

# 2013 Overseas Presentations : From Preparation to Execution

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## Abstract

This report describes the process and activities related to presentations given at the International Cognitive Linguistics Conference (ICLC) and the English Linguistics Society of Korea (ELSOK) conferences in Edmonton, Canada and Seoul, Korea, respectively. Parts 1 and 2 provide explanation of the application and acceptance procedures for these conferences. Conference details are provided in Part 3. A discussion of the presentation preparation and its execution is summarized in Part 4, and the full presentation is provided in Part 5.

### 1. Acceptance Procedures and Preparation :

The first step needed in the preparation process is to write an abstract of your research findings. The average length is one to three pages ; however, each conference committee will have its own guidelines for abstract submission. The abstract contents should be clear and easy to read because approval committee members may not be completely familiar with your particular research topic. Make sure to follow all submission guidelines carefully and completely. Adherence to all criteria from the onset will help ensure the abstract's approval as well as save valuable editing time in the long-term.

All conferences have a limited time frame in which a "call for presenters" will be posted. In the case of this presentation, the notices for both the International Cognitive Linguistics Conference (ICLC) and the English Linguistics Society of Korea (ELSOK) conferences were posted about six months in advance on the website called, "Linguist List"<sup>1)</sup>. This is a web resource for linguists and includes, among other information, conference dates, times, and application uploading details and links. Furthermore, for the ICLC conference, abstracts were required to be uploaded via the abstract website "Easy Abstract"<sup>2)</sup>. For the ELSOK conference, the abstract was e-mailed to the conference organization committee in Microsoft Word format. It is advisable to attach a PDF version of the abstract as well, just in case operating systems or software versions are not completely compatible. Once the abstract is written, saved in the proper format, and uploaded or e-mailed, it is just a matter of waiting for a response from the conference committee members. Most submission committees will post an acceptance/rejection date, but response times will vary greatly. Only if absolutely necessary should polite correspondence about acceptance/rejection be inquired about. Even if rejected, this may not necessarily mean that the research or abstract is not of quality. Each conference committee has an image of what it wants

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<sup>1)</sup> Homepage address : <http://www.linguistlist.org/>

<sup>2)</sup> Homepage address : <http://linguistlist.org/confservices/EasyAbs/index.cfm>

to accomplish, and the rejected abstract may simply not be appropriate for that particular conference. Submit the abstract to a few conferences to increase the chances of acceptance. The abstract for this research was submitted to three different conferences, two of which were accepted.

## 2. Preparation Procedures :

With the acceptance of the abstract, all necessary details relating to travel and accommodation can be secured. Many conference websites have links to accommodations proximal to the venue as well as transportation directions getting there and back from the local airports and or train/ bus stations. In my case, after buying the airplane ticket, I accessed each of the links on the conference websites and reserved accommodations for the conference. In the case of the ICLC, the venue was held on the campus of the University of Alberta. Due to the summer vacation, accommodation at one of the dormitories on campus was available to conference attendees at minimal cost. The dormitory was only a 15-minute walk to the conference venue.

For the ELSOK conference, the venue was split between the University of Korea on the first two days and the Korea Military Academy on the final two days. I reserved a popular chain hotel located downtown that was mentioned on the website's recommended list. This was convenient for the first half of the week, only a twenty-minute subway ride with one train-change to the conference site. On the final two days, however, travel time took about 40 minutes by train and then a shuttle bus delivered attendees onto the military base fifteen minutes later where the Academy was located.

## 3. Conference Details :

The ICLC conference was held from June 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> at the University of Alberta campus in Edmonton, Canada. The sponsoring organization was the International Cognitive Linguistics Association<sup>3)</sup>. The schedule included seven presentations running simultaneously throughout the day starting at 8 : 30am and ending at 9 : 00pm. Nineteen time slots per day were offered, and a variety of presentations were offered including plenary speakers, forums, discussions, and theme session presentations. Hundreds of presenters from around the world converged on this venue.

