

Dynamicity, Fictivity, and Scanning

- A. Cognitive Semantics
- B. Dynamicity
- C. Fictivity
- D. Fictive Scanning
- E. “Logical” Elements

A. Cognitive Semantics

- (1)(a) **Cognitive semantics** unequivocally identifies meaning with **conceptualization**, i.e. the cognitive activity constituting our apprehension of the world.
- (b) **Construal**: Our ability to conceive and portray the same situation in alternate ways.
- (c) **Imaginative capacities**: metaphor, metonymy, mental spaces, conceptual blending.
- (d) **Embodiment**: The grounding of conceptual structure in everyday bodily experience (e.g. motion, perception, muscular exertion).

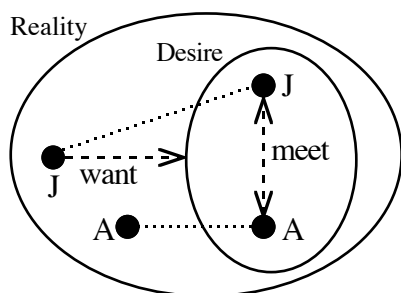
- (2)(a)(i) *We went to the store.* (ii) *The situation went from bad to worse.*
 (b)(i) *She turned to face him.* (ii) *The weather turned cold.*

- (3)(a) *You {must/should/may} attend this protest rally.* [root modals]
 (b) *She {must/should/may} be home by now.* [epistemic modals]

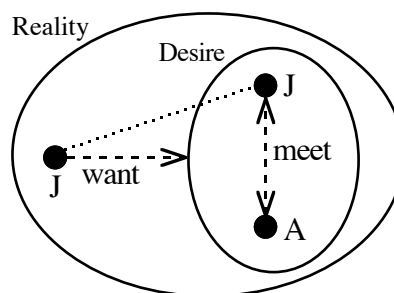
- (4)(a) *Joe wants to meet **an actress**.* [ambiguous]
 (b) *Joe wants to meet **a certain actress**.* [specific]
 (c) *Joe wants to meet **an actress—any actress**.* [non-specific]

(5)

(a) Specific



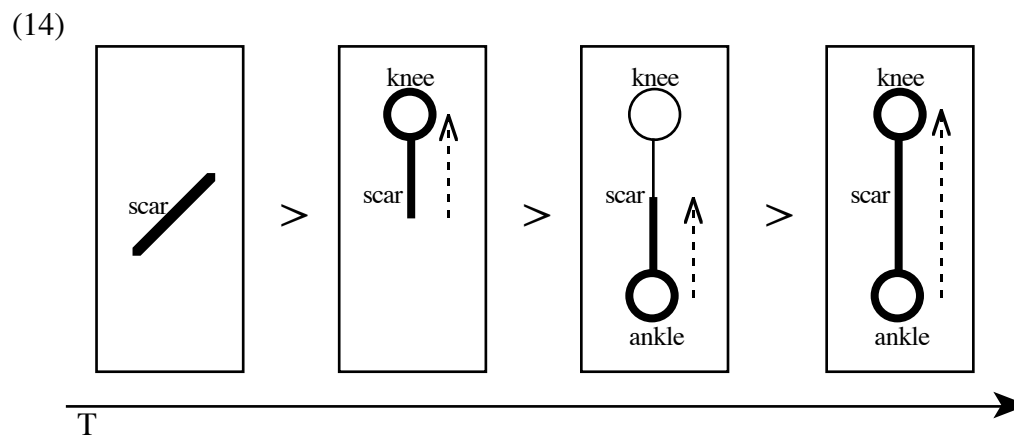
(b) Non-Specific



- (6)(a) *Joe wants to meet **an actress**. **She** is very talented.* [specific]
 (b) *Joe wants to meet **an actress**. **She** has to be very talented, though.* [non-specific]

