To Be or Not To Be Ideophonically Impoverished*

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This paper addresses a current debate over the universality of ideophones, a class of expressions that are used to simulate, through performative foregrounding, the salient processes and perceptions of everyday life experience. Using data from Quechua-speaking Runa in Amazonian Ecuador, I argue for a view of ideophones as a type of cultural discourse through which speakers align themselves with nonhuman life forms and forces of nature. This alignment is suggested by the special performative properties of ideophones, which collapse the distinction between a speech event and a narrated event, thus compelling a speaker to become an action, event, or process, in order to communicate about it. My argument finds support in Quechua data from a variety of discourse genres, including life history narratives, myths, and casual conversations. While there may be a universal tendency for all languages to develop ideophones, there are extralinguistic factors that can constrain or inhibit their emergence as a fully blown class of expressions with unique formal properties. Evidence for the importance of extralinguistic factors to ideophonic development or decay comes from comparative data on Zulu and Japanese ideophone usage, as well as the functionally restricted use of ideophones by speakers of English.

This paper addresses a current debate over the universality of ideophones, a typologically widespread class of expressions that usually function adverbially or adjectivally and are defined, prototypically, with a constellation of features, including reduplicated morphology, unusual phonotactics, and expressive, sensorily grounded semantics with possible sound-symbolic associations. In discourse, ideophones are a likely locus of intonational and gestural foregrounding, which contributes to their status as a particular kind of performance where the distinction between the speech event and narrated event are collapsed. The collapsing of this distinction is evident in the following example from the Quechua spoken in Pastaza province, Ecuador.[1] Here the speaker uses three ideophones to performatively simulate the crashing of a tree to the ground during a storm:[2]

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[1] The Quechua language is broadly classified into two main groups. All varieties of Quechua spoken in Ecuador are classified by Mannheim (1991) as *Peripheral Quechua*. The term *Quichua* has been adopted by many specialists of Ecuadorian dialects of Quechua.

[2] All data are cited according to their tape number and series name from the author's files. This example comes from Verb Portraits Ba kuchuna. In addition, all examples may be found in the

(1)   Gyauuuuuuuunng bl^huuuuuu   put^hunnng!   urma-gri-n
        (creaking sound)   (breaking off) (impact with ground) fall-TRSLC[3]
        "(Creaking) gyauuuuuuuunng and (breaking off) bl^huuuuuu it falls
        put^hunnng."

The tree's falling is modeled with ideophones which simulate the salient properties of creaking, rupturing, and falling with impact. The performative extension of vocalic sounds in *gyaung* imitates the prolongation of the creaking sound. The force of the tree's breaking off from its base is symbolized by the aspiration of *bl^hu*. The lack of consonantal obstruction in this ideophone's word final position simulates the unrestricted falling of the tree trunk toward the ground. Finally, the prolongation of the word-final velar nasal *-ng* in the second syllable of *putung* simulates the reverberative qualities of the sound of impact.

Linguists concerned with ideophony have often bemoaned the status of their research interest as it has always seemed to occupy a shadowy world of unofficial linguistic inquiry. Childs (2001) reports that in grammars and dictionaries, ideophones have been "disdained, given superficial treatment, or ignored" (p. 64). The difficulties of finding data on ideophones are compounded by the reluctance of some speakers to use them or even to talk about them. In her study of Wolaitta ideophones, the linguist and native speaker Azeb Amha noted that her own mother was able to enlarge her list of ideophones considerably, but only after an initial protest against discussing them in public. (Childs, 2001, p. 61.) In my own research on Quechua ideophones, I encountered an acute embarrassment on the part of a man I had brought to the U.S. to help me teach the language, when I asked him to use them in a classroom context.

The peripheral status of ideophone research, the difficulties in finding reports on ideophones even in languages where they are known to exist, and the problems involved in trying to get certain native speakers to use them might lead one to believe ideophones to be a rare phenomenon. However, the following statement appeared in the introduction to a recently published collection of essays written for an international symposium on ideophones: "it is. . . reasonable to assume that ideophones exist in all languages of the world: They are a universal category" (Voeltz & Kilian-Hatz, 2001, p. 3). In a review of this volume, Nilson Gabas Jr. (2002) objected to the claim of ideophones' universality on a number of grounds. I enter this debate by stating that if ideophones are to be treated as a universal feature of all languages, then some qualification is necessary. Not all languages have developed an ideophonic subsystem. In some languages and language families they exist in the hundreds and thousands while the English language and European languages generally are ideophonically impoverished. Although it may be true that all languages are potentially able to develop systems of ideophony, I believe there are extralinguistic social and cultural factors which inhibit and constrain this development. My goal, then, is to map some preliminary ground for thinking about ideophones' quasi-universal status.