The ELSOK conference was held from July 3<sup>rd</sup> until July 6<sup>th</sup> at two venues in Seoul, the first at Korea University and the second at the Korea Military Academy. The organizations responsible for hosting the conference were The English Linguistics Society of Korea<sup>4)</sup>, The Korean Association for the Study of English Language & Linguistics, The Modern Linguistics Society of Korea, and the Phonology-Morphology Circle of Korea. Five presentations ran parallel from 9 : 00am to 5 : 35pm. Eleven time slots per day were offered and included plenary speakers, theme presentations, and a three-hour hands-on workshop on the first day of the conference. Approximately one hundred presenters mostly from Asia presented at this conference.

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<sup>3)</sup> Homepage address : <http://www.cognitivelinguistics.org/>

<sup>4)</sup> Homepage address : <http://www.elsok.org/>

#### 4. Presentation Execution :

Presentations are now usually created in electronic form. Any presentation software may be used, but most computer systems can run Microsoft PowerPoint. Any software that is used should be compatible with this. Some larger and newer conference venues have computer-ready facilities where an electronically-saved version of the presentation on some data storage device is all that is needed. However, it is highly recommended that your own laptop computer or cable-ready tablet be brought along as a backup device. Although the PowerPoint presentation I had saved on a USB memory stick was sufficient for the ICLC in Alberta, I had to connect my own computer to the projector at the ELSOK conference in Seoul due to some technical glitch. The lesson here is to be prepared for any contingency.

There are many presentation styles according to research genre and personal preference. There are a few general guidelines, however, that should be followed no matter the specialty. The first concerns time constraints. There will usually be people presenting before and after you, and the schedule is typically very tight, so your presentation needs to start and finish on time. Arrive at least 15 minutes before your allotted time to situate yourself to the room and take a look at the technology. If possible, talk with the technicians (if available) beforehand and test the compatibility of the equipment and the software used.

The second guideline deals with presentation contents. Your presentation is made for your audience to understand, so avoid overloading them with too much detailed data or an overabundance of language. This second point may seem counterintuitive because the presenter uses language to convey the contents. What this means is to keep the presentation slides simple, elegant, and very concise. Only the most important terms should be written on the slide ; other supporting language and details can be spoken to your audience directly. There is nothing more challenging to audience patience and concentration than a presenter reading verbatim off of slides. Unfortunately this happens more often than not.

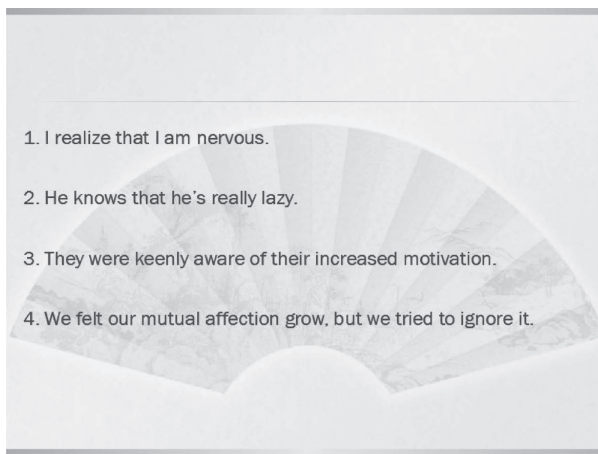
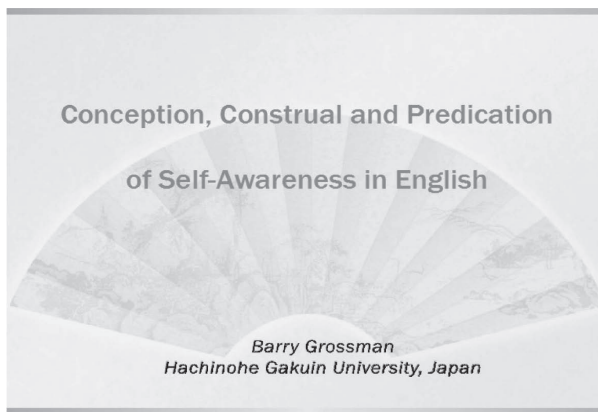
The final guideline concerns your spoken and physical style. The presentation is a chance to introduce your research to the audience and for the most part, they sincerely want to know about your findings. Keep your attitude and speaking style semi-formal yet friendly, allowing presenter-audience non-verbal connections to become established so that interested researchers can approach with questions or contact information.

