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SPATIAL EXPRESSIONS IN ZARGULA

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Abstract

Zargula, an East Ometo language in southwest Ethiopia, employs a few locative suffixes and numerous relational locative nouns to express spatial relations. Case categories such as the nominative and accusative play a role in the system of spatial grammar. The language has a rich system of deictic locative expressions which integrate distance and elevation in their meaning and are used both in expressions of static locative relations as well as motion events. The morphological form of some toponyms ending in -(l)la/(l)le), and locative nouns marked by-so/se and encode designated spaces within a spatial domain, but also time (of the day) are discussed, and a hypothesis is advanced that both the -(l)la/(l)le) and -so/se ending words are derived from nouns that designates space or place.

Keywords: elevational demonstratives, locative demonstratives, locative predication, Omotic, Ometo, Zargulla

1. Introduction

"Zargula" is an Omotic language, classified as a member of the East Ometo branch of Omotic. Administratively, the area of the language is part of the Bonke District Administration (or Bonke *Woreda*) within the Gamo-Gofa Zone. Although known by the name *Zargula ~ Zargulla* in various scientific publications[1] as well as in the national censuses prior to 2007, the speakers identify themselves as *Gamo* and they refer to their language as *Gamotso*[2]. The speakers use the term *Zargulá* when referring to their area. The reason

1 See for mention of Zargula: Fleming & Bender (1976a: 46); Fleming (1976: 300); Bender 2003: 78-79) Baye Yimam (1994); Hayward (1990: xi, xxvi).

2 The morpheme *-tso indicates language name e.g. amarté 'Amhara people' vs amarátso 'Amharic'.*

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(we) linguists did not use the self-designation names of the people is because these exact names, i.e., Gamo and Gamotso, are respectively used as ethnonym and language name by the neighbors, whose language belongs to the North-Ometo group to which Dawro, Gofa and Wolaitta also belong. Zargula and North-Ometo Gamo are related but are from different branches of Ometo and they are not mutually intelligible.

Zargula is spoken in six large *qebele*-administrations (sub-districts). There is no census data on Zargula after the 1994 one, which reported 7625 "ethnic Zargula". However, local administrators informed the author in 2017 that there are at least 14,000 speakers of Zargula. Even by this latter count, the language is spoken by relatively few people, a large number of whom are fluent bilinguals in North Ometo Gamo, and this number continues to grow as primary education is given in the latter language (cf. Azeb Amha & Zelealem Liyew 2022).

In this paper, I present an analysis of linguistic features of spatial expression in Zargula. This involves an examination of what is known in the literature as Basic Locative Construction (BLC) (cf. Levinson and Wilkins 2006) that comprises the question and the corresponding responses in identifying *where entities (persons or objects) are located in space*. In Zargula, the same form *ʔána/ʔánna* 'where' is used to form a question that elicits information on '*where* entity X exists' as well as for the question '*where* X is moving (to/from)', covering 'where-questions' for both static/topological relations and motion events. I present an analysis of topological relations and motion events in Sections 2 and 4 respectively. Next to a few bound locative markers, a number of relational nouns (most of them body part nouns) plus deictic locative demonstratives that distinguish relative distance and elevation with respect to the deictic center are employed in encoding spatial relations. In Section 3, I present bi-morphemic local toponyms and some relational ~ temporal nouns that seem to be erstwhile compound nouns with one of the constituents being a noun designating 'place'. This section also includes initial observations on the linguistic practice of naming and describing space in the domain of dwelling areas. Section 5 summarizes the descriptive account with a generalization on Frames of Reference that are used in the expression of spatial relations in Zargula and concludes with a note on the way forward.

In this paragraph, I summarize main typological characteristics of the language. Zargula is an SOV language. Accordingly, modifiers precede the noun that they modify and all bound morphemes are suffixes or enclitic (e.g., the locative *=ga*). Important morpho-phonological characteristics at a word level include: (1) tone-accent: the language distinguishes high-tone (marked by ′ in the examples) and low-tone (unmarked). However, the realization of tone can vary depending on the tone of the lexeme, affixes, as well as on

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word-level rules which restrict multi-syllabic words with low-tone (thus the label tone-accent instead of tonal language). (2) Nouns distinguish singular and plural number (singular is unmarked), gender (masculine and feminine; masculine syncretizes accusative and genitive in the domain of nouns), definiteness (indefinite is unmarked) and case. (3) Verbs can be grouped into three: locative-existential verbs, simple lexical verbs and complex predicates. Locative-existential verbs have limited inflectional possibilities as discussed in Section 2.1 below. The inflection of simple lexical verbs depends on information structure: they can be fully inflected for subject-agreement, tense, polarity and mood/modality when the clause has predicate focus (e.g. *dápóttesínne* 'he released', *dápó/ínne* 'did she release?'). When the clause has subject focus, the verbal predicate comprises only the verb stem and the general relative clause marker *-e (e.g. dapé* 'that s/he release'). When focus is on complements of the verb (e.g., object or adverb), verbal subject agreement is marked on the focused constituent and the verb is inflected only for tense: e.g. *dápínne* '(he, she, we, etc.) released', *dápíne* '(he, she, we, etc.) release(s)' or *dápéne* '(he, she, we, etc,) will release'. The inflection of complex predicates (V_1+V_2) can follow the inflection pattern of locative-existential verbs if V_2 is from this category. Otherwise, the pattern of simple lexical verbs described above applies (cf. Azeb Amha 2009, 2013, and 2014).

Part of the data for this paper come from narratives and discourse gathered for my documentation project on the Zargula language.[3] Other examples are from elicited data using questionnaires given in Bouquiaux and Thomas (1992: 175-309)

2. Topological spatial relations

2.1. Basic locative predication

Zargula has two grammatically and functionally related locative-existential verbs *yéne* and *yése*. Unlike other verbs, the two verbs make tense distinction

3 The audio-visual recordings and corresponding annotated text (with varying level of details) are archived at ELAR (cf: Zargula-amha-0447 | Endangered Languages Archive). Annotation is still work in progress. Examples from the archive material are indicated by the label of the file in the archive e.g., [asnakech_001_0282] after a sentential example indicates that the source is utterance 282, in the first recoding with speaker Asnakech.

