3 Theoretical Preliminaries

3.1 Introduction: A cognitive approach

The analysis which will be presented in this study is fundamentally cognitive. That is, I assume that language is not a separate, isolable, faculty of the human mind but is intimately bound up with general cognitive processes involving perception, processing, reasoning and construal, and that our theories must take these processes into account. With respect to grammar, I assume the following[1]

- Grammar is inherently symbolic, involving form-meaning pairings of phonological material with semantic structure.

- Syntax, in particular, is not modular or autonomous, but is part of a continuum that includes the lexicon, morphology, syntax, and (I would argue) discourse.

- As form-meaning pairings, syntactic constructions, like lexemes, exhibit semantic polysemy, where a single grammatical form is associated with multiple related senses. And, like lexical polysemy, multiple related senses are expected as the norm for constructions.

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[1] These principles reflect several sources in the cognitive literature, including Langacker (1991) , Goldberg (1995), and Lakoff (1987).

The cognitive linguistic theory which is most central to the theoretical discussion in this study is Mental Spaces. Mental Spaces theory will generally be used for the representation of discourse, and figures prominently in Chapters 5, 7, 9, and 10.[2]

Another cognitive theory, Construction Grammar, will generally used for syntactic representations. This theory is alluded to in the presentation of two constructions in Chapters 4 and 6 (the Conversational Construction and the Narrative Construction, respectively), however it figures prominently in the representation of obviation in Chapter 9.

In Section 3.2, I present the primary reasons for the use of Construction Grammar for syntactic representations. Section 3.3 introduces the basic principles and mechanisms of Mental Spaces theory needed to talk about discourse structures, with the illustration of an introduction to a Potawatomi narrative. In Section 3.4, I argue for an elaborated representation of ground in Mental Spaces theory. This is useful for distinguishing basic types of illocutionary force such as statements and wh- questions, but becomes important for distinguishing various types of information in narrative (discussed in Chapter 7).

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[2] Recent work in Mental Spaces theory is paving the way for representations of constructions as blends, and so it might have been possible, with a little creativity, to construct the argument here using just the theory of Mental Spaces (in fact, in Chapter 4, I have represented subordinate clauses as embedded spaces). However, for detailed syntactic descriptions, such as is required for obviation, I have found it more practical to use Construction Grammar representations. The theories are generally compatible, however, and relatively easy to integrate. Information about mental space networks can, for example, be indexed in the external semantics of constructions, as I have done in Chapter 9.

3.2 Motivations for using a Construction Grammar framework

Construction Grammar, as described by Fillmore and Kay (1993; 1999), and elaborated by Goldberg (1995), is a unificational theory of syntax that takes grammatical constructions (pairings of syntactic form with semantic meaning) as the central grammatical phenomenon to be explained. The motivations for using Construction Grammar here are outlined below.

'Non-core' grammar. The first is a theoretical commitment to take into account all of the conventional constructions that sanction sentences in a language as well as those that are less conventional or less common; not just what we might arbitrarily define as 'core' grammar. Well-known examples of 'non-core' grammar that have been addressed with this theory include the 'What is X doing Y?' (WXDY) construction analyzed by Fillmore and Kay (1999) ('What is this fly doing in my soup?), or the caused-motion construction discussed by Goldberg (1995) ('He sneezed the napkin off the table.'). While I will not be attempting to account for equivalent types of expressions in Potawatomi, I will, in the spirit of this theoretical commitment, try to account for the grammar found in discourse genres not traditionally addressed by syntactic theory, such as the morphosyntax of narrative discourse.

The lexicon-syntax continuum. Secondly, Construction Grammar assumes that there is no strict separation between syntax and the lexicon. According to Goldberg, "Lexical constructions and syntactic constructions differ in internal complexity…but [they] are essentially the same type of declaratively represented data structure: both pair form with meaning." (p. 7) The discussions in Chapters 7 and 10 are a good argument for

extending this continuum to include discourse, since constructional forms can map onto discourse functions.

  Constructional Polysemy. Most lexical items exhibit polysemy, that is, they have sets of related meanings, some of which are presumed to be more basic, or central, than others. Likewise, studies of particular constructions have shown that they typically occur in networks of related senses, generally with a central sense extended to other senses.[3] In this study, I argue for the existence of several constructions that each has multiple related senses in syntax and discourse. Because lexical items and constructions are presumed to have the same type of structure—that is, they are form-meaning pairings, this similarity in behavior is expected.

  Construction Grammar has a rather large set of representational conventions. The details of these conventions are not particularly germane to this discussion. The idea of constructions will be introduced in Chapters 4 and 6 in the discussion of the Conversational and Narrative Constructions. The theoretical mechanism of representation is not needed until Chapter 9, where it is introduced, along with a means of abbreviated representation.

3.3 Introduction to Mental Spaces theory

  The theory of Mental Spaces (Fauconnier, 1985; 1997) was developed to account for how we use language to construct and process meaning. According to the theory,

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[3] For example, with the caused motion construction, the central sense is successful transfer of a patient from an agent to a recipient, as in 'I gave Bill a cake.' 'I baked Bill a cake' would be an extended sense where the agent intends to cause the recipient to receive the patient (Goldberg, 1995, p. 40).

when we engage in any kind of discourse, we partition information into mental spaces, which are "constructs distinct from linguistic structures, but built up in any discourse according to guidelines provided by the linguistic expressions" (Fauconnier, 1985, p. 16). Grammatical expressions such as adverbial clauses or conditional clauses, as well as aspects of grammar such as tense and mood, provide cues which allow speakers to create and navigate mental space structures, and signal listeners to do the same. The grammar and lexicon of a language are therefore used to establish and populate these mental spaces and track relationships between them.