The presentation time allotments for both ICLC and ELSOK were 20 minutes (the former including questions and the latter not.) My presentation was 25 slides in length, averaging to less than one minute per slide. As shown below in Part 5, most of the slides have very little language written on them. This allows time to *explain* each slide, as stated above. The font on each slide is large enough to read from a distance. Bullets, font color and font size are all used to highlight and allow the audience to follow the logical progression of the main points without overwhelming their visual concentration.

Presenting at international conferences is an invaluable opportunity to share your research ideas with colleagues, learn about new advances in your field of research, meet old friends and make new ones, and challenge yourself to be clear and concise in your research.

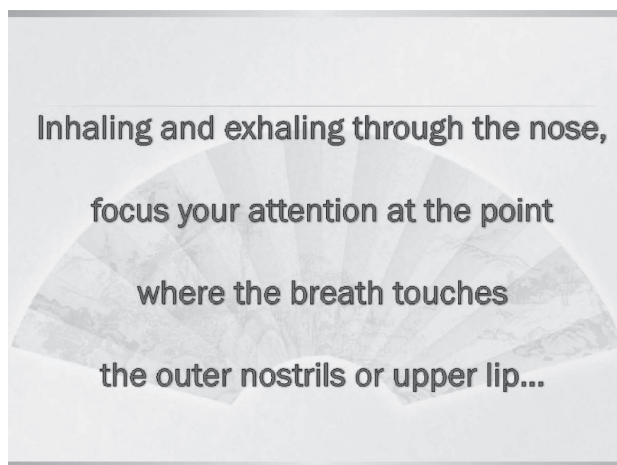
## 5. Presentation :

The full presentation with presenter notes underneath each slide is provided in this section<sup>5)</sup>.

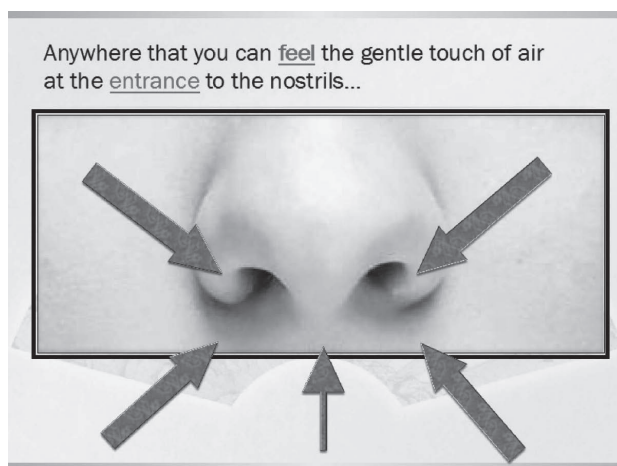


Today I will be talking about the expression of self-awareness in English. There are a few ways that English speakers express self-awareness. One way is to overtly state that fact. But today, a different, more interesting way will be presented. Before I go into that, I'd like to ask for your cooperation. There is a more direct way of understanding self-awareness that is relevant to today's topic. And I'd like to try that together now.

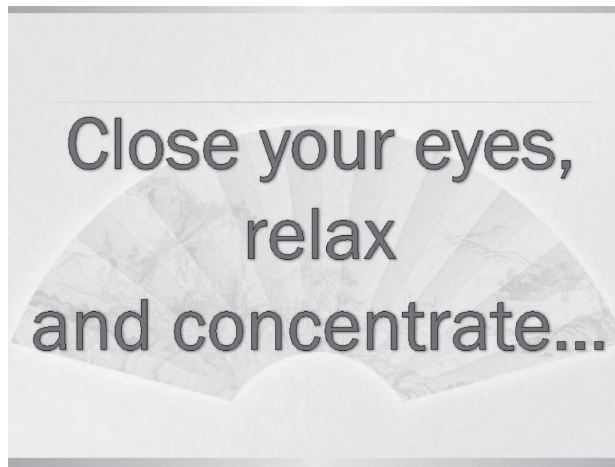
<sup>5)</sup> The following is a link to the published research paper from which this presentation was derived : [https://hachinohe-hachitan.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=pages\\_view\\_main&active\\_action=repository\\_view\\_main\\_item\\_detail&item\\_id=146&item\\_no=1&page\\_id=15&block\\_id=18](https://hachinohe-hachitan.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=pages_view_main&active_action=repository_view_main_item_detail&item_id=146&item_no=1&page_id=15&block_id=18)