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using suppletive forms: *yene* and *yese* in the present tense and a shared past tense form: *yéʃʃe*. And the negative form for all three, *yése*, *yéne* and *yéʃʃe*, is *baáʔa* 'there is/was no X'. Both *yése* and *yéne* can be used in a locative description as in, example (1a).

(1) a. bíʃʃǎ-ttó-y danʔa-á-tt-íʃ yéne/yésa/ʔyése
woman-F.DEF-NOM back.of.house-LOC-FOC-3FSG EXIST.PRES$_{1/2}$
'The woman is at the back of the house'

However, compared to *yéne*, *yése* has more inflectional and derivational possibilities: like other lexical verbs, a.o., it is used in relative clauses, it can be nominalized, and it has an emphatic/intensive stem *yésa*[4] whereas *yéne* is not used for these functions. In their use in locative expressions as well, there seems to be a difference: speakers note that replacing *yéne* with *yése* in example (1) makes the sentence incomplete (as indicated in the examples with a questions mark). Also, with *yésa*, the sentence has some slightly different (pragmatic?) reading: '~She is not here, where you are looking for her'. In addition, of the three possible predicates above, the sentence with *yéne* is the most appropriate for the question in (1d).

(1) b. bíʃʃǎ-ttó-y ʔánna-á-íʃ yéne
woman-F.DEF-NOM where-LOC$_1$-3FSG EXIST.PRES$_1$
'Where is the woman?'

As research in many languages has shown[5], responses to the question '*where is* X?' (as in (1b)) help determine the main predicate(s) of the basic locative construction (BLC) of a language (Levinson and Wilkins 2006: 15). In Zargula both the '*where*-question' and the response to it are predicated by *yéne*. In addition, although the language has bound copula markers (*-tte/tta*[6] in the affirmative and *-wa* in the interrogative) used in adjectival and nominal predication, these morphemes are not used as predicates in a locative construction. We therefore conclude that *yéne*, including its suppletive past and negative forms, is the main locative predicate in Zargula. Following the typology of locative predicates developed in Ameka and Levinson (2007), the language thus belongs to Type Ib languages that have a single locative verb (+Existential verb). In sub-sections 2.2-2.3 below, I describe

4 There are two lexically distributed morphemes for the intensive: *-á* and *-ó*. These are affixed to verb roots that head a clause with predicate focus (cf. Azeb Amha 2007).

5 See, for example, the chapters on individual languages in Levinson and Wilkins (2006) and in Levinson and Ameka (2007).

6 Of these two, *-tte* is also used to mark focus.

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morphological marking of the *Ground*, i.e., the noun that designates the location of the *Figure* (the entity searched) irrespective of the predicate type used in the example sentences.

2.2. Topological spatial relations marked by bound locative markers

There are only a couple of bound locative morphemes in Zargula. These include the general locative marker *-á/-a*, *-ná* in locatives derived from demonstratives and the clitic *=ga*, which is derived from the locative noun *gálla* 'body'. The fourth bound locative morpheme is the ablative *-ɸe* /*-pe*, discussed in Section 4.

The general locative marker *-á/-a* is directly affixed to the noun that designates the *Ground*, i.e., the location where the *Figure* (the entity searched) is found. Example (2)[7] illustrates the use of the general locative marker *-a*. In (2a), the locative marker replaces the word final vowel [e] of the lexeme *karé* 'interior' and carries a default high tone-accent, whereas in (2b) the word final vowel of *ʔallá* 'ground' and *wóra* 'place for waste' is not deleted and locative *-á/-a* occurs adjacent to the vowel.[8]

(2) a. ʔúsúní hátte taás ʔing-íd-es-í
3PL/3SG.HON.NOM DM 1SG.DAT give-PVF.REL-NMZ-NOM
namʔú gaídde-tte kar-á yésa
two cattle-FOC interior-LOC.1 EXIST:PRES.INTS
'Well, there are two cattle at home that she gave me' [asnakech_001_1327]

(2) b. ʔallá-a woíʔ-úkkó wóra-á-tte gúp-e
ground-LOC1 lie.down-CND place.for.waste-LOC spill-GEN.REL
'If (the cut sesam plant is placed) horizontally on the ground, the seeds spill out on waste-ground (i.e., one cannot gather them for use; they are wasted). Seasam_AA_108

As can be seen from the above examples as well as in examples in different parts of this paper, the general locative marker covers a number of locative relational meanings, including: containment, coincidence, attachment, or support relations. Levinson and Wilkins (2006: 3-4) note that across languages, these spatial relational meanings, i.e. non-angular specifications of spatial relations, constitute the conceptually simplest and core sub-domains of topological relations. As we show in Section 2.3 next,

7 The immediately relevant parts are underlined in sentential examples.

8 Most basic, non-derived nouns end in vowels: *e, o,* or *a,* labelled terminal vowels. A number of nouns end a in sibilant consonant. When morphemes are added to the basic noun, the terminal vowel may be deleted. Hayward (1987), in a comparative study of the phenomenon, labels these: unstable terminal vowels, contrasting with the ones that are not deleted (stable terminal vowels).

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the morpheme *-á/-a* can also be used in the domain of angular specification of locative relations.

2.3. Locative relational nouns

In this section we examine locative relational nouns in Zargula, which meet the characterization of angular coordinates in Levinson and Wilkins (2006: 4): that they help specify *in which direction from the Ground one needs to search to find the Figure*. With few exceptions, relational nouns in Zargula are from the domain of body part nouns, with little to no change on the phonological shape of the source noun. I.e., they are not grammaticalized postpositions, but like postpositions they occur after the noun that designates the *Ground* entity. See Table 1:

Table 1. Locative relational nouns

Locative, relational nominal	Related term	comment
gálla 'on, in'	*gálla* 'body'	*The* enclitic *=ga* is clearly related to this form. In some contexts the two can be used interchangeably. In other cases different interpretations are given: *ʔóta=ga* 'in/inside the pot' vs. *ʔóta gálla* 'on the pot (outer surface)'
gánna 'through, across'	*gálla* 'body' *-nna* INST?	Example (4b)
giddá 'in the middle'	*giddá* 'center'	
gaáts 'in the middle'	gaáts 'center'	Example (3b)
gindé 'behind'	*gínde* 'heel'	Example (5)
ɗattá 'behind, after, at the back'	*ɗattá* 'back (body part')	
ʔaɸá 'above, over, on top'	*ʔaɸá* 'sky'	
mílle 'side of'	*mílle* 'side (body part)'	
birá 'in front, at the front'	*bir*[9]- 'go ahead/ lead'	
ʔoommó 'under, underneath'	*ʔoommó* 'bottom'	Example (3b), (3d)
bágga 'direction of, part of'	*bágga* 'half'	
ʔúkke, báze 'near'		Example (3a)
góllo 'around'		

9 For example, imperative form: *birá* 'go ahead/lead in front someone/group traveling together (2SG)!', plural addressee: *biraíte.*

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As examples in (3) illustrate, relational nouns may be marked by bound locative affixes as regular nouns (see *gaáts* ('centre') + =*ga* 'in the middle' in (3b)).

