

Subjectivity in Grammar and Discourse by Shoichi Iwasaki.
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This book starts out with the definition of subjectivity, which has been mentioned but not fully treated in the field of linguistics. Shoichi Iwasaki's (henceforth SI) book is one of the first attempts to suggest a concrete linguistic approach to this notion.

Subjectivity has been considered difficult to define for linguistic investigation, even though some linguists (e.g., Langacker, 1985; Lyons, 1977) point out the importance of subjectivity to languages in various ways. Japanese happens to be one of the languages which reflects the speaker's subjectivity particularly in morphology and grammar. SI lays out a very original approach to the notion of subjectivity in this book, which is, in essence, a pragmatic approach to the attributes and experience of the real speaker which affect the way clauses are shaped. The book is divided into five chapters, with an appendix containing a sample glossed narrative transcript and transcription conventions.

In Chapter 1, SI discusses in depth three types of speaker's subjectivity, the basic notion of this book: (a) the speaker as the center of spatial deictic phenomena (e.g., *kuru* 'come,' *kureru* 'give'); (b) the speaker as the center of evaluation of event and attitude (e.g., the adversative passive *-(r)are*, expression of regret, *te shimau*); and (c) the speaker as the center of epistemological perspective (e.g., the mental process verb *omou* 'think' being appropriate for expressing the speaker's own perspective).

Chapter 2 further develops type (c), the speaker's epistemological perspective, which is the main focus of the rest of the book. SI describes three subtypes of a speaker's epistemological perspective which affect grammar and the use of language: (1) S-perspective, when the speaker describes his/her own experience, (2) O-perspective, when s/he describes other sentient beings' experiences, and (3) Zero-perspective, when no sentient being's experience is involved in the description. SI argues that Japanese grammar reflects this three-way distinction in the area of transitivity. The speaker taking an S-perspective, where the speaker is the more conscious instigator of an action than in other perspectives, has more direct access to the information for a situation described in a sentence. SI shows that predicates with higher transitive features are associated with greater information accessibility, in other words, with S-perspective, and predicates with lower transitive features, which represent less information accessibility, are associated with O-perspective or Zero-perspective.

Chapter 3 deals with the hypothesis of information accessibility and how it

manifests itself in actual discourse. SI analyzes declarative sentences of first person narratives because the perspective distinction between the speaker and other participants as outlined in the previous chapter is more straightforward than in third person narratives. SI explains the distributional patterns of tense forms: first person subjects are more frequently associated with past tense forms, whereas third person and inanimate subjects are more frequently associated with nonpast tense forms. SI's theory of the speaker's perspective nicely accounts for this variation; first person subjects, which usually represent S-perspective, are associated with past tense forms because of their higher information accessibility.

Chapter 4 goes beyond verb morphology and considers an intra-clausal phenomenon, switch reference, realized in clause-chains in Japanese. SI takes two clause-chaining morphemes, *-te* and *-tara* and shows how the notion of perspective influences the selection of these clause-chaining forms. *-Tara* occurs when higher information accessibility changes to lower information accessibility (and this often marks the shift from S- to O- perspective); *-Te* is used when there is no change in the degree of information accessibility. Iwasaki claims that in order to account for the Japanese switch reference system, the importance of S-perspective (or first person perspective) must be considered—a provoking contribution to earlier discussions on switch reference, which generally stress the primacy of the third person (cf. Haiman & Munro, 1983).

Chapter 5 extends the discussion on perspective phenomena to other languages. This chapter can be regarded as a re-interpretation of well-known concepts in functional linguistics using the notion of perspective principles. Here, SI once again emphasizes the importance of including the notion of subjectivity in linguistic investigation. He discusses the phenomena known as split ergativity and transitivity in terms of perspective principles. He further extends the theoretical implications of his study to language universals and typology, and points out the relevance of the notion of an animacy hierarchy to this perspective distinction.

As a whole, this study is intriguing and provocative in various ways. In terms of methodology, defining the notion of subjectivity is itself a challenging task, and SI's three-way division of speaker subjectivity gives a concrete foundation for the rest of the study. However, one can also ask: "Why three? Are there always three? If not, why these three then?" In other words, the cross-linguistic applicability of his three-way division of subjectivity is an interesting question we must pursue in the future. In languages which manifest less morphosyntactic realization of subjectivity, SI's three-way divisions may not apply at all.

The fact that subjectivity is concretely expressed in Japanese morphosyntax makes us wonder whether the role of subjectivity in Japanese grammar is potentially more significant than in other languages like English where subjectivity is less morphologically salient. In the last three decades, some schools of linguistics seem to have placed an extreme emphasis on the notion of

"proposition" in English and other Indo-European languages. SI's work is a unique contribution to linguistic study in that it suggests the expansion of the notion of grammar to include subjectivity, since, as SI has shown, it is impossible to separate propositional and pragmatic elements in actual language use, at least in languages like Japanese.

SI's work provides us with a tool for cross-linguistic research on speaker's subjectivity and the relationship between subjectivity and grammar in language. Functional linguists, who ascribe to the concepts such as "tendency" of a particular linguistic phenomenon and the "continuous" nature that natural discourse data exhibit, should find SI's methodology concrete and convincing at least in two aspects. First, SI limits the scope of his analysis to the speaker's epistemological perspective, using declarative sentences from first person narrative data. SI has chosen the type of genre which shows the perspective shift most straightforwardly, and I consider such an approach to be an effective starting point. However, the applicability of this approach to different types of genres (e.g., conversation, lecture) must also be investigated as a next step.

Second, SI combines a continuum and discreteness in developing his theory of perspective, which leads him to present convincing quantitative results as well. The Information Accessibility Hypothesis is of a scalar nature (it is discussed in terms of "more" and "less" in Chapter 2). The three perspectives (S-, O-, and Zero-) are suggested as the three points on the scale. The actual linguistic forms (i.e., first person, third person, and inanimate subjects) are then connected to each point on the perspective, which enables SI to measure the realization of subjectivity in natural discourse. In other words, SI's theory outlined in Chapter 2 is carefully constructed and his work is a precise model which shows that a notion like "subjectivity" can be concretely measured and presented.

REFERENCES

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