

OBSERVATIONS AND SPECULATIONS ON SUBJECTIVITY

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O. Introduction

This paper is an exploratory attempt to come to grips with the problem of subjectivity in natural language. The problem is both subtle and complex, and its manifestations are both pervasive and fundamental in grammatical structure. I will approach it from the perspective of **cognitive grammar** (also called **space grammar**), a framework that clearly reveals the special character of subjective expressions and provides the constructs needed to describe them coherently.¹

Subjectivity pertains to the observer role in viewing situations where the observer/observed asymmetry is maximized. In the case of linguistic expressions, the relevant “observers” are the speech act participants: the speaker conceives and structures a scene in a particular manner for purposes of linguistic coding, and the addressee must do likewise in reconstructing the speaker’s intent. Interesting problems are therefore posed by deictic expressions, since the speech act participants are involved in two distinct ways: they are responsible for observing (i.e. conceptualizing) the scene (as with any expression); but they also function as elements of the scene in question. Various ways of accommodating this dual role — as observer, and as object of observation — will be our central concern.

Semantic structure

1. The Framework

equate A with B:

AをBと同一視する

Cognitive grammar equates meaning with conceptualization. **Semantic structure** is nothing more than conceptualization structured in accordance with established patterns of linguistic convention; semantic description therefore requires substantive hypotheses regarding the internal structure of such

entities as thoughts and concepts. Meaning is not determined in any direct way by objective reality — instead it is a matter of how we construe or structure a situation in our cognitive representation of it. Moreover, the same conceived situation can be described by numerous alternative expressions each of which embodies a distinct **image**. Such expressions contrast semantically despite their functional (even truth-functional) equivalence.²

Imageの説明 The term **image** is understood in a particular way. It does not pertain to visual or sensory imagery per se (though such imagery is important to semantic structure), but rather to how a situation is conceptualized and structured for linguistic purposes. The image embodied by an expression involves such matters as the following: its scope of predication (see below); the level of specificity at which the scene is characterized; the relative salience of different facets of the situation (presumably augmented by explicit mention); the figure/ground organization imposed on the scene; the assumed vantage point from which it is viewed; the background assumptions and range of alternatives relative to which it is construed; and so on.

- (1) a. The cat chased the rat.
 b. The rodent was chased.

These sentences, for example, contrast in figure/ground organization (manifested in their choice of subject), and also in the level of specificity at which one participant is characterized (*rat* vs. *rodent*) and the prominence accorded the other (through explicit mention).

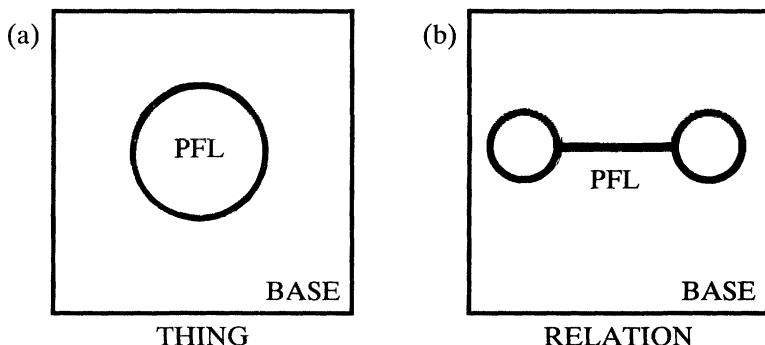
A linguistic expression is characterized semantically relative to one or more **domains**. Some domains are cognitively irreducible: these include our experience of time, our conception of two- and three-dimensional space, domains associated with the various senses (color space, pitch discrimination, etc.), emotive domains, and so on. However, most expressions — including those of concern in this paper — are best described with reference to cognitive structures of a more elaborate sort.

The semantic value of a linguistic expression is claimed to derive from the imposition of a **profile** on a **base**. The base (or scope of predication) consists of those facets of pertinent domains that are directly relevant to the expression's characterization, hence necessarily accessed when the expression is used. The profile for an expression is a substructure within the base: it is that substructure which the expression **designates**, making it maximally prominent within the base. The conception of an arm, for example, consti-

tutes the primary domain in the base for terms like *elbow* and *hand*, each of which profiles a particular substructure within it. The conception of a hand in turn functions as the base for such notions as *finger*, *palm*, and *thumb*. For a more abstract example, consider the noun *Tuesday*. The domain for this expression is not time per se, but rather the conceptualization of a cycle of seven days constituting a week and employed as a temporal frame of reference; *Tuesday* designates one of the seven days in the conceived cycle.

Semantic structures can be classified according to the nature of their profile. The most fundamental distinction is between what I call **things** and **relations**. As a rough approximation, we can define a thing as a bounded region in some domain, and equate the class of nouns with the class of expressions designating things. The noun *red*, for instance, designates a bounded region in color space, *octave* a bounded region along a musical scale, *Tuesday* a bounded region (one day) in the cycle of days constituting a week, *inning* a bounded region in a baseball game, *hand* a bounded region within an arm, and *finger* a bounded region of a hand. Observe that the definition of a thing makes no reference whatever to physical objects, though such objects — as bounded regions in three-dimensional space — satisfy the definition.

Relational predication profiles the interconnections between two or more conceived entities (where an entity may be a thing or another relation). Within the class, a basic distinction is made between **stative** relations (corresponding to adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and similar categories) and **processes** (corresponding to verbs). A stative relation profiles a configuration that is construed atemporally and accessed as a simultaneously available whole. A process is more complex, and is necessarily temporal in two respects. First, it profiles a series of states — each relational — conceived as occupying a continuous series of points in time. Second, instead of being activated as a simultaneously accessible whole, these states are accessed sequentially, so that the process is seen as unfolding through time stage by stage. Here, it is sufficient to make the two-way notational distinction illustrated in Figure 1. Within a base (corresponding to the boxes in Figure 1) the profiled substructure (PFL) is given in boldface. A circle abbreviates the conception of a thing, as illustrated in 1(a). Figure 1(b) stands for a relational predication: two entities are depicted, together with a line between them representing their interconnections.



Grammatical structure Figure 1

Space permits only the most rudimentary discussion of grammatical structure. The framework posits just three basic kinds of units: semantic, phonological, and symbolic. Lexicon, morphology, and syntax form a continuum of symbolic structures divided only arbitrarily into separate components. Grammar consists in the successive combination of symbolic expressions to form progressively more elaborate symbolic structures. To the extent that such combination follows patterns of any generality, they are given in the form of schematic symbolic structures (equivalent to specific complex expressions except for their level of abstraction). They serve as well to sanction novel expressions for which they can be judged schematic.

A grammatical construction specifies how two or more component expressions can be integrated to form a composite expression. The semantic and phonological integration of two symbolic structures constitutes a valence relation. A reasonably sophisticated theory of valence relations has been worked out within the cognitive grammar framework (cf. Langacker 1981), but only selected aspects of this account are directly relevant here. The crucial notions for our purposes are correspondence and profile determinance.

Every valence relation depends on correspondences established between the component structures. A correspondence identifies a point of overlap between the two component structures: it holds between substructures of the two components, and specifies that they are construed as being identical. It is by virtue of such overlap that the component structures are capable of being integrated to form a coherent composite conceptualization. The composite structure is derived by merging the two component conceptualizations and superimposing the specifications of corresponding entities. What will be the profile of the composite structure? Generally the composite structure

他のintegration
パターンもある？

inherits its profile from one of the component structures (i.e. it designates the same entity as this component). The component structure that lends its profile to the composite structure is called the **profile determinant** in the valence relation.

Consider (1a). *Chased* profiles a process with two main participants; the verb itself characterizes these participants only schematically — one as a thing capable of motion, and the other as a thing capable of pursuit. Each of the nominals, *the cat* and *the rat*, designates a thing specified in far greater detail, and further indicates that the identity of this profiled entity is known to the speaker and hearer. Two valence relations unite these constituents in forming the composite structure of the full sentence. One of them integrates *chased* and *the rat*. It involves a correspondence between the profile of *the rat* and one of the schematically characterized participants in the process designated by *chased* (namely, the thing pursued). *Chased* is the profile determinant in this construction, so the composite expression *chased the rat* designates a process rather than a thing. The second valence relation integrates *the cat* and *chased the rat*: the thing profiled by *the cat* is put in correspondence with one of the participants in the process designated by *chased the rat* (the pursuer, characterized only schematically). Once more the processual expression functions as profile determinant, so the overall composite structure — the semantic structure for the sentence as a whole — profiles a process with specified participants (identified to both speaker and hearer) and located prior to the time of the speech event.

2. Deixis and Epistemic Predications

I will use the term **ground** to indicate the speech event, its setting, and its participants. The ground is therefore multifaceted, and certain facets of it may be more directly relevant than others for the description of particular linguistic expressions. Among the elements of the ground, the **speaker** can be regarded as central, and reference to the ground can often be interpreted as reference primarily to the speaker.

Contents of 'ground'

A **deictic expression** can now be defined as one that includes the ground — or some facet of the ground — in its **scope of predication** (i.e. its base). Consider the noun *Tuesday*, illustrated in (2):

- (2) a. Tuesday is the second day of the week.
- b. Tuesday was hectic.
- c. Tuesday is going to be difficult.

This noun has both a deictic and a non-deictic sense. The non-deictic sense, as in (2a), simply designates one of the days in the seven-day cycle constituting the week. The profiled substructure is identified solely by its position in the sequence relative to other days, as seen in Figure 2(a) — reference to the ground is not required for this purpose and is therefore excluded from the set of obligatorily accessed notions defining the scope of predication. The deictic sense of *Tuesday* is represented in (2b-c). Here the noun profiles one particular day out of the indefinitely many that occupy the requisite position within a week, namely the closest one to the day that witnesses the speech event, in either direction along the time axis. This is diagrammed in Figure 2(b): the ground (G) is included in the base as a point of reference for identifying the profiled entity. The ground is not itself in profile (i.e. it is not **designated**), but it is nevertheless an essential element in the semantic structure of the expression.³

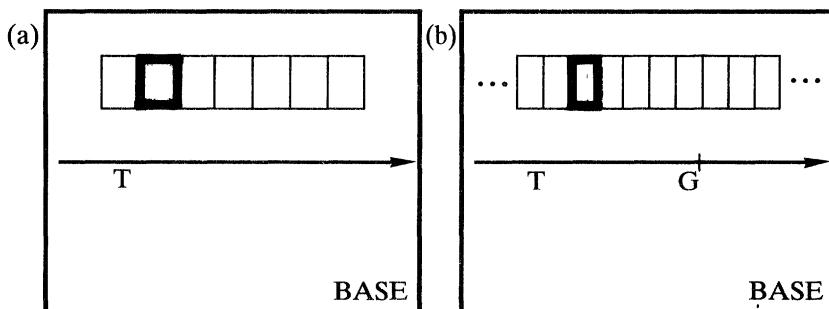


Figure 2

There are several types of deictic expressions, and it is important that we distinguish them clearly. One essential distinction holds between expressions that specifically profile ground elements and those (like *Tuesday*) which simply include the ground as point of reference in their base. The former class includes first- and second-person pronouns (*I, you, we*), as well as terms like *here* and *now* under their nominal interpretation:

- (3) a. The best place is (right) here.
- b. Now is a good time.