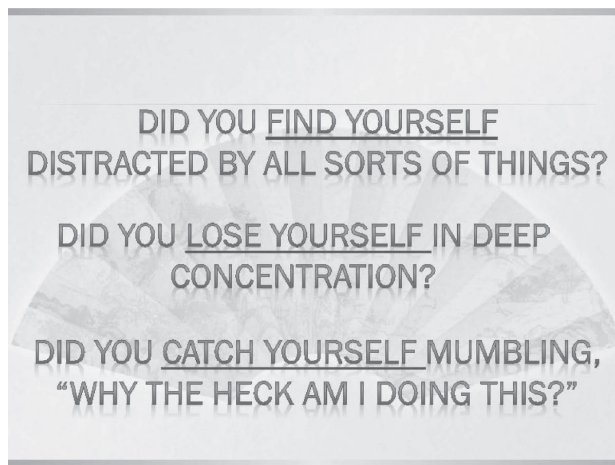
Inhaling and exhaling through the nose, focus your attention at the point where the breath touches the outer nostrils or upper lip.



Anywhere that you can feel the gentle touch of air at the entrance of the nostrils...



Now please close your eyes, relax, and concentrate on feeling that point of contact...  
Whenever the mind starts to wander, bring it back to the touch of breath around the nostrils. Focus your attention, concentrate on that spot...



Now slowly open your eyes. These are the types of examples we will be looking at today.

## Questions

What concepts are being conveyed by the metaphorical use of  
find, lose, catch, etc.. + reflexive [-self] ?

How are these conceptions being construed and predicated?

What are the frequencies and distributions in natural language?

This presentation will attempt to answer three questions :

1. What concepts are being conveyed by the metaphorical use of these verbs when collocated with the reflexive pronoun ?
2. How are these ideas construed and expressed ?
3. What can we learn by looking at corpus data ?

## Examples

from COCA (Corpus of Contemporary American English)

5. "... Stevens found himself in a state of continual nervous excitement..."  
(COCA #19:1991:FC:Bi:SF:FromDuskTill)

6. "Elizabeth tried to lose herself in the joyful anticipation of the holidays."  
(COCA #4:2007:FC:Bk:QuiltersHomecoming)

7. "...When I caught myself humming one of her tunes while eating my prewalk cereal..."  
(COCA #12:1995:MAG:Prevention)

8. "...She surprised herself by adding, " Wonderful memories can't be so bad."  
(COCA1:2012:FC:Bk: DarknessBound)

We will be looking mainly at two verbs, [find] and [lose], but others will be touched upon as well. In example 5, what exactly did Stevens 'find' ? Or in example 6, What was Elizabeth trying to do when she "tried to 'lose herself' ? Also in examples 7 and 8, exactly what or whom is being found, lost, caught, and surprised ?

## Literal vs. Metaphorical

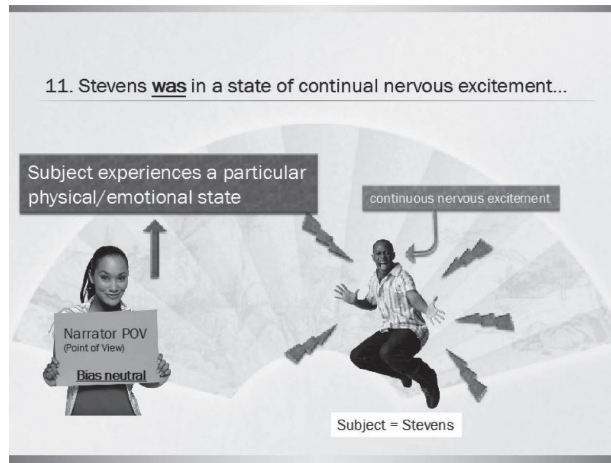
9a. John found a *wallet* on the street.  
 9b. John found him on the street.  
 9c. John found *himself* on the street.