(3) a. tʃ'ar-í-is ʔúkke=ga
swamp-F.POSS-DAT near=LOC_2
'Near the swamp' (*tʃ'aré* 'swamp') [Woldeyohannes_Upbringing_092]

(3) b. hayá gaátsu=ga ʔoommó maló-y
PROX.M.NOM centre=LOC_2 bottom stone-NOM
baásu-wa
NEG.EXIST.NMZ-COP.Q
'This one, in the middle, isn't there stone underneath (it)?'
[zarg_aa_keela_bg_001_092]

(3) c. ʔésí ʔóttó <s'arɓezá> ʔoommó-tte-s gád-ínne
3MSG.NOM pot.F.DEF <table.Amh> under-FOC-3MSG place-PST
'He put the pot under the table'

Combined with nouns that denote a durative event/state, the general locative marker *-á* or locative relational nouns listed above express temporal meaning. Compare the realization of *ʧ'eemó* 'evening' in the following two examples:

(4) a. ʧ'eem-á ʔuddés-éɗe núná puuttá-tt-íʃ
evening-$LOC._1$ all-PL 1PL.ACC cotton-FOC-3FSG
súss-e
spin.CAUS-GEN.REL
'In the evening, she made us all spin cotton'[asnakech_001_0850]

(4) b. ʧ'eemó gánna-tt-ún puuttá súk'k'-e
evening through-FOC-1PL cotton spin-GEN.REL
'It is in/during the evening that we did spinning' [asnakech_001_0851]

Similarly, in example (5) the body part noun *gindé* 'heel' expresses a temporal notion 'after, following' that likely is derived through its locative interpretation 'behind'.

(5) ʔəə hiíkka hínní gindé yés-és-í
DM DM DIST.DEM_1-F.POSS heel/after EXIST-REL.NMZ-NOM
gel-á-tt-íde
marry-$INTS_1$-FOC-PFV
'Eh, on top of that, the one (daughter) who was born *after* that one (F) one [?] has married' [asnakech_001_0282]

Concluding Section 2, I note that instances of *N + relational N (+ locative affix)* discussed above relate to the literature on Frames of Reference

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in spatial expressions. Levinson and Wilkins (2006: 4) identify the following three:

(1) Absolute frame of reference, using fixed bearings such as cardinal directions (North, South, East and West) or major landmarks (e.g., mountains, water bodies) to specify angles for locating entities in space. This frame of reference is not used in Zargula. The area is part of a rift valley system where different altitudes and landscapes exist, but a system of locative reference based on such a geographic system does not exist. East and West can be identified using the sun's direction, but from the material at hand these terms are not frequently used in describing spatial relations between objects. There are no terms for North and South.
(2) Intrinsic frame of reference, which relies on a prior assignment of inherent parts and facets to objects (e.g., assigning *ʔoommó* 'bottom (part)' to <*s'arɓezá*> 'table', in (3c)).
(3) Relative frame of reference, which involves the use of the viewer's/speaker's own bodily coordinates such as 'left / right of X' but also the speaker's spatial orientation. The best instance of this frame of reference is the deictic system, discussed in the next section, where description of spatial relations in distant places is determined by the position of the speaker/viewer in a vertical axis.

2.4. Deictic Spatial Expressions

In Zargula, personal demonstratives and locative demonstratives are derived from the same deictic elements. These comprise three distance-based deictic elements and two distance- plus elevation-based demonstratives, represented in Table 2. For both types, the deictic center is the speaker/viewer. Further, in combination with the locative clitic *=ga*, the third person singular possessive pronouns *ʔe-* (M), *ʔi* (F) form distal deictic locative terms in which the deictic center is not the speaker/viewer. Below, these two types are discussed in turn.

2.4.1. Demonstrative-based locative expressions

Modifying demonstratives (column two, Table 2) are basic forms from which locative and other pronominal deictic terms are formed. The proximal demonstrative has only one basic form (*há*) whereas there are four basic distal demonstratives (*hí, sé, wó, and yé*), functionally distinguished by denoting differences in relative distance and elevation.

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Table 2. Overview of modifying and locative

		Modifying demonstratives	Locative demonstratives	Locative form interlinearized as
Proximal		*há*	*haná* *haíga*	*PROX.LOC*$_1$ *PROX.LOC*$_2$
	Located in distance from the speaker, i.e. the deictic center; no information about relative elevation. May be more used in pointing? Used in the exclamation *yáa seélla* 'see there (it is right/true)!'	-	*yáa*	*DIST.LOC*$_1$
DISTAL	Located in a similar elevation to the deictic center but relative *difference in distance to the speaker/viewer*. Speakers point out that *hiná* 'there' is closer to the deictic center than *sená* 'there'.	*hí*	*hiná* *híga*	*DIST.LOC*$_2$ *DIST.LOC*$_3$
		sé	*sená* *seíga*	*DIST.LOC*$_4$ *DIST.LOC*$_5$
	Located in higher elevation than the deictic center	*wó*	*woná* *woíga*	*DIST.H.LOC*$_1$ *DIST.H.LOC*$_2$
	Located in lower elevation than the deictic center	*yé*	*yená* *yeíga*	*DIST.L.LOC*$_1$ *DIST.L.LOC*$_2$

The use of basic demonstratives as modifiers in an NP is illustrated in (6). Like other modifiers, demonstratives precede the head noun.

