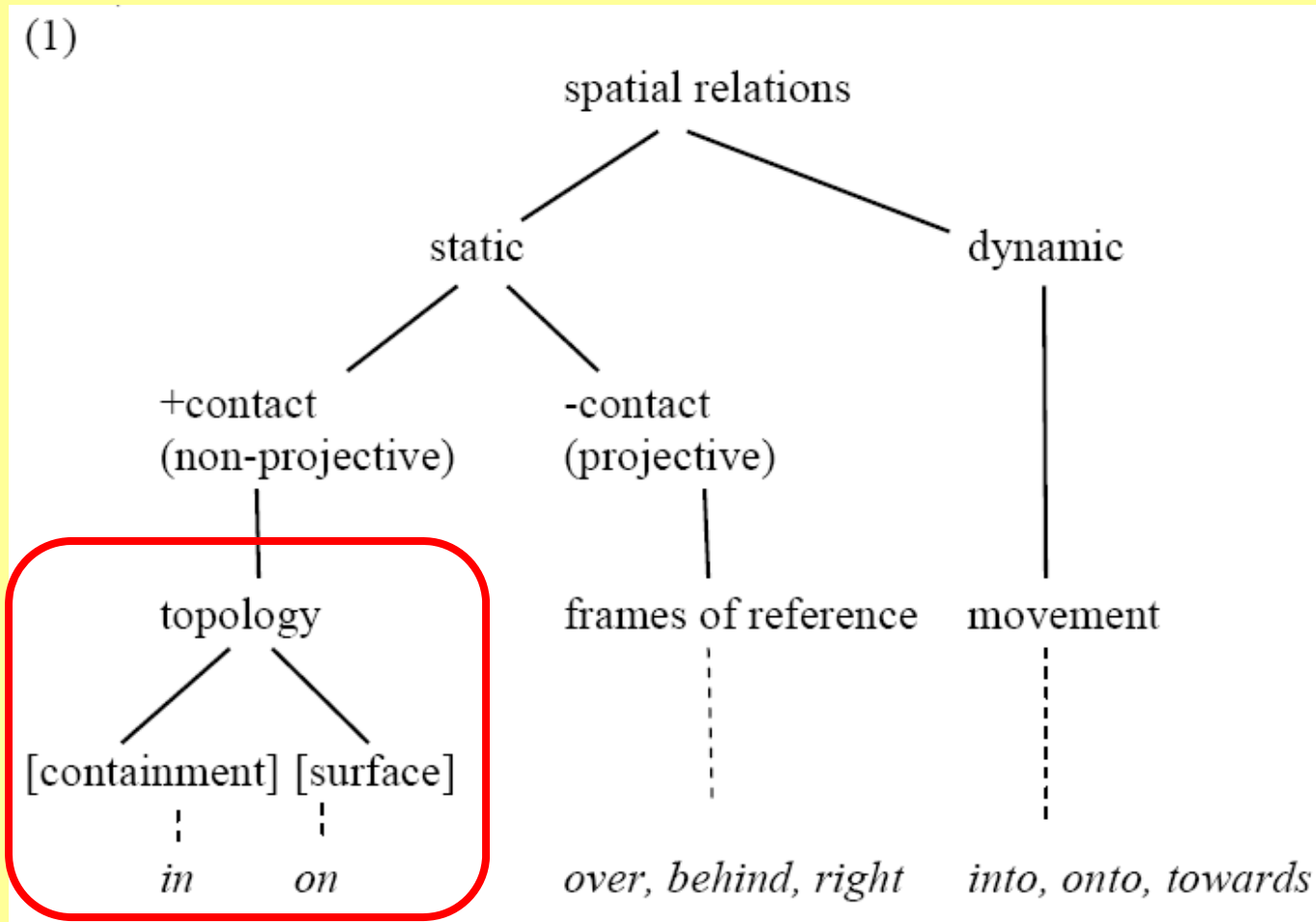


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Locative classification and  
orientation of the configuration:  
Spatial conceptualization in Laz