For example, various expressions such as *in 1994…*, *Joe thinks…*, *if I win the lottery…*, *once upon a time…*, set up spaces in which information is predicated, and considered valid. In the sentence *'In 1994, my daughter was two years old.'* The phrase *in 1994* prompts the creation of a past space, in which the information 'my daughter is two years old' is valid (she would of course be much older today). The mental space structure for this sentence would look like the diagram in (1):

(1) *'In 1994, my daughter was two years old.'*

'REALITY' SPACE
(2003, my daughter
is nine years old)

PAST SPACE
(1994, my daughter
is two years old)
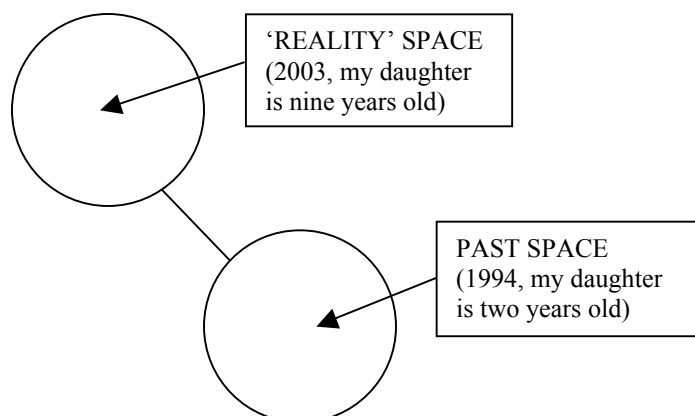
The spaces created during discourse are much more complex than this simple example. Many spaces are organized into a hierarchical network, beginning with an initial "reality" space, shown in (2) as Space R. New spaces (past spaces, future spaces, spaces for a narrative, etc.) are then set up subordinate to this space:

(2) HIERARCHY OF SPACES IN A NETWORK
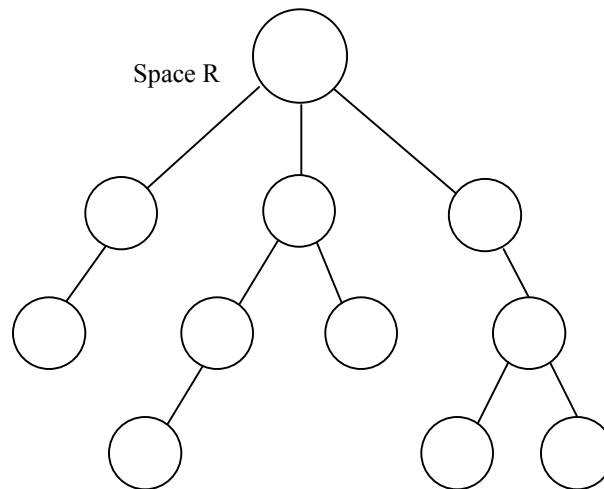
Space R

I use the term "reality" space with quotes to emphasize that this space does not represent a description of the real world, but rather speaker's mental representation (cognitive construal) of it. Since discourse context, particularly the roles of speaker and hearer, features prominently in this analysis, it is important to establish the "reality" space from the outset. This space is not always explicitly given in mental space representations. For example, Fauconnier begins space configurations with 'Space M,' sometimes defined as speaker reality (1985, p. 24). Cutrer apparently uses 'Space M' when de-emphasizing the context of a sentence, as with her illustrations of how BASE, V-POINT, FOCUS and EVENT work; later examples begin with 'Space R', speaker reality (1994, p. 104).

Besides the arguments which will be presented here, there is other evidence that every space configuration begins with a space which represents the "reality" of the speaker. Langacker (1991) has argued that every expression is grounded, although there is a cline with respect to the degree to which the ground is onstage and profiled. In addition, Liddell (1995), based on his work on ASL, has shown the necessity of setting up a 'real' space, a mental construct of the physical environment where people and objects physically present can be indexed. This real space is distinguished from 'surrogate' and 'token' spaces, which house the loci set up to reference people and things not present in the physical environment.

A network of spaces has several features. At any point in a discourse, one of the spaces in the network is the BASE, one is the VIEWPOINT (or V-POINT) and one is the FOCUS. The feature BASE represents a deictic center of a conceptualizing self, and identifies the starting point for the discouse. In the default case, the BASE space is the here and now of speaker "reality", but may shift during discourse to represent another conceptualizer. The feature V-POINT identifies the space from which other spaces are currently being accessed and structured. According to Cutrer (1994), V-POINT stands for a bundle of deictic dimensions: In the strongest version, it represents the V-POINT of a conceptualizing self, with a full set of deictic dimensions. However V-POINT can also be more abstract, with a limited set of dimensions, in which case it corresponds to something like Langacker's notion of 'vantage point' (Langacker, 1991). The third feature, FOCUS indicates which space is most active, the one that is currently being

structured with information.[4] To these, Cutrer also adds EVENT, "the temporal space in which the event encoded in the verb takes place" (Cutrer, 1994, p. 72).[5]

3.4 Illustration of the theoretical mechanism

I will illustrate the basic operation of Mental Space in discourse by using the illustration of the beginning of a Potawatomi narrative, *How Rabbit Got a Short Tail* (MD102694). The lines of the narrative to be discussed are as follows:

(3) HOW RABBIT GOT A SHORT TAIL

1	**O, neko ngi-babzedwak neshnabék é-yayajmowat éyayéngajmowat.**	I used to listen to the people telling stories; something they laughed about.
2	**[Iw je] ni wabozoyen ngodek é-gi-yajmawat.**	Once they told about Rabbit.
3	**O, bnewi neko o wabozo gi-gnewanwé.**	Oh, at one time Rabbit had a long tail.
4	**Gi-gnewanwédek kedwik.**	He must have had a long tail, they say.
5	**Iw je i wéch-shkwanwat ngom ga-zhewébzet.**	That's why he has a short tail today, because of what happened to him.
6	**Jigbyék ibe é-pa-zhyat.**	He went around there by the water. (MD102694)

Line 1 of the narrative begins with the narrator describing an activity in the past, listening to people telling stories. This sets up the BASE space in the here and now (what I will refer to as speaker "Reality"). The particle *neko* 'used to' plus the past tense *gi-* on *ngi-babzedwak* 'I listened to them' opens a past space embedded in the BASE space.

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[4] FOCUS was incorporated into Mental Spaces theory based on the work of Dinsmore (1991).

[5] The feature EVENT is primarily needed to represent tense. Although I will use it in diagrams, I will not discuss it in more detail here, since tense is peripheral to this analysis.
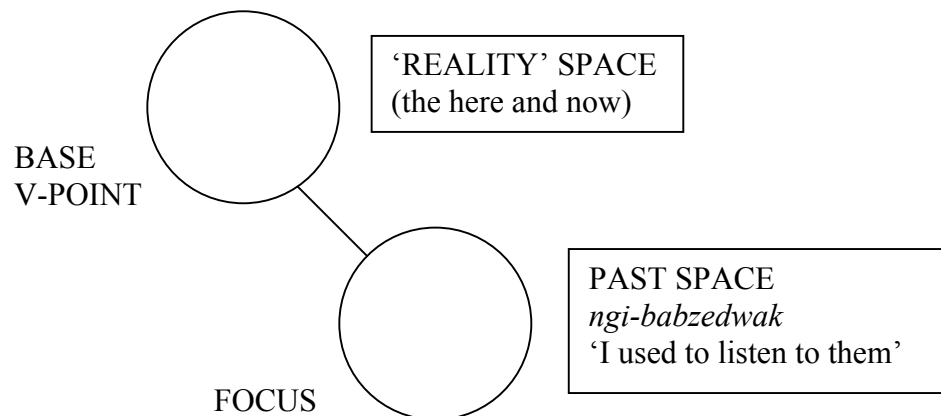
This subordination of the Past Space to the present BASE space is represented with a connecting line between the two spaces.

When the past space is opened, V-POINT remains with BASE in the "Reality" Space, as indicated by the use of past tense. In other words, the information predicated in this space is about past events and entities, and not about the speaker's present. FOCUS thus shifts to the Past Space, indicating that this is the space currently being structured by new information.

(4) FOCUS SHIFTS TO PAST SPACE

```
…neko ngi-babzedwak neshnabék é-yayajmowat…
```

'I used to listen to them telling stories'

BASE
V-POINT

'REALITY' SPACE
(the here and now)

PAST SPACE
*ngi-babzedwak*
'I used to listen to them'

FOCUS

In line 2, *é-gi-yajmawat* 'they told about him' opens a Narrative Space subordinate to the past space. The Narrative Space and any spaces subordinate to it are separated from the rest of the network in a narrative domain. This domain is then subordinate to spaces predicated in the "Reality" domain. FOCUS now shifts to the narrative space, however the use of the past tense signals that BASE and V-POINT remain in the "Reality" Space. We also learn that this space is populated by an entity

Wabozo 'Rabbit' (represented by *w′* in the Narrative Space) This Rabbit is understood to be a mythic character; either a role, or possibly a prototypical instance of rabbits whose traits are inherited by all modern rabbits. Modern rabbits are represented in the "Reality" Space as *w*. (The line connecting *w* and *w′* is explained below.)

