

# **Speech-event conceptions behind discourse-pragmatic characteristics of the construction ‘do and see’ in East Asian languages\***

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## **Abstract**

This study addresses the semantic and functional diversities of the construction literally meaning ‘do and see’ in three East Asian languages: Japanese, Korean, and Ainu. The literal sense is dominant in Ainu, the tentative sense is predominant in Japanese, and the experiential sense as well as the tentative sense is very common in Korean. The study advances a discourse-pragmatic analysis with respect to speech-event conceptions that underlie the different senses of the construction.

## **1 Introduction**

This study addresses the semantic and functional diversities of the “converb construction” (Shibatani 2003: 263) with a verb of ‘seeing’ as its head in East Asian languages. We take up Japanese, Korean, and Ainu as case studies. We propose a discourse-pragmatic analysis with respect to

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different focusing and defocusing in the speech-event conceptions that underlie the different senses of the construction.

Earlier studies have described the relevant construction in Japanese, *V-te miru*, to have the meaning 'to perform an action to know something or to know the resulted state of the action' (Yoshikawa 1975: 39). Koguma (2015: 45) proposes that the facets of "action" and its "concomitant experience" be distinguished in the meaning and points out that the construction has further developed a subsense of "psychological reflexive benefaction" along with the trial sense of 'try doing.' Although comparable constructions are recognized in Korean (Hwang et al. 1988; Paik 2007) and Ainu (Asai 1969; Nakagawa 1995; Kayano 1996; Tamura 1996), their meaning and function have so far attracted little attention in the literature on each language.

We argue here that the conceptualizations of the converb construction *V and see* in Japanese, Korean, and Ainu can be characterized with respect to three facets: (i) the intention of *Ving*'s or *seeing*'s subject (conation), (ii) his or her seeing/experience of *Ving* (actualization), and (iii) his or her encounter of an (un)expected consequence often expressed in what follows the construction (cognition). We further demonstrate that comparable constructions in the three languages exhibit semantic and functional characteristics partly overlapping but somewhat different from one another. The present analysis demonstrates that the different (sometimes even unique) (de)focusing of each facet is responsible for the diversities among the three languages as well as between distinct uses found in each language.

Since Japanese, Korean, and Ainu are SOV languages, the relevant converb construction can be morphosyntactically defined as:

$(NP_{subj}) (NP_{obj}) V \text{ and } see$

where *see* corresponds to *mi-ru* in Japanese, *bo-da* in Korean, and *inkar* in Ainu. In Ainu, *inu*, a verb for hearing, can also be used in the same construction with comparable meanings and functions (Nakagawa 1995; Kayano 1996; Tamura 1996). The present discussion will mostly limit itself to the cases with the verb for seeing.

The relevant construction, generalized as *V and see*, can have three major senses. One can be translated into English as 'do and see,' which will be referred to as **literal** sense. Another can be glossed in English as 'try doing,' which will be referred to as **tentative** sense. The other can be interpreted as 'have (ever) done before,' which will be referred to as **experiential** sense.

The sentences in (1) instantiate the *V and see* construction in Japanese.<sup>1</sup> Declarative *tabe-te mi-ta* in (1a) and interrogative *tabe-te mi-ta?* in (1b) both impart a tentative sense: 'I tried eating it' and 'Did you try

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<sup>1</sup> The abbreviations used in glossing example sentences are as follows: ACC (accusative), FP (final particle), IMP (imperative), NEG (negation), PRS (present tense), PST (past tense), and TOP (topic).

eating it?', respectively. Comparable sentences in Korean are given in (2).<sup>2</sup> In both (2a-b), *meogeo boasseo* can convey a similar tentative sense. However, it is more likely to evoke an experiential sense: 'I have eaten it before' and 'Have you ever eaten it before?', respectively. Interestingly, comparable sentences are not attested in our Ainu data.