B. Dynamicity

- (7) Conceptual structure is **dynamic**: it emerges and develops through *processing time*, this temporal dimension being inherent and essential to its characterization.
- (8) Sequenced processing occurs simultaneously in multiple dimensions and on different time scales, some too small for conscious awareness. It does not preclude backtracking (allowing the reexamination and reanalysis of material already encountered) or holding analysis in abeyance until sufficient material has accumulated for successful resolution.
- (9)(a) *Your camera is upstairs, in the bedroom, in the closet, on the top shelf.*
 (b) *Your camera is on the top shelf, in the closet, in the bedroom, upstairs.*
- (10)(a) *A dead rat lay in the middle of the kitchen floor.*
 (b) *In the middle of the kitchen floor lay a dead rat.*
- (11)(a) *I lay in the middle of the kitchen floor.*
 (b) *?*In the middle of the kitchen floor lay I.*
- (12)(a) *A scar extends from his ankle to his knee.*
 (b) *A scar extends from his knee to his ankle.*
- (13) *?A scar extends to his knee from his ankle.*



- (15)(a) *The rainy season starts in December and runs through March.*
 (b) *??The rainy season runs through March and starts in December.*
 (c) *They raised tuition from \$15,000 to \$20,000.*
 (d) *?They raised tuition to \$20,000 from \$15,000.*
- (16) We often invoke the conception of one entity as a **reference point** in order to establish mental contact with another (the **target**), i.e. to mentally access one entity via another.

- (17)(a) *Proust is on the top shelf.*
 (b) *Chernobyl was a great tragedy.*
 (c) *That car is evidently lost.*

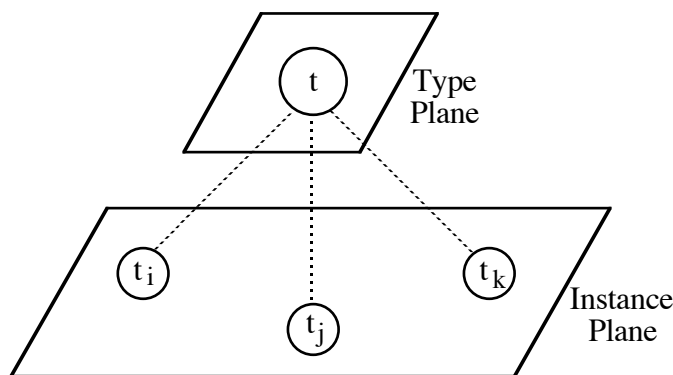
(18) In **metonymy**, an expression's usual referent (its **profile**) serves as a reference point providing mental access to its intended referent. It is understood as designating a target found somewhere in the reference point's dominion.

C. Fictivity

(19) Language is commonly thought of as a vehicle for directly describing **actual** individuals and events occurring in the world around us. Yet the entities directly described linguistically are very often **fictive** (or **virtual**), even for the characterization of actual situations.

- (20)(a) By itself, a lexical noun (e.g. *cat*, *oxygen*) merely specifies a **type** of "thing", and a lexical verb (e.g. *chase*, *love*) a type of "process".
 (b) A full noun phrase (e.g. *this cat*, *some oxygen*) profiles a **grounded instance** of a thing type, and a finite clause (e.g. *I chased it*; *She may love him*) a grounded instance of a process type.
 (c) **Grounding** elements (determiners, tense, modals) single out an instance of a type and locate it with respect to the **ground** (the speech event and its participants).

(21)

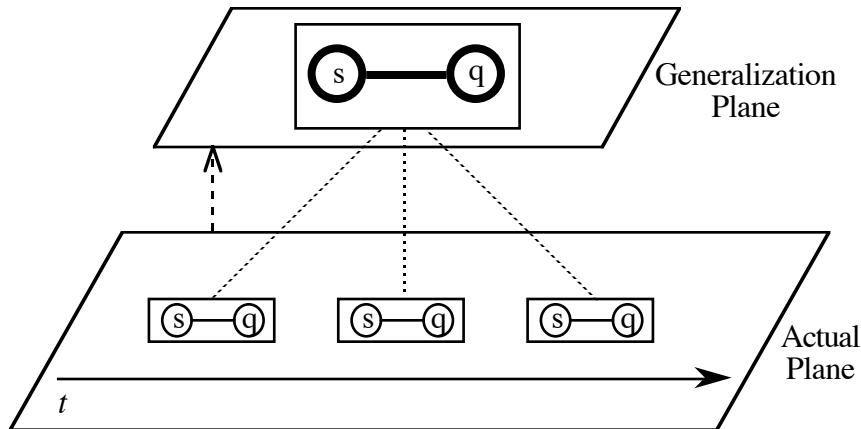


- (22)(a) *Sarah loves **this** cat.*
 (b) *Sarah is a **cat-lover**.*

(23) A **virtual** instance of a type (also called a *fictive* or *arbitrary* instance) is a non-actual instance "conjured up" for a special purpose, with no status outside the mental space (or plane) constructed for that purpose.