(5) REFERENT *W* ESTABLISHED IN THE NARRATIVE DOMAIN

    [Iw je] ni wabozoyen ngodek é-gi-yajmawat.
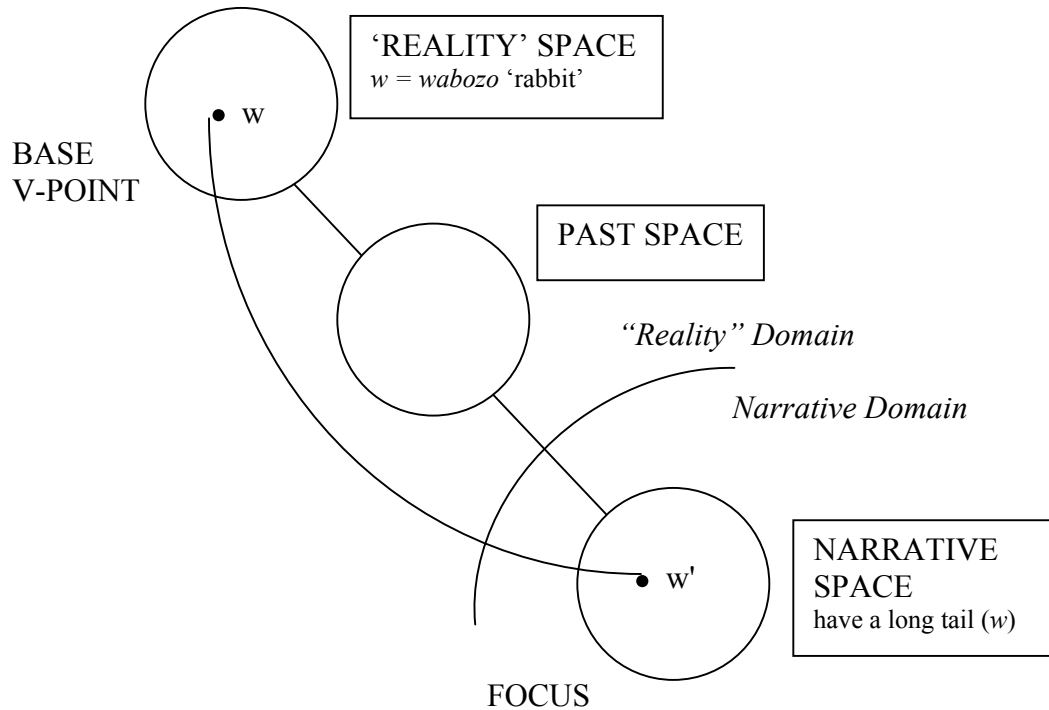
    'Once they told about rabbit.'
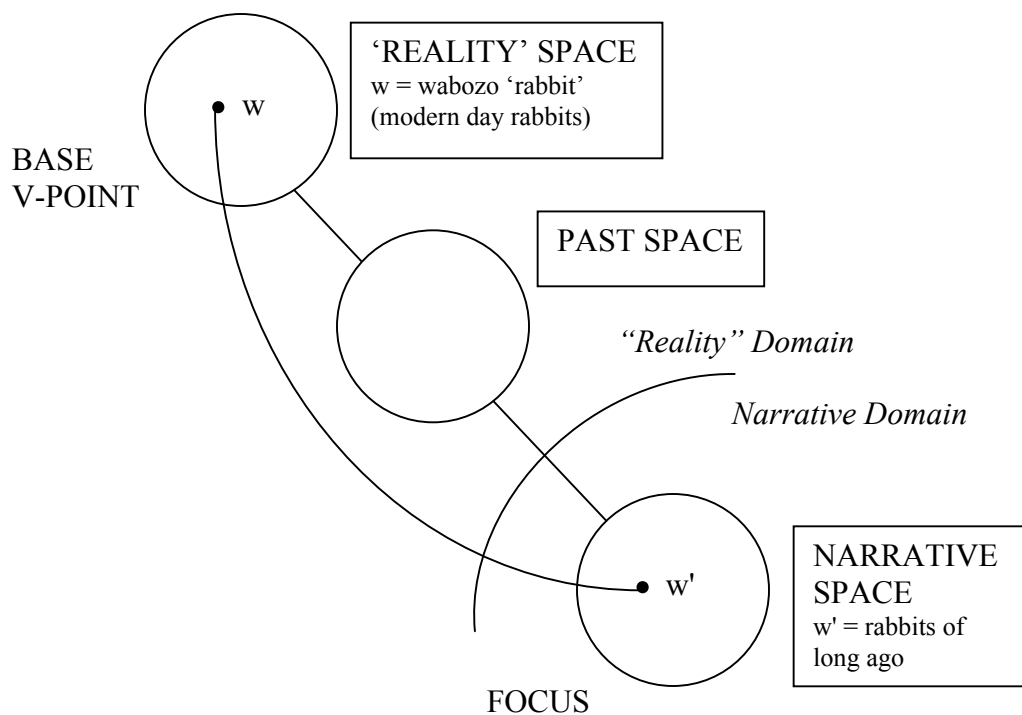
Lines 3 and 4 now structure the narrative space, which is in FOCUS. We learn that *bnewi neko* 'it used to be long ago' *gi-gnewanwé* 'he (Rabbit) had a short tail', so this information is added in the representation to the narrative space (shown in (6))

(6) FOCUS SHIFTS TO NARRATIVE SPACE

O, bnewi neko o wabozo gi-gnewanwé.

'At one time, rabbit had a long tail.'

In line 5, the third person pronominal referent 'he' in the participle

wéch-shkwanwat 'why he has a short tail' sets up a counterpart to Wabozo (w') in the

"Reality" domain. We represent the pragmatic relationship between the two referents w

and w' with a connector (line) between their referents in the two different spaces. This

Rabbit is also a role, but instead of having a long tail, he has a short tail. We add this

information to the 'reality' space, since this is information about modern rabbits.

We now come to a classic problem of reference that is easily solved in Mental

Spaces theory. The problem is the non-contradiction in a sentence like *'In that painting,*

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the girl with the blue eyes has green eyes.' Without the phrase *'in that painting'* the rest

of the sentence is contradictory. Fauconnier and others have noticed that representations

(such as paintings, photographs, etc.) set up pragmatic relationships between the

representation and the model, where the representation and model are *counterparts*. In

the following diagram, the phrase *'in that painting'* sets up a representation space

subordinate to the "reality" space. The blue-eyed girl (*a*) is set up as an entity in the

"reality" space and the green-eyed girl (*a'*) is an entity in the representation space. The

line connecting them indicates that *a* and *a'* are counterparts:

(7) *'In that painting, the girl with the blue eyes has green eyes.'*

'REALITY' SPACE
where *a* = girl
and *a* has blue eyes

REPRESENTATION SPACE
(the girl has green eyes)
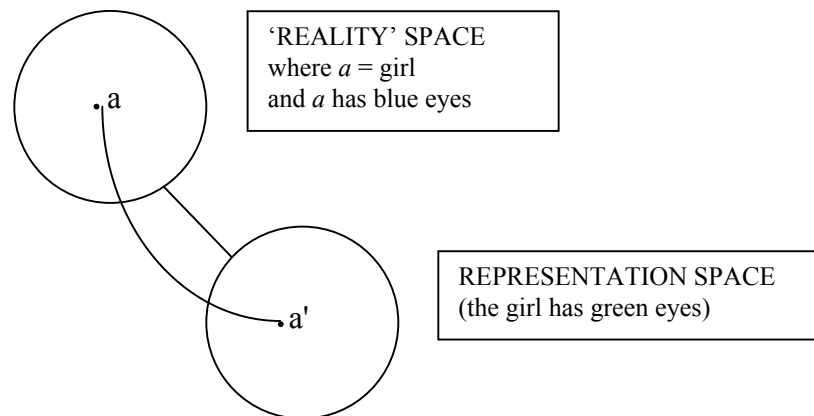
An entity in one space can then be referred to by its counterpart in another space,

so that *the girl with the blue eyes* can refer to the entity in the representation space,

meanwhile, information predicated about one or the other entity can be true within its

own context.[6] The same has been shown to be the case in a wide variety of contexts

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[6] See Nunberg (1978; 1979), Jackendoff (1975) and Fauconnier (1997).

including beliefs, as in *'George believes that the girl with blue eyes has green eyes,'* and narratives, as in *'In that story, the girl with the blue eyes has green eyes.'*

Returning to our narrative, we are faced with the potential contradiction in lines 4 and 5 that rabbits have long tails and rabbits have short tails. What allows us to keep this non-contradictory is the establishment of a narrative space where the information 'rabbits have long tails' is valid. This narrative space is already available, set up in previous sentences. To this pre-existing narrative space, we set up w' for long-tailed rabbits, and link this to its counterpart w in the "reality" space which represents short-tailed rabbits, as shown in (8).[7] (FOCUS shifts back to the 'reality' space where we add the information that rabbits have short tails.)
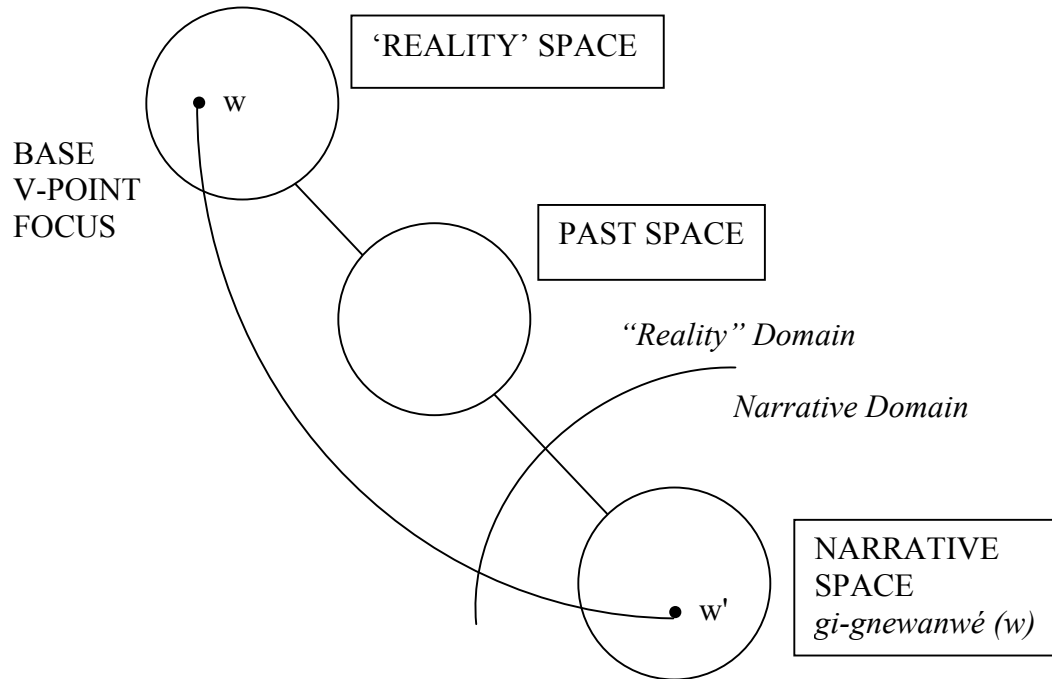
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[7] There is also a counterpart to *w* in the Past Space. This is not represented in the diagram merely for the sake of simplicity of representation. In general, I will only note counterparts in diagrams for spaces that are currently being discussed.

(8) COUNTERPART TO *W* SET UP IN THE REALITY DOMAIN

```
Gi-gnewanwédek kedwik. Iw je i wéch-shkwanwat ngom ga-zhewébzet.
```

'He must have had a long tail, they say. That's why he has a short tail today, because of what happened.'