- (1) a. ***tabe-te mi-ta.*** (tentative) JAPANESE  
**eat-and see-PST**  
 '(I) tried eating (it).'
- b. ***tabe-te mi-ta?*** (tentative)  
**eat-and see-PST**  
 'Have (you) tried eating (it)?'
- (2) a. ***meogeo boasseo.*** (tentative/experiential) KOREAN  
**eat:and see:PST**  
 '(I) tried eating (it)/(I) have eaten (it) before.'
- b. ***meogeo boasseo?*** (tentative/experiential)  
**eat:and see:PST**  
 'Have (you) tried eating (it)?/Have (you) ever eaten (it)?'

It should be noticed here that the subject of the *V and see* construction ordinarily amounts to the "anchoring speaker" in Koguma and Izutsu's (2016, 2017) terms; it corresponds to the current speaker in declarative sentences and to the next speaker (addressee) in interrogative sentences. Note that the subject person alternates between the speaker 'I' and the addressee 'you' according to whether the sentences are in the declarative, as in (1a) and (2a), or whether they are in the interrogative, as in (1b) and (2b). In this regard, the *V and see* construction in Japanese and Korean can be classified into the category of subjective or "emotive predicate" (Nishio 1972; Masuoka 1997; Kanro 2004).

## 2 *V and see* as main-clause predicates

Here we will look at the *V and see* construction that occurs in Ainu, Japanese, and Korean main clauses.

### 2.1 Literal and tentative senses in Ainu

First, we look at the *V and see* construction in Ainu. Its occurrences in main clauses are mostly found in imperative sentences, as illustrated in (3).<sup>3</sup> (3a) can either be interpreted as 'Let's dig and see here' (literal sense) or 'Let's try digging here' (tentative sense). In (3b), however, the second clause is only interpretable as 'come out and look' (literal sense). The facet of seeing can be clearly located in the denoted event. On the other hand, (3c) is seemingly confined to a tentative-sense interpretation. Here the

<sup>2</sup> We are indebted to Yong-Taek Kim for all the Korean examples cited in this article.

<sup>3</sup> The English glosses and translations in (3) are ours.

facet of seeing has been nearly lost or 'bleached' in Sweetser's (1988) sense of the term.

- (3) a. ...*a=ta wa inkar=an ro.* (literal/tentative)  
 we=dig and look=we let's (Kayano 1996: 86)  
 'Let's dig and see (here)/Let's try digging (here).'
- b. ...*\_hetak \_hokure an=ona asin wa inkar.* (literal)  
 hey hurry I=father exit and look  
 'Hey, hurry up, dad, come out and look.' (Sugimura 1990: 64)
- c. *e=mi kuni cikarkarpe asa wa inkar.* (tentative)  
 you=wear should embroidered.clothing order and look  
 'Try placing an order to make your embroidered clothing.'  
 (Kayano *ibid.*)

The literal sense instantiated in (3a) and (3b) can be diagrammed as in Figure 1. *V and* designates the subject person's action, which is represented by the bold arrow, and *see* denotes the subject person's visual perception of the effect of the action. The dotted-line arrow stands for this visual attention.

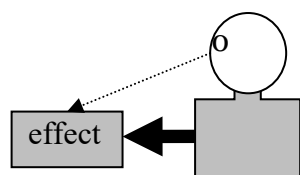


Figure 1: Literal sense

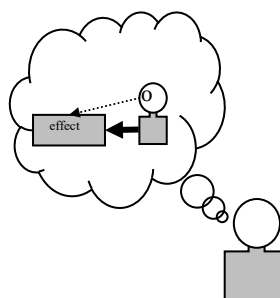


Figure 2: Tentative sense

In the tentative sense exemplified in (3a) and (3c), the subject person does not perform an action but rather imagines his/her action and its effect, as diagrammed in Figure 2. *V and* designates such an imagined action by the subject person, which is represented by the bold arrow in the thought balloon, and *see* denotes the subject person's visual perception of the effect of the action in the imagination. This sort of imagination about the action effect can amount to the speaker's and/or addressee's expectation for, or anticipation of, the action encoded in *V and*.