Silvia Kutscher, University of Cologne

# Stratification of the conceptual domain SPACE



(Herskovits 1986, Levinson/Wilkins 2006)

# Constructional scheme of a topological expression

---

- in an adpositional language (e.g. English):

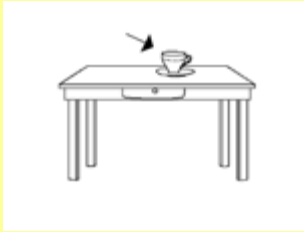
(2) *The bottle*      *is*      *on*      *the table*  
Figure                      predicate      Relator      Ground

- in Laz:

(3) *şışe*              *masa*              *goo-*      *dgun*  
bottle              table              on              stand:3s:PRS  
Figure              Ground              Relator-predicate

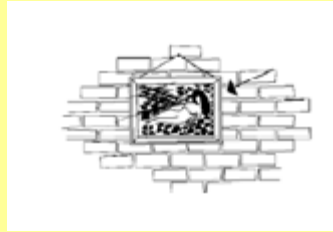
# Are there universal spatial concepts?

---



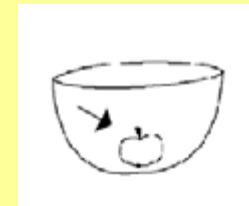
*auf dem Tisch*

*on the table*



*an der Wand*

*on the wall*



*in der Schüssel*

*in the bowl*

## English

*in:* [containment]

*on:* [surface]

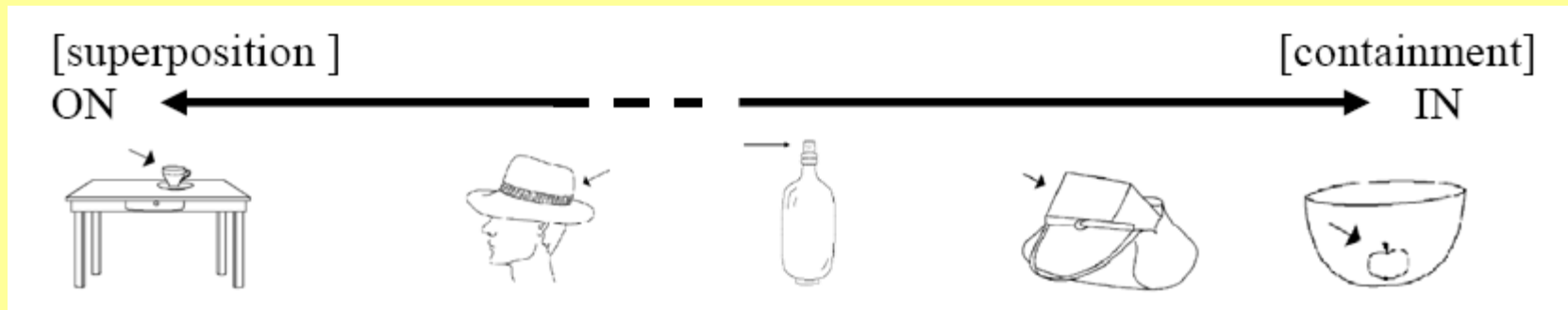
## German

*in:* [containment]

*auf:* [surface, superposition]

*an:* [surface, side]

# IN-ON-scale as universal conceptualisation principle?



(Bowerman/Choi 2001, Levinson/Meira 2003)

*on*

*on*

*in*

*in*

*in*

In more than **40 languages** (e.g. Romance, Slavonic, Turkish, Finnish, Ewe, Tiriyo)

Laz:

*goo-*

*ce-*

*dolo-*

*dolo-*

*ce-*



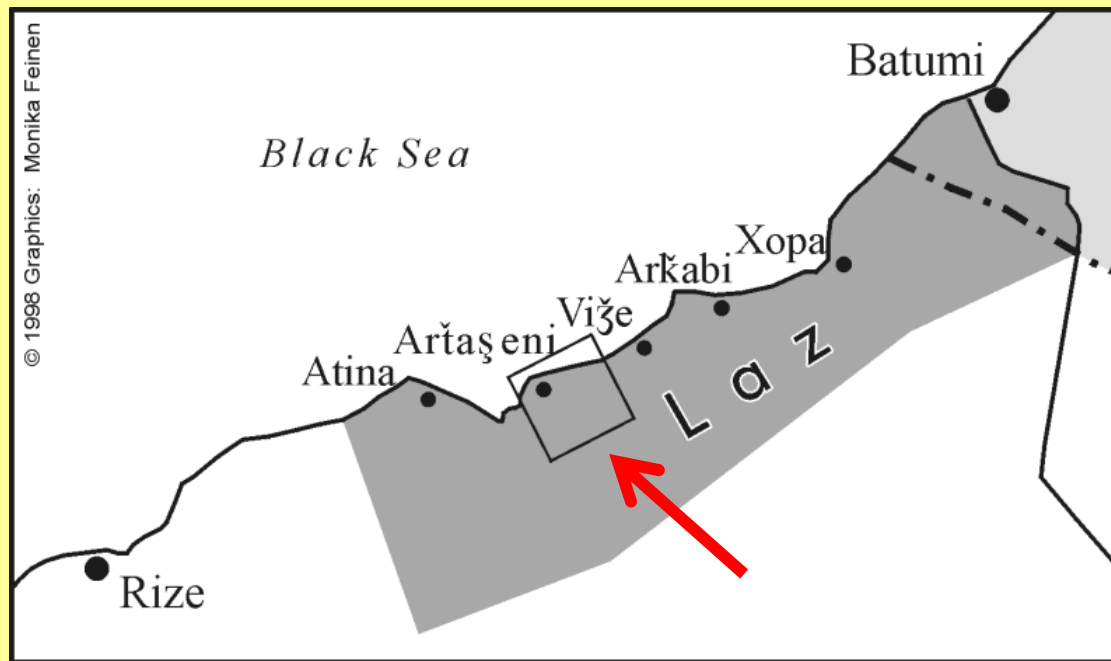
---

# Conceptualisation of topological relations in Laz

# The Data (I)

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- Laz in the variety spoken in the city of Ardeşen (Artaşeni) and the surrounding villages



# The Data (II)

---

- visual stimuli developed by the MPI Nijmegen (TopRel and PosVerb picture booklets); tested with four speakers
- spontaneous data overheard during the fieldwork stay
- spoken narratives (Kutscher/Genç 1998)



# Configurations of Containment

---

(6) *bere yatayi ce-zun*  
child bed PRV-lie:3s:PRS



*ce-*

(8) *şışe tikiņa dolo-zun*  
bottle basket PRV-lie:3s:PRS



*dolo-*

(9) *koči oxori mola-xen*  
man house PRV-sit:3s:PRS



*mola-*

(10) *kinči mca meška-xen*  
bird tree PRV-sit:3s:PRS



*meške-*

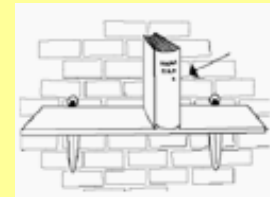
# Surface configurations (I)

(11) *fincani masa* **goo-dgun**  
cup table PRV-stand:3s:PRS



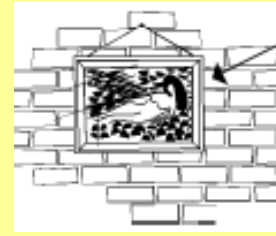
**goo-**

(12) *çitabi ožude* **gola-zun**  
book shelf PRV-lie/stand:3s:PRS



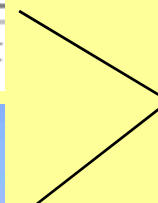
**gola-**

(13) *rezimi koda* **cela-bun**  
picture wall PRV-hang:3s:PRS



**cela-**

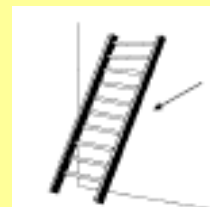
(14) *balčkoni* **cela-p-xer**  
balcony PRV-1.A-sit:PRS



