Some Theoretical Implications of Two Intersubjective Viewing Arrangements:

A New Look at Japanese Cognitive Grammar
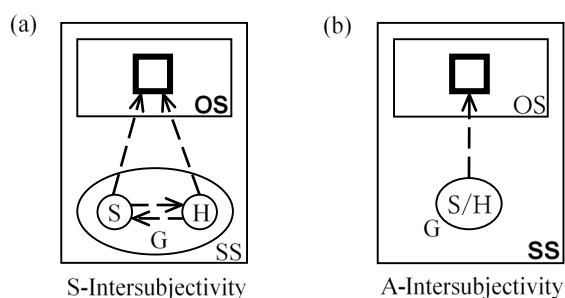
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The aim of this paper is to propose a unified model on intersubjectivity and its related notions within the framework of Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 2008, etc.). Since language is intersubjective in nature, we begin our discussion with observing two different communication stances (face-to-face vs. side-by-side), which leads us to assume that there are two distinct types of intersubjectivity (S-Intersubjectivity vs. A-Intersubjectivity). Based on the face-to-face communication stance, the speaker and the hearer establish an intersubjective recognition (called S-Intersubjectivity) by mutually simulating others' perspectives, which evoke the potential to create a surrogated self in an objective scene (a blended space of the speaker's and the hearers' mental worlds). In A-Intersubjectivity, on the other hand, the speaker's and the hearer's perspectives are assimilated, based on a sense of self-other identification induced by side-by-side communication stance. As illustrated in the figure below, S-Intersubjectivity contains two distinct perspectives while A-Intersubjectivity has only one assimilated perspective.

Although S-Intersubjectivity and A-Intersubjectivity respectively correspond to Langacker's optimal viewing arrangement and ego-centric viewing arrangement, recognizing these viewing arrangements as the distinct types of intersubjectivity plays a crucial role in understanding overt vs. covert grounding, (zero) pronouns and the probability of so-called "ellipsis" in a unified way. We propose that the Japanese grammatical system has evolved based on A-Intersubjectivity, which does not necessarily require the speaker to

S-Intersubjectivity
A-Intersubjectivity

direct the hearer's attention to the referent because sharing attention between them has already been established by definition. That makes covert grounding, zero pronouns and some ellipses possible in Japanese. The English grammatical system, on the other hand, has developed based on S-Intersubjectivity, which requires the speaker to explicitly direct the hearer's attention to the referent. That is why English speakers have to ground the referents with articles, use verbal pronouns and strictly confine ellipses to some cases.

This distinction of intersubjectivity is, of course, flexible in reality since communication stances are dynamically interchanged. In addition, it is natural to assume that there is a cognitive operation called "objectification of the subject of conception" to meet our flexible event construals. The subject of conception can be objectively construed in two ways: self-introspection (Langacker 1990) and simulation of other's perspective (Tomasello 1999). Ground as the deictic center or the default reference point can also be objectified as a "surrogated" reference point by which the speaker invites the hearer's attention to the target in S-Intersubjectivity. By the same token, Japanese topic marker *wa* provides a reference-point function for the speaker to share his attention with the hearer when they do not establish A-intersubjectivity. This analysis has a potential to open a new perspective to capture language diversity systematically.

References
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