awareness of the mind-body self  
at a particular moment in time

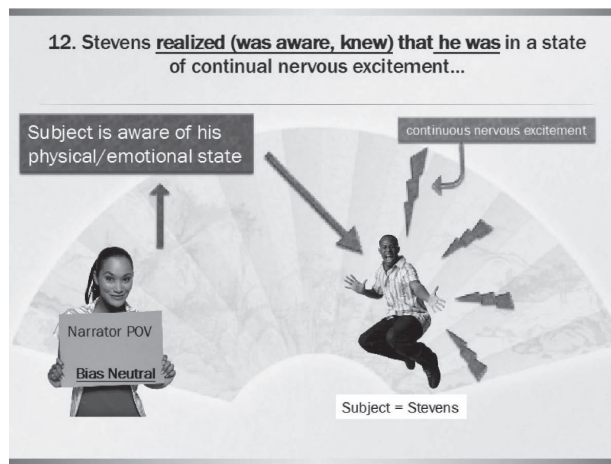
10a. Mary lost *her wallet* at the disco last night.  
 10b. Mary lost her at the disco last night.  
 10c. Mary lost *herself* at the disco last night.

Looking at a few typical examples shown in sentences 9 ‘a’ thru ‘c’, non-self physical objects, ‘wallet’, in the ‘a’ sentence and pronoun ‘him’ in the ‘b’ sentence are contrasted with the reflexive pronoun “–self” in sentence ‘c’. But we must first ask, “what does it mean to ‘find’ something?” In 9a & b, there are physical objects, a wallet and ‘him’, coming into consciousness by the Subject. ---- John was on the street and was not conscious of the wallet in 9a or person in 9b. Then, at some moment, John becomes **aware** of these things on the street, and at **that** moment these things become ‘found’. But can we use the same analysis with sentence 9c? In 9a and 9b, the first step was to recognize that John was originally **not aware** of the wallet or the other person. So, in 9c, it is asserted that John was **not aware** of himself on the street... We all know that this non-awareness is possible. In layman’s terms, we recognize it as absent-mindedness or even daydreaming, and it happens to all of us at one time or another. But then what is it that John finds? The [found] item cannot refer only to John’s physical body, unless there was a mannequin of John or a cloned John or a time-warped John. ‘Found himself’ refers to something else. The verb [find] must assume a metaphorical meaning. I believe this metaphorical reference is to John’s **awareness of his total mind-body being at a particular moment** that has been ‘found. His awareness being ‘found’ he NOW knows that he is on the street. We can do a similar analysis for [lost] in example 10 as well. In the case of [lost], however, the temporal sequence of awareness is reversed...Mary originally possessed self-awareness but then no longer possessed it as she ‘lost’ her mind-body awareness to disco fever.





Let's examine a possible explanation for how self-awareness can be expressed. Here in example 11, the writer, from her non-biased, neutral point of view (POV), explains the Subject's emotional and physical state as "continual nervous excitement". We don't know whether the Subject is **aware** of this physical/emotional state or not.



In example 12, the Narrator, again from a non-biased POV, explains that the Subject 'Stevens' is now aware of his inner state of being. He knows what is happening with his mind-body entity and understands that to be something called, "nervous excitement" which continued for some period of time.

13.(4) “Stevens **found himself** in a state of continual nervous excitement...”  
 <COCA.19:1991:FC:BkSF:FromDuskTill>

Subject 'posseses' self-awareness while experiencing a physical/emotional state

continuous nervous excitement

Narrator POV  
Biased

Uses metaphor 'find' to comment on the quality of awareness.

Subject = Stevens

In #13, the Narrator, wishing to comment on the quality of Stevens’ Self-Awareness, thus biasing the POV, chooses to blend the conceptual qualities of ‘find’ with that of Self-awareness. In other words, “Stevens was not previously aware of his inner situation, but now, with a heightened state of inner knowledge which has properties in common with ‘finding an object’, he understands himself to be in a state of continual nervous excitement. All of this information is conveyed through the use of the metaphor, “Stevens **found himself...**”

### Construal of Awareness

S → O  
 Subject of conception has an Object of thought

14. John was thinking about her again.

S = John → O= thinking about her again

(summarized from R. Langacker, *Consciousness, Construal, and Subjectivity*, 1997.)

