tsaw-dzən-is*  
office-ABL      EL.TRAN-go-FUT-3.SG  
‘(S)he will walk out of the office.’ (speaker and actor will *not* meet each other)
- (5b) *Ofis-æj*      *ra-tsaw-dzən-is*  
office-ABL      EL.CIS-go-FUT-3.SG  
‘(S)he will walk out of the office.’ (speaker and actor will meet each other)

The key distinguishing factor between *a-* and *ra-* is the motion’s relationship to the speaker as deictic center. This is what determines the

appropriate preverb in examples (3), (4) and (5). It becomes evident that the speaker-as-goal is the deciding factor rather than the speaker's inessivity because *a-* (examples 3a, 4a and 5a) is also used in situations where the speaker is *outside of the office*. Even if the speaker is outside during the speech act, *a-* will be used if the outward motion does *not* result in the actor and speaker meeting.

This contradicts Abaev's [1952; 1964] grammar, which states that the determining factor for preverb choice is whether the speaker is "inside" (*a-*) or "outside" (*ra-*).

#### 4. Preverbs *ba-* and *ærba-*

The preverb *ba-* is illative translocative. It refers to inward motion where the motion's goal is *not* the speaker; i.e., the actor will not meet the speaker upon completing the motion. The preverb *ærba-* is illative cislocative. It refers to inward motion where the motion's goal *is* the speaker; i.e., the actor will meet the speaker upon completing of the motion.

##### 4.1 First person

Tense does not determine *ba-* or *ærba-* in the first person, which differs from the dynamics of *ra-* and *a-*. For typical scenarios of inward motion in the first person, *ba-* is the default preverb. The preverb *ærba-* is solely permitted to indicate inward motion where the speaker-actor is meeting a person or people subsequent to the motion. However, this is optional; *ba-* can also be used in this scenario:

- (6a) *Xarandun-mæ ba-tsəd-t-æn*  
 cafe-ALL ILL.TRAN-go-PST-1.SG  
 'I entered the cafe.' (unmarked form, perhaps *will* or *will not* meet someone)
- (6b) *Xarandun-mæ ba-tsaw-dz-æn*  
 cafe-ALL ILL.TRAN-go-FUT-1.SG  
 'I will enter the cafe.' (unmarked form, perhaps *will* or *will not* meet someone)
- (7) *Xarandun-mæ ærba-tsəd-t-æn*  
 cafe-ALL ILL.CIS-go-PST-1.SG  
 'I entered the cafe.' (implies that the speaker meets a person or people).

##### 4.2 Second and third persons

The rules governing the second and third persons mirror that of *ra-* and *a-*. Where the inward motion results in the speaker and actor *not* meeting, *ba-* is used. Where the speaker is the goal of the actor's inward motion, *ærba-* is used. The choice of preverb is the same for all tenses:

*Imperative singular*

- (8a) *Xarandun-mæ ba-ts-u*  
cafe-ALL ILL.TRAN-go-IMP  
'Go into the cafe.' (speaker and actor will *not* meet each other)
- (8b) *Xarandun-mæ ærba-ts-u*  
cafe-ALL ILL.CIS-go-IMP  
'Come into the cafe.' (speaker and actor will meet each other)

*Second person singular*

- (9a) *Xarandun-mæ ba-tsaw-dz-ənæ*  
cafe-ALL ILL.TRAN-go-FUT-2.SG  
'You will go into the cafe.' (speaker and actor will *not* meet each other)
- (9b) *Xarandun-mæ ærba-tsaw-dz-ənæ*  
cafe-ALL ILL.CIS-go-FUT-2.SG  
'You will come into the cafe.' (speaker and actor will meet each other)

*Third person singular*

- (10a) *Xarandun-mæ ba-tsaw-dz-ənis*  
cafe-ALL ILL.TRAN-go-FUT-3.SG  
'(S)he will go into the cafe.' (speaker and actor will *not* meet each other)
- (10b) *Xarandun-mæ ærba-tsaw-dz-ənis*  
cafe-ALL ILL.CIS-go-FUT-3.SG  
'(S)he will come into the cafe.' (speaker and actor will meet each other)



**Figure 1:** When the speaker is inside and the actor is outside, *ba-* is used IF the destination is somewhere else in the room. See (9a) for gloss.

The speaker’s inessivity plays no role in determining the appropriate preverb. As such, *ba-* (examples 8a, 9a and 10a) is possible even if the speaker is also present within the very same space. A speaker who *also* is sitting in the cafe could produce *ba-* in a “James Bond spy-movie scenario” where the speaker is giving the actor instructions on a mobile phone to walk into the café but the intent is to never actually meet in the cafe. Figure 1 illustrates this scenario.

