

ABSTRACT

Evidentiality in Cognitive Grammar

Ronald W. Langacker
University of California, San Diego

Grammar effects the implementation of semantic functions. A full clause serves the intersubjective function of presenting and negotiating a proposition. As component subfunctions, it both describes an occurrence and gives some indication of its epistemic status. The latter consists primarily in an assessment of whether the occurrence is realized, but may also include the basis for this assessment, and since there is no sharp distinction between the two, evidentiality constitutes a dimension of clausal grounding. Both dimensions of grounding are organized egocentrically in terms of immediacy to the ground and increments of distance from it. Examples are given of the multifaceted characterization of highly grammaticized grounding systems. In a broad sense of the term, grounding is also implemented by lexical and grammatical means (e.g. *reportedly*; *they say*). These represent a higher level of functional organization concerned not with the occurrence of events but with the validity of propositions. These constructions are examined from the standpoint of their structure and potential for grammaticization.