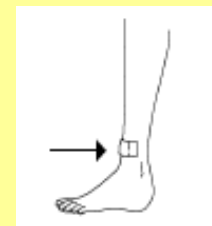
# Surface configurations (II)

---

(15) *mskala* *ķoda* ***me-zun***  
ladder wall PRV- lie:3s:PRS



(16) *banři* *ķuķxe* ***me-čabun***  
band.aid leg PRV-stick.to:3s:PRS



***me-***

# Hypothesis

---

Comparable to the differences between English and German cluster concepts for surface configurations (cf. *on* vs. *an/auf*), Laz may have a finer grained differentiation in the conceptualisation of containment and surface configurations, i.e. **the IN-ON-scale** may need some rearrangement but **in principle holds also for Laz.**

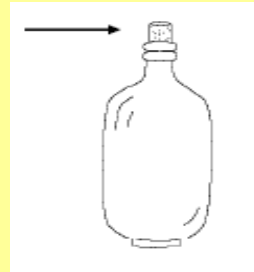
# Check:

---

Are there Ground properties which are relevant for the use of preverbs denoting containment configurations?

# *dolo-* and *meşke-*

- *dolo-*



Compare: *ce-*  
,in bed', ,in bowl'

→ *dolo-*: [Ground: cylindrical]

- *meşke-*



Compare: *mola-*  
,in house', ,in cupboard'

→ *meşke-*: [Ground: dense, narrow]

## *gola- vs. cela- vs. ela-*

---

- *go-la-*: ‚being on a shelf‘, ‚going along a horizontally oriented road or path‘
- *ce-la-*: ‚hanging down on the wall‘, ‚being on a balcony‘, ‚going down a road/path in the mountains‘
- *e-la-*: ‚going up a road/path in the mountains‘

→ *-la-* [Ground: strip]

# Shape properties of the ground

---

- Ground is **striplike** or has an **edge**:  
*gola-*, *cela-* (vs. *goo-*)
- Ground is **cylindrical**: *dolo-*
- Ground is **,dense, narrow'**: *meška-*

→ Locative classification (Allen 1977, Aikhenvald 2000)



# But:

---

The orientation of configuration is also relevant for configurations which - from a geometric perspective - are containment relations

# *dolo- vs. mola-*

---

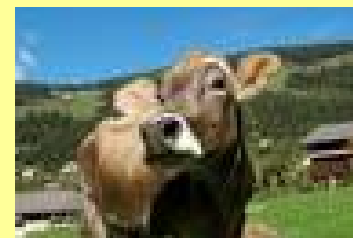
(21) *zeytiniyayi dolo-bubi*

olive.oil

PRV-pour:[1>3]s:PAST.PFV

'I poured olive oil into (the cow's mouth).'

(the cow is lying on the ground)



(22) *řici řari molo-bibi*

mouth

water

PRV-pour:1.A:PAST.PFV

'I put water in my mouth.'

(in order to spray it on swarming bees)



# *cela-/ela- vs. gola- ceška-/eška- vs. meška-*

---

- *cela- / ela-* ,Ground is a **vertical** oriented striplike object (e.g. a mountain path)‘ vs.
- *gola-*: ,being on a shelf‘ ,going along a **horizontally** oriented road or path‘
- *ceška-/eška-* ,Ground is a **vertical** oriented dense or narrow object‘ vs.
- *meška-*: ,being in a small place (like a hole in a tree), being in a dense or narrow object (like a hay stack)‘; moving **horizontally** amidst a narrow or a dense object‘