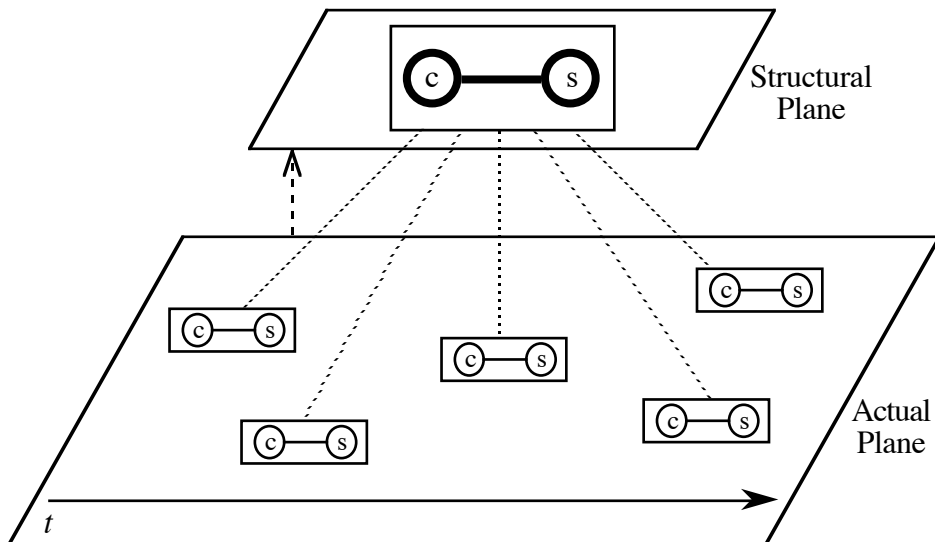
- (24)(a) *Three times during the class, students asked intelligent questions.*
 (b) *Three times during the class, a student asked an intelligent question.*
 [local generalization based on contingent occurrences; “phenomenal” statement]

(25)



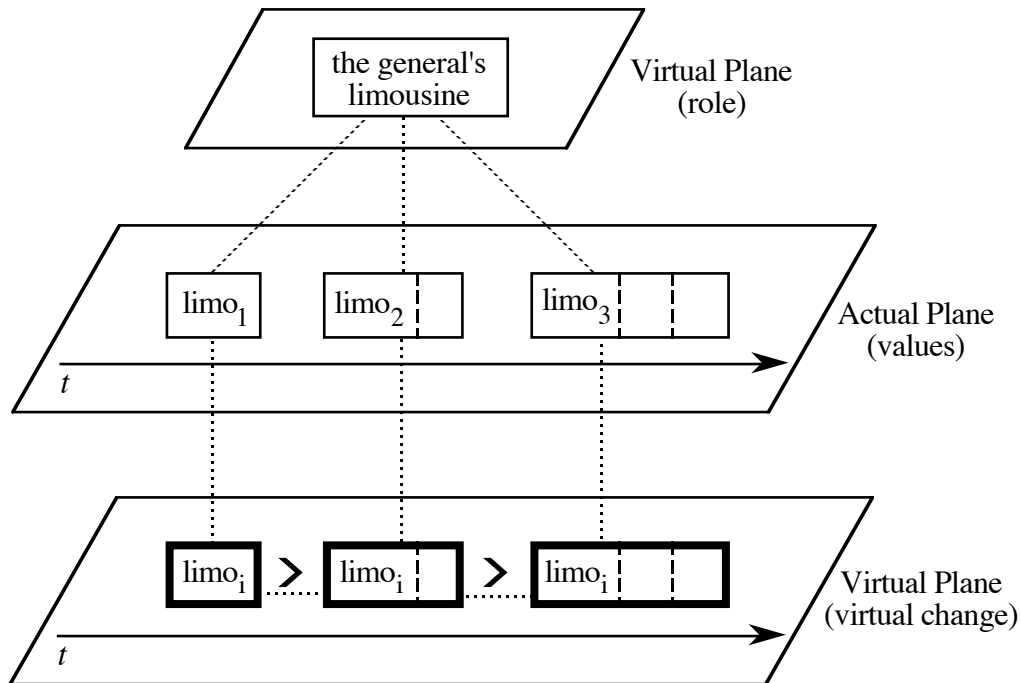
- (26) *A cat eats salmon.*
 [global generalization reflecting the world’s inherent nature; “structural” statement]