(6) a. ha bíʃʃá-tt-ó nayé naay-ád-es-ta
PROX woman-F.DEF-F.ACC hunger do.hunger-IPFV-REL.NMZ-COP$_2$
'This woman is going hungry'

(6) b. sé namʔá-nts-í gel-á-tt-íde
DIST two-DEF.PL-NOM marry-INTS$_1$-FOC-PFV
'Those two are married'

(6) c. híkké woná wó zumá-z=ga
DM *DIST.H.LOC*$_1$ DIST.H.DEM mountain-M.DEF=LOC$_2$

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kés-í
climb/go.out-SS.CNV
'Up there, having climbed that mountain up there' [Woldeyohannes_Upbringing_090]

The non-elevational locative demonstratives are formed by suffixing *-ná* or *=ga* to the modifying/adnominal demonstratives. The morpheme *yáa* seems to comprise a demonstrative *ya* and the general locative marker *-a*. However, the form *yá* (with a short vowel) is not attested in data at hand, so I do not make morphological breakdown of the word in the examples in (7):

(7) a. yáa waas'-í gádd-íse gáde
DIST.LOC$_1$ put.on.yoke-SS.CNV keep-PST.REL land
'There, the land where the (oxen) were kept ready (to plough) with the yoke placed on them' [asnakech_001_0241]

(7) b. yáa ʔuddá gákk-í góʃ-á-ít-íne
DIST.LOC$_1$ all reach-SS.CNV plough-INTS$_1$-2PL/2SG.HON-PRES
hátte ʔé=ga
DM 3MSG=LOC$_2$
'Now, do you really have time to reach (to) all those (pieces of land in different places) and cultivate (them) there?' [asnakech_001_180]

The examples in (8) illustrate the contrast between proximal and distal locative demonstratives formed with *=ga*.

(8) a. haí=ga yeéd-í tá ʔúmma-s
PROX.LOC$_2$ come-SS.CNV 1SG.POSS head-DAT
ʔak'-á-tte-t-íne
spend.night-INTS$_1$-FOC-1SG-PRES
'Having come here I spent the night alone' [asnakech_001_0227]

(8) b. seí=ga danʔaá-nna <maskoóte>
DIST.DEM$_2$=LOC$_2$ back.side.of.house.LOC-INST <window>
meɗɗ-íi
make-SS.CNV
'There, at the back side of the house, I made a window and... ' Birhanu_002_206]

Sentential examples of distal locative demonstratives formed with *-ná* are given in (9):

(9) a. ʔəʔə boʧé yésa hiná
DM farm.land.at.the.outskirts EXIST.PRES.INTS$_1$ DIST.LOC
tá ʔíndó-y ʔing-uts-í-kká
1SG.POSS mother-NOM give-NMZ-NOM-INCL

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yésáaa
EXIST.PRES.INTS$_1$.DM
'No (I said): I have a farmland at the outskirts (*boʧé*); and there, I also have the one that my mother gave (me).' [asnakech_001_0257]

(9) b. sená <woíne>-so
DIST.LOC$_4$ prison-place
'Was it there, in the prison?' [birhanu_001_036] [confirmation question after the addressee told that he learned the skill of weaving when serving his term in a prison in Arba Minch city]

In (10) we find examples of the use of the two elevational distal locative demonstratives *woná* and *yená* [(10a) repeated from (6c) above].

(10) a. híkké woná wó zumá-z=ga
DM *DIST.H.LOC$_1$* DIST.H.DEM mountain-M.DEF=LOC$_2$
kés-í
climb/go.out-SS.CNV
'Now up there, having climbed (to) that (high up) mountain' [Woldeyohannes_Upbringing_090]

(10) b. híii sená gákk-í yená gákk-í
DM *DIST.LOC$_4$* reach-SS.CNV *DIST.L.LOC$_1$* reach-SS.CNV
'Eh, having reached over there and down there' (referring to her two houses, one clearly at a slope, near a river-bed) [asnakech_001_0225]

(10) c. yená-tt-un ʔoots-é yená-tt-un
DIST.L.LOC$_1$-FOC-1PL work-GEN.REL *DIST.L.LOC$_1$*-FOC-1PL
muún-e
eat-GEN.REL
'We work down there and we eat down there' [asnakech_001_1246]

Relative distance is often expressed by repeating the locative deictic marker two or more times as can be seen in example (11):

(11) yená <gas'áre>=ga yená yená
DIST.L.LOC$_1$ <country.side>=LOC$_2$ *DIST.L.LOC$_1$* *DIST.L.LOC$_1$*
borké=ga yés-eés-ka
river.bed=LOC$_2$ exist-REL.NMZ-INCL
'Although it is down there in a rural area, far down there at the river bed…' [expressing wish that electricity gets connected to her house outside of town] [asnakech_001_1243]

The locative demonstratives *woná* and *yená* are distinct from the non-deictic locative adverbs *ʔúde* 'up' and *súle* 'down' that are discussed in Section 4. Their base forms *wó* and *yé* are deictic and they are pronominals since they inflect in exactly the same way personal pronouns inflect, taking the same

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gender, number and case inflection. In the partial paradigm in Table 3, we find the full inflectional set of the feminine singular forms and only the nominative form of masculine singular to show the gender contrast. Plural forms are not included but they are well-attested. Similar patterns of nominalizing demonstratives is widely attested in related languages and also more widely, as typological research has shown (see Diessel (1999) and Dixon (2003)). Compare the locative forms in column two with the corresponding genitive, nominative, and accusative forms.

Table 3. Pronominal demonstratives

	Feminine				Masculine[10]
	Locative 'on this / that one (F)…'	Genitive	Accusative	Nominative	Nominative
Proximal	hánníga	hánní	hánnó	hánnóy	háy
Distal$_1$	hínníga	hínní	hínnó	hínnóy	hií
Distal$_2$	sénníga	sénní	sénnó	sénnóy	séy
High elevation	wónníga	wónní	wónnó	wónnóy	wóy
Low elevation	yénníga	yénní	yénnó	yénnóy	yéy

Consider the following sentential example:

(12). sénní=ga káts-ó sénní=ga
DIST.DEM$_2$-F-F.POSS=LOC$_2$ cook-INF$_1$ DIST.DEM$_2$-F-F.POSS=LOC$_2$
ʔoóts-ó ʔól-á-tte-t-íde
work-INF$_1$ give.up-INTS$_1$-FOC-1SG-PFV
'I gave up cooking and working (in that specific house) over there' [asnakech_001_0158]

The above inflected deictic pronouns are not discussed here further, but it should be noted that there is some difference in meaning between the non-inflected locative demonstratives (in Table 2) and the inflected ones (in Table 3), as the contrast between (13a) and (13b) suggests.