Let’s take a look at how self-awareness might be symbolized in construal. Summarizing from Langacker<sup>6)</sup>, this slide shows a ‘Subject of conception having an Object of thought’.

<sup>6)</sup> Langacker, Ronald W. (1997) *Consciousness, Construal, and Subjectivity*, in *Language Structure, Discourse, and Access to Conscience*. *Advances in Consciousness Research*, Edited by Staminov, Maxim I. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

### Construal of Awareness

$$S \rightarrow [S \rightarrow O] O'$$

15. John realized that he was thinking about her again.

S = John [S=he  $\rightarrow$  O=thinking about her again]  
O' = realization of thought [O]

But the Subject is not consciously aware of the self thinking that thought... So a new level of construal is necessary to explain the Subject's awareness (O') of that Object of thought (O)...

### Onstage\* Awareness (OA)

$$S [OA] \rightarrow [...S \rightarrow O...] O'$$

A Subject conceives an Onstage Awareness through which other Objects of thought, emotion, or perception are entertained.

16. "...Ginger Walsh, who finds herself single at 41 and back home..."

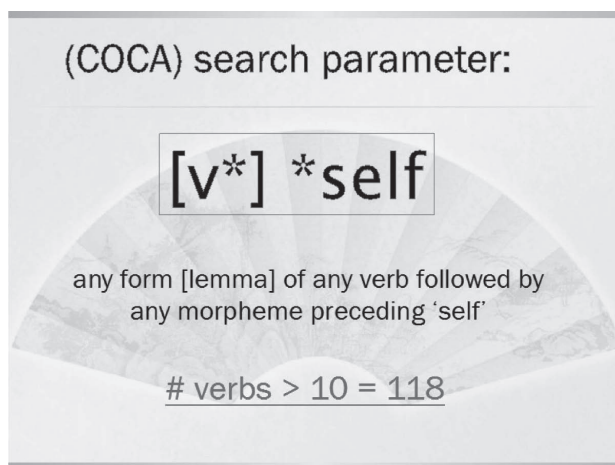
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(\* Onstage as explained by R. Langacker)

However, as we have seen, this is not equal to the quality of Self-Awareness discussed here. I have coined the type of self-aware construal described today, 'Onstage Awareness'. Onstage refers to the concept being given prominence. Looking at the example on the slide, the Subject, Ginger, merely 'being single and living at home again' does not do justice to the intention of the conception. Ginger is suddenly and keenly aware of her situation, and it is through this awareness that she understands her situation. The writer decides to give this awareness prominence, put it 'Onstage', and to express the quality of this awareness as similar to "an object being found". **It is through this Onstage Awareness that other thoughts, emotions, and perceptions are entertained.** In the slides that follow, I will be referring to this Onstage Awareness as "OA".



Let's take a look at some corpus data. The corpus used for this study was COCA, the Corpus of Contemporary American English. It contains over 450 million words from 1990 to 2012.



At first, I didn't know how many and which verbs would display the OA tendency, so I had to make the initial search parameters as wide as possible while trying to avoid as much interference from unrelated hits.

I decided upon the search parameter on your screen. The total number of hits was too large for this pilot study, so I decided to limit my search to the number of hits greater than 10. There were 118 verbs that I analyzed in this initial study.