(27)



(28) *The general's limousine keeps getting longer.*

(29)



- (30)(a) *The balloon rose quickly.* [actual motion]
 (b) *The path rose quickly as we climbed.* [perfective virtual motion]
 (c) *The path rises quickly near the top.* [imperfective virtual motion]

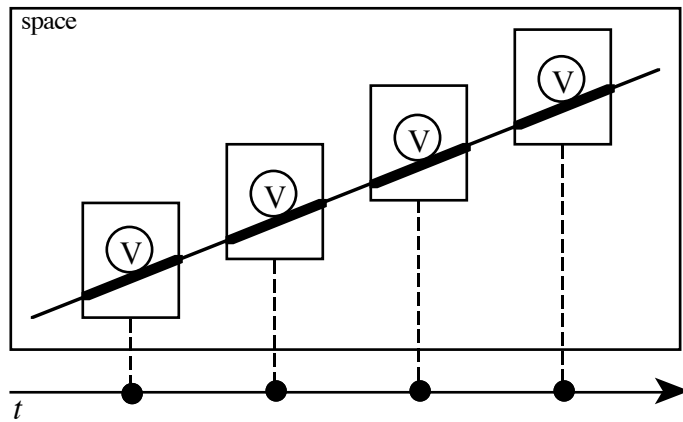
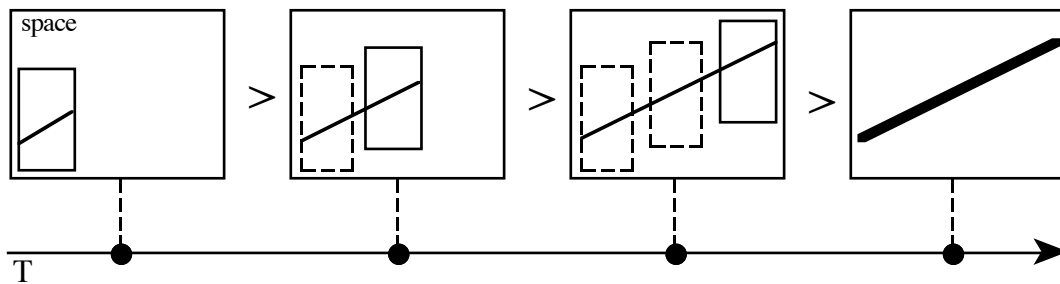
- (31)(a) *The trail is rising quickly as we approach the summit.*
 (b) *The highway ran along the coast, then turned inland.*
 (c) *The bike path went from Santa Barbara to Goleta.*

- (32)(a) *The trail rises quickly near the summit.*
 (b) *The highway runs along the coast, then turns inland.*
 (c) *The bike path goes from Santa Barbara to Goleta.*

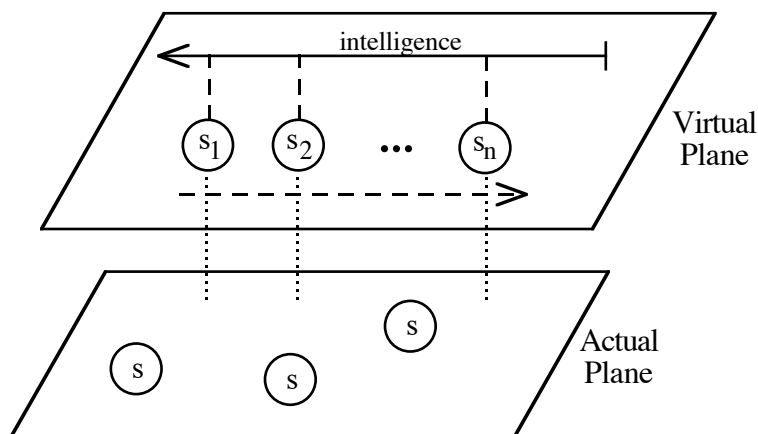
(33) **His forehead is rising less steeply near the hairline.* [OK while climbing Mt. Rushmore]

- (34)(a) **Conceived time** (*t*): time as an *object* of conception.
 (b) **Processing time** (*T*): time as the *medium* of conception.