With data from a dialect of Quechua spoken in eastern Amazonian Ecuador, I outline the salient features of Quechua culture which contribute to ideophony. Foremost among

these features is a disposition to perform, by means of sound, a sentiment of animacy that is common to humans and nonhumans. Sound expresses such a sentiment because sound is only possible when there is movement, and movement is the most obvious evidence for animacy. During ideophonic performances the sound qualities of the sign vehicle are foregrounded and intensified. By sonically simulating their perceptions of nonhuman nature, Runa enact the salient links between themselves and the nonhuman life world. My claim that ideophones thrive within animistic cultures finds anecdotal support from observations of ideophony in Africa. Fortune (1962) characterized ideophony among Shona speakers as reflecting "a concern to give concrete and adequate expression to the forces and energies of the world" (p. 41). In the Kxoe language (a Central Khoisan language spoken in Namibia), "the sounds or noises of the environment are seen in a very anthropomorphic perspective as 'utterances' or 'citations' of the animals and objects of the world" (Kilian-Hatz, 2001, p. 162).

The performative nature of ideophonic expression allows speakers to become active agents in the processes they simulate. During brief moments of ideophonic performance, people enact their alignments with nonhuman nature to express their sharing of a similar life force. Evidence that ideophones constitute a special performative frame comes from contextualization cues, such as pausing, and dynamic changes in prosodic features, as well as metanarrative commentaries that are built around ideophonic performances. Most importantly, the very features that make ideophones unique as a category of linguistic expression lend themselves to the special performative frames they bring about. They typically do not receive grammatical markings that would link them to the arguments of a predicate. Instead they maintain a certain aloofness (Kunene, 2001) from their surrounding utterances. This argument constitutes a novel synthesis, by taking insights from recent ethnographic work in Amazonian Ecuador and using them to deepen the implications of performance theory. Poetics and performance are critical commentaries not only on language and social life (Bauman & Briggs, 1990) but on human alignments with the nonhuman world.

Finally, I link the diminution of ideophones among some Quechua speakers to changing experiential frameworks which redefine peoples' alignments with nature. Ultimately, the diminution of ideophones among peoples of the world who are experiencing rapid change and upheaval is tied to the ideophonic impoverishment of English and European languages generally. A complex set of assumptions which are part of processes of westernization and globalization are having a deleterious effect on ideophony throughout the world. Material conditions such as literacy, market economy activities, and urbanism are frequently mentioned culprits blamed for their diminution. Such factors, however, can only go so far as explanations. The expression of these material conditions within a culture's cosmological construction of nature is of critical importance as well. I consider the following three factors to have a constraining effect on ideophony in Standard Average European languages: Judeo-Christian constructions of nature as degraded, "fallen," and antagonistic to humans; Renaissance notions of nature as brute substance for the fashioning of mechanisms; and modern philosophical notions of nature as a set of processes that spend or dissipate energy. The use of ideophones in Japan, and possibly other Asian cultures as well, might lend support to my claims as it is a highly industrialized, hyper-urban society, where, nevertheless, ideophones are prolific in number and widely used. It is, perhaps, because Japanese culture has at base ideas about nature that are so radically different from Judeo-Christian constructions that ideophony has been allowed to flourish. The animistic complex of ancient Shintoism along with Buddhism are

foundational to Japanese culture, and both are of interest for their foregrounding of alignments between human and nonhuman life forms.

   Data for this paper come from a dialect spoken by people living along the Bobonaza River, in and around the villages of Puka yaku, Sara yaku, and also from those living in the town of Puyo. They refer to themselves as *Runa*, and I will henceforth adopt their term. All of the following examples are from Senora Eloise Cadena. Runa traditional ways of life combine swidden horticulture, along with fishing, hunting, gathering, and trading for their needs. As their territories become increasingly enmeshed within the global economy, they are becoming more involved with those forces through dependence on commodity goods and