10 Masculine locative form is the same as the deictic locative forms in column three in Table 2. These seem to be formed by adding *=ga* to masculine nominative demonstratives in this column. Feminine locative demonstratives on the other hand are based on the feminine possessive form.

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(13) a. haná yéw-a / haí=ga yéw-a
PROX.LOC$_1$ come-2SG.IMP / *PROX.LOC*$_2$ come-2SG.IMP
'Come here!' 'Come here!'
(13) b. hánníga yéw-a
DIST.DEM$_2$-F-F.POSS=LOC$_2$ come-2SG.IMP
'Come just over here!' (as in pointing to a seat next to oneself)

In all the deictic forms mentioned so far, distance or elevation are expressed from the view point of the speaker, i.e., the deictic center is the speaker. However, the deictic center can be away from the speaker as discussed in the following section.

2.4.2. Third person pronoun-based locative demonstratives

Third person singular possessive pronouns *ʔé* and *ʔí* are affixed with *=ga* to form the distal locative forms *ʔéga* and *ʔíga* 'there' (compare: *ʔésí* 'he'; *ʔísí 'she'; ʔé keets* 'his house', *ʔí keets* 'her house'). In these personal pronoun-based locative expressions, the deictic center and the ground (search domain) coincide. The forms can be used endophorically as in (14a) or as an exophoric demonstrative as in example (14b).

(14) a. ʔí gállá-tte-t kees'-us-áde-s danda ʔ-ída
3FSG.POSS body-FOC-1SG build-CAUS-IPFV-DAT be.able.PFV
'I was able to have (the house) built on that[11] (support)'
[asnakech_001_0051]
(14) b. ʔé=ga ʔard-ád-es-a ʃaattís
3FSG.POSS=LOC$_2$ live-IPFV-REL.NMZ.ACC child.F.DAT
híd-í-tté-t <boottó> keés's'-e
say-SS.CNV-FOC-1SG <place.F> build- GEN.REL
'I built the place for the one who will live there, for the girl'
[asnakech_001_0013]

2.4.4. Combination of two locative adverbs..

As the preceding sections demonstrated, there are a number of ways Zargula speakers can express deictic spatial relations. However, it seems that these deictic forms lack precision in depicting the actual location of entities in space. Perhaps due to this, we find frequent use of a combination of two locative demonstratives in discourse. See the following examples:

11 Speaker is referring to various kinds of material contributions she received from family and friends when the house was built.

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(15) a. hiná hí=ga yésa-wán
DIST.LOC$_2$ DIST.DEM.$_1$=LOC$_2$ EXIST.PRES.INTS$_1$-COP.Q.**n**
baá-s-wa
EXIST.NEG-REL.NMZ.COP.Q
'There, on/in that, is it present or not?' [asnakech_001_652]

(15) b. həə *haná haí=ga* yésa
DM *PROX.LOC$_1$ PROX.LOC$_2$* EXIST:PRES.INTS$_1$
'ʔəə, there is (a house) here, right here' [asnakech_001_0258_259]

(15) c. hátte tá k'ámma <madabbéra>[12]
DM 1SG.Sh.NOM yesterday-evening <sac.Amh>
yáa ʔé=ga ʔing-eés
DIST.LOC$_1$ 3MSG=LOC$_2$ give-REL.NMZ
'The one to whom I gave the sac there yesterday evening' [asnakech_001_0240]

In such double deictic expresseions, the two locative demonstratives match in distal and elevational values: *hiná ~ híga* 'there, overthere'; *haná ~ haíga* 'here, over here'; *yáa ~ ʔéga* 'there, over there' etc. are common.

3. Toponyms and naming of other salient places

It seems that the words *wollá* and *bes*(*o*) contribute respectively to the formation of toponyms and some relational nouns used in locative expressions. Related to the latter, I also make brief remarks on the role of dwelling places (*-so ~ < sóo* / *sóh/ʔo* 'home') as anchors to the expression of spatial relations.

3.1. Toponyms: place-indicating morphemes –(l)le / -(l)la

Including the name *zargulá*, that designates the area where the language under investigation is spoken, we find some place names that end in –(*l*)*la* or –(*l*)*le*. There are twenty *qebeles*, i.e., smaller administrative units within the district *Geretse Zuria Woreda* where Zargula is spoken. Of these, twelve have names ending in *-l*(*l*)*e* and three end in –(*l*)*lá* as shown in Table 4:

Table 4. Place names in the district Geretse Zuria Woreda

Place names ending in *–(l)le*	Place names ending in *–(l)la*
ɗimá**lle**	zaa**llá** doo**llá**
koʃá**lle**	Buu**lá**
dambí**lle** ʔotorá	koirá mukku**lá**
dambí**lle** ʔootsá	

12 The Amharic word *madaberia* also means 'fertilizer'; but both in Amharic and in the borrowing languages, the word also refers to a specific container/sac (made from plastic fibers) which probably was first introduced as container for fertilizer

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kettél**e**	
fuuddal**é**	
ɗeʃkel**é**	
mel**é** gaagúl**e**	
kumʔál**e** bariʔó / ʔooró	

Some of the place names above are compounds in which both components end in *–(l)le* or *–(l)la*. These are *melé gaagúle* and *zaallá doollá*. Within a *qebele*, names of some neighborhoods that are called *Niʔus qebele* "sub-*qebele*" (from Amharic) also end in *-l(l)e*. Consider the following seven neighborhood names.

(16) gogálle
meellé
zallé
ɗarbillé
ʃaalé
ɓoóra mándale

The above examples suggest that the place names comprise at least two morphemes; probably originally these were compound nouns. The main question rests on the source of *–(l)le /–(l)la*. It is plausible to consider *wollá* 'place' or *ʔallá* 'ground, earth', both ending in *-llá* but this cannot account for the final vowel /e/ in several of the place names listed. Perhaps the final /e/ in these place names is a terminal vowel (idiosyncratically) replacing the last vowel of *-llá*.

The use of *wollá* 'place' and *ʔallá* is shown in (17a-b).

