

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN  
COGNITIVE AND PERCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

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**Development of Geocentric Spatial Language and Cognition**  
*An Eco-cultural Perspective*

“A remarkable illustration of how research can integrate concepts, methods and findings from cognitive and developmental psychology, as well as from cultural anthropology and linguistics, to explain the development and use of spatial frames of reference in a number of cultures.”

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“A wonderful contribution to the literature on child development in relation to language and culture.”

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<FINAL PUFF TO FOLLOW>



Egocentric spatial language uses coordinates in relation to our body to talk about small-scale space (“put the knife on the right of the plate and the fork on the left”), while geocentric spatial language uses geographic coordinates (“put the knife to the east, and the fork to the west”). How do children learn to use geocentric language? And why do geocentric spatial references sound strange in English when they are standard practice in other languages? This book studies child development in Bali, India, Nepal, and Switzerland and explores how children learn to use a geocentric frame both when speaking and when performing non-verbal cognitive tasks (such as remembering locations and directions). The authors examine how these skills develop with age, look at the socio-cultural contexts in which the learning takes place, and explore the ecological, cultural, social, and linguistic conditions that favor the use of a geocentric frame of reference.

**Pierre R. Dasen** is Professor Emeritus in the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. His field of expertise is cross-cultural developmental psychology, particularly culture and cognition and the interface between anthropology and psychology. Professor Dasen is the founder of the Association pour la Recherche Interculturelle (ARIC) and an honorary member of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP).

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Dasen and Mishra  
Development of Geocentric Spatial Language and Cognition

# Development of Geocentric Spatial Language and Cognition

An Eco-cultural Perspective

Pierre R. Dasen and Ramesh C. Mishra

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