More commonly, *here* and *now* have a relational profile, as in (4):

- (4) a. She's here.
- b. I see them now.

The time or place of the speech event then functions as one of the central

relational participants, but the other participant need not be confined to ground elements.

Some expressions have both a deictic sense that includes the ground in their base as a point of reference, and also a non-deictic sense. A typical example is *across*, which can designate a non-deictic relation with only two participants:

- (5) An armadillo waddled across the field.

A more elaborate sense involves a point of reference in addition to the central participants. When overtly specified, this reference point is unrestricted, as shown by (6a-b).

- (6) a. There is a mailbox across the street from the drugstore.
 b. There is a mailbox across the street from here.
 c. There is a mailbox across the street.

The specifically deictic sense of *across* is exemplified by (6c). The conventions of English permit the locus of the speech event to be construed as point of reference in such expressions even in the absence of previous mention. The verbs *come* and *go* are more strongly deictic, in that they invoke the ground as reference point on a preferential basis.

Come in particular resists the construal of a non-ground element as its goal unless this element is sentient and capable of observing the motion analogously to how the speaker would do so, i.e. the expressions are most felicitous when the speaker can empathize with the goal and construe it as a potential or surrogate ground element. The shift of reference point to the main-clause subject is easily made in sentences like (7a), which are thereby ambiguous as to whether it is this subject or the speaker who functions as observer and goal of the projected motion.

- (7) a. Rachel told the plumber to come immediately.
 b. I will come to Chicago tomorrow.
 c. She came to the window.
 d. She went to the window.

When the speaker is the mover, as in (7b), the hearer — as the second-ranking speech act participant — is the unmarked choice; (7b) thus intimates that the hearer is in Chicago (or will be tomorrow), though another individual can be taken as the goal given an appropriate context. Observe that (7c) suggests the presence of somebody at the window waiting to greet the subject, but (7d), with *go* instead of *come*, might simply mean that she went to the

window to open it or look outside.⁴

Among the class of deictic expressions is a restricted group with special properties and grammatical significance. I will call these **epistemic predications** because they pertain to the speaker's knowledge of other entities and his assessment of their status. In the case of processes, epistemic predications mark the speaker's assessment of their relation to present reality; English tense and modal auxiliaries are examples. In the case of things, epistemic predications indicate the degree to which the speaker (and hearer) has succeeded in identifying the designated entity out of the range of possible alternatives in the universe of discourse; examples include markers of (in)definiteness as well as certain quantifiers. Though it might not be readily apparent from these informal descriptions, I would argue that the nominal and verbal epistemic predications have a great deal in common when allowances are made for the intrinsic differences between things and processes.⁵ The elements I wish to identify as epistemic, in my technical sense of the term, constitute a small, closed set, one of which (with certain qualifications) is invariably found in a nominal (i.e. noun phrase) or the verb group of a finite clause. It is in fact the presence of an epistemic predication that proves criterial for nominals and finite clauses, distinguishing them from simple nouns and verbs respectively. A nominal, in other words, is an expression that profiles a thing whose relation to the ground is indicated by an epistemic predication, and a finite clause is an expression profiling a process whose relation to the ground is similarly indicated. I will say that a nominal designates an **epistemically grounded** thing, and a finite clause, an epistemically grounded process.⁶

What is it, then, that distinguishes the class of epistemic elements from other expressions that pertain to reality and identification? It would not be inappropriate to speak of grammaticalization and the form word/function word contrast, but these notions explain little in themselves. Certainly we are dealing with meaningful units, and in any case I would deny the existence of any sharp distinction between lexical and grammatical elements. It would be difficult to argue for any substantial difference along these lines for quantifiers like *all*, *most*, and *some* on the one hand, and those like *many*, *few*, and *seven* on the other, yet only the former qualify as epistemic. Later I will claim that the defining feature of epistemic predications is a kind of **radical subjectivity**, but for the moment we must be content to enumerate certain properties that are symptomatic of this characteristic.

The first of these properties is their non-occurrence in clausal predicate

position. It is illustrated most dramatically by the contrast between the **relative** quantifiers of (8a), which are considered epistemic, and the **absolute** quantifiers of (8b), which are not. Only the latter can function as clausal predicates.⁷

- (8) a. *The people who agree with me are all/most/some.
- b. The people who agree with me are seven/many/few.

Demonstratives, the clearest examples of nominal epistemic predication, do not occur freely in clausal predicate position, though they would appear to be relational (indicating distance from the ground and identification to the speech act participants):

- (9) a. ?The culprits are those.
- b. The problem is this.

When a demonstrative does appear in predicate position, as in (9b), it does so only when construed as a predicate nominative — that is, it is not used strictly in its basic relational sense to indicate distance and identification, but rather in a derived sense where it predicates identity between two nominal entities.

When we turn to verbal epistemic predication, the situation is very similar. Modal predication in general are permitted as clausal predicates, as seen in (10a), but the modal auxiliaries — the elements identified as epistemic predication in the special sense of the term relevant here — are not:⁸

- (10) a. That we will finish on time is possible/likely/certain.
- b. *That we will finish on time may/should/must.

The remaining epistemic predication occurring with verbs are the tense inflections for present and past.⁹ Their impossibility as non-elliptic clausal predicates cannot be directly tested, due to their inflectional character (a full word is required as complement of *be*), but it is fair to say that the deviance of (11a) is striking even if we attempt to ignore that deficiency.

- (11) a. *Their destruction of the village is/was -ed.
- b. Their destruction of the village is in the past.
- c. Their destruction of the village was before the present.

Non-epistemic predication specifying the temporal location of an event relative to the ground occur without difficulty in clausal predicate position, as illustrated in (11b-c).

The first distinctive property of epistemic predications, then, is their inability to occur in clausal predicate position, where other relational expressions — apparently quite similar in meaning — do appear. Their second distinguishing property is obligatory deixis. They incorporate a reference point that is **always** equated with the ground, not just optionally (as with locatives like *across*) or even preferentially (as with *come* and *go*).¹⁰ To see this, let us compare (7a), *Rachel told the plumber to come immediately*, with (12):

- (12) Rachel said that this piano needed tuning.

In contrast to (7a), where the main-clause subject can easily be interpreted as the reference point for *come*, the predications that I identify as epistemic in (12) take only a ground element in this role. Observe that *this* can only be construed as indicating the proximity of the piano to the speaker, not to Rachel, even though the subordinate clause containing it reports what Rachel said. Similarly, both instances of the past-tense morpheme situate the process in question at a distance (past reality) from the time of the overall speech event — both the time of the main-clause process *say* and that of the subordinate-clause process *need* are in the past relative to the time of speaking. Note in particular that the tense of the subordinate clause is not computed relative to the time at which Rachel's act of speaking took place; if it were, the subordinate clause would be in the present tense, but this would change its meaning to imply that the need for tuning endures through the moment of the overall speech act.¹¹

The third property pertains to valence relations. Specifically, the ground element that functions as point of reference in an epistemic predication must be left implicit — unlike that of a non-epistemic predication comparable in semantic value, it cannot be spelled out explicitly by means of a nominal expression. The demonstrative *this*, for example, predicates a dual relation between a thing and the speech act participants: proximity (to the speaker in particular); and identification (by both participants), which might be regarded as proximity in an abstract domain. *Near* and *close* are non-epistemic predications reasonably similar in basic content to the first of these specifications, and *known* and *identified* to the second. All are stative relations, and all permit the reference point (their **landmark**) to be elaborated in a valence relation by an object nominal or by an oblique expression with *to*:

- (13) a. a town near us
 b. a town close to us

- c. a person known/identified to us

By contrast, *this* does not tolerate comparable elaboration of its reference point. None of the other expressions in (14) even approximates being a viable elaboration of (14a).

- (14) a. this town
 b. *this (to) me town
 c. *(a/the) town this (to) us

Observe that it is possible for *this* to co-occur with a locative expression which specifies peripherastically the same relationship of spatial proximity that it itself conveys, as in (15), but that is not at issue.

- (15) a. this town near us
 b. this here town

Finally, I note that epistemic predication appears to be problematic for the theory of valence relations developed in the cognitive grammar framework. Within this framework, there are good indications that an epistemic predication functions as the profile determinant in a valence relation combining it with a nominal or verbal expression. Consider expressions like *most horses* and *some sand*, where a relative quantifier combines with a mass noun. Recall that a relative quantifier identifies a mass as some proportion of a larger reference mass — the noun that combines with such a quantifier in a valence relation corresponds to this reference mass and specifies its character. What is then the profile of the composite expression, i.e. what does an expression like *most horses* designate? Clearly it does not designate the reference mass as a whole. Instead it designates a restricted portion of this mass, in accordance with the value of the quantifier. The property of liking to run is therefore attributed to the full set of entities designated by *horses* in (16a), but only to a large proportion of this set in (16b).

- (16) a. Horses like to run.
 b. Most horses like to run.

Since designation is equivalent to profiling in this model, we must conclude that the composite structure of *most horses* inherits its profile from the quantifier rather than the noun. By definition, then, the quantifier is the profile determinant in the valence relation.

Tentatively, I make the assumption that epistemic predication consistently function as profile determinants when they participate in grammatical valence relations. This assumption immediately leads us to an apparent con-

tradition, however. Epistemic predication would appear to be stative relations: this is the semantic category of all those expressions that seem reasonable as approximations of their semantic value, e.g. *known*, *identified*, *near*, *before*, *possible*, *certain*, and so on. Now if epistemic predication are analyzed as stative relations, and are also treated as consistent profile determinants, they should impose their relational profile on the composite structure in a valence relation. *This man* should therefore designate a stative relation, namely the relation of proximity and identification to the speech act participants — in fact, though, it is nominal rather than relational in character, and designates the man instead of his relation to the ground. Similarly, the analysis implies that *He fainted* is non-processual, designating the stative relation of temporal anteriority, but obviously we want to claim that this clause profiles the process designated by *faint* (and that its temporal anteriority to the time of speaking is a subsidiary, unprofiled specification).