## 2.2 Tentative senses in Japanese sentences

The *V and see* construction in Japanese can also have a tentative sense as well as a literal sense.<sup>4</sup> Here we will concentrate on the examples with a

<sup>4</sup> The following sentence can be interpreted as an instance of the literal sense, but it is much easier to understand as one of the tentative sense.

(i) *Bangumi-o rokugasi-te mi-ru.*  
 program-ACC record-and see-PRS

tentative sense in (4). *Tabete mi-ru?* in (4a) and *tabete mi-nai?* in (4b), both in the interrogative, serve as offers: ‘Will you try eating it?’ and ‘Will you not try eating it?’, respectively. Imperative *tabete mi-na* in (4c) functions as a suggestion: ‘Try eating it.’ Since the subject person in interrogative and imperative sentences corresponds to the addressee, these expressions are all understood to refer to the addressee. In the tentative sense instantiated in (4a-c), the addressee does not necessarily perform an action but rather imagines his/her action and its effect. Therefore, as diagramed in Figure 2 above, *V and* designates such an imagined action by the subject person, represented by the bold arrow in the thought balloon, and *see* denotes the subject person’s visual (or some other) perception of the effect of the action in the imagination.

- (4) a. *tabete mi-ru?* (tentative) NON-PAST sentences  
eat-and see-PRS  
‘(Will you) try (eating) (it)?’  
b. *tabete mi-nai?* (tentative)  
eat-and see-NEG  
‘(Will you) not try (eating) (it)?’  
c. *tabete mi-na.* (tentative)  
eat-and see-IMP  
‘Try (eating) (it).’

In the sentences of past time reference in (5), however, the subject person does not only imagine his/her action and its effect but also actually performs the relevant action and actually has a visual (or some other) perception of the effect of the action, as in Figure 3. Here the imagination is represented by a thought balloon containing expectation/anticipation. The bold and the dotted-line arrows stand respectively for the action and the (visual) perception. (5a-c) convey a tentative sense: ‘I tried eating it,’ ‘I didn’t try eating it,’ and ‘Did you try eating it?’, respectively.

- (5) a. *tabete mi-ta.* (tentative) PAST sentences  
eat-and see-**PST**  
‘(I) tried eating (it).’  
b. *tabete mi-nakat-ta.* (tentative)  
eat-and see-NEG-**PST**  
‘(I) didn’t try eating (it).’  
c. *tabete mi-ta?* (tentative)  
eat-and see-**PST**  
‘(Have you) tried (eating) (it)?’

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‘(I usually) record and see TV programs.’ (literal)  
‘(I will) try recording TV programs.’ (tentative)

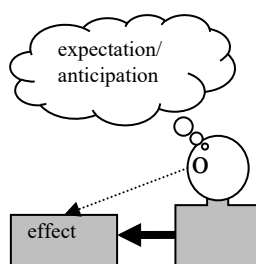


Figure 3: Tentative sense with an effect

### 2.3 Tentative senses in Korean sentences

Next we turn to the *V and see* construction in Korean. In the examples of non-past time reference in (6), it has a tentative sense just as in Japanese example (4) above, in which the subject person does not perform an action but rather imagines his/her action and its effect, as diagramed in Figure 2 above. *V and* designates such an imagined action by the subject person, which is represented by the bold arrow in the thought balloon, and *see* denotes the subject person's visual perception of the effect of the action in the imagination. (6a-d) convey: 'Will you try eating it?', 'Won't you try eating it?', 'Why don't you try eating it?', and 'Try eating it,' respectively.

- (6) a. *meogeo bo-llae?* (tentative)  
eat:and see-will  
'Will (you) try (eating) (it).'
- b. *an meogeo boa?* (tentative)  
NEG eat:and see  
'Won't you try (eating) (it)?'
- c. *meogeo bo-ji anheu-llae?* (tentative)  
eat:and see NEG-will  
'Why don't (you) try (eating) (it)?'
- d. *meogeo boa.* (tentative)  
eat:and see  
'Try (eating) (it).'