Rank	Verb [lemma]	Total Number
1	[FIND]	17,328
2	[SEE]	4,081
3	[CONSIDER]	2,417
4	[CATCH]	980
5	[LOSE]	659
6	[TAKE]	568
7	[KNOW]	566
8	[REINVENT]	474
9	[HOLD]	411
10	[PICTURE]	370

Total Verb Number >10 = 124      Total Sample Count = 35,402

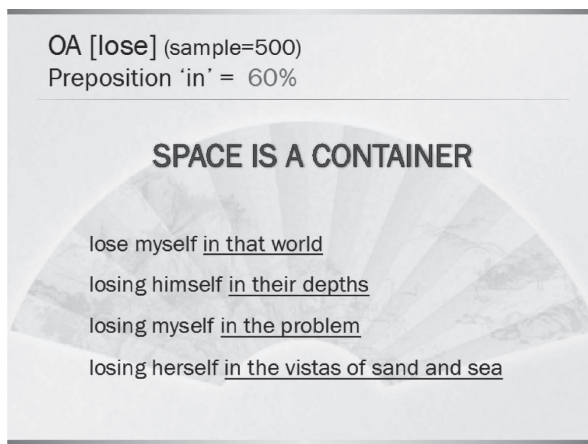
In total, there were over 35,000 tokens. Here is a list of the top ten verbs that were mined from the corpus. We can see the overwhelming number of hits for the verb 'find', more than 4 times the number of any other verb. Looking at the total count number, we can see that the verb 'find' accounts for just about half of all occurrences !

OA-[FIND] (sample=1000)

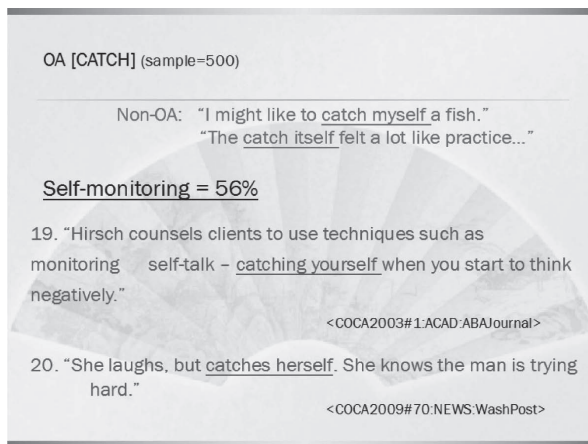
17. "He was happy. You know, he's found himself."  
<COCA 1993#250:SPOK:ABC20/20>

18. "Well, I'm sorry Fred, but I had to find myself first. My head was so far out there in wonderland."  
<COCA2002#150:SPOK:NBCDateline>

There were other surprises in the data as well. In slightly over 3% of the cases in the random sample, an extension of OA[find] as seen in examples 17 & 18 was identified. OA-[FIND] can metaphorically extend to the sense of 'knowing one's deeper, transcendental self'.



For the verb [lose], when one literally gets lost, the location is a space, thus the metaphor “space is a container” is prevalent in the data. This accounts for the high percentage of the preposition ‘in’. When we understand that self-awareness can share conceptual qualities with OA verbs such as [lost], this explanation becomes evident.

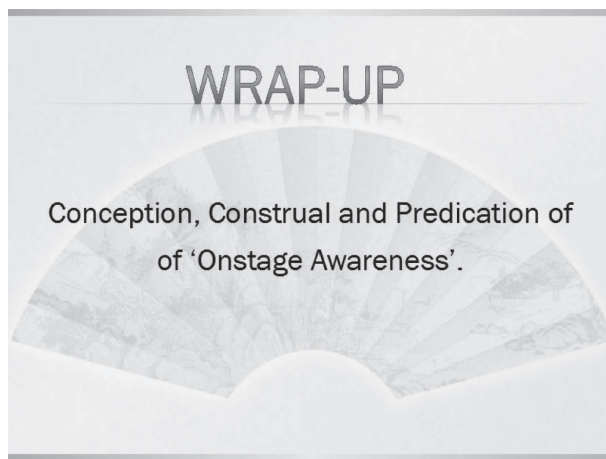


Data for the verb [catch] had the highest rate of non-OA occurrences, which accounted for 22% in a 500 item random-sample. The verb [catch] is very accommodating of non-reflexive, non-metaphorical sentences such as, “I might like to catch myself a fish.” and “The catch itself felt a lot like practice...” In the remaining 78% of the data, 56% involve the self-monitoring of mental or verbal speech acts or vocalizations such as laughing or grunting, specifically *refraining oneself from doing, thinking or saying those things*. In order to refrain oneself, one must first be aware of the intent or urge to perform that action, thus the verb [catch] also receives OA status.