##### **5. For *ra-* and *ærba-*, the speaker cannot relinquish deixis**

In English, it is perfectly correct for a speaker to say “he came home to his mother” instead of “he went home to his mother”. This is possible even when a speaker is physically removed from the scenario: English “come” does not always require the speaker to be the deictic center when it is selected over “go”. This is not the case in Kudar Ossetic.

The following scenario is one example of the speaker’s deictic permanence in the “second dimension” of the preverb’s bidimensional scheme. Person 1 and person 2 are sitting in a cafe speaking to each other about person 3. Person 3 is *also* in the cafe. They observe person 3 walk out of the cafe to meet her friends. If person 1 wants to emphasize to person 2 that

person 3 walked out *for the purpose* of meeting her friends, one could reasonably expect the secondary deictic center of the motion to shift *from the speaker to the friends*. However, according to the native-speaker informant, this is not the case. One cannot ever use *ra-* in this scenario; rather, the speaker must retain deixis:

- (11) *xarændun-æj a-tse-di(s) tsæmæ je*  
 cafe-ALL EL.TRAN-go-PST.3.SG in\_order\_to REFL.POSS  
*(æ)mbælttæ-l fembæ-l-a*  
 friend.PL-AD meet-PST.3.SG  
 ‘She came out of the cafe in order to meet her friends.’ (speaker is inside café)

The same rule applies for *ba-* and *ærba-*. Even when the semantics of the sentence remove focus from the speaker to the third person, the deictic role of the speaker “sticks” and mandates the translocative.

## 6. Preverbs *nə-* and *ær-*

The sublative preverbs *nə-* and *ær-* generally mirror *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-* and *ærba-*, but with some key differences.

### 6.1 Preverb *nə-*

The preverb *nə-* is sublative translocative. It is used in instances where the actor and speaker start at the same elevation, and the speaker’s motion is downward:

- (12a) *Dalxadzor-mæ nə-xiz-Ø*  
 basement-ALL SUBL.TRAN-climb-IMP  
 ‘Go down into the basement.’ (actor and speaker *start* on same elevation)
- (12b) *Koldemæj nə-xiz-Ø*  
 hill-ALL SUBL.TRAN-climb-IMP  
 ‘Go down the hill.’ (actor and speaker *start* on same elevation)

This obviously can mean specific translocative motion where the speaker is the actual departure point of the actor’s motion. But it can also mean more general translocation like the right-hand illustration in Figure 2. It can be seen there that the actor is nowhere near the speaker at the beginning of the motion. *Nə-* is used, nonetheless, because both the speaker and actor *start off on the same elevation*. This actually most closely reflects Abaev’s [1952; 1964] description.

### 6.2 Preverb *ær-*

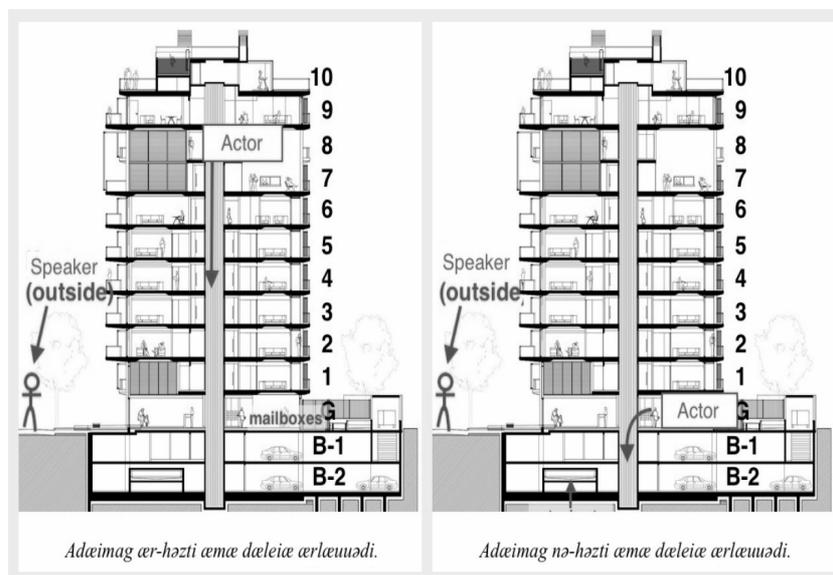
The preverb *ær-* is prototypically sublative cislocative, but its use is much broader than that. It is indeed used in instances where the actor’s motion

is downward, but the destination does not have to be the speaker or even the speaker's elevation. The speaker can be anywhere *except at the starting elevation of the motion*:

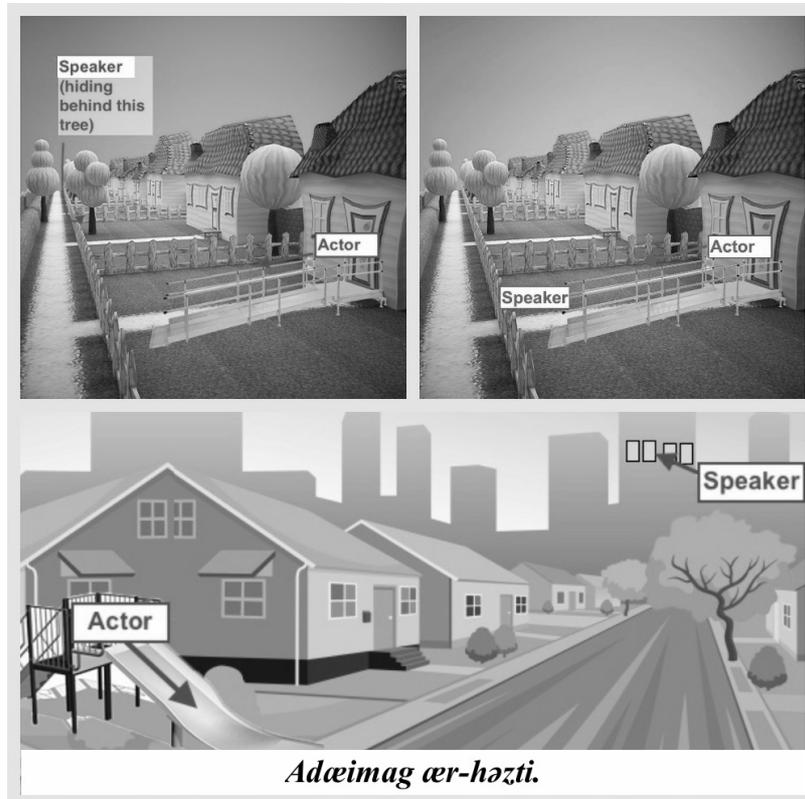
(13a) *Dalxadzor-mæ ær-xiz-Ø*  
 basement-ALL SUBL.CIS-climb-IMP  
 ‘Come/go down into the basement.’ (actor and speaker *do not start on same elevation*)

(13b) *Koldemæj ær-xiz-Ø*  
 hill-ALL SUBL.CIS-climb-IMP  
 ‘Come/go down the hill.’ (actor and speaker *do not start on same elevation*)

To reiterate the above description, *ær-* is not always cislocative in actual usage. This is exemplified in the left-hand side of Figure 2 and in the top-left and bottom illustrations in Figure 3. In those illustrations, the motion is not cislocative in the classic sense. Rather, it is cislocative via *its distinction* from *nə-*'s definition of translocativity.



**Figure 2.** Dual translations of “The person went down and stopped at the bottom”. In the scenario to the left, the actor is starting from the eighth floor, the destination is the mailboxes on the ground floor, and the speaker is outside on the ground floor. In the scenario to the right, the actor is starting from the ground floor, the destination is the water heater in the basement, and the speaker is again outside on the ground floor.



**Figure 3:** Translation of “the person went down”. In the scenario to the top right, the actor’s destination is the speaker. In the scenario to the top left and bottom, the actor’s destination is not the speaker. What all of these scenarios have in common is that the speaker is not at the same elevation as the actor when the motion starts.

### 7. Telicity and motion with *nə-/ær-* and *a-/ra-*

Like the idiomatic usage of “down” in English, Ossetic motion verbs can take on the preverbs *nə-* and *ær-* to denote distance motion with no relevance to actual downward motion. An English example would be (speaker is in Ossetia) “he came down from Moscow for a visit”. When they shed their sublative meaning in this type of usage, *nə-* and *ær-* take on the role of denoting telicity in motion. The preverb *nə-* refers to *completed* motion away from the speaker, and *ær-* refers to *completed* motion toward the speaker:

*Completed motion across space*

- (14a) *Mæskwə-mæ nə-tsə-di(s)*  
 Moscow-ALL TEL.TRAN-go-PST.3SG  
 ‘(S)he went to Moscow’ (telic; actor arrived; away from speaker)

- (14b) *Mæskwə-mæ ær-tsə-di(s)*  
 Moscow-ALL TEL.CIS-go-PST.3SG  
 ‘(S)he came to Moscow.’ (telic; actor arrived; toward speaker)

In complement, *a-* and *ra-* can relinquish their prototypical relative denotation in order to indicate distance motion as well. They take on the role of marking *incomplete* action in this instance. The preverb *a-* retains its translocative meaning, and *ra-* retains its cislocative meaning:

*Incomplete action across space*

- (15a) *Mæskwə-mæ a-tsə-di(s)*  
 Moscow-ALL ATEL.TRAN-go-PST.3.SG  
 ‘(S)he was going to Moscow.’ (atelic; unclear whether actor arrived; away from speaker)
- (15b) *Mæskwə-mæ ra-tsə-di(s)*  
 Moscow-ALL ATEL.CIS-go-PST.3.SG  
 ‘(S)he was coming to Moscow.’ (atelic; unclear whether actor arrived; toward speaker)

Unlike Russian, where atelic and habitual action are expressed with the imperfect, the above uses of *a-* and *ra-* for motion across space *only* denote atelic motion. For habitual action, the prefix *fæ-* is used, and usually an adverb like *aræx* (“often”) is required.