'REALITY' SPACE

w

BASE
V-POINT
FOCUS

PAST SPACE

"Reality" Domain

Narrative Domain
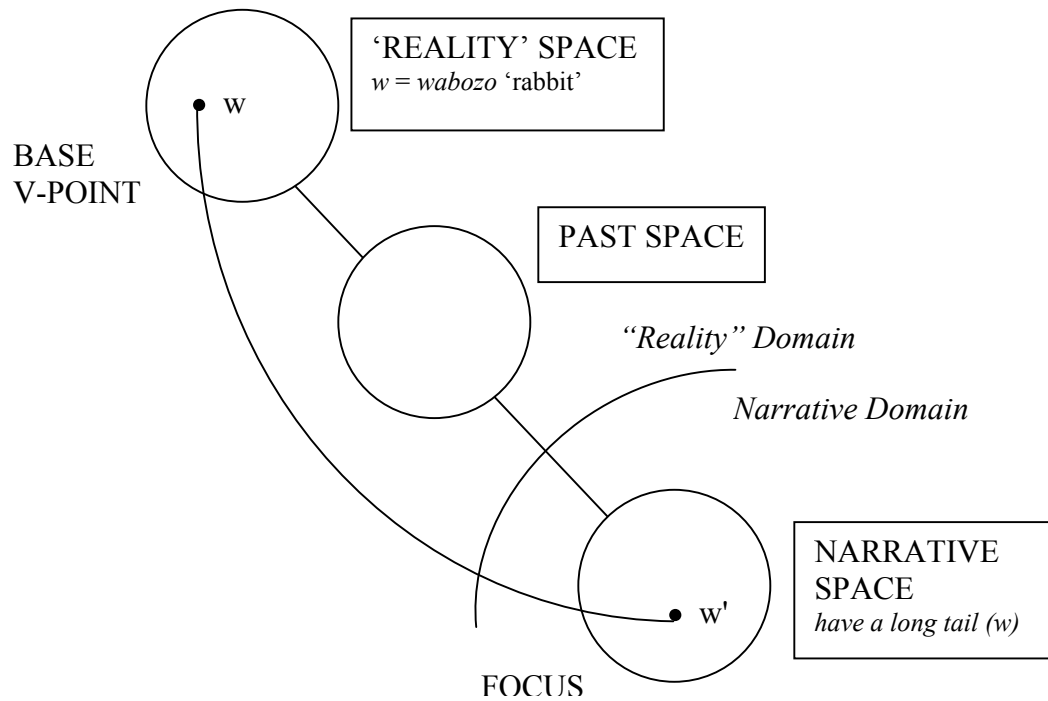
NARRATIVE
SPACE
gi-gnewanwé (w)

w'

Line 6 begins the narrative proper. From this point, most of the information structures spaces in the Narrative Domain. BASE and V-POINT remain in the Reality Domain, and FOCUS shifts to the Narrative Domain, as shown in (9). This is the basic arrangement for the activity of 'narration'. In Chapter 6, I show how this configuration changes to accommodate the representation of a narrative-internal viewpoint, such as the representation of a character's perspective.

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(9) THE BASIC NARRATIVE CONFIGURATION

    ```
    Jigbyék ibe é-pa-zhyat.
    ```

    'He went around there by the water.'

BASE
V-POINT

w

'REALITY' SPACE
w = wabozo 'rabbit'

PAST SPACE

"Reality" Domain

Narrative Domain

NARRATIVE
SPACE
have a long tail (w)

w'

FOCUS

3.5 An elaborated representation of ground

In the this section, I describe in more detail what is meant by the "reality" space, and argue for an elaborated representation of ground (that is, the representation of the "Reality" Domain) in Mental Spaces theory. This representation will become important in the discussion of Potawatomi Narrative in Chapter 7.
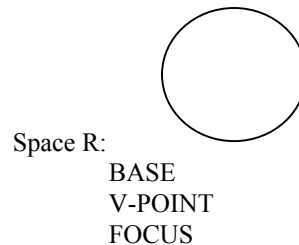
3.5.1 The "reality" space

The simplest space configuration consists of a single space; the "reality" space of the speaker. This space functions as the BASE, and is the locus for V-POINT and FOCUS as shown in (10). This default configuration serves as a starting point for any

discourse; thus every communicative act is ultimately grounded in the deictic center of the speaker.

(10) SIMPLEST SPACE CONFIGURATION

While discourses commonly build up a large network of spaces, this single-space configuration can be approximated by a simple conversation in and about the here and now. Consider the following dyadic exchange. The conversation takes place in the kitchen belonging to A and B. The jar of mayonnaise has recently been purchased, and A wonders whether it has been put on the shelf or refrigerated.

Space R:
         BASE
         V-POINT
         FOCUS

(11)   A: Where is the mayonnaise?

        B: In the fridge.

If I am speaker A, the configuration for this exchange can be represented by Space R, my "reality" space, which is minimally populated by myself (a), a conversation partner (b), and the mayonnaise (m) and fridge (f). In this case, (a), (b) , (m) and (f) exist

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in the proximate space.[8] The mayonnaise and fridge, as definite descriptions, are both

present in Space R, supplied by the context which includes a frame for the activity,

'sandwich-making,' and the physical environment of the kitchen (this frame is not

otherwise represented in the diagram).

As conceptualizing individuals, (a) and (b) supply a potential V-POINT

(represented by "@"), each of which is available as a BASE space. By default, Space R

represents the BASE associated with the role of speaker. The BASE space for (b) is

represented by a Space H (for "Hearer") subordinate to Space R.

