

A CROSS-LINGUISTIC EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF MOTION EXPRESSIONS: MANNER AND CODING POSITIONS OF MANNER, PATH AND DEIXIS

MATSUMOTO Yo
(Kobe University)

A crosslinguistic experimental study of the linguistic expressions of motion events is reported. This study is a comparative study of 18 human languages, and differs from previous studies in that it is a video-based study in which three aspects of motion events are examined: manner, path and deixis of motion. Based on the results, two issues are discussed: 1) typology based on the frequencies of manner, path, and deixis expressed, and 2) typology of the path and deixis coding locations in a sentence. As for the first issue, a large variation of the frequencies of expressions was observed for manner, path, and especially deixis. English, for example, very commonly mentions manner, while Japanese tends to refer to deixis often. Such differences can be attributed to the differences in the constraints placed on the explicit mention of manner/path/deixis, and the means of expressing such aspects. As for the second issue, it was found that path and deixis are coded in different locations in a clause in some languages, calling for a different treatment. Languages can be divided into three types in terms of the coding location of path: 1) head path coding languages (in which path is coded in the head or the main verb root of the sentence, in languages in which a clause has a single main verb), 2) head-external path coding languages (in which path is coded outside the head or the main verb root of the sentence, in languages in which a clause has a single main verb), and 3) co-head path coding language (in which path is coded in a co-head, or in one of the series of verbs that are equally regarded as a head of the sentence). It was found that the distinction between the first two is a matter of degree.

The data from JSL are examined to see how JSL can be characterized in this crosslinguistic study.