# Hypothesis does not hold, since:

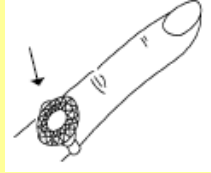
---

- Orientation of configuration relevant for (geometrical) containment configuration (e.g. *dolo-* vs. *mola-*)
- Preverb *mo-* does not refer to meaning components such as [surface] or [containment], see next slides.
- There are preverbs which refer to both surface (ON) and containment (IN) relations (*ce-*), see next slides.
- Thus, Laz preverbs cannot be ordered according to the IN-ON-scale

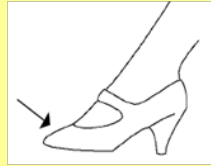
# Semantic extension of the preverb *mo-*



(cf. (25a))



(cf. (25b))

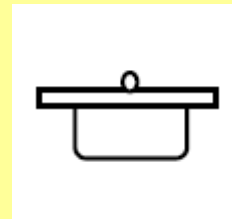


(cf. (25c))



(cf. (23))

*mo-*



(cf. (24))

*goo-*

(26) *ko-mo-xti*

MOD-PRV-go:2sIMPER

‘Come here!’

# Meaning of *mo-*

---

- Instead of relating to a surface (ON) or a containment (IN), the topological use of the preverb *mo-* expresses that the Figure is **part of** (lid) or **belongs to** (slipcase) the Ground, or expresses that the Figure **is located on a ,prototypical' Ground** (,ring on finger', ,shoe on foot')
- *mo-* ,belonging-to- relation'

# Semantic extension of the preverb *ce-*

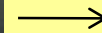
*containment*

(cf. (6), (27))



*surface*

(cf. (28), (29))



*goo-*  
and  
*ce-*

*downwards*

(cf. (30))



*ce-*

# Meaning of *ce-*

---

- Preverb *ce-* represents a clustering of concepts that deviates from what is expected if IN-ON-scale is universal.
- Instead of denoting either a surface (ON) or a containment relation (IN) of some kind, in topological expressions *ce-* relates to the **endpoint of a vertical path-movement** („Figure has been put down“)



