VIEWPOINT AND THE FABRIC OF MEANING

FORM AND USE OF VIEWPOINT TOOLS ACROSS LANGUAGES AND MODALITIES
This volume explores the cross-linguistic diversity, and possibly inconsistency, of the span of linguistic means that signal reported speech and thought. The integration of broad linguistic (viewpoint in conversation and narrative) and cognitive (theory of mind and understanding the inner life and thought of others) strategies for handling mixed points of view will be considered.

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The series features volumes which address a variety of concerns and broadly compatible theoretical approaches that have a common basic outlook: that language is an integral facet of cognition which reflects the interaction of social, cultural, psychological, communicative and functional considerations, and which can only be understood in the context of a realistic view of acquisition, cognitive development and mental processing.
Viewpoint and the Fabric of Meaning

Form and Use of Viewpoint Tools across Languages and Modalities

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Arie Verhagen

Introduction: On tools for weaving meaning out of viewpoint threads

Human beings are unique in the animal kingdom for a variety of reasons. One of them is their extensive high levels of social cognition. The capacity to take the knowledge, feelings, and attitudes of other people, and the ways these relate to their own cognitive and emotional states, into account in coordinating their activities, definitely is a major “root” of human sociality (Enfield and Levinson 2006). Colloquially put: people are normally very good at assessing other people’s “point of view” on matters that are of interest to them. The study of viewpoint has a long history in the scholarly study of narrative discourse: (linguistic) narratology, stylistics, and (cognitive) poetics. An essential feature of stories (whether fact or fiction) is that they represent the speech, thoughts, attitudes, and emotions of characters. In processing narrative discourse, listeners/readers construct conceptualizations of the ways these different viewpoints are connected into a meaningful fabric, and moreover connect it to their own point of view, thus adding a further dimension of meaning. The study of the complexities of viewpoint in narrative discourse thus provides an especially interesting window on core characteristics of human cognition, while theories of social cognition and its evolution may shed light on the delight that humans universally take in storytelling and the role of viewpoint in it (cf. Zunshine 2006, Boyd 2009, Van Duijn, Sluiter and Verhagen 2015).

In the humanities, the study of viewpoint goes back until at least the middle of the 19th century, and its history has shown a development, reflected in the present volume, from interest in a specific type of narrative viewpoint mixing, to a much larger and varied set of viewpoint tooling tools and techniques, some of them beyond traditionally recognized linguistic categories. The specific type of “mixed viewpoints” that has been studied intensively from early on (and still is in present day research), is that of the so-called Free Indirect Discourse, as it appears to constitute a prototype of mixing. Direct Discourse (‘quotation’ as in She said: I may be president tomorrow) minimizes the responsibility of the narrator and the distance between the reader and the character; Indirect Discourse (complement as in She thought that she might be president the next day) maximizes them; but Free Indirect Discourse (She was lost in thought; she might be president tomorrow!) constitutes a ‘mixed’ variety. It was characterized by Jakobson ([1957] 1971) as a special type of one of the four crucial “duplex” structures in language (reported speech being a message representing a message), and has been in the centre of attention in various linguistic, narratological and stylistic studies. In
Ad Foolen and Toshiko Yamaguchi

**Perspective: Kawabata’s *Beauty and Sadness* and its translations into English, German, and Dutch**

**Abstract:** It has been pointed out that Japanese culture, including literature, has a preference for a special type of subjective construal, with an experiencing subject embedded in the experienced situation (see, for example, Ikekami 2005, 2008). At the same time, it is often claimed that Western culture and literature prefer a more objective, distanced, perspective. In the present paper, this assumed contrast is tested by analyzing the opening scene of *Beauty and Sadness*, a novel by the Japanese author Yasunari Kawabata and its translations in English, German, and Dutch. The four versions differ with respect to the way perspective is handled. In our analysis, we show that the original author and the translators recruit a variety of linguistic means (adverbs, pragmatic markers, negation, and constructions on the sentence level) to express perspective and guide perspectival shifts. We did not find, however, a systematic contrast in perspective taking between the Japanese original and its translations in Western languages. Instead, we found variation among the three translations, sometimes coming closer to the original, sometimes deviating from it substantially. We conclude that perspective in literary texts is a challenge for translators, which deserves more attention in translation theory and practice.

**1 Introduction**

The central question in cognitive linguistics is how languages conceptualize the world, or better, how *people* conceptualize the world in their language, or, even better, how they conceptualize *experience* (of the world) in their language. Whichever version one prefers, conceptualization remains the central notion. Conceptualization takes place with the help of cognitive processes like categorization, image schemas, metaphor, metonymy, etc. (see for example, the different chapters in Part I of Geeraerts and Cuyckens [eds., 2007] *Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*).

The central aspect of conceptualization is ‘construal’, a cover term for “non-objective facets of meaning” (Verhagen 2007: 48). In general, construal can be defined as “the relationship between a speaker (or hearer) and a situation that he conceptualizes and portrays” (Langacker 1987: 487–488). With objective con-
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