(35)

(a) Perfective Virtual Motion(b) Imperfective Virtual Motion**D. Fictive Scanning**(36)(a) *From one restaurant to the next, prices vary greatly.*(b) *As body size increases, the average gestation period gets longer.*(c) *From the brightest student in the class to the dumbest, they all work very hard.*

(37)

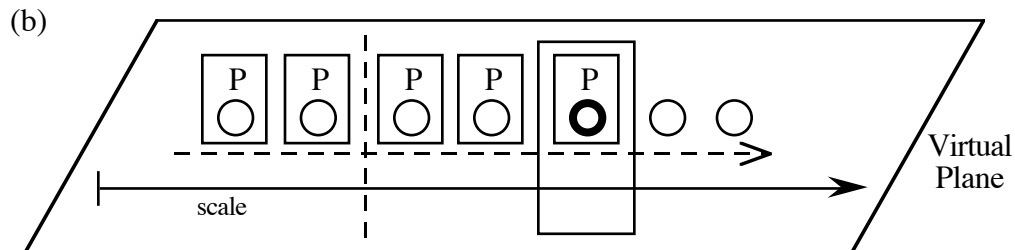
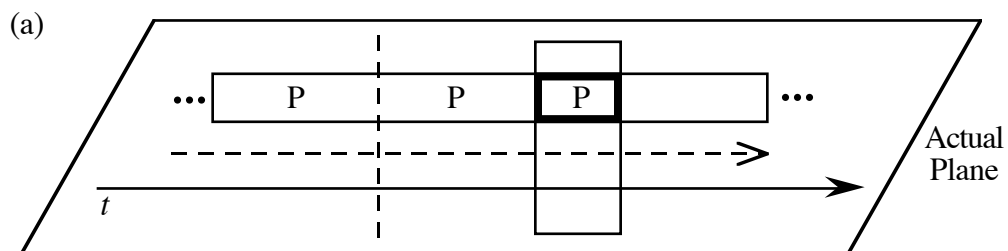


(38) Jack is **still** writing his dissertation, but Jill has **already** finished hers.

(39)(a) You won't get very far with a contribution of \$10,000, or even \$25,000. And \$50,000 is **still** not enough for a private interview with the president.

(b) Forget about calculus—elementary algebra is **already** too difficult for him.

(40)



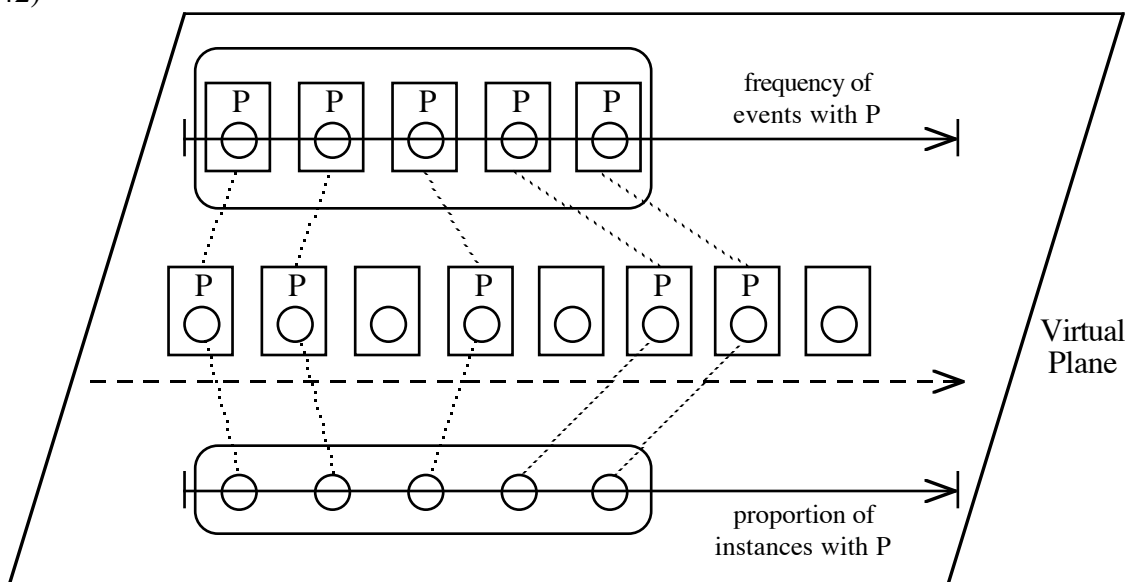
(41)(a) A professional basketball player is **usually** tall.