The sentences of past time reference in (7) can also be used in a tentative sense; declarative *meogeo boasseo* in (7a) and *an meogeo boasseo* in (7b) can mean 'I tried eating it' and 'I didn't try eating it,' respectively. Interrogative *meogeo boasseo?* in (7c) and *an meogeo boasseo?* in (7d) can mean 'Did you try eating it?' and 'Didn't you try eating it?', respectively. This can also be diagramed as in Figure 3 above. *V and* denotes that the subject person envisions the effect of his/her relevant action as an expectation/anticipation and actually performs that action. The facet of expectation/anticipation is represented by a thought balloon. And *see* in the past tense indicates that the subject person actually has a visual (or some other) perception of the effect of the action. In this sense, the facet of literally seeing the effect of the action is still active in that the person

intended to see (or sense) the effect. The dotted-line arrow stands for this facet of perception here as well.

- (7) a. *meogeo boasseo*. (tentative/experiential)  
 eat:and see:PST  
 ‘(I) tried eating (it)/(I) have eaten (it) before.’  
 b. *an meogeo boasseo*. (tentative/experiential)  
 NEG eat:and see:PST  
 ‘(I) didn’t try (eating) (it)/(I) have never eaten (it).’  
 c. *meogeo boasseo?* (tentative/experiential)  
 eat:and see:PST  
 ‘(Have you) tried eating (it)?/Have (you) ever eaten (it)?’  
 d. *an meogeo boasseo?* (tentative/experiential)  
 NEG eat:and see:PST  
 ‘(Haven’t you) tried eating (it)?/Haven’t (you) ever eaten (it)?’

Nevertheless, (7a-d) are more likely to convey an experiential sense; they mean ‘I have eaten it before,’ ‘I have never eaten it,’ ‘Have you ever eaten it?’, and ‘Haven’t you ever eaten it?’, respectively, as shown in the second translation of each sentence in (7). This experiential sense can be diagrammed as in Figure 4. *V and* denotes that the subject person actually performed the action represented by the bold arrow, and *see* in the past tense indicates that the subject person encounters rather than sees the effect of the action. In this sense, the facet of visual perception seems to be “bleached” out in Sweetser’s (1988) sense of the term. This is why the dotted-line arrow for visual attention is lacking here.

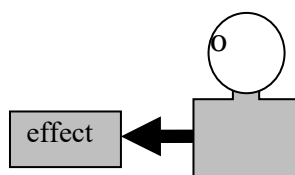


Figure 4: Experiential sense

### 3 *V and see* as subordinate-clause predicates

We will here move on to the *V and see* construction in subordinate clauses.

#### 3.1 Literal and experiential senses in Ainu subordinate clauses

First, we look at Ainu examples.<sup>5</sup> As seen in (8a), the construction imparts primarily a literal sense and secondarily an experiential sense. In the literal sense, (8a) (*ni ka ta rok=an wa inkar=an\_ayke sarkitoy kes wano siruhuy wa...*) means ‘When I sat on a tree and looked, a fire broke out at

<sup>5</sup> The English glosses and translations in (8) are ours.

the low end of the reed field,' while in the experiential sense, it means 'I sat on a tree and noticed that a fire broke out at the low end of the reed field.' In many instances, the two senses are hard to distinguish from each other, as is the case with (8a). Similar points can be made about the *V and hear* construction, illustrated in (8b). It also carries primarily a literal sense of 'do and listen/sniff' but can only secondarily have an experiential sense ('do and hear/smell') at the same time.

- (8) a. *ni ka ta rok=an wa inkar=an\_ayke sarkitoy kes wano*  
 tree top at sit=I and look=I when reed:field end from  
*siruhuy wa...* (literal/experiential) (Sugimura 1990: 150)  
 fire.start and  
 'When I sat on a tree (and looked), a fire broke out at the low end of  
 the reed field...'
- b. *okamkino an=e wa inu=an\_hike nepka wenpe ka*  
 deliberately I=eat and listen=I when something bad either  
*somo ne.* (literal/experiential) (Sugimura 1990: 346)  
 NEG be  
 'When I ate it (actually), it was not anything bad.'