(17) a. tá yel-útt-íse wollá-y laakká
1SGbe. born-PASS-PST.REL place-NOM Laakka
'The place where I was born is Laakka' [asnakech_001_0005]

(17) b. ʔallaá-ɸe buur-eɗĕ ʃiiʃʃ-í
ground.LOC-ABL waste-PL gatger-SS.CNV
'Collecting various types of waste from the ground' [kororumma_074]

On the other hand, it is not easy to identify the meaning of the second component of the toponyms; i.e., the meaning of *ɗîmá* in *ɗîmá**lle;*** *koʃá* in *koʃá**lle***. In some cases, words from Zargula that could potentially be linked to the toponyms can be suggested. Also, putative sources may be from neighboring languages. For example, one can point out the two options in (18) below as source of the base lexeme of the place name *koʃálle*. From the topography and ecology of the place now, both options are plausible: *koʃálle*

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is a flat, lowland area that is dry and hot in some seasons but turns quickly green even with little rain. Also, some major rivers cross the area. The putative source [?] from Zargula associates the place with positive meaning whereas if the name were given by a neighboring group, e.g. Gamo, the association can be the reverse.

(18) Word in Zargula: *koʃé* 'new growth, regenerated plant on a tree stamp that is cut'
Word in Gamo: *koʃá* 'draught, hunger'

3.2. Space and time: the morpheme *-so*

We find the morpheme *-so* in fixed combination with some nouns, designating specific spatial areas or relations linked to the N-component, listed in Table 5 (in the second column the corresponding simple nouns are given).

Table 5. Compound nouns involving so

Complex form with -so		Corresponding simple noun	
biráso	'in front of'	birá	'front'
gadǎse[13]	'in a lowland area'	gadǎ	'low-land'
tamaaréso[14]	'(at) school'	tamaaré	'pupil, learner'
ʔibóso	'outer/inner place near a door'	ʔibó /dibó	'door opening/ entrance'

In the following example, the speaker points to a small table between him and the addressee, as response to a preceding question, 'is there something here that you made/created (as carpenter)?'

(19) hóo yésá-tte haí-ʧĭ biráso
Yes, EXIST:PRES.INTS$_1$-FOC PROX.NOM-Q infront
'Yes there is. How about this one, infront of you/us?' [Birhanu_002_483]

Some body-part nouns also have the same structure: *ʔaáɸeso* or *sinóso* 'face' (< *ʔaáɸe* 'eye, fruit' and *sinó* 'forhead'). And, the morpheme *-so* is attested in derived nouns designating specific time of the day:

(20) wóntaso 'dawn' (around 6am in the morning)
dároso 'day time' (~10 am – 6pm)
galbóso 'noon to early afternoon' (~12pm - 3pm)

13 This is the only example I have where *-so* is realized as *-se.*

14 Here, the borrowed word *tamaaré,* is used in a similar way as in the source language Amharic: *tämari bet* 'school' (pupil + house). However, these days, the latter expression is widely replaced by *tïmhirt bet* (education + house).

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siiɸaso	‘late afternoon’ (~3pm – 6pm)
tʃˇeemóso	‘evening’ (~ from 6pm onwards) (*cf.*: *dúma* ‘darkness’)
tʃˇeemáso	‘yesterday evening/night’; alternative word: *k’ámma*

Components combined with *-so/-se* in (20) above have independent meaning: *wónta* ‘light’; *dáro* ‘day time’; *tʃˇeemá* ‘darkness, night’.

From the previous examples, the meaning of *-so* is not clear but it is plausible to link it to the formally related word *soó* (word finally realized as *sóo*) in example (21a).

(21) a. soó-z-a ʔárd-aáʔa soó-z-a
home/place-M.DEF-LOC.$_1$ live-IPFV.NEG home/place M.DEF-LOC.$_1$
ditʃˀtʃˀ-aáʔa
grow-IPFV.NEG
‘(As heir) one does not live and does not grow up at home.’ [Woldeyohannes_Upbringing_002]

(21) b. sandáme ʔádé-só yeéd-í
Sandame father-home/place come-SS.CNV
‘Having come to the house/home/place of Sandame's father’ [Woldeyohannes_Upbringing_183]

(21) c. ʔiʃítʃtʃ-u-só-tte pót-útt-e
five-EPN-home/place-FOC pierce-PASS-GEN.REL
‘(The piece of wood for the yoke) is pierced in five places’

I have not encounterd *sóo* or a related word as an independent basic, uninflected lexeme with meaning related to ‘place of, part of’, but its use in example (21) can link it to this interpretation. We find a formally and semantically related independent word: *sóò ~ sóʔo~sóho* with the interpretation ‘home’ as well as ‘place’ in Gamo (cf Hayward and Eshetu Chabo 2014: 926, 953) and in Wolaitta: *sohó* ‘place’ and *sóo* ‘home’ (from the author‘s language knowledge). I therefore tentatively analyze *-so* as an originally independent word that designated ‘space, place of, part of’ that got a slightly different interpretation depending on the (pro)nominal or adverbial form with which it is combined. The concept of home, one’s dwelling, is important in other respects as well. While a full treatment of this topic and its cultural context needs further study, I briefly discuss it in the following section.

3.3. Locative expressions related to the orientation of *keéts* - ‘house’

The orientation of houses also serves as an important anchor in the use of a few terms that relate to spatial expressions. These include four words identifying different places around a house:

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Balé: generally designates the space in front of houses, i.e. the side where the front or main door is, through which visitors enter the house. *Balé* often is the side facing the road but that is not necessarily the case for every house. Also, *balé* is expected to be an open space. In contexts when expansion or (re)construction of a new house forces people to have only a small open area by the main entrance, and/or when the main door is found opposite to or facing another house that is situated very close, people might specify an open place to the *side* of their house as *balé*. This was the case for my host family during my fieldwork in 2019 and 2023. The term *balé* also refers to the date and place of a funeral ceremony which is held in a large open area where the mourning family can receive visitors.

danʔé: this term designates the space opposite to the front side (*balé)*, i.e., space at the back side of a house. There may or may not be a door on the side of *danʔé*. The size of *danʔé* may be large, especially in more rural areas, and the space is used to grow spices and vegetables. In towns, however, this is not always the case, so the *danʔé* of one's house may be just a main street or another back-to-back house. Culturally, this is not preferred but it may be forced upon house owners as local administrators build new facilities (e.g., roads) and land is claimed for such community purposes.

