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Author(s)	藤田, 隆博
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SUMMARIES

On Fictive Names

Takahiro FUJITA

This paper aims to rethink the “nomenclature-view” of language,

which Saussure rejected, from the standpoint of Gibsonian direct realism. Saussure's rejection of this "naïve" view was based on two points: 1) The ontological status of "names" is ambiguous: physical or mental; 2) different languages may describe the same reality differently. Although Saussure didn't mention, two more points may be listed: 3) syntax is neglected; 4) fictive names need explained.

I propose the notion of "referential affordance" so as to conceptualize in Gibsonian way what is called "denoting", "referring", "naming" or "name". Referential affordances are what whatever or whoever mentionable affords to whomever can speak. Many ecological entities (objects, events, places, etc.) have referential affordances. Thereby, 1) names are not merely physical nor mental. In addition, ecological entities are diverse and nested in each other. Because of this, 2) an entity which has some name in a language may overlap with other entities which do not have any names in that language. For the same reason, referential affordances can be words of any parts of speech, phrases or sentences. This means that 3) we can do away with syntax as a mental or logical device which generates sentences from their constituent words.

A referential affordance does not equal word(s) independent of context. A referential affordance consists of a set of a spoken chain (*chaîne parlée*) and its occurrence condition, namely, it is a set of three things: a linguistic sound, an environment the sound may appear in and the communicative value (politeness, naturalness, figurativeness, etc.) the sound will have in that environment. (The "environment" here means anything surrounding that linguistic sound, including other linguistic sound preceding or following it.) Accordingly, 4) a fictive name shared by a speech community is a referential affordance of the environment just as a real name is, the communicative values accompanied being the only difference. The same is true of a novel and fictive expression: if it tells us something about our meaningful environment or our life, it is meaningful and will be shared with other speakers, otherwise, simply meaningless.