In short, epistemic predication supposedly derive nominals and finite clauses, but this is inconsistent with their putative role as profile determinants if they are also claimed to designate stative relations. One of these claims must therefore be abandoned or modified, and if the overall framework is assumed to be valid, we would hope to find a principled basis for the necessary adjustment. We will find this basis in the concept of subjectivity. The problem is resolved by treating epistemic predication as maximally subjective, with the consequence that they are not in fact to be categorized as stative relations. This analysis not only eliminates the apparent dilemma cited above, but also helps to explain the special grammatical properties of epistemic predication.

3. Subjectivity

The contrasting terms **subjective** and **objective** have a variety of meanings, but I will understand them in a particular way. They will be characterized relative to the asymmetry between the **observer** in a perceptual situation and the entity that is **observed**. We can begin by noting that a perceptual relationship is neither symmetrical nor reflexive. It is non-symmetrical because we can observe things that do not observe us (and may even be incapable of perception). It is non-reflexive because we cannot observe ourselves with the same ease, to the same degree, or in the same manner that we observe another individual (we cannot in general see our own profile, or the back of our head).

The basis for this asymmetry is clear: the major sense organs are part of the observer's body and directed outward. They have a limited zone of

coverage (e.g. the visual field), and within this zone certain regions can be perceived with greater acuity than others. The observer/observed asymmetry would be considerably reduced if the sense organs were somehow separate from the observer's body and able to float about in space — then the observer could occupy the region of perceptual acuity on a par with other entities. It would not be eliminated entirely, however, if only because the sense organs themselves would still be excluded from this region.

- 1 Consider now an **optimal viewing arrangement**, defined as one that maximizes the observer/observed asymmetry. Such an arrangement is diagrammed in Figure 3(a), where 'S' stands for the observer (or SELF), 'O' for the observed (or OTHER), and the arrow for the direction of perception. Several factors contribute to the optimality of a viewing situation. First, S and O are fully distinct, i.e. the SELF is observing an OTHER rather than any aspect of the SELF. Second, S focuses his attention solely on O, to the point that conscious awareness of SELF either fades away entirely or is greatly diminished. What S observes, in other words, is **O**, not **S observing O**. To the extent that S is conscious of SELF, the observer/observed distinction is blurred — full role differentiation implies the loss of SELF-consciousness. Finally, O is highly prominent and is situated in a region of maximal acuity; it stands out distinctly from its background and is perceived in fine-grained detail. For the most part, of course, acuity increases with proximity to the observer. A certain distance must nevertheless be maintained: if O is immediately adjacent to S, it may be too close for clear observation, just as the SELF cannot be fully observed.

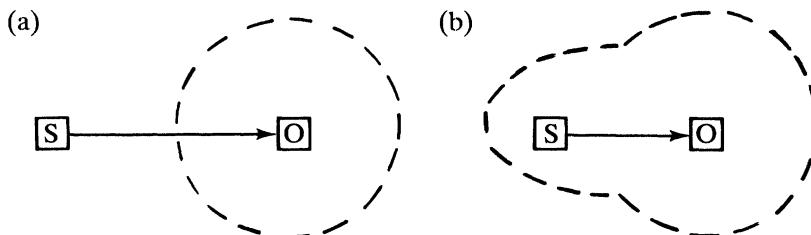


Figure 3

With respect to an optimal viewing arrangement, S can be characterized as maximally **subjective**, and O as maximally **objective**. An entity is therefore said to be subjective to the extent that it functions asymmetrically as the observer in a viewing situation, losing all awareness of SELF as it observes

an OTHER. An entity is said to be objective to the extent that it achieves prominence as a well-articulated object of observation, distinguished clearly from both its background and the observer. To be fully objective, then, an entity must occupy a region of high acuity or perceptual optimality, which generally places it close to the observer (but not immediately adjacent). I will refer to this region — indicated by the broken-line circle in 3(a) — as the **objective scene**. The objective scene is therefore the primary locus of attention in a viewing situation. In terms of the obvious theater metaphor, the objective scene is the **on-stage** region. The actors on stage are viewed in fully objective terms by the observers seated in the audience. To the extent that these observers are completely engrossed in the performance, thereby losing all awareness of SELF, their own participation in the viewing process is maximally subjective.¹²

2 The optimal viewing arrangement of Figure 3(a) can be contrasted with another, sketched in 3(b), that I will call the **egocentric viewing arrangement**. Both can be defined in relation to basic perceptual experience, and each can make a claim to cognitive salience. They differ in the extension of their objective scene. The arrangement in 3(a) defines this region with reference to perceptual optimality, hence the observer is external to it, as previously discussed. By contrast, the egocentric viewing arrangement accommodates the natural interest that most people have in themselves and in the relations they bear to the entities around them. The locus of viewing attention is thus expanded beyond the confines determined by perceptual optimality to include as well the position of the viewer and his immediate surroundings. The observer S is thus situated within the boundaries of this more extensive objective scene, reflecting the fact that S is no longer simply an observer, but also to some degree an object of observation. SELF-consciousness therefore attenuates the subjective/objective distinction.

Naturally, our concern here is not perception per se, but rather the meaning of linguistic expressions. I nevertheless maintain that the concepts and constructs presented above are directly relevant to the analysis of semantic structure. The first step in establishing their relevance is to recognize that the **perceptual** relationship between the observer and what is observed is a special case of the more general **construal** relationship between the conceptualizer and what is conceptualized. The second step is to consider the construal relationship in reference to a linguistic expression: the conceptualizer can be equated with the speech act participants, and the conceptualization with the meaning of the expression.

I will do little more here than assert the plausibility of these moves, since their primary justification must stem from the adequacy of the resulting semantic analyses. The extent to which conceptualization is perceptually grounded is an open question, and it is certainly not claimed that all conception reduces to perceptual *imagery*. Obviously, though, a *clear-cut* boundary between perception on the one hand and general conceptual ability on the other cannot be *found*, and it is reasonable to *regard* them as intergrading manifestations of the same basic cognitive principles. It is not irrelevant to *observe* that linguistic expressions pertaining to perception are a major source of the terms we employ for the description of abstract mental processes, as the *perceptive* reader can readily *see*.

Terms like **observer**, **acuity**, **objective scene**, and so on are most obviously appropriate and most easily understood in relation to the perceptual domain, but we must interpret them abstractly enough to be applicable to any type of conception, to whatever extent this proves useful. The diagrams in Figure 3 may therefore be applied (at least in exploratory fashion) to the construal relation holding between a conceptualizer and a conceptualization, with the observer S identified as the conceptualizer. Certainly it is reasonable to speak of an asymmetry in a construal relationship between the conceptualizer and the entity that is conceptualized, and there are notable differences between the conception of SELF and the conception of OTHERS. Perceptual acuity has obvious conceptual analogs, such as degrees of definiteness and the level of specificity (i.e. fine-grained detail) at which a conceived entity is characterized. The optimal viewing arrangement depicted in 3(a) can be equated with a conceptualization focused primarily on OTHERS — the role of the conceptualizer S is then subjective to the extent that S loses conscious awareness of this role. The egocentric viewing arrangement in 3(b) corresponds to instances where S is specifically concerned with SELF and consequently functions as both the conceptualizer and an object of conceptualization.

The meaning of a linguistic expression is a conceptualization, and the relevant conceptualizers are the speech act participants. The speaker necessarily conceives and structures a situation in a particular manner when he chooses what to say and how to say it, and the hearer when he attempts to reconstruct the speaker's intent. For some purposes, of course, the speaker is the SELF and treats the addressee as an OTHER — in its narrowest construal, then, S in Figure 3 represents the speaker alone. The cooperative nature of communicative activity nevertheless encourages a broader con-

stral, where the speaker and addressee regard themselves as a collective SELF capable of arriving at a shared conceptualization as the semantic value of a linguistic expression. S can then be taken as indicating the speech act participants, and (by extension) the ground.

We can classify expressions in terms of deixis and subjectivity, i.e. with respect to what role (if any) the conceptualizer himself plays within the conceptualization that constitutes an expression's semantic value. For the moment it is sufficient to distinguish three possibilities. One possibility is for the conceptualization — which is equivalent to the expression's scope of predication — to make no reference at all to the conceptualizer or any other facet of the ground. Because the ground remains external to the scope of predication, an expression of this sort is non-deictic. Moreover, the conceptualizer is maximally subjective in his relation to the scene described, since he is not himself in any way a participant in this scene.

The other two possibilities include the ground within the scope of predication; the resulting expressions are therefore deictic, and the conceptualizer is to some degree an object of conceptualization. The distinction between them lies in the relative prominence of the ground element within the conceived situation. On the one hand, the ground element — though included in the scope of predication — may be relatively non-salient. It remains **offstage**, outside the objective scene, serving only as a point of reference for situating those entities that attract the focus of viewing attention. On the other hand, the ground element can itself be a salient, on-stage entity. Not just a reference point, it is included within the objective scene as a major participant in the relationship of central concern.

This distinction, quite obviously, corresponds to the contrast between the optimal viewing arrangement (Figure 3(a)) and the egocentric viewing arrangement (3(b)). When the ground (viewer) is included in the scope of predication, it can either remain offstage, outside the objective scene, where it is relatively non-salient; or else it achieves prominence by going on stage within the expanded objective scene that gives the egocentric viewing arrangement its special character. It should be noted that the greater prominence of entities within the objective scene accords with its definition as the primary locus of viewing attention.

These observations are summarized in the three diagrams of Figure 4, which represent the types of expressions considered above. The profiled entity is in each case taken to be a *thing* (shown as a boldface circle), and in accordance with the previous claim it is restricted to the objective scene

(the broken-line circle). The three types are distinguished by the location of the ground (G) relative to the objective scene and to the scope of predication (represented by the box). The expression in 4(a) is non-deictic: it makes no reference at all to the ground, which is consequently excluded from the scope of predication. This expression type is exemplified by almost any common noun (e.g. *elbow*, *antelope*, *desk*), or by *Tuesday* in its non-deictic sense (cf. Figure 2(a)). The ground is internal to the scope of predication in 4(b) and 4(c), so these expressions are deictic. In 4(b) the ground and profile are distinct; G remains outside the objective scene, where it functions as a point of reference for identifying the designated entity. This was illustrated earlier by the deictic construal of *Tuesday* (cf. Figure 2(b)). In 4(c), by contrast, the ground and profile coincide, i.e. the expression designates a ground element. The ground is therefore internal to the objective scene (specifically, to the expanded objective scene implied by the egocentric viewing arrangement). An example is *I*, which designates the speaker.