The literal and experiential senses are, by nature, very close to each other in that their major difference only lies in whether or not the designated event conception clearly involves the subject person's visual (or auditory/olfactory) perception of the relevant effect. In the literal sense, diagramed in Figure 1 (Section 2.1), *V and* refers to the subject person's action, which is represented by the bold arrow, and *see* denotes the subject person's visual (or some other) perception of the effect of the action. The dotted-line arrow stands for this visual (or auditory/olfactory) attention. On the other hand, in the experiential sense, diagramed in Figure 4 (Section 2.3), *V and* denotes that the subject person performs the action represented by the bold arrow, and *see* or *hear* indicates that the subject person encounters the effect of the action. In this sense, the facet of visual (auditory/olfactory) perception is bleached out, and therefore the dotted-line arrow for visual attention is not involved here.

### 3.2 Tentative and experiential senses in Japanese subordinate clauses

In Japanese as well, the *V and see* construction in subordinate clauses can have a literal sense, but it is far more likely to convey a tentative sense or an experiential sense, as illustrated in (9). In the tentative-sense interpretation of (9b), with non-past time reference, 'When you try eating it, you will know if it is rotten,' the subject person envisages his/her action and its effect as an expectation/anticipation. In (9a) and (9c), with past time reference, *V and* denotes that the subject person has an anticipation/expectation for the effect of his or her action, represented by a thought balloon (see Figure 3 above), and actually performs the relevant action. And *see* indicates that the subject person sees (or senses) the effect



of the action. Note that the facet of literally seeing the effect is still active here. The dotted-line arrow stands for this facet of visual (or some other) perception. In contrast, in the experiential-sense interpretation of (9a-c), the facet of expectation/anticipation is lost. Therefore, *V and* denotes the subject person's action only, 'I ate it.' And *see* indicates that the subject person encounters the effect of the action, 'I found that it was rotten' or 'you will know if it is rotten.' Here the facet of literally seeing the effect is also lost.

- (9) a. *tabe-te miru-to, kusattei-ta.* (tentative/experiential)  
 eat-and see-when be.rotten-PST  
 'When (I) tried (eating) (it), it was rotten.'
- b. *tabe-te mire-ba, kusatteiru-kadooka wakaruy-o.*  
 eat-and see-if be.rotten-whether understand-FP  
 'When (you) try (eating) (it), (you) will know if it is rotten.'  
 (tentative/experiential)
- c. *tabe-te mi-tara, kusattei-ta.* (tentative/experiential)  
 eat-and see-when be.rotten-PST  
 'When (I) tried (eating) (it), it was rotten.'

### 3.3 Tentative and experiential senses in Korean subordinate clauses

In Korean, the *V and see* construction in subordinate clauses can have a tentative sense, as well as a literal sense, as exemplified in (10b), 'When I try eating it, it tastes good.' In this interpretation as a tentative sense, *V and* denotes that the subject person envisages his/her action of eating with an expectation/anticipation of its effect and actually eats. And *see* focuses on the person's encounter of the actual effect: 'it tastes good.' However, the construction in subordinate clauses is much more likely to convey an experiential sense, as in (10a) and (10c). In this interpretation, with past time reference, *V and* denotes the subject person's action only, 'I ate it' in (10a) and 'I was eating it' in (10c). And *see* indicates that the subject person encounters the effect of the action, 'I found that it was rotten' in (10a) and 'I found it all gone' in (10c).

- (10) a. *meog-go bo-ni da sanghan eumsig-ieosseo.* (experiential)  
 eat-and see-when all rotten food-be:PST  
 'When (I) tried (eating) (it), it was rotten.'
- b. *meogeo bo-ni mas iss-ne.* (tentative)  
 eat:and see-when taste be-FP  
 'When (I) try (eating) (it), it tastes good.'
- c. *meogda bo-ni da ddeoreojeosseo.* (experiential)  
 eat:and see-when all disappear:PST  
 'While (I) was eating (it), it was all gone.'