(a) and (b) are assigned to the roles of either Speaker or Hearer, depending on the

point in the exchange.[9] These roles are supplied by the discourse frame 'dyadic
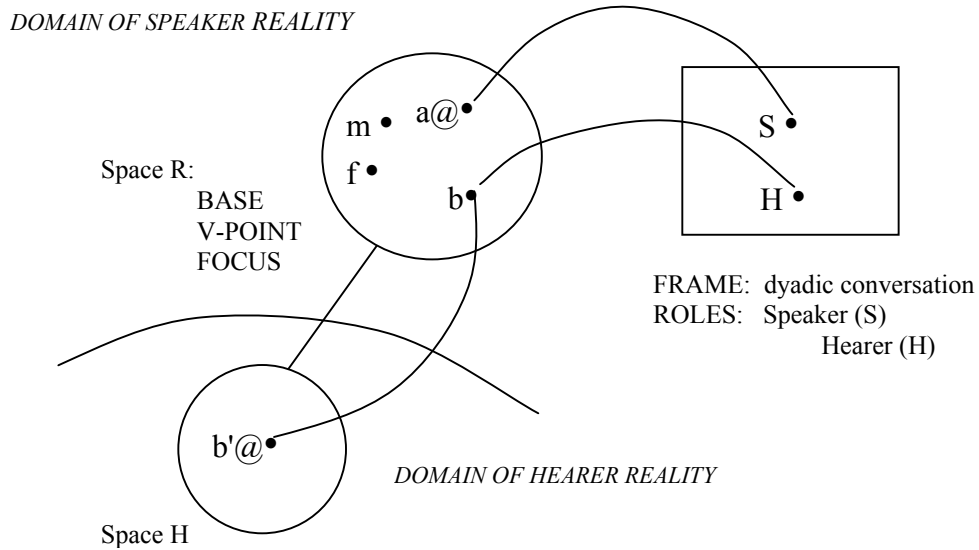
conversation.'[10]

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[8] That is, (a) and (b) are proximate for the purpose of face-to-face conversation, and (m) is proximate for

the purpose of (a)'s easily fetching it. Note that this is a cooperative scenario; if the exchange occurred at a

picnic, (b)'s reply would flout the maxim of relevance, since the refrigerator is not proximate, meaning that

'we left it at home.'

[9] Dancygier and Sweetser (1996) includes a representation of the discourse context, including Speaker and

Hearer (labeled as individuals, though rather than roles) in their discussion of metalinguistic spaces.   This

is the only other work within the Mental Spaces theory literature (that I am aware of) to make ground

explicit in a configuration.

[10] As another example, the discourse frame 'lecture' would supply a lecturer, an audience, expectations

about venues, possible subject matter, etc. Unlike roles supplied by the content of the discourse, such as

'the president' in the sentence 'the president changes every four years,' discourse roles are non-explicit,
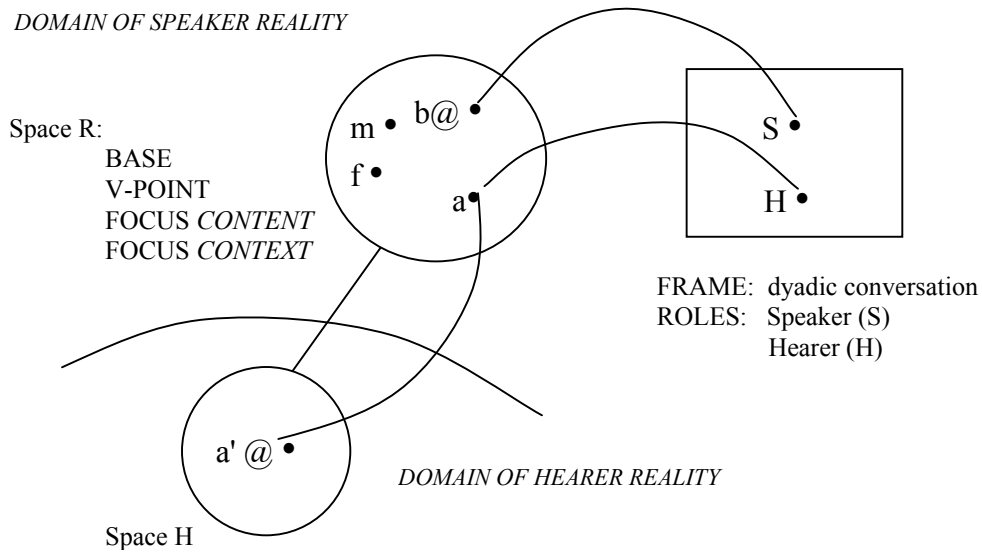
and backgrounded.

(12) MODEL FOR DYADIC CONVERSATION

DOMAIN OF SPEAKER REALITY

m •   a@•

Space R:
     f •
     BASE   b•
     V-POINT
     FOCUS

S •

H •

FRAME: dyadic conversation
ROLES: Speaker (S)
                Hearer (H)