(b) A professor is **always** arrogant.

(c) Theoretical linguists are {**often/frequently/commonly**} obtuse.

(d) Politicians are {**seldom/rarely/never**} honest.

(42)



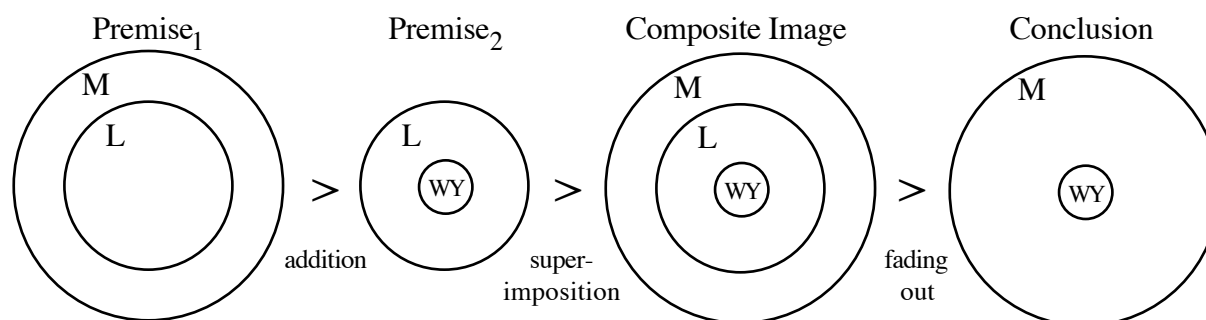
E. “Logical” Elements

- (43) **Image schemas:** schematic and imagistic concepts which are abstracted from pre-conceptual bodily experience, function as constituents of more complex notions, and provide the structure projected metaphorically to more abstract domains.
[*container/content*; *center/periphery*; *part/whole*; *source/path/goal*; *linkage*; *force*; *balance*; etc.]

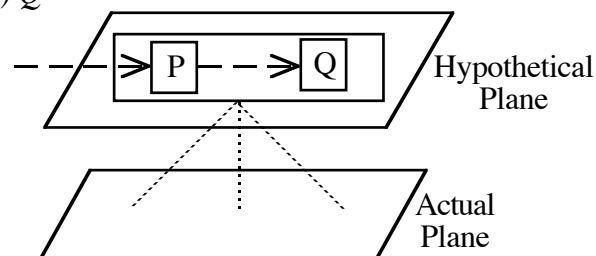
- (44) **Modus ponens:**

All linguists are mammals. Wang Yin is a linguist. ∴ Wang is a mammal.

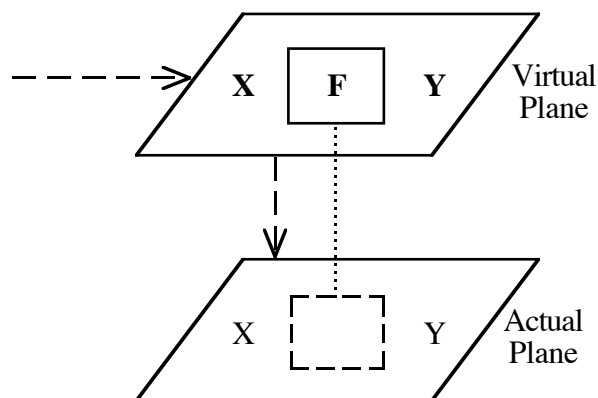
- (45)