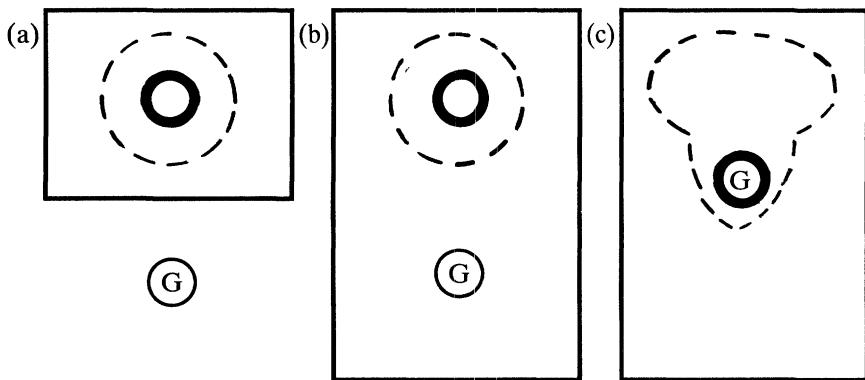


Figure 4

These three configurations can be regarded as cardinal points on a scale of subjectivity with respect to the role of the ground. In 4(a) the ground is maximally subjective. G is excluded from the conceptualization, and is associated with it only through the omnipresent construal relation. Role differentiation is fully maintained: the conceptualizer is not himself an object of conceptualization. To the extent that G does gain prominence as an object of conceptualization, the observer/observed asymmetry is eroded, and the

subjectivity of G thus decreases. It is diminished to some degree in 4(b), since G is within the scope of predication, but it is not entirely eliminated. G remains offstage, an unprofiled point of reference, so its role as an object of conceptualization is minimal. In 4(c), on the other hand, G is maximally prominent as an object of conceptualization, for it stands in profile as the focal entity in the objective scene. Rather than fading from awareness (as subjectivity demands), the SELF is placed on stage and viewed in basically objective terms. The observer/observed asymmetry is essentially neutralized, and the subjectivity of G is minimal.

Our purpose in the following section will be to examine this subjectivity scale in greater detail. We will consider a variety of grammatical and rhetorical devices employed by speakers of English to portray ground elements with varying degrees of objectivity. This range of devices turns out to be iconic with regard to correspondences between form and meaning.

Sounds are objective entities, in terms of our previous definition. A sound signal, once emitted, is separate from its source and accessible to any number of distinct observers. Moreover, the signal that defines a speech event is placed "on stage" by the speaker specifically to be observed by the addressee for purposes of communication — symbolic relationships permit the latter to reconstruct an intended conceptualization on the basis of a perceptual experience. We are concerned with an iconicity between the degree of phonological objectification in the perceptual sphere on the one hand, and the degree of objectivity manifested by the corresponding conceptual entities, on the other. More specifically, the position of a ground element along the subjectivity scale is claimed to correlate iconically with the extent to which it receives objective phonological symbolization.

The claim can be illustrated by sets of sentences like the ones presented in (17):

- (17) a. The person uttering this sentence doesn't really know.
- b. I don't really know.
- c. Don't really know.

Three different expressions are used to refer to the speaker: *the person uttering this sentence*, *I*, and zero. They manifest an obvious difference in the quantity of their objective phonological content, since a descriptive phrase is almost invariably longer than an explicit pronoun, which in turn has more objective content than zero.¹³ These differences in the phonological domain are claimed to parallel the degree of objectivity with which the speaker is

conceptualized: a pronoun portrays the speaker (or another ground element) more subjectively than a descriptive phrase, and zero more subjectively than a pronoun.¹⁴ Constructs previously introduced provide a reasonable characterization of these semantic contrasts.

4. The Subjectivity Scale

Linguistic expressions can be ranked according to how subjectively (or objectively) they construe a particular entity. Our task is now to examine this aspect of grammatical organization in greater depth and detail.

In Figure 4(a) representing non-deictic expressions, the ground is fully distinct from the profile and maximally subjective. In 4(c), on the other hand, the ground and profile coincide (i.e. the expression designates a ground element); the basis for the subjective/objective contrast is thus eroded, and the subjectivity of the designated ground element is minimal. We begin this section by examining two constructions (or rhetorical devices) where the status of G vis-à-vis the profile is not so straightforwardly determined. The meaning of these expressions hinges on correspondences established between two conceived “worlds”, each of which therefore figures in its scope of predication (cf. Fauconnier 1979). A ground element in particular is equated with another entity through a correspondence, but the two entities are nevertheless distinct by virtue of their identification with different worlds.

The first of these devices reflects our capacity for conceptual **displacement**, i.e. our ability to describe a situation from a vantage point distinct from our actual one. It is illustrated by (17a) in which the speaker refers to himself as *the person uttering this sentence*, thus describing himself in the third person as if he were characterizing some other individual. The first-person pronoun *I* directly and specifically designates the speaker, but in the case of *the person uttering this sentence*, it is only by attending to the actual contents of the description that the listener is able to deduce that the speaker is actually referring (quite obliquely) to himself.

Another, more striking example is the contrast between (18a) and b., either of which might well be uttered by an exasperated parent to admonish her child:

- (18) a. Don't lie to me!
- b. Don't lie to your mother!

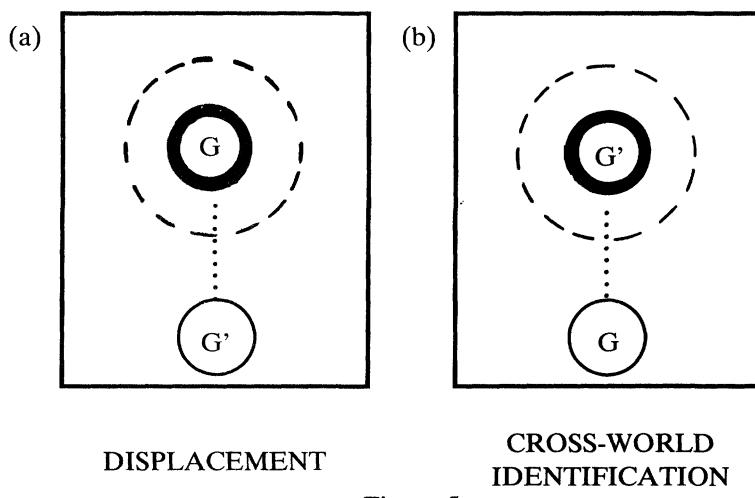
In (18b) the mother is assuming an “external” vantage point and describing herself objectively, just as if she were describing another individual. Possibly

this assumed vantage point is that of the child (in which case it is still internal to the ground, but external to the relevant facet of the ground, i.e. the speaker) — the mother describes herself from the child's perspective in order to minimize any chance of misunderstanding.¹⁵ The same displacement is manifested when (19b) is used in lieu of (19a).

- (19) a. Come over here and sit beside me.
b. Come over here and sit beside your mother.

Here, though, the motivation appears to be one of endearment and solidarity, the mother expressing emotional attachment by transferring herself to the child's vantage point.

The situation is diagrammed in Figure 5(a), where G stands for the actual position of the relevant ground element, and G' the position assumed for purposes of describing this element linguistically. Conceptual displacement of the speaker from G to G' permits the designated entity to be viewed from offstage, in accordance with the optimal viewing arrangement, even though it is a ground element that is profiled. As a consequence of this "split" between G and G', the former is construed objectively, and the latter subjectively, even though their identity is recognized. The dotted line in 5(a) indicates this correspondence between G and G'. They belong to two conceived worlds that diverge only very slightly: one is the actual world, with G in its actual position; the other is an imagined world which is the same except for the shifted position of the viewer.



The distinction between the two conceived worlds is more substantial in the second of the two devices, which might be termed **cross-world identification**. It is exemplified by expressions like (20a) — said while showing somebody a photograph — and the second sentence in (20b).

- (20) a. That's me in the middle of the top row.
b. In my next movie I play a double-agent. Both the CIA and the KGB are trying to kill me.

This device is very similar to the preceding one diagrammatically, as seen in Figure 5(b), but conceptually it is quite different. The speaker (G) retains his actual vantage point, so no displacement is involved. He is however conceiving of another “world”, such as the world depicted in a photograph, a movie, or a dream. Some entity G' within this other world is identified as corresponding to G in the actual world and by virtue of this identification G' is described by the same linguistic expression that is normally employed to designate G. Despite the common label, G' is nevertheless observed from an external vantage point. G' is **on stage** in a fairly obvious, almost literal sense of the term, and G is viewing it from offstage in something that approximates the optimal viewing situation.

Displacement and cross-world identification therefore represent different cognitive mechanisms, but each of them results in a configuration that is comparable to Figure 4(b) with respect to the subjectivity of the viewer (G or G') and the objectivity of the profiled entity. In both instances the viewer perceives the profiled entity from offstage, so despite their correspondence there is a substantial observer/observed asymmetry between them. We may speculate on the basis for the contrast in person between the two constructions. With displacement, a third-person expression is used instead of the normal first-person pronoun to designate a ground element. The whole point of this construction is to objectify the ground element, i.e. to impose an external perspective on an entity that would otherwise coincide with the viewer; resorting to a third-person form is thus consistent with the desire to treat the SELF as an OTHER, and is necessary as a means of making the perspective-shift explicit. By contrast, cross-world identification functions to establish a relation between the viewer and some entity in another conceived world that would otherwise be quite distinct. The purpose of this construction is hence to reduce the objectivity of an OTHER by attenuating its distinctness from the observing SELF. The non-canonical use of a first-person form is quite appropriate to signal this special construal.

Up to this point we have focused almost exclusively on expressions that

designate things. Let us turn now to relational expressions, which profile the interconnections among conceived entities. The status of relational predications with respect to deixis and subjectivity is a matter of some complexity, due to the multifaceted character of a relational profile. For one thing, the relational participants can vary individually in this regard (e.g. one participant may be a ground element, but not the others). Beyond this, we must allow for the possibility that the relation *per se* might function as a ground element.