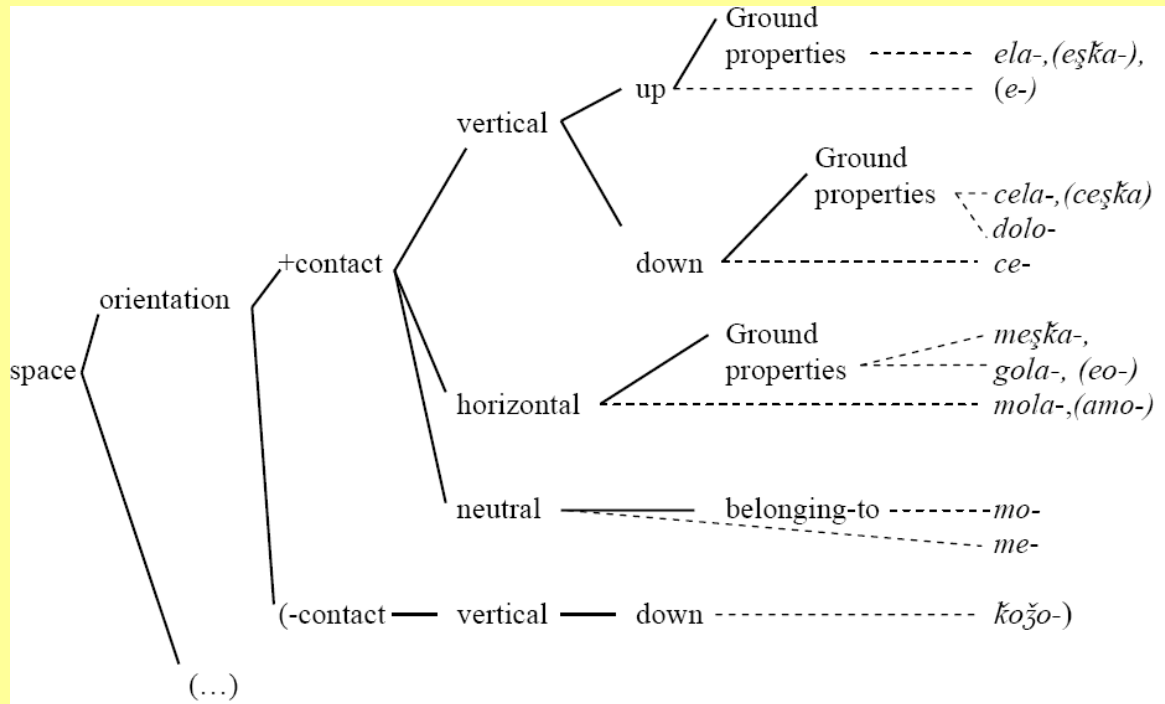
# Clustering of Concepts in Laz

(cf. Table (1))

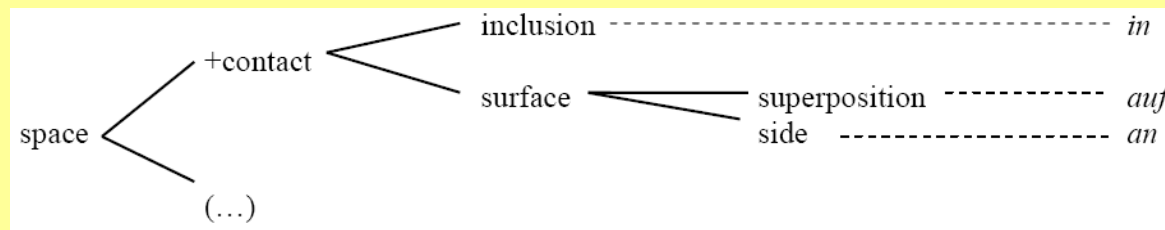
ORIENTATION	GROUND PROPERTIES	INCLUSION ?		
VERTICAL ("up")	--	-	<i>e-</i>	UP ON LADDER
	dense, narrow strip	?	<i>eşke-</i>	UP IN FORREST
		-	<i>ele-</i>	UP ON PATH
("down")	--	-/+	<i>ce-</i>	IN CAR, ON PLATE, DOWN ON LADDER
	dense, narrow strip	?	<i>ceşke-</i>	DOWN IN FORREST
		-	<i>cele-</i>	DOWN ON WALL , DOWN ON PATH
	cylindric	?	<i>dolo-</i>	IN BASKET(PANNIER), IN BOTTLE NECK
HORIZONTAL	dense, narrow strip	+	<i>meşke-</i>	IN TREE CAVE, IN HAYSTACK
		-	<i>gola-</i>	ON SHELF
	--	+	<i>mola-</i>	IN HOUSE
	--	-	<i>goo-</i>	ON TABLE
NEUTRAL (+meronym)	--	-/+	<i>mo-</i>	LID ON POT
(-meronym)	--	-	<i>me-</i>	ON LEG, LEANING ON WALL

# Comparing two Taxonomies of Space

Laz:



German:



# Conclusion

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- For Laz, concepts such as surface and containment seem not to be fundamental spatial concepts. In addition, the IN-ON-scale proposed by Bowerman/Choi (2001) and Levinson/Meira (2003) is not applicable for topological expressions in Laz (cf. (5)).
- Rather, concepts such as **orientation of the configuration** ([vertical: downwards], [horizontal]), **shape properties of the ground** ([striplike], [cylindrical]), and **„belonging together“** (lid on pot) are relevant for the meaning of Laz preverbs.

# A typology of spatial conceptualisation

---

- With respect to the fundamental concepts of space, we find at least two types of languages:
- **Type 1** (English, German, Finnish, Turkish, etc.): topological spatial concepts are ordered according to the **IN-ON-scale**. All seem to have **nominal** relators (adpositions, local cases).
- **Type 2** (Laz, Mingrelian?): topological spatial concepts relate to endpoints of **path configurations**. The relators are part of the **verbal** complex.

Thank you for listening!