ʔozé: this is the third side, where there is a slope, and the term is often translated in Amharic as የቤት ታች በኩል፣ ዝቅ ያለው በኩል ('lower side of a house'). However, also for houses that seem on leveled ground, this reference is still used and people offer additional descriptions such as: "ይህ በብዛት ሽንት ቤት ምናምን የሚገኝበት፣ ዘወር ያለ ቦታ ነው", i.e., "this often designates the part where the toilet and the like are found; it is a bit secluded, outside of view". In houses where cattle are kept, *ʔozé* borders *boré*, 'a barn inside a house'[15], the two being separated by a wall. The barn (*boré*) itself has a part that is known as *tuk'urá* 'a slope ("lowered place") around the barn, where the urine of the cattle is directed outside'.

ʔummáde is described in Amharic as 'የቤት በላይ በኩል', i.e., the higher side of a house. It is the parallel side to *ʔozé*, and like the latter, it is defined by perceived difference on the levelling of the ground, which often is not immediately recognizable to an outside observer. It seems to be a compound word, combining *ʔúmma* 'head' and *ʔáde* 'father'. The prominent part of the interior of a house, e.g. where a bed is placed, is preferably on the side in which the *ʔummáde* is found.

The following sentential examples contain the terms described above:

15 *Tuk'urá* also designates 'a deserted barn'. A barn outside of a house is called *hans'é*, if it is a strong, permanent barn with wooden walls, or *k'eeʃʃé* if it is a temporary barn made from cut branches and thorn. The term *zedé* is also recorded in my data as 'barn' but I have not investigated how it differs from *tuk'urá*, *hans'é* and *k'eeʃʃé*.

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(22) a. háy mála-y híkke balé=ga
PROX.NOM type-NOM DM front.side.of.house=LOC$_2$
yés-á-tta ʔaála mála lóʔó
exisit-INTS.$_1$-COP$_2$ what type good
'Now, if this type was present in the front side of the house, how good it would be!'
[zarg_aa_keela_bg_001_020]

(22) b. seí=ga danʔaá-nna <maskoóte>
DIST.DEM.NOM=LOC$_2$ back.side.of.house.LOC-INST <window.Amh>
meɗɗ-íi
make-SS.CNV
'There, by the back side of the house, having made a window, ...'
[Birhanu_002_206]

Location of a dwelling area also determines the meaning and (metaphoric) use of other locative terms, e.g., nouns designating different places of work. They are not discussed here.

4. Motion and direction

There is no formal ground to distinguish motion verbs from other verb lexemes in Zargula. Instead we need to examine clause structure and what motion semantics is expressed in the clause. For example, whether or not the the clause expresses change of space / locative relation, and if it does, whether the change of space is caused or not; whether explicit information on source, end point and manner of motion is available. Detailed and targeted data collection using tools and stimuli, a.o., Bowerman and Pederson (1992), to generate a robust description of motion event in Zargula was not done.[16] In this section, using data collected for other purposes, I provide an outline of the structure of motion events in the language.

I noted use of the following terminologies on the components of motion events from comparative-typological literature, namely Levinson and Wilkins (2006:17) (based on Talmy (1985)):

(a) *Figure*, the thing moving
(b) *Ground*, source or goal of motion
(c) Path, trajectory of the motion
(d) Manner of motion

(In 23a) the *Figure* is *ʒiiʒʒóy* marked for the nominative case; in (23b) the figure that sets the motion (*ʔésî*) is in the nominative and the moving *Figure maló* 'stone' is in the object form (distinct from subjective, as

16 See Gashaw Arutie (2021), who made use of space stimuli kit in his analysis of static locative expressions in Amharic.

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accusative case is not overtly marked on an indefinite noun; compare with *doró ʔúteza* in (24)). The locative phrase *ʔé ʔumma bázennattes* 'close/near to his head' in (23a) encodes the *Path* or the trajectory of the motion. See also (23b), where the relational nominal *gánna* 'through, across' occurs; in Table 1 (Section 2.3) it was suggested that this word probably is a contraction of *gálla* 'body' + *-nna* INST. From these examples and similar uses in various text, we conclude that the instrumental case marks *Path*.

(23) a. ʒiiʒʒó-y ʔé ʔumma báze-nna-tt-és ʔaáɗ-ínne
spear-NOM 3MSG.POSS head near-INST-FOC-3MSG pass-PST
'The arrow passed close to his head'

(23) b. góde ʔaáɗɗ-í kontsó <katáma> gánna
side.way pass-SS.CNV Konso <town.Amh> through
ʔaáɗɗ-í hang-iʃʃínna
pass-SS.CNV go-PST.PROG
'I went to the side and while I was going across Konso town' [Birhanu_002_289]

(23) c. ʔésí wulá=ga-tté-s maló ɗǎw-ínne
3MSG.NOM well-LOC$_2$-FOC-3MSG stone.ACC throw-PST
'He dropped a stone into the well'

There is no distinct allative case morpheme; the goal noun can be marked with the locative *=ga* (*wulágatteés* 'in the well' (23b); *waas'éga* 'at the water source' in (24)). The goal can also be a locative demonstrative (*híga* 'there' in (24)) or a (place) noun in the accusative (cf. *Dambílla, ʔaimmá* in (26)).

(24) híkke doró ʔúte-z-a súle hí=ga
DM sheep offer-M.DEF-M.ACC down *DIST.LOC$_3$*
waas'é=ga ɗay-í
water.DEF.F=LOC$_2$ throw-SS.CNV
'(I) slaughtered (*lit.* threw down) the offered sheep down there at the water source' [Woldeyohannes_Upbringing_140]

It is interesting that, with human agents, the verb *ʔul-* 'turn, turn back/around)' implies that the goal of the motion is the home (dwelling) place of the agentive *Figure* (cf. question and answer in 25).[17] The semantically related verb *maák'-* / *mah-* 'return, itr./tr.' is not used in this way.

17 Note: the verb *kal-* in Konso 'to come back home' (example 20, Ongaye, this volume).

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(25) a. ʔul-í-s hámm-ínne
turn-SS.CNV-3MSG go-PST
'Did he go back home?'
(25) b. hóo ʔul-í[18]
yes turn -SS.CNV
'Yes, (he) has returned home'

As in (25a), *ʔul-* 'turn' often forms a complex predicate with another motion verb, e.g., *ʔul- + hamm-* 'went back (i.e. 'turn + go)' as in (25a) above, and also with the related verb *maák'*: *ʔul- + maák'-* 'return back' ('turn + retun$_{itr}$), *ʔul- yeétt-* 'come back' in (26), but it can also occur as the only predicate (cf. example (27)).