To consider this latter possibility, we must first be more explicit about the internal structure of *G*. This is done in Figure 6(a), which shows the ground as centered on a relation (specifically a process — the speech event) that includes the speaker (*S*) and hearer (*H*) as major participants. The linguistic contents of the speech event, both phonological and semantic, can be regarded as an additional, more abstract participant (*C*).¹⁶ Since we are primarily concerned with the semantic content of an expression, *C* can be regarded as a conceptualization on the part of the speaker and hearer. We can equate this conceptualization with the scope of predication, and the vertical line connecting *C* to the process can be taken as standing for the construal relation. It will be convenient to adopt 6(b) as a notational variant of 6(a). Observe that 6(b), with the scope of predication depicted separately above the remainder of *G*, is quite analogous in format to previous diagrams (cf. Figure 4(a) in particular). The principal difference is that Figure 6 overtly indicates the status of the conceptualization as an aspect of the speech event.

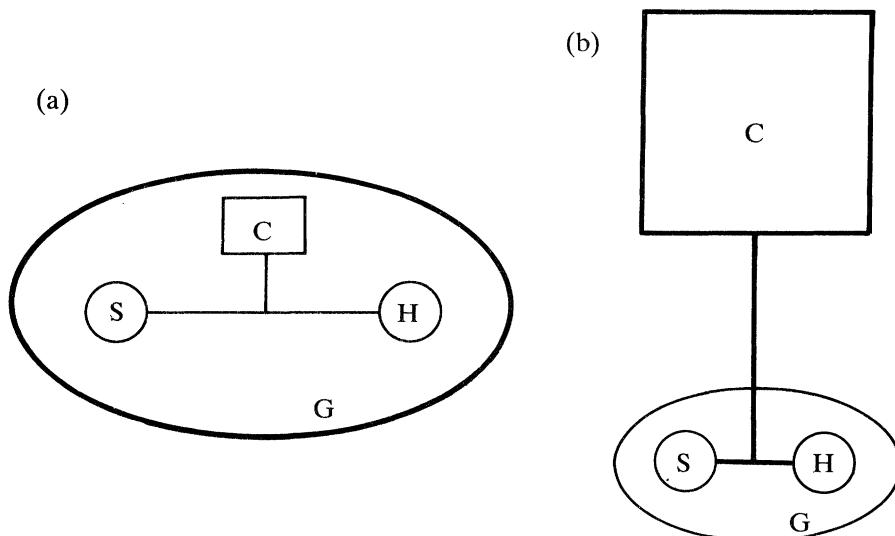


Figure 6

Our primary concern is SELF-reference, instances where a facet of the ground (G) is included in the scope of predication (C) as an object of conceptualization. We have already seen that major ground elements (the speaker and hearer, as well as the time and place of the speech event) can figure in the scope of predication, in either of two ways: as a profiled, onstage entity; or as an unprofiled point of reference, external to the objective scene. One more ground element must now be considered in this regard, namely the process of speaking itself.

If the process of speaking is comparable to other facets of the ground, it should be able to occur in any of the three positions indicated for G in Figure 4: outside the scope of predication; internal to the scope of predication but external to the objective scene; or on stage as the profile within the objective scene. We therefore expect to find the configurations sketched in Figure 7, where 7(a)-(c) are parallel to 4(a)-(c) respectively. Figure 7 is obtained by making just two changes in Figure 4: (i) adopting the format introduced in 6(b); and (ii) changing the profile from a thing to a process.¹⁷

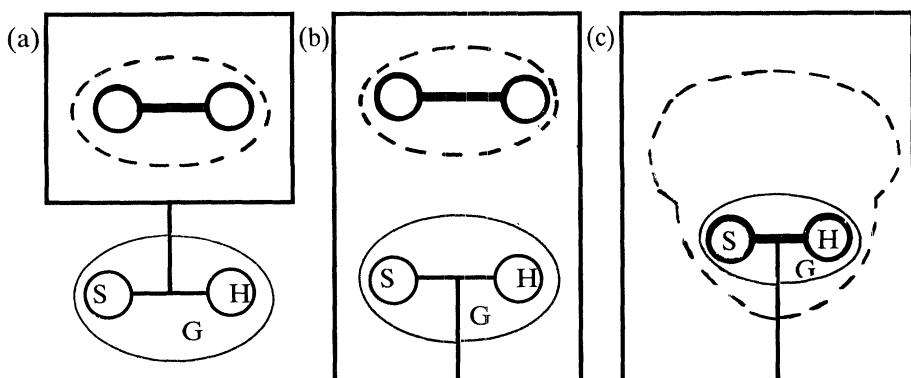


Figure 7

In determining whether the configurations in Figure 7 actually exist, we may begin with 7(c), which poses the question of whether it might be possible for the speech event to go on stage as the process profiled by a sentence or a finite clause. The answer, quite obviously, is that it can — this is the defining property of explicit performatives, illustrated in (21).

- (21) a. I say to you that this wasteful government spending must stop!
- b. I ask you why he would ever do such a thing?
- c. I order you to pack your bags and leave town immediately!
- d. I promise you that everything will turn out all right.

Explicit performatives presuppose the egocentric viewing arrangement, where the on-stage region is expanded beyond its optimal bounds to encompass the viewer and his immediate surroundings. The immediate surroundings, in this case, can be equated with the ground, and the relationship of central concern — the focal area within the objective scene — is identified with the speech act itself. Just as *I* and *you* designate the speaker and the addressee in such a viewing arrangement, so the main-clause predication in these sentences designates and characterizes the process that constitutes the communicative event and defines the speaker and hearer roles.

In sentences with overt performatives, then, the process profiled by the main clause is identified with the process constituting the speech event. Placed on stage as the focus of interest, the speech act achieves the greatest degree of objectivity possible, consistent with its status as a ground element (this correlates iconically with the attendant phonological objectification, i.e. overt mention). Normally, however, the process profiled by a sentence or a finite clause is distinct from the communicative event. Even when the nature of the speech act is apparent from the form of the expression, the speech event *per se* is non-objective (in relative terms) due to the absence of a performative clause that specifically designates it. Granted that the speech event is then offstage, external to the objective scene, it remains to determine whether it occupies the position indicated in Figure 7(a) or in 7(b). That is, we must determine whether or not the speech event is included in the scope of predication for run-of-the-mill non-performative sentences.

So long as we confine our attention to full sentences, it can reasonably be maintained that the speech event itself contributes to the meaning of an expression and is therefore to be included in its scope of predication. The sentences in (22), for example, are obviously distinct in meaning in a way that reflects the nature of the speech act, and which is excluded only arbitrarily from the domain of semantic description:

- (22) a. You will leave town immediately. [statement]
- b. Will you leave town immediately? [question]
- c. Leave town immediately! [command]

The semantic value of these sentences cannot be reduced to the mere conception of the addressee leaving town just after the time of speaking, for this is common to all of them. Crucial to their meaning as well is the status of this conceived event relative to the knowledge and desires of the speaker: whether he offers his description of it to the addressee as a statement, a request for

confirmation, or a directive to effect its implementation. The speech event — which I interpret broadly, to encompass not only the physical act of producing the utterance, but also the knowledge and objectives of the speaker and hearer — therefore figures prominently in the conceptions symbolized by these expressions. It specifies a communicative context (abstract domain) in which the designated process (i.e. the hearer leaving town) is situated, and in this respect it is comparable to the offstage points of reference that we have posited for other sorts of examples.

The speech event, in its physical, mental, and communicative aspects, is therefore incorporated in the overall conceptualization that constitutes the semantic value of a sentence. When the sentence is SELF-referential and profiles the speech act itself, this act goes on stage as the focal area within the objective scene, as in Figure 7(c). Typically, though, the speech event is distinct from the designated process, in which case it is included in the scope of predication but remains offstage, in the manner of 7(b).¹⁸ From the perspective of cognitive semantics, the claim that the meaning of a sentence makes reference to the speech event is plausible and not at all surprising — in fact, illocutionary force (i.e. reference to a particular type of communicative event) is quite possibly one of the distinguishing characteristics of sentences.

Linguistic convention specifies that sentences with certain formal properties can be attributed a corresponding range of performative values, but this symbolic relationship would appear to be a feature of the sentence as a whole, and not of its subconstituents. For example, the verb *leave* (taken as a simple stem) designates a process whose conceptualization makes no inherent reference to a speech act or its participants; simple mention of the word (e.g. in a discussion of its etymology) thus leaves the speech event outside its scope of predication, as in Figure 7(a). The imperative sentence *Leave!* is far more complex and inclusive semantically, for it pulls the ground into the scope of predication and embeds the simple processual notion in the conception of a specific sort of communicative act. Even a finite clause, which necessarily contains deictic elements (epistemic predictions) and therefore makes reference to the ground, does not per se have performative value.

The remainder of our discussion will focus on expressions designating relations distinct from the speech event in which one of the participants nevertheless happens to be a ground element. One of our concerns will be the contrast between pairs of sentences like *There is confusion all around me* and *There is confusion all around*, where the ground element is explicit

in one case and implicit in the other. We will also return to epistemic predictions, which locate an entity relative to the ground in both abstract domains (pertaining to reality and identification) and more basic domains (e.g. time and space).

A relational predication like *all around* is not intrinsically deictic (cf. *There were presents all around the tree*), and in a non-deictic use the entire relational profile can be confined to the restricted objective scene of the optimal viewing arrangement, in the fashion of Figure 7(a). When one of the participants is equated with a ground element, however, this is no longer possible. The ground element (G) is now part of the relational profile, so at least this facet of the ground must be on stage within the expanded objective scene that characterizes the egocentric viewing arrangement, as shown in Figure 8(a). This structure will serve as a first approximation to the representation of such expressions under their deictic construal, regardless of whether the ground element in question is explicitly mentioned. We will return shortly to the semantic effect of leaving the ground element implicit. First, though, let us consider more carefully the interaction between relations involving G and canonical viewing arrangements.

