So many ideophones in Japanese but less so in English:

A three-tier model account

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Ideophones "typically depict sensory imagery using various types of iconic mappings" (Dingemanse & Akita [D&A] (2016: 502)) and "are a universal category" (Voeltz & Kilian-Hatz (2001: 3)), with which people generally *show*, and not *tell*, what they perceive (D&A (2016), Haiman (2018)). Even if ideophones are universal, their distribution is not equal across languages. For example, Japanese is rich in mimetics as a subclass of ideophones (e.g., *gorogoro* 'rolling$_{MIM}$') (Kita (1997), D&A (2016), Iwasaki et al. (2017), a.o.), while in English, ideophones, which include response cries (e.g., *brrr* [sound emitted when cold]) and twin forms (e.g., *jibber jabber*), are "insignificant and barely attested" (Haiman (2018: 68)). Why then are so many ideophones found in some languages and not in others? This study argues that the distributional biases are systematically accounted for by the three-tier model of language use (Hirose (2015)), in particular by the private-/public-self-centeredness of a given language. That is, private-self-centered languages like Japanese are rich in ideophones, but public-self-centered languages like English are not.

Two hypotheses of the three tier model (Hirose (2015: 123-125)) are relevant. (i) The three tiers of language use (i.e., the situation construal, situation report, and interpersonal relationship tiers) are combined in different ways in different languages; (ii) the speaker is decomposed into a public self as the subject of communicating and a private self as the subject of thinking. English is a public-self-centered language, in which the public self in the situation report tier views a situation from the outside and reports it, while Japanese is a private-self-centered language, in which the private self in the situation construal tier views a situation from the inside and expresses it.

Based on this pragmatic-typological distinction, Hasegawa (2017) recognizes two marked modes of language use in Japanese: *soliloquy mode* and *presentation mode*. The former is simply a bare realization of situation construal, detached from the rest. The latter mode, realized as soliloquy uttered to be heard, involves a "metapragmatic shift" by which to alternate the unification pattern of the three tiers as follows: situation report is detached from interpersonal relationship and is unified with situation construal; hence, the unification of situation construal and situation report. Though this pattern seems similar to that of English, the deictic center remains in the private self, or the self in situation construal. Thus, whether in the soliloquy mode or in the presentation mode, Japanese speakers can freely place themselves in a situation and see it from the inside, thus expressing it without regard to others. As a result, they can easily express a situation as they construe it regardless of the presence or absence of the hearer. By contrast, English speakers, due to the language's public-self-centeredness, are always supposed to be conscious of the hearer. In fact, even response cries are observed less often with no hearer present in English (Goffman (1978), Hasegawa (2017)). However, ideophones are in essence speaker-oriented and are not aimed at communicating with others. Therefore, private-self-centered languages are richer in ideophones. From this conclusion, we may parameterize the frequency of ideophones according to whether languages are public-self-centered or private-self-centered.

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