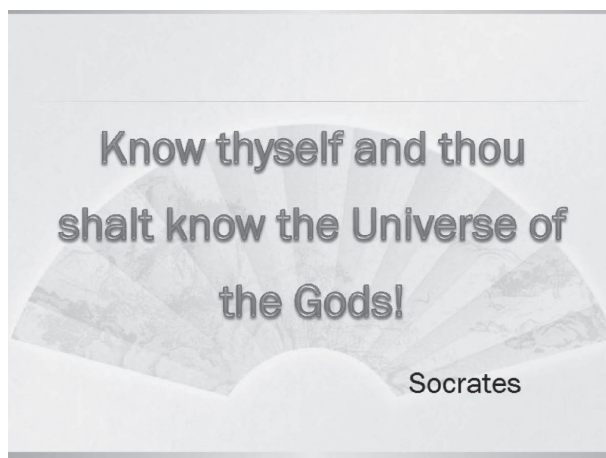
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Lost & Found	See	Knowledge & Ignorance	Appearance	Comfort & Punishment	Containment	Judgement	Acceptance & Denial	Causatives
find	see	consider	portray	console	take	ask	stele	make
lose	picture	define	cast	compose	hold	question	accustom	have
catch	watch	think	paint	reassure	gather	judge	resign	force
surprise	view	understand	bill	congratulate	collect	answer	bring	let
discover	imagine	regard	depict	comfort	contain	police	challenge	enable
shock	envision	fancy	draw	calm	open	justify	empower	get
pinch	recognize	redefine	describe	assure	expose	warn	motivate	
impress	perceive	experience		love	form	implicate	deny	
remember	visualize	fashion		cheer	arrange	investigate	expect	
reinvent	examine	believe		pat	empty		psych	
remind	notice	kid		please	split		content	
forget		fool		ease	extend		trouble	
distract		delude		thank	leave		promise	
leave		doubt		like	control		accept	
		betray		soothe				
		trick		berate				
		deceive		kick				
		concern		chastise				
				hate				
				blame				
				punish				
				reproach				
				curse				
				scold				
				nurture				

So what are the verbs that comprise the OA set? Although preliminary, I have so far uncovered 118 verbs in 9 general semantic categories that accept OA in construal. The work ahead of me now is to analyze the environmental subtleties that surround each member of each category to uncover the various patterns that emerge. From those patterns might emerge a more global understanding that reveals self-awareness to be a possible candidate for an embodied prime.

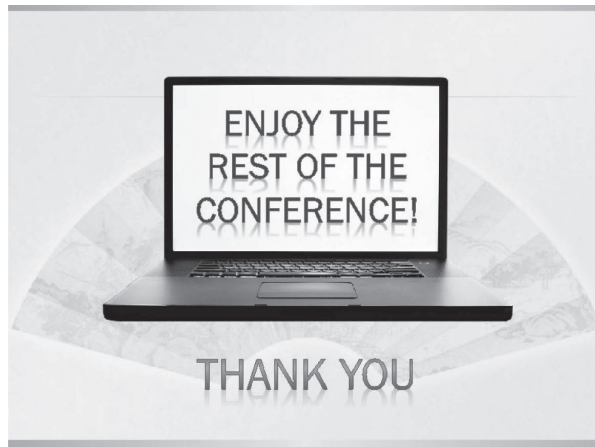


This presentation attempted to describe a particular case of self-awareness, named 'Onstage Awareness' that is conceived, construed, and predicated in English. The predication of OA can be expressed by collocating an OA category verb with a reflexive pronoun. OA is a necessary component of construal that symbolizes essential conceptual information. Data from the COCA corpus was presented to support the above premise as well as offer insights into patterns of usage that are not easily obtainable without the use of a large database.



Continued study will reveal important information about how English speakers conceive and express their self-awareness. Socrates said, "Know thyself and thou shalt know the Universe of the Gods!" Although my goals for this study are not so grandiose, I do believe that any insight we may gain from studying and practicing self-awareness can help enlighten us on an individual, and eventually, global scale.





### **Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to Hachinohe Gakuin University for providing a 'Special Research Grant' to fund this research project.