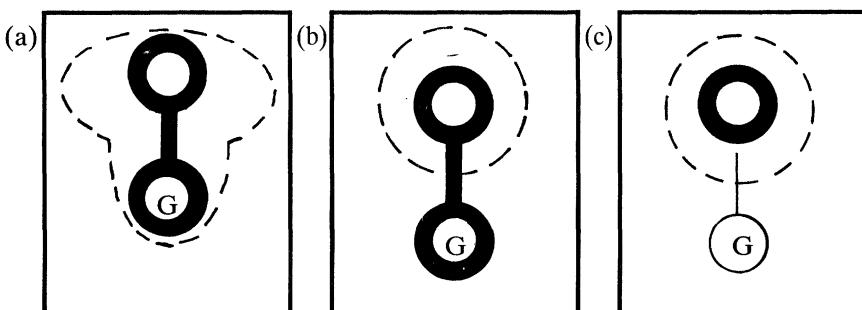


Figure 8

We may take the configuration in Figure 8(a) as our starting point. Suppose, now, that we shift from the egocentric viewing arrangement of 8(a) to the optimal viewing arrangement. The result of this shift — given the previous characterization of relevant constructs — is the configuration of 8(c), in accordance with the following rationale. The objective scene in the optimal viewing arrangement is defined in terms of maximal access to observation, and G is consequently external to it. By shifting to this arrangement,

then, we obtain the configuration in 8(b). Configuration 8(b) is not a permissible one, however. The objective scene is the locus of viewing attention, and the profile of a predication is confined to this region: as the designated entity, it is the center of interest and thus the focal area within the objective scene. Barring displacement, therefore, a relational predication cannot specifically profile a ground element as a major participant and at the same time leave this element offstage to view the relation objectively. Structure 8(b) is hence precluded by restrictions inherent to the descriptive framework, and 8(c) is the automatic outcome of excluding G from the objective scene. G can no longer be in profile, nor can a relation involving G (since a relation cannot exist apart from its participants). Only the non-G participant is wholly included in the objective scene and retains its status as a profiled entity; G and the overall relation are still part of the semantic value of the expression, but they are offstage as unprofiled facets of the base.

Obviously configuration 8(c) has not been so laboriously introduced merely as an academic exercise. Indeed, 8(c) is the structure posited for epistemic predications.¹⁹ Consider a demonstrative, such as *this*, which would appear to designate a stative relation involving ground elements as participants, since it is (very roughly) equivalent to a conflation of the relational expressions *near me* and *identified to us*. In the analysis I propose, *near me* and *identified to us* do in fact have a relational profile, and presuppose the egocentric viewing arrangement, as depicted in Figure 8(a). By contrast, the demonstrative *this* — incorporating reasonably similar relational notions — presupposes the optimal viewing arrangement of 8(c). The profile of *this* is consequently a thing, specifically the thing that is identified to the speaker and hearer and situated in the vicinity of the speaker. The speech act participants remain offstage as points of reference, and the relations of proximity and identification are necessarily unprofiled, important though they are to the semantic value of the expression. By the same token, the past tense morpheme resembles the deictic sense of *before* in specifying the location of a process prior to the time of speaking. *Before* is a stative relation in the manner of 8(a), but the past tense predication is epistemic; thus it has the structure of 8(c) — with both G and the relation of temporal anteriority to G offstage and unprofiled — except that the profiled entity is a process rather than a thing.

This analysis is strongly motivated. For one thing, it elucidates in natural fashion the semantic contrast between epistemic predications and non-epistemic expressions like *identified*, *before*, and so on. More importantly, it helps

to explain the special properties observed for epistemic predication in section 2. Let us briefly review these properties, focusing mainly on demonstratives.

Demonstratives fail to occur as clausal predicates because such predicates are always relational, while demonstratives are nominal in character, as we will see. The pivotal property of an epistemic predication is that it profiles only the entity that is epistemically grounded — not the grounding relationship *per se* — even though the grounding relationship provides its principal semantic content. A demonstrative therefore designates a schematically characterized thing, as in 8(c), while a verbal epistemic predication of tense or modality designates a schematically characterized process. Because it profiles a thing, and further specifies its epistemic status, a demonstrative is actually categorized in this framework as a schematic nominal (noun phrase). The analysis thus explains the common ability of demonstratives, in English and many other languages, to stand alone as full nominals, often used anaphorically. It similarly explains the ability of English modals, as schematic but epistemically grounded processes, to occur as pro forms for the verbal elements in a finite clause (e.g. *Yes, you may; She will; We must*).

It can further be seen that the analysis automatically resolves the apparent problem posed by epistemic predication for the cognitive grammar theory of valence relations. Various considerations make it desirable to claim that an epistemic predication is always the profile determinant when it participates in a valence relation with a noun or a verb. On the assumption that epistemic predication are stative relations (parallel to *identified, near, certain, before*, etc.), it was seen that such a claim leads to untenable results: *this man* is adjectival, designating the locative/epistemic relationship of *man* to the ground, and *He fainted* is adverbial, designating the relationship of temporal anteriority between *faint* and the time of speaking. Even though these deictic relationships are important to the meaning of the expressions, we clearly want to claim that *this man* is nominal and designates the man, while *He fainted* is processual and designates the process of fainting. This is precisely the result obtained when epistemic predication are given the structure of 8(c), where the profile is limited to the entity (thing or process) that is epistemically grounded, leaving the grounding relationship unprofiled in the base. A demonstrative designates a schematic thing that corresponds in a valence relation to the profile of the head noun, and the past-tense morpheme designates a schematic process that corresponds to the profile of the verb. Even though the epistemic predication is the profile determinant, there-

fore, the resulting composite structure correctly designates the man in the first instance and the process of fainting in the second.

The content of epistemic predication is largely restricted to epistemic domains (time, reality, identification), but they are hardly alone in referring to these domains. The special character that sets them apart from other, seemingly comparable elements can be summarized in these terms: an epistemic predication construes the ground with maximal subjectivity, consistent with its status as a deictic expression. The ground must lie within the scope of predication in a deictic expression, so it cannot be fully subjective in the manner of Figure 4(a). There are nevertheless degrees of subjectivity even for entities included in the scope of predication, and this is precisely the basis for the contrast between Figure 8(a) and 8(c). In 8(a), presupposing the egocentric viewing arrangement, the viewing asymmetry required for the subjective/objective contrast is largely dissipated; since G is on stage, its inherent subjectivity is minimized, and its objectivity maximized, to the extent that these notions are still applicable. Epistemic predication, on the other hand, preserve the optimal viewing arrangement and hence a certain measure of asymmetry between the observer and the observed; in 8(c), where G is external to the objective scene (the locus of viewing attention), its role of observer predominates over its role as object of observation, and it is therefore maximally subjective under the circumstances.

This characterization of epistemic predication is also consistent with another of their properties, namely the impossibility of elaborating their landmark (reference point) in a valence relation. The landmark of *near* or *identified* can be spelled out in a valence relation even when it is a ground element (*a town near us*; *a person identified to us*), but nothing directly parallel is possible for a demonstrative (**this (to) me town*; *(*a/the*) *town this (to) us*). This is no doubt due in part to the obligatory deixis of epistemic predication, which precludes the possibility of significant contrast. However it also fits in well with the iconicity posited for the subjectivity scale. I have suggested that phonological objectification (i.e. explicit mention) and conceptual objectification tend to correlate — in particular, a ground element is more likely to be construed subjectively (or with a greater degree of subjectivity) when left implicit than when it is overtly mentioned. The fact that reference to G is **obligatorily** implicit with epistemic predication is thus fully consonant with their characterization as deictic expressions that maximize G's subjectivity.

Our final order of business is to examine more carefully this putative

iconic relationship between objectivity and explicit mention. We will focus in particular on expressions that represent the configuration of 8(a), i.e. relational predications that have a facet of the ground as one of their participants. We are therefore concerned with the contrast between pairs of sentences like the following, where a. and b. are in each case to be interpreted as involving the same ground element:

- (23) a. I hope not.
b. Hope not.
- (24) a. You leave me alone!
b. Leave me alone!
- (25) a. There is snow all around me.
b. There is snow all around.

The hypothesis predicts that the relevant ground element will tend in each instance to be construed more objectively in a. than in b.

The semantic contrast between the a. and the b. sentences is obviously very subtle. In (23) and (24), formality suggests itself as a relevant parameter. Sentence (23a) is appropriate in any register, but the subject ellipsis in (23b) is limited to causal, informal speech. By leaving his subject role implicit, the speaker invites greater intimacy, effectively encouraging the listener to view the process from his own, internal vantage point; the effect of explicit SELF-mention in (23a), on the other hand, is to put the speaker roughly on a par with other individuals — he describes his attitude more objectively, approximately as he would describe the attitude of an OTHER.²⁰ Similarly, the occurrence of *you* in (24a) has the effect of specifying overtly and objectively — as in writing a contract — that the command is directed at the addressee. In (24b) the speaker relies on the cooperation of the hearer to draw this conclusion indirectly (from the conventions of English grammar), but (24a) spells it out “in no uncertain terms”.

The association between formality and objectivity is readily apparent. As the formality of an occasion increases, less can be taken for granted as common ground; more aspects of the situation must be raised to the level of specific concern, as matters of potential variability and negotiation. An entity is objective to the extent that it is put on stage in this manner and functions as an object of viewing attention — this is true of a ground element like any other. It is therefore plausible to interpret the greater informality of an expression that leaves a ground element implicit as being indicative of this element being construed more subjectively than in cases of explicit mention.

The data in (23)-(24) appears to be consistent with the basic hypothesis, but due to the abstractness of the notions involved it hardly provides compelling support. The evidence is perhaps more convincing in cases like (25), which lend themselves to an interpretation based on observation in the narrow sense, i.e. perceptual experience. The choice between (25a) and (25b), I suggest, depends on how strongly the speaker wishes to emphasize the perceptual basis of his description: in (25a) the speaker is simply describing an aspect of his immediate physical environment, but in (25b) the speaker is describing what he actually sees. Suppose, for example, that an astronaut lands on another planet and sets out to explore the territory around his spacecraft. In radio contact with Houston, our space hero — in the calm, matter-of-fact way of speaking that astronauts are trained to use — conveys to the scientists back on earth the following, objectively-presented checklist of environmental features:

- (26) I am in the middle of a large crater. It is approximately a kilometer in diameter. *There is snow all around me*, to a depth of about 10 centimeters. There is a thin crust of ice on the upper surface of the snow, except in the vicinity of the larger boulders.

Suppose, on the other hand, that a non-astronaut takes a skiing vacation in the mountains. While resting at the top of a slope, he decides to write a postcard to his friend back home:

- (27) What a glorious day! The sun is shining, the sky is blue, and the scenery is spectacular. *There's snow all around*, as far I can see, and no smog at all. I feel great! Wish you were here.

It would be too strong to claim that the expressions in question could not be interchanged in these passages. Sentence (28) is acceptable, for instance:

- (28) There's snow all around me, as far as I can see.

I would nevertheless maintain that they are natural in the contexts provided for them, and that assigning them to the opposite contexts would represent the marked choice.