- (46) *if P (then) Q*



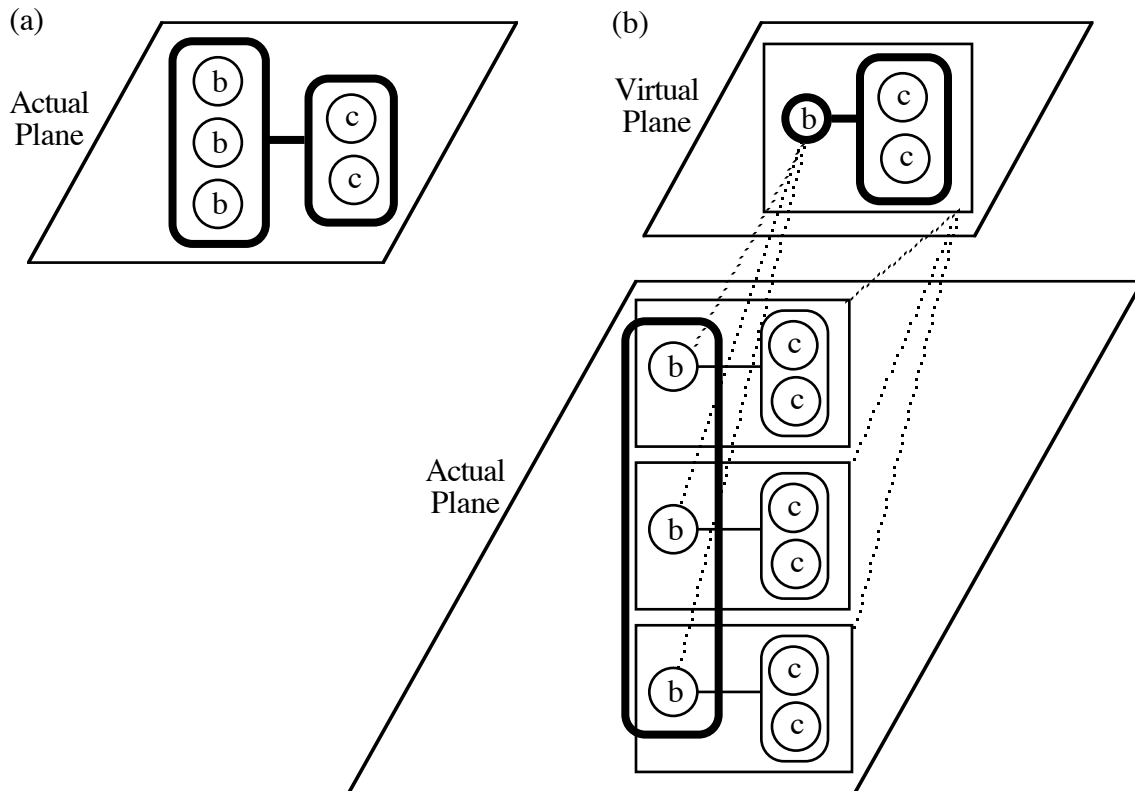
- (47) *not*



- (48)(a) *It didn't rain last night.*
 (b) *I didn't eat the ZUCCHINI.*
 (c) *She didn't PASSIONATELY embrace me.*

(49) *Three boys lifted two chairs.*

(50)

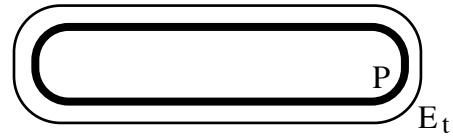
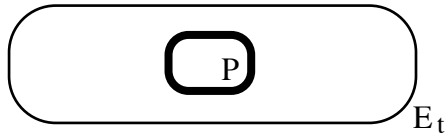


- (51)(a) *Three boys each lifted **two chairs**. *Both were metal.*
 (b) *Three boys each lifted **two chairs**. In each case, **both** were metal.*

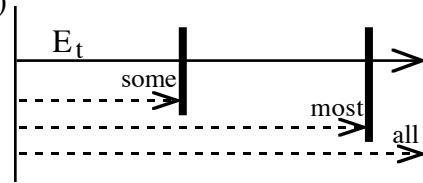
- (52)(a) *All cultures are worth preserving.*
 (b) *Every culture is worth preserving.*
 (c) *Each culture is worth preserving.*
 (d) *Any culture is worth preserving.*

- (53)(a) **Proportional quantifiers:** *all, most, some*
 (b) **Representative instance quantifiers:** *every, each, any*
 (c) **E_t** = the contextually relevant *extension* of a given type (t), i.e. the maximal set of instances invoked as a basis for generalization.