## 8. Summary

Tables 2 and 3 summarize this paper’s main finds:

**Table 2.** Prototypical uses for motion preverbs in Ossetic

Preverb	Deictic dimension		“Side” confirmed
	Space	Speaker	
<i>a-</i>	outward	away from the speaker	
<i>ra-</i>	outward	toward the speaker	Thordarson [1982] and Tomelleri [2009]
<i>ba-</i>	inward	away from the speaker	
<i>ærba-</i>	inward	toward the speaker	
<i>nə-</i>	descent	speaker & actor start at same elevation	Abaev [1952; 1964] and Vydrin [2013]
<i>ær-</i>	descent	speaker & actor do not start at same elevation	

**Table 3.** *ær-/nə-* in telic motion; *a-/ra-* in atelic motion

Preverb	Telicity	Goal
<i>nə-</i>	telic	away from the speaker
<i>ær-</i>	telic	toward the speaker
<i>a-</i>	atelic	away from the speaker
<i>ra-</i>	atelic	toward the speaker

It has been demonstrated that in their prototypical use, the motion preverbs, *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-* and *ærba-*, affix themselves to motion verbs to denote both the relation of the actor's motion to space as the deictic center and the relationship of the motion to the speaker as the deictic center. This is consistent with Thordarson's [1982] and Tomelleri's [2009] position that Ossetic motion preverbs have *bidimensional deixis* [Tomelleri 1982: 253]. The speaker's inessivity is not material for use of *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-* and *ærba-* as proposed by Abaev [1952; 1964] and ratified by Vydrin [2013]. Instead, the speaker's relationship to the motion is what matters.

In the first person, *cis-* and translocativity are semantically problematic. But the data implies that both *a-* and *ra-* are interchangeably correct for *outward* motion in the first-person present and future. Only *ra-* is acceptable in the first-person past. For first-person *inward* motion, *ba-* is the unmarked form, and *ærba-* implies that the speaker will be meeting someone, regardless of tense.

The speaker cannot relinquish deixis for *ra-* and *ærba-*; that is to say, one cannot say "he *came* home to his mother". The translocative must always be used when the movement is removed from the speaker.

In contrast to *a-*, *ra-*, *ba-*, and *ærba-*, it would appear that Abaev's/Vydrin's interpretation of *nə-* and *ær-* is more correct than Thordarson/Tomelleri. *Nə-* is warranted for sublative motion when the speaker and actor start at the same elevation and the direction of the motion is away from the speaker. *Ær-* is warranted for generally any other instance of downward motion, regardless of whether the speaker is the destination of the motion or not.

Additionally, *nə-* and *ær-* can relinquish their prototypical sublative dimension to denote telic motion, and *a-*, and *ra-* can relinquish their prototypical relative dimension to denote atelic motion. The preverbs retain their respective speaker-locative deictic dimensions.

## 9. Discussion

The results on *nə-* and *ær-* in section 6 may be a functional reanalysis in progress. *Ær-* is used in a broader range of scenarios than *nə-*. These scenarios – such as the bottom illustration in Figure 3 – are not always cislocative by any interpretation of locativity. Because of this find, it can be proposed that *ær-* is transitioning into an unmarked default, taking on both translocative and cislocative denotation in instances of sublative motion.

Future disappearance of *nə-* might be likely when we take into account that superlative motion is indicated by the unidimensionally deictic preverb *s-* (*s-səd* “he went up/he came up”). *S-* is used regardless of whether the speaker is the destination of the motion or not. According to Thordarson [1982],

these gaps in the bidimensional scheme should be treated as neutralizations of the ‘hin/her’-opposition; historically they reflect a more ancient stage of development where the symmetrical relations of the present-day system has not arisen [1982: 254].

For example, *a-* is no longer in use in the Digor dialect, as *ra-* has taken on both cislocative and translocative motion. The same may eventually happen to *nə-* in Kudar.

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## Abbreviations

1/2/3 – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> person; ABL – ablative case; AD – adessive case; ALL – allative case; ART – article; ATEL – atelic; CIS – cislocative; EL – elative; FUT – future tense; ILL – illative; INF – infinitive; IMP – imperative; PL – plural; POSS – possessive; PREF – prefix; PST – past; REFL – reflexive; SG – singular; SUBL – sublative; TEL – telic; TRAN – translocative

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