The contrast is therefore subtle, as we would expect it to be, and it is easily overshadowed by other factors. When conditions allow it to emerge, however, the effect of leaving the ground element implicit is to facilitate a construal in which the scene is conceptualized from the vantage point of this element. Nothing in (25a) prevents one from conceptualizing the scene as observed “through the speaker's eyes”, but (25b) specifically invites this interpretation. What is remarkable about this is that neither sentence con-

tains any lexical item pertaining to vision or place of observation, and that the sentence which induces us to take the speaker's position does not even mention the speaker! These facts are readily explained in the present analysis. Implicit reference to the speaker correlates with the speaker being construed more subjectively, where subjectivity is the property of the viewer in a viewing situation that preserves some measure of observer/observed asymmetry. It is the inherent nature of subjectivity that facilitates the understanding of sentences like (25b) in terms of vantage point and perception.

As a literary device, the subjectifying impact of implicit reference can be exploited even for third-person expressions. Consider (29).

- (29) Dmitri was trudging through the woods.
a. There was a clearing ahead of him.
b. There was a clearing ahead.

Suppose that (29) is the opening line of a novel, and consider the effect of choosing b. rather than a. as the continuation. It seems perfectly evident that by choosing b. the author is adopting Dmitri's point of view for the narration, describing the setting as it appears through the eyes of his subject. By contrast, the a. continuation keeps the author's options open — he avoids the conceptual displacement that would merge the author/reader viewpoint with Dmitri's, preserving the distance between himself and his subject and permitting a fully objective construal of the scene from an external (i.e. offstage) perspective. In support of these interpretations, observe that (29b) suggests quite strongly that Dmitri knows that there is a clearing ahead (either because he sees it or because he is familiar with the woods) and intends to go there, while (29a) is equally compatible with Dmitri's ignorance of what lies ahead (the author's omniscience and external vantage point provide this information).

Let us consider just one more type of example. Suppose a visitor is allowed in to observe a UCSD Linguistics Department faculty meeting. Seated in the conference room, and in awe of the famous personages seated around the table, our visitor excitedly whispers to his neighbor one of the sentences in (30):

- (30) What a thrill to be in such illustrious company!
a. Ed Klima is sitting across the table from Dave Perlmutter!
b. Ed Klima is sitting across the table from me!
c. Ed Klima is sitting across the table!

So far as the locative relationships are concerned, (30a) is fully objective, while sentences b. and c. are deictic and take the speaker as point of reference. It is claimed that the speaker is construed more subjectively in c. than in b., and more specifically, that c. portrays the situation as seen "through the eyes of" the speaker. We would naturally like to find some corroboration for this claim. The putative contrast also stands in need of further clarification. Can it be adequately characterized by means of the constructs and notational conventions adopted earlier?

As corroboration of the distinction between (30b) and c., let us extend the scenario. Suppose that photographers are permitted in to record the historic faculty meeting for posterity. The next day, our privileged visitor finds a series of pictures from the meeting displayed prominently on the front page of the local newspaper. He runs to a friend of his that he wants to impress, points excitedly to one of the pictures, and says...what? My judgment is that (31a) would be perfectly natural in this context, but that (31b) would be decidedly odd:

- (31) Look at this photograph!
 - a. Ed Klima is sitting across the table from me!
 - b. *Ed Klima is sitting across the table!

The difference in acceptability follows directly from the proposed analysis. The context involves cross-world identification, diagrammed in Figure 5(b). The speaker is looking at a photograph, and all of the entities depicted in this photograph are external and objective from his actual vantage point. The fact that he identifies one of the figures as his counterpart in the world of the photograph motivates his use of the pronoun *me* to designate it, but this figure is nonetheless viewed objectively, from offstage. While this is not a canonical use of *me* (cf. Figure 4(c)), it at least resembles the canonical use in that the latter also construes the speaker (insofar as possible) as an object of observation. On the other hand, the absence of a pronoun in (31b) indicates that the speaker is construed subjectively, his role as observer assuming greater importance than his role as object of observation.

We must now attempt to pin down more precisely the position of the speaker in the two types of expressions. The speaker functions as a reference point even when not overtly mentioned, so G must be included in the scope of predication for both types. Furthermore, these expressions are non-epistemic, despite their deictic character. In (30), for example, *across the table (from X)* retains its relational profile when the reference point X is equated

with a speech act participant; moreover, the deixis of this phrase is non-obligatory (cf. *across the table from Dave Perlmutter*), and even when it is deictic the reference point can be spelled out explicitly in a valence relation (*across the table from me*). In all of these traits the expressions in question contrast with the properties of epistemic predication. We can therefore assume that Figure 8(c), representing the analysis of such predication, is inappropriate for the constructions that concern us now.

Recall that G remains offstage in an epistemic predication (e.g. a demonstrative), and that the grounding relationship is consequently incapable of being profiled, since the profile is restricted to the objective scene. Here, though, we are dealing with expressions that retain their relational character even though a ground element functions as an essential participant. We must therefore assume that the speaker is on stage, within the objective scene, for both *across the table from me* and *across the table* (interpreted in parallel fashion). Both expressions thus correspond to Figure 8(a), where G is included as a profiled relational participant within the expanded objective scene of the egocentric viewing arrangement. Figure 8(a) was advertised as a “first approximation” when initially introduced. The need for a second approximation is now quite evident: a semantic contrast pertaining to subjectivity/objectivity is claimed for the two expressions, but the contrast is not revealed in the diagrammatic representation worked out for them so far.

A tentative solution is suggested by the discussion of recent examples, which led to the conclusion that a relation is construed as seen “through the eyes of the speaker” when the role of the speaker in the relation is left implicit. If so, the effect of mentioning the speaker explicitly must be to suspend this provision, allowing the conceptualizer a certain amount of leeway in the vantage point he assumes in construing the scene. SELF-mention by the speaker may therefore indicate a certain degree of dissociation between his actual position and the vantage point that he assumes for purposes of linguistic expression. This amounts to displacement, but it cannot be the radical sort of displacement diagrammed in Figure 5(a) and illustrated by the speaker referring to himself as *the person uttering this sentence*. Radical displacement assumes an offstage vantage point and results in a change of person, neither of which is necessarily involved in expressions like *across the table from me* or *all around me*.

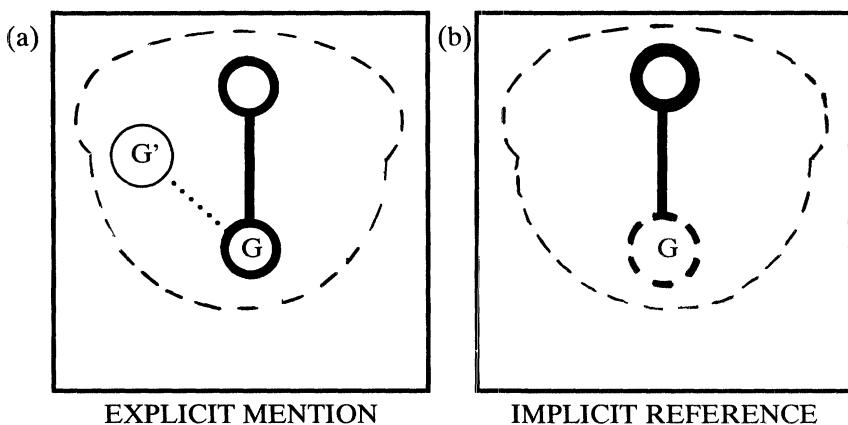


Figure 9

Instead I propose a displacement of modest proportions, sketched in Figure 9(a). G is the actual position of the speaker, as before, and G' is the vantage point he assumes for expressive purposes. To describe a relation in which he participates, the speaker invokes the egocentric viewing arrangement and goes on stage within the objective scene. Without resorting to radical displacement, he nevertheless allows himself the luxury of SELF-examination from a vantage point G' sufficiently dissociated from his actual position to overcome the inherent limitations of the latter in this regard. Intuitively, I feel that the speaker presumes a kind of "omniscience" within the objective scene, being free to adopt any vantage point G' so long as it remains on stage, though generally this mental transfer is quite minimal — the speaker "steps outside himself" just enough to permit a measure of SELF-observation "from the exterior".

As a limiting case, the degree of displacement is zero, and in this event G and G' coincide. Explicit SELF-mention is therefore not incompatible with the speaker construing the scene with respect to his actual viewpoint, which may even represent the unmarked choice precisely because it requires no mental transfer. The hypothesis, of course, is that non-mention of the speaker facilitates this interpretation, making it more likely if not obligatory. In Figure 9(b), then, there is no divergence between the actual position of the speaker and his assumed vantage point. This absence of displacement augments the subjectivity of the speaker, as it diminishes his capacity for SELF-observation. The salience of the speaker as an object of observation

is thereby reduced, as indicated in 9(b) by use of the broken-line circle to surround G.

In all, then, there are at least five different degrees of subjectivity possible for the speaker, three without displacement and two with. Without displacement, the speaker can be (i) external to the scope of predication; (ii) offstage within the scope of predication; or (iii) on stage within the objective scene, which is portrayed as viewed "through his eyes". The subjectivity of the speaker decreases from (i) through (iii), and his objectivity increases, though in (iii) there is little basis for the subjective/objective contrast. With displacement, however, the basis for the contrast is restored, and the speaker gains in objectivity in proportion to the degree of displacement. Here there are at least two options: (iv) the assumed vantage point can be confined to the objective scene; or (v) an offstage vantage point can be assumed, resulting in a greater measure of objectivity.

5. Implications

From the standpoint of theoretical linguistics as it is presently constituted, the analysis advanced here might well be regarded as hopelessly vague and informal. Certainly it is not immune to such charges, but one would be misguided, I believe, to reject the possible value — even the necessity — of exploratory investigations such as this, which seek to elucidate in preliminary, intuitively comprehensible terms the basic character of phenomena that will eventually have to be dealt with in more rigorous fashion. For those who accept the cognitive basis of semantic and grammatical structure, the significance of the issues we have wrestled with in this paper should be fully apparent, despite the inevitable deficiencies of this first attempt at capturing them in a coherent system of descriptive constructs. Any dissatisfaction with this system as it presently stands is best expressed in the form of another system, of comparable coherence and detail, that avoids these deficiencies.

Even as a first approximation, the analysis has many ramifications of potential significance, only some of which will be touched on briefly by way of conclusion. From the perspective of the cognitive grammar framework, its central import lies in the characterization of epistemic predications, and more specifically, in the fact that their seeming anomaly — with respect to its generally well-motivated account of valence relations — can be explained and resolved in terms of their semantic value. The special nature of epistemic predications derives from the radical subjectivity that sets them apart from other deictic expressions; linguists concerned with the process of grammatical-

zation, and in particular the semantic “bleaching” that goes into it, would consequently do well to pay some heed to “subjectification” as one of its possible dimensions. The iconic aspects of subjectivity are naturally most relevant to the concerns of this volume. I hope to have demonstrated that subjectivity is a phenomenon that should not be overlooked in this regard, despite its general neglect and the obvious difficulty of dealing with it explicitly.