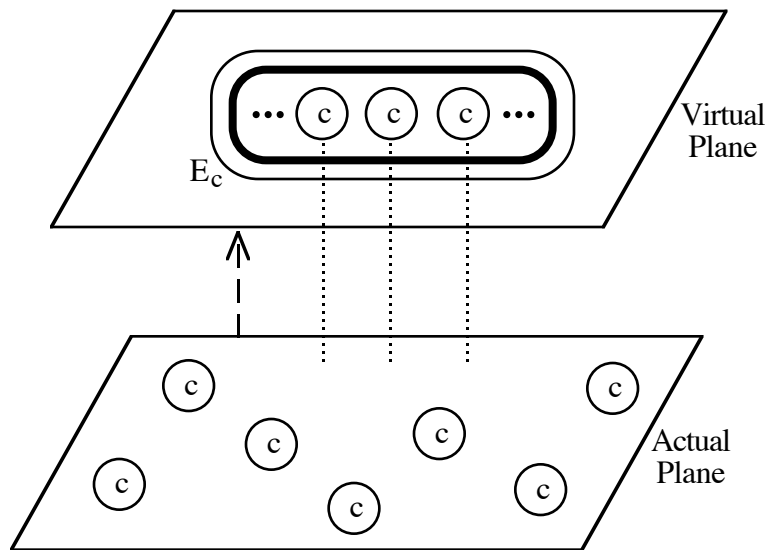
(54)

(a) *all*(b) *most*(c) *some*

(d)

(55) *Most cats are lazy.*

(56)



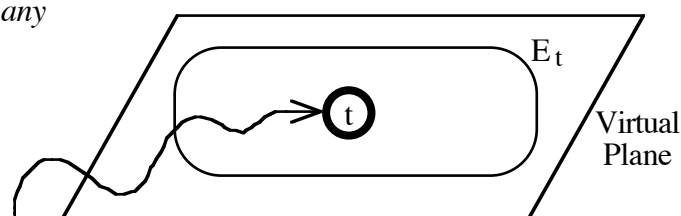
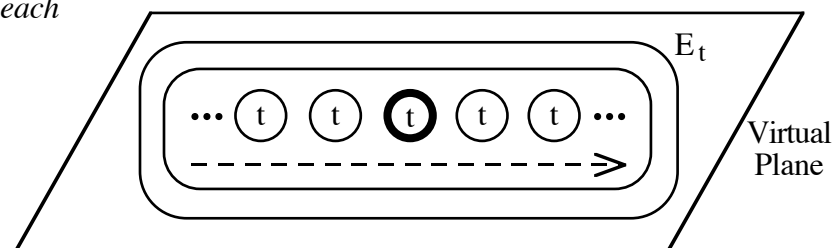
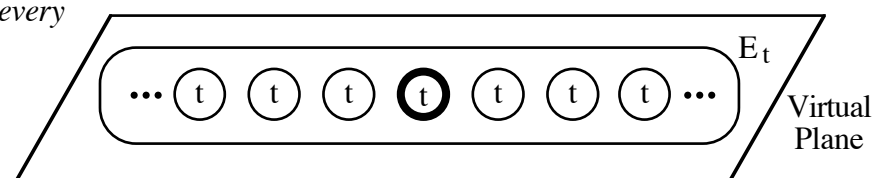
(57) {1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, ... }

(58) Some pertinent aspects of embodied experience:

- moving through our surroundings looking for objects of a certain type
- putting a number of objects together to form a spatial group
- perceiving an object as having a bounded spatial expanse
- laying one object on top of another for purposes of comparison or measurement

(59) **A:** {Every/each/any} cat is lazy. **B:** *Which one?

(60)

(a) *any*(b) *each*(c) *every*(61) *Tonight you can see {every/each/any} star in the Milky Way.*(62)(a) *{every/each} {coin/*coins/*money}*(b) *all {coins/money/*coin}*(c) *any {coin/coins/money}*(63)(a) *I examined {each/?every/?*all/*any} (one) in turn.*(b) *{All/?*every one/?*each (one)/*any (one)} of them looked alike.*

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