b'@•

DOMAIN OF HEARER REALITY

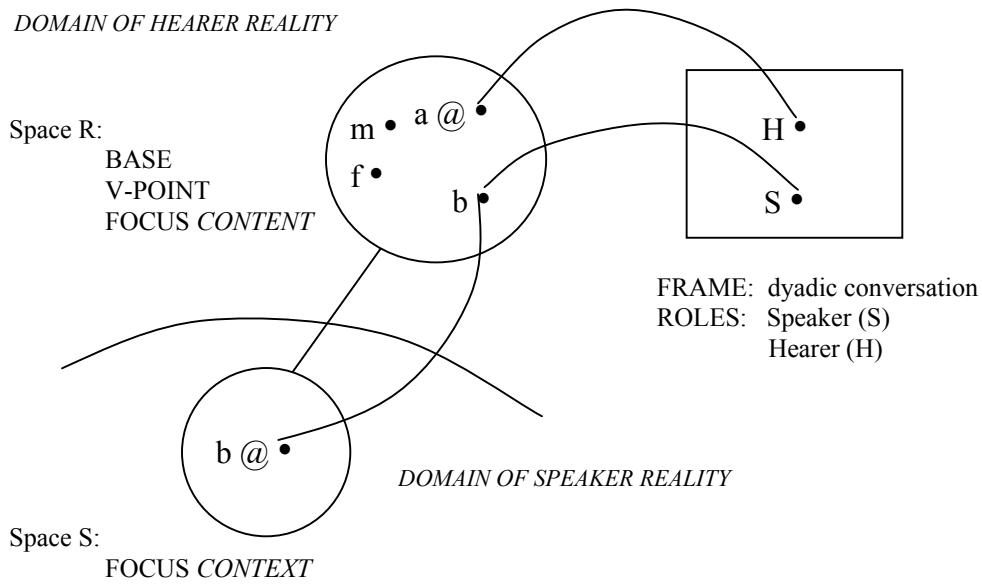Space H

3.5.2 The profiling of discourse participants

In the model for a prototypical diadic conversation, one participant is always profiled. For example, if (b) is the conceptualizer in the conversation in (11), when (b) makes the statement 'in the fridge', (b) is the speaker and profiled participant, as in (13). I represent this profiling by the use of a feature FOCUS *CONTEXT* (which will be explained below).

(13) SPEAKER IS CONCEPTUALIZER AND PROFILED PARTICIPANT

DOMAIN OF SPEAKER REALITY

Space R:
    BASE
    V-POINT
    FOCUS *CONTENT*
    FOCUS *CONTEXT*

m
b@
f
a

S
H

FRAME: dyadic conversation
ROLES: Speaker (S)
            Hearer (H)

DOMAIN OF HEARER REALITY

a' @

Space H

(b) is also the profiled participant from (a)'s point of view as hearer. In (a)'s

mental space network, this is represented by FOCUS *CONTEXT* moving to Space S (for

the "Speaker"), as in (14).

(14) HEARER IS CONCEPTUALIZER, SPEAKER IS PROFILED PARTICIPANT

DOMAIN OF HEARER REALITY

Space R:
    BASE
    V-POINT
    FOCUS *CONTENT*

m
a @
f
b

H
S

FRAME: dyadic conversation
ROLES: Speaker (S)
            Hearer (H)

b @

DOMAIN OF SPEAKER REALITY

Space S:
    FOCUS *CONTEXT*

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Certain types of illucutions, such as Wh-questions, foreground the hearer's role as a conceptualizer. In (a)'s question 'Where is the mayonnaise?', the hearer (b) is profiled as a conceptualizer who possesses potentially unique knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs. The question word 'where' implies that the hearer has knowledge that the speaker does not possess; that their representations of reality are different on this point. This is represented in (15) below.

(15) SPEAKER IS CONCEPTUALIZER, HEARER IS PROFILED PARTICIPANT
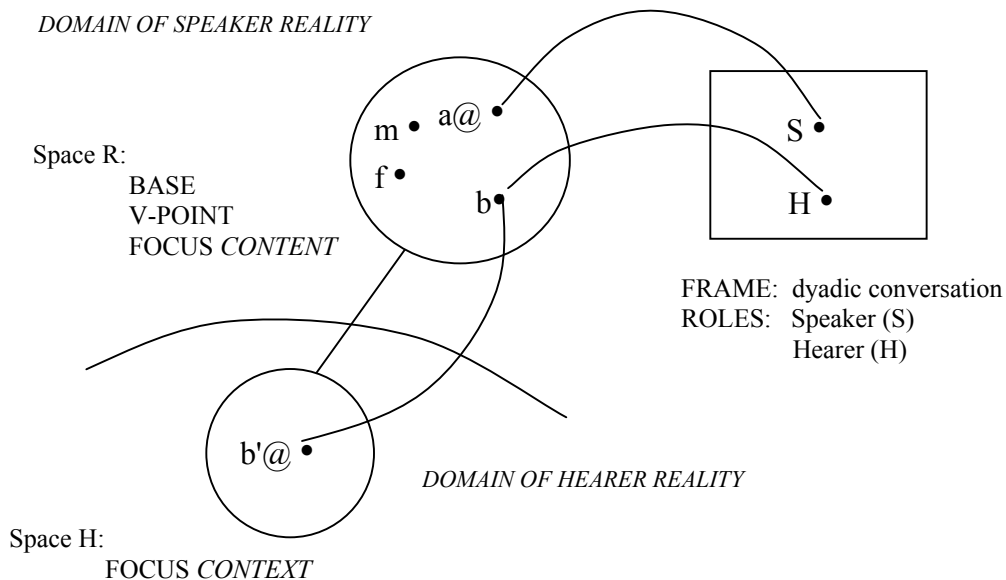
Of the existing theoretical features, the most likely candidate to represent this profiling is FOCUS, since focus has to do with foregrounding components of the discourse structure. In this respect, it is similar to Langacker's *profiling*, which gives special prominence to a part of a semantic structure, but on the level of discourse rather than word or sentence level semantics.

I therefore propose splitting FOCUS into two dimensions: a *content* dimension, and a *context* dimension. The content dimension represents what we normally think of as FOCUS, that is the space currently being structured. In Dinsmore's terms the space in FOCUS is "[t]he space that a discourse sentence as a whole is intended to say something about, that is, the space into which the sentence is contextualized" (1991, p. 122).[11] The context dimension, on the other hand, is relevant when a discourse participant, for one reason or another, is brought into the foreground and thus commands our attention. FOCUS *context* therefore involves the highlighting of discourse participants. This representation of discourse participant profiling will be taken up again in the discussion of narrative in Chapter 7.

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[11] In the following discussion, where I use the term FOCUS alone, I am referring to FOCUS *CONTENT*.

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