### 3.4 Distribution of literal, tentative, and experiential senses

Now we can have a semantic and functional overview of the *V and see* construction in Japanese, Korean, and Ainu, as shown in Table 1. First, it is a remarkable fact that none of the three languages allows the construction to appear in the negative imperative.

Table 1: Sentence types and three senses

		Japanese	Korean	Ainu
declarative	affirmative	tentative	tentative/experiential	literal
	negative	tentative	tentative/experiential	N.A
interrogative	affirmative	tentative	tentative/experiential	N.A
	negative	tentative	tentative/experiential	N.A
imperative	affirmative	tentative	tentative	literal/tentative
	negative	N.A	N.A	N.A
subordinate	affirmative	tentative/experiential	tentative/experiential	literal/experiential
	negative	tentative/experiential	tentative/experiential	N.A

In Ainu, the construction does not seem to occur in the interrogative either. Furthermore, the negative form is unattested in the declarative and interrogative in addition to the imperative. The literal sense is still dominant in Ainu. In Japanese and Korean as well, the literal sense is not impossible, but other senses are more dominant than in Ainu. The tentative sense is predominant in Japanese, while the experiential sense as well as the tentative sense is very common in Korean. In Japanese and Ainu, the experiential sense is possible in subordinate clauses alone.

Table 2 tabulates the examples examined above according to each sentence type and its polarity. The marked slots, the affirmative declarative in Ainu and the negative subordination in Japanese and Korean, are not necessarily impossible but exhibit so highly idiomatic usages that the present discussion will not touch upon them.<sup>6</sup>

Table 2: List of the examples of each sentence type

		Japanese	Korean	Ainu
declarative	affirmative	(1a), (5a)	(2a), (7a)	※
	negative	(5b)	(7b)	N.A
interrogative	affirmative	(1b), (4a), (5c)	(2b), (6a), (7c)	N.A
	negative	(4b)	(6b-c), (7d)	N.A
imperative	affirmative	(4c)	(6d)	(3a-c)
	negative	N.A	N.A	N.A
subordinate	affirmative	(9a-c)	(10a-c)	(8a-b)
	negative	※	※	N.A

<sup>6</sup> In Japanese, for instance, the *V-te miru* can be used in negative subordinate clauses like:

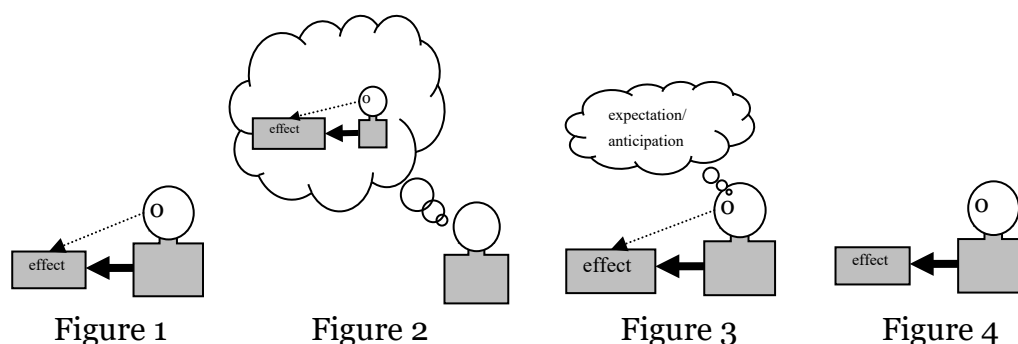
(i) *yat-te mi-nakere-ba kekka-wa wakara-nai.*  
do-and see-NEG-if result-TOP understand-NEG  
'The result will not be known if you do not try doing (it).'

## 4 Focusing and defocusing in the relevant conceptualization

We will here demonstrate that the semantic and functional diversities of the *V and see* construction in the three languages can be captured with respect to the focusing or defocusing of facets of the relevant event conception.