In Zargula, the source of motion is indicated by the ablative case *-ɸe/-pe*, as illustrated in (26). The morpheme *-ɸe* /*-pe* has a variant *-koɸe* which is used when the source of dislocation (e.g., transfer of an object from one person to other) is expressed.

(26). dambíll-a ʔaimmá hám-a ʔul-í
Dambille-M.ACC catle.camp.ACC go-INTS$_1$ turn-SS.CNV
hiná-ɸe-kka ʔul-í yeétt-a
DIST.LOC$_2$-ABL-INCL turn-SS.CNV come-INTS$_1$
'I go to Dambille, to the cattle camp; from there too (I) come back home'
[Woldeyhannes_Upbringing_027]

Direction or orientation of *Path* can be expressed using *ʔudetsá* 'upward', *suletsá* 'downward', *godetsá* 'towards the side' that are derived from the corresponding locative adverbs: *súle* 'up', *ʔúde* 'down' and *góde*[19] 'sideways; in a horizontal plain'. Example (27) illustrates the use of the derved directional forms.

(27) a. drúm-ó gode-tsá dap-á
tree.trunk-F.ACC side.way-DIR pull-2SG.IMP
'Pull the tree trunk sideways'
(27) b. háy ʔulí hayá ʔudetsá ʔuddá
PROX.NOM turn-SS.CNV PROX.ACC up.DIR all
ʔalts-ád-es-ta hagá
finish-IPFV-REL.NMZ-COP$_2$ yet
'This one is still to turn and cover all this (ground going) in upward direction'
[kororumma_356]

18 In Zargula the converb is also used as predicate of a main clause, denoting a completed action. The same is observed in Zayse (cf. Hayward 1990).

19 The expression *góde hammá* 'go away!' is used to express irritation/rejection.

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The context of example (25c) is that the *figure*, represented by *háy*, is a spice-plant (*kororúmma*) that first produces underground stems, growing into adjacent areas to finally form a dense, connected shrub above-ground.

5. Conclusion

In this paper we examined morphological and syntactic means used in the expression of Zargula spatial relations and designations of some key locations, e.g. around dwelling areas. We established that the main predicate in Basic Locative Constructions is *yéne*, and that Zargula can be grouped with the Type Ib group of languages established in cross-linguistic typology. Although *yéne* shares some grammatical, distributional and functional similarities with existential verb *yése*, the latter is somewhere between lexical verbs and the locative predicate (general BE.verb) *yéne*. Like lexical verbs *yése* can be relativized, nominalized, etc. but it does not inflect for TAM categories in the way lexical verbs are inflected. Its past tense and negative form is identical with that of the locative predicate *yéne*.

Zargula makes use of case markers, (body part) nouns, and deictic elements in the expression of spatial relations both in the domain of topographical and motion events. We observed that the bound locative morphemes *-á/a* and *=ga* are used in various contexts and cover spatial meanings of topographical relations or *non-angular* relations, namely, containment, coincidence, attachment, and support. These locative morphemes can also combine with nominal constituents drawn from restricted domains (e.g., body part nouns and the natural environment noun *ʔaɸá* 'sky'). These combinations encode spatial relations that involve *angular* specifications, i.e., assigning features to the *Ground* noun on a tacit basis. They define the search domain of a *Figure vis-à-vis* the *Ground*.

The locative morphemes also combine with demonstratives to form deictic locative terms which distinguish proximal and distal locations. Section 2.4. showed that distal locative demonstratives are further specified for +/-elevation distinction, which is determined on the basis of the location of the speaker/viewer who is describing the locative relation.

In Section 4, we showed that locative phrases that are used in describing static topological spatial relations are also used in clauses that depict motion event. In the latter case, the clause is headed by a lexical verbal predicate that encodes (dynamic) motion. We observed that morphologically marked components of motion in Zargula include: (1) *Figure* marked by nominative or accusative case, (2) *Ground*, of which source is marked by the ablative case, and *goal* by the locative or accusative, and (3) *Path* which is marked by the instrumental.

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The *angular* spatial expressions used in both topological relations and in motion event descriptions indicate that of the three cross-linguistic Frames of Reference identified in Levinson and Wilkins (2006: 4; see above), Zargula uses Intrinsic and Relative Frames of References. The former was observed where the expression of locative relation between *Figure* and *Ground* involved not only locative affixes but also (body part) nouns that specified a certain feature or region of the noun denoting the *Ground*. The Relative Frame of Reference is observed in the deictic locative system which incorporates distance as well as elavation relative to the location of the speaker/viewer. The third, Absolute Frame of Reference, is not observed.

As already noted, for the analysis of spatial relations in Zargula I used examples from elicited material and phrases and sentences extracted from narrative and descriptive texts that were gathered for language documentation purposes. The latter data are helpful in offering context-based analysis and general overview of spatial expressions in the language. However, it is possible that gaps exist in such data. Future research on spatial relations on Zargula could benefit from targeted elicitations using various Space Stimuli Kit that were developed for cross-linguistic typological research. Such research will probably not discover new spatial locative markers but it can give new insights on spatial conceptions and expressions, as speakers respond to varied spatial relation scenarios (in drawings, pictures, etc.) included in the research stimuli.

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	First, second, third person
1, 2, 3	Type 1, 2, etc.
ACC	Accusative
CAUS	Causative
CND	Conditional
CNV	Converb
COP	Copula
DAT	Dative
DEF	Definite
DEM	Demonstrative
DIR	Directional
DIST	Distal
DM	Discourse marker
El	Elevation
F	Feminine
FOC	Focus
H	High
HON	Honorific
IMP	Imperative

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INCL	Inclusive
INST	Instrumental
INTS	Intensive
IPFV	Imperfective
LOC	Locative
L	Low
M	Masculine
NEG	Negative
NOM	Nominative
PL	Plural
PASS	Passive
POSS	Possessive, genitive
PRES	Present tense
PROG	Progressive aspect
PROX	Proximal
PST	Past tense
Q	Question, interrogative
REL	Relative
SG	Singular
TEMP	Temporal

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