The notions of subjectivity and objectivity may help to clarify a number of grammatical issues of more traditional concern. One such issue, to be mentioned only in passing, is the problem posed by the apparent optionality of complement subject deletion, as illustrated in (32).²¹

- (32) a. I want to be rich.
- b. I want me to be rich.

With verbs of cognition, such as *want*, the subject is a conceptualizer, hence it plays a role with respect to its complement which is somewhat analogous to that of the speaker and hearer in the construal relation for the sentence as a whole. It may be suggested, then, that the explicit occurrence of *me* in (32b) indicates a more objective construal by the main-clause subject of its role in the process described by the complement clause. This would appear to be the case. Sentence (32a), where the complement subject remains implicit, simply describes a desire felt by the speaker — there is no particular thought of the possibility of anybody else being rich, one way or the other. By contrast, (32b) is more cerebral. The speaker considers the range of people who might be rich and selects himself from this set as the person with respect to whom the desire is entertained. The SELF is thus objectified to the extent of being considered on a par with OTHERS as the conceivable focus of the desire.

The ranking of expressions along a scale of subjectivity/objectivity bears a certain affinity to Givón's notion of **topicality** and correlates in certain respects with the hierarchy (which goes by different names) referred to by DeLancey (1981) as the **empathy hierarchy**. Factors such as thematicity, definiteness, individuation, animacy, and humanness are commonly cited as contributing positively to the ranking of entities on this hierarchy. These factors are not at all unrelated to our previous characterization of objectivity, which pertained to perceptual optimality: an entity is objective to the extent that it is sharply distinguished from both its background and the observer, and is perceived in sharp, fine-grained detail. I will offer only a brief remark, which can hardly do justice to the complex issues involved.

I believe we need to distinguish two closely-related scales, one pertaining to **proximity** and the other to **objectivity**. They are largely the same, but differ in their relation to the speech act participants (i.e. the observers). The various factors mentioned as contributing to topicality or empathy can all be interpreted as bringing an entity into closer proximity to the ground (given an appropriately abstract conception of distance). Definiteness, for example, implies that "contact" has been made with a particular individual, and old information is content that has already been brought within the scope of discussion. Humans rank above other animates, which in turn rank above inanimates, with respect to similarity to the speech act participants — this translates into proximity in terms of egocentricity and empathy. Individualization, sharpness of delineation, and detail of specification all correlate perceptually with proximity to the observer, and one can plausibly assume an analogous correlation for more abstract levels of processing (as we have done throughout).

Proximity is not however precisely the same as objectivity. If the measure is simply proximity to an observer, the observer is clearly at the endpoint of the scale: maximal proximity amounts to contact, even coincidence with the observer. On the other hand, objectivity implies a certain distance from the observer. Perceptual optimality correlates for the most part with proximity, but beyond a certain point the further approximation of an entity to the observer results in decreased perceptibility. The observer, then, is **not** the endpoint of the objectivity scale — he is in fact a maximally subjective entity. The objectivity scale is consequently very similar to the proximity scale except for the anomaly induced by the difficulty of SELF-observation. Maximal proximity to the observer can be attributed to the observer himself, while maximal objectivity is achieved only at a certain distance from the observer and is thus reserved for OTHERS.

It is not a matter of choosing between the two scales. Each has its own rationale; and both are obviously of substantial linguistic significance. The significance of the empathy/topicality scale is witnessed, for instance, by the relative proclivity of the entities along the scale to occupy subject position in a clause — here the speech act participants rank at the top. On the other hand, the validity of a scale that is comparable except for its treatment of the speech act participants is supported by the kind of data cited by DeLanney: first- and second-person forms are often treated differently from all others, in regard to split ergativity and other phenomena. I would suggest, as a working hypothesis, that objectivity is the relevant notion.

Finally, the analysis advanced here has important implications for the description of semantic structure. For one thing, it shows that the construal relation and the observer/observed asymmetry are essential to the characterization of many expressions and constructions and cannot be left out of account. It raises the important question of the extent to which semantic structure in general is organized along lines that we normally consider to be specifically "perceptual". If the analysis has been successful, it suggests that even an intangible, seemingly nebulous concept like subjectivity might be susceptible to description by means of an array of specific, potentially precise constructs, each with its own conceptual import and broader motivation.

At the most fundamental level, the analysis supports the need for a view of meaning and semantic structure that fully acknowledges and gracefully accommodates its cognitive nature. Meaning is conceptualization. It presupposes the construal relation and resides in the image employed by the conceptualizer to structure a given situation. Alternative images can be employed to structure the same basic situation, often within a single sentence. Our imagic capacity is the source of meaning and the necessary starting point for its characterization. It is no less crucial to grammar, for grammar is nothing other than the conventional structuring and symbolization of conceptual content.

NOTES

1) See Langacker 1982 and 1983 for a more comprehensive exposition of this framework.

I wish to thank various conference participants for their helpful remarks on the preliminary version of this paper, in particular Dwight Bolinger, John Haiman, and Elizabeth Traugott.

2) For discussion, see Lakoff 1982; Tuggy 1980; Casad and Langacker 1982; and the work of Leonard Talmy (e.g. 1975, 1976).

3) Figure 2(b) of course presents the anterior construal of the deictic sense — the posterior construal is comparable. There is also a relational version of the deictic predication, as in *It happened/will happen Tuesday*.

4) In all these examples with non-ground elements as goal, it would be possible to claim that the speaker mentally transports himself to the reference point, thus preserving their deictic character. Conceivably this is correct, but the nature and import of this transfer must be clarified and elaborated. Here I will simply note that it contrasts with the salient and clear-cut instances of **displacement** considered later.

5) Observe, for example, that when *all* of the members of a class share a certain property, selecting a member at random *must* result in the choice of a member that displays this property; when *most* share the property, random selection *should* uncover one with the property; and when only *some* share the property, random selection *may* uncover one.

6) Some expressions (e.g. proper nouns and personal pronouns) make the requisite epistemic predication as part of their internal semantic structure, hence they qualify as epistemically grounded without a separate predication to this effect.

7) The notional difference is that the relative quantifiers characterize a mass as some proportion of a more inclusive reference mass, while the absolute quantifiers do not (cf. Langacker 1982).

8) Expressions such as *We may*, *They should*, etc. are elliptic and not directly parallel to (10a) (note the non-clausal subject). Their use as pro forms for the verbal elements of a finite clause is explained by the analysis offered later.

9) It is argued in Langacker 1978 that the so-called "past tense" morpheme in English is more accurately viewed as an abstract marker of dissociation from the ground — interaction with other factors yields past tense as a special case. The conception of tense as involving abstract "distance" brings out its affinity to demonstratives.

10) Since the sense in which relative quantifiers and modal auxiliaries incorporate the ground as reference point is not straightforward (cf. note 5), we will restrict our attention in what follows to tense and demonstratives, where the nature of this grounding is more obvious.

11) Cf. Langacker 1978, where it is argued that there is no need for any putative "sequence of tenses" rule in English.

Elizabeth Traugott has pointed out to me that the grounding of epistemic predictions is more complex in certain literary styles, in particular the "free indirect style". (A hypothetical example: *She was afraid. Why was this happening to her?* Note that the value of *this* is computed relative to the protagonist, while tense and person are computed relative to the speaker/author.) Further examination of literary styles in terms of the constructs introduced in this paper should prove revealing.

12) The objective scene is probably related to Lindner's **region of interactive focus**, which she has shown (1981, 1982) to be highly important for the analysis of English verb-particle constructions.

13) Though I cannot argue the matter here, I would claim that not all phonological content is objective. Sound structures are conceptual entities, only certain facets of which are susceptible to physical implementation and objective manifestation. I would go so far as to say that the speaker is in fact symbolized phonologically in (17c), though by non-objective content (by an identity function, in effect).

14) Observe that something more is involved than simple **economic motivation** (Haiman 1983), where quantity of phonological content correlates with the quantity of information to be conveyed. All of the sentences in (17) could be used in contexts (e.g. in answer to a question) where the identity of the subject as the speaker is well established and taken for granted. Moreover, the conventions of English specifically sanction both *I* and zero as means of indicating the speaker in sentences like these. The semantic contrast between (17b) and c. is not primarily one of identification or information content, but rather one of how subjectively the speaker is construed.

15) An immediate objection can be raised to equating the assumed vantage point with that of the child, namely that *my mother* would then be expected instead of *your mother*. I do not believe this objection to be valid, however, since it presupposes — incorrectly — that an entire complex expression is necessarily constructed with reference to a single vantage point. This is simply not the case — note *I'll come there tomorrow*.

16) The representation is still quite crude, but I hope sufficient for present purposes. A more elaborate diagram would indicate that the speech event is a process rather than a stative relation;

that the process has a particular duration and location in time; and so on. It is important that my shorthand (and quite standard) reference to the “contents” of a linguistic expression not be taken as an endorsement of the “conduit” or “container” metaphor that pervades our thought about language (cf. Reddy 1979).

17) Since we are dealing with a kind of SELF-reference, one should not be bothered by the fact that in 7(b) and (c) the ground is included in the scope of predication (C), while C itself has been identified as an element of the ground. Nor should one be overly concerned with the diagrammatic contortions forced upon us by the artificial restrictions of the two-dimensional page.

18) Given the overall principles of the cognitive grammar framework, this analysis uses only constructs that must be posited for independent reasons. To this extent, at least, it constitutes a principled account of the sort that Ross (1970) contemplates as an alternative to his performative clause analysis (he refers to it as a **pragmatic analysis**, but I reject the semantic/pragmatic distinction — cf. Haiman 1980). The speech act participants are not “in the air”, but simply offstage.

19) This structure is not limited to epistemic predictions — note that the deictic sense of *Tuesday* (Figure 2(b)) accords with its specifications. The predictions identified as epistemic are largely restricted to the “epistemic” domains of reality, identification, etc.

20) Subject ellipsis may also lend a nuance of reticence, the speaker being reluctant to assume an on-stage role. As in the case of displacement, the same device — with a constant effect in terms of position along the subjectivity scale — appears to be exploited for rather different social or emotive purposes.

21) Sentence (32b) can occur in answer to the question *Who do you want to be rich?*, and is even preferable to (32a) in this context. It can be read with contrastive stress on *me*, but it is possible to construct situations where it occurs with normal stress.

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