### 4.1 Diverse senses of *V and see* constructions

Let us review the senses of the *V and see* construction in the three languages. The discussion above has illuminated three different senses: literal sense, tentative sense, and experiential sense. However, the tentative sense in the past time reference is somewhat distinguishable from the tentative sense in the non-past time reference. Thus we now have four distinct senses at hand. The major facets of each sense can be detected in the diagrams that we demonstrated above, which are repeated below.



In the literal sense, diagramed in Figure 1, *V and* designates the subject person's action, represented by the bold arrow, and *see* denotes the subject person's visual perception of the effect of the action. By contrast, in the tentative sense in non-past sentences, diagramed in Figure 2, the subject person is supposed to have an anticipation/expectation for the effect of his or her action, and *V and* designates such an imagined action by the subject person, again represented by the bold arrow in the thought balloon. And *see* denotes the subject person's visual perception of the effect of the action in the anticipation/expectation.

In the tentative sense in past sentences as well, diagramed in Figure 3, the subject person is assumed to have an anticipation/expectation for the effect of his or her action, represented in a thought balloon, but *V and* denotes that the subject person actually performs the action encoded in the *V*, which is represented by the bold arrow. And *see* indicates that the subject person has a visual (or some other) perception of the effect of the action, which is perceived as an expected or an unexpected one.

On the other hand, in the experiential sense, diagramed in Figure 4, *V and* designates the subject person's action, represented by the bold arrow,

and *see* denotes the subject person's encounter with the effect of the action. The visual perception involved in the literal sense is absent in this sense.

Here we can summarize the difference between the four distinguishable senses. The two variants of tentative senses involve the facet of the subject person's anticipation/expectation for his or her action, but the literal and experiential senses lack this facet of meaning.

## 4.2 Diverse focusing and defocusing

The semantic and functional diversities of the *V and see* construction in the three languages can be captured with respect to focusing or defocusing some facets of the event conception in which the subject person performs an action and has its effect. As noted about (1) and (2) in the beginning of the present discussion, the subject person in the construction amounts to the anchoring speaker: speaker in the declarative and the addressee in the interrogative. Accordingly, the anticipation/expectation involved in the tentative sense(s) basically reflects the speech-event conception that the speaker and/or addressee entertain.

The *V and see* construction in Ainu tends to convey a literal sense of 'do and see'; it defocuses or does not focus on the speech-event participants' expectation for, or anticipation of, what comes from the event encoded in *Ving* except for imperative sentences. The literal sense in subordinate clauses can occasionally evoke an experiential sense of 'have actually done.'<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, the Japanese *V and see* construction primarily serves to focus on the expectation/anticipation component of the speech-event conception, thereby giving rise to a tentative meaning of 'try doing' in most types of sentences. In subordinate clauses, however, it can evoke an experiential sense more easily than a tentative sense, because the expectation/anticipation component can be much more weakened than in the main clauses. As pointed out above, the anticipation/expectation component basically reflects the speech-event participants (speaker and/or addressee) and is thus associated with the main clause rather than the subordinate clause.

Likewise, the Korean *V and see* construction can evoke a tentative sense in most types of sentences. At the same time, it is more likely to focus on the subject referent's actual encounter with the event encoded in *Ving* and/or its effect, and thus it designates an experiential sense far more often than in Japanese.

The conceptualizations of these converb constructions can be characterized in terms of three facets: (i) the intention of the subject referent (conation), (ii) its seeing/experience of *Ving* (actualization), and (iii) its encounter of an (un)expected consequence often expressed in what follows the construction (cognition). In Ainu and Korean, (ii) and (iii) are focused on, while in Japanese, (i) is emphasized. These differences can be

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<sup>7</sup> Koguma (2015: 46) notes that the relevant construction in Ainu can be characterized "as foregrounding the facet of experience."

ascribed to the notional differences between the verbs for ‘see.’ The Ainu and Korean verbs for seeing can be used in the sense of ‘meet’ but the Japanese verb cannot. The former presupposes far more interaction between the subject and object referents; in other words, they tend to emphasize the facet of the subject referent’s experience of the object referent.

Comparable differences in the (de)focusing of the three facets are observed among two-verb constructions of other languages (e.g., *look and see*, *try to do*, and *try doing* in English). The fact that each construction or its respective use is typical of declarative or imperative sentences implies that the discourse-pragmatic functions of the relevant converb construction in the three languages reflect major facets of speech-event conceptions: speaker and addressee’s intention or expectation about an event talked about and the relevant consequence of the event.

### **4.3 (De)focusing from a contrastive perspective**

In the three East Asian languages, the *V and see* constructions linguistically encode both facets of the subject person’s action (*V*) and trial for or experience of its effect (*see*). In Ainu, the facet of the subject’s trial/experience can be expressed with a verb for ‘listen/hear it’ as well as one for ‘look/see it,’ as noticed in (8) above. In other languages like English, however, the action facet is not usually expressed though the trial facet is, as in *I tried it* rather than *I tried eating it*. In examples like *look and see*, one could see both facets of action and experience to be somehow expressed but one can hardly say *eat and see* in the context of Japanese and Korean sentences (4c) and (6d) above. In English, the trial facet is focused on and realized as a verb *try*, while neither its concomitant action nor the experiential facet ordinarily receives a linguistic encoding.

On the other hand, the Japanese *V and see* construction can have a *kibarashi* (‘pastime’) sense (Koguma 2015: 45), illustrated in (11a), which he interprets as “psychological reflexive benefaction” that occurs along with the trial sense. He points out that English employs the “have a V-stem” construction (Wierzbicka 1988; Dixon 1991) for this pastime sense, as exemplified in (11b).

- (11) a. *mati-o (kibarasi-ni) arui-te-mi-ta.* (Koguma 2015: 45)  
town-ACC pastime-for walk-and-see-PST  
‘I walked around the town (to feel refreshed).’  
b. I had a walk around the town. (Koguma 2015: 43)

Whereas English encodes the action facet with a word as in Japanese, it is not put in a verb but a verb-stem nominal *a walk* here. It encodes the trial/experiential facet with the verb *have*. This configuration is quite comparable to the *V and see* construction; in both constructions, the action facet is put in a non-finite (non-tensed) verb form (*V and* in Japanese and verb stem in English), while the trial/experiential facet is encoded in a finite verb (*see* and *have*, respectively).

Here we can see formal similarities in semantic and functional counterparts of the two different languages. Unlike Japanese, Korean, and Ainu, English basically defocuses and therefore does not encode the action facet, let alone the experiential facet of the event conceptions corresponding to the tentative/experiential senses in the three languages. English only focuses on and thus encodes the trial facet. These tendencies for linguistic encoding can also be understood as another kind of difference in focusing and defocusing.

## **5 Conclusion**

This study demonstrated that morphosyntactically comparable converb constructions *V and see* in Japanese, Korean, and Ainu exhibit semantic and functional characteristics partly overlapping but somewhat different from one another and argued that their differences can be accounted for with respect to the focusing/defocusing of (i) the intention of the subject referent (conation), (ii) its seeing/experience of *Ving* (actualization), and (iii) its encounter of an (un)expected consequence often expressed in what follows the construction (cognition). The Ainu and Korean constructions are more or less actualization/cognition-oriented, while the Japanese one is far more sensitive to the subject referent's conation.

We further discussed the contrast between the *V and see* constructions and semantic-functional counterparts in English, showing that they differ principally in whether or not they put the action facet of the relevant event conception in a linguistic form. The three East Asian languages tend more or less to encode the facet in the morphosyntactic form, *V and*, followed by a verb for 'see' or 'hear,' while English ordinarily does not encode it. In a related construction for a pastime sense, however, English can also express the action facet with a verb-stem nominal.

The different senses of those constructions can be described as based on the event conceptions in which speech-event participants hold some expectation or anticipation of an action they participate in. The partial overlaps and discrepancies among the senses and forms can be accounted for with respect to differences in the focusing and defocusing of certain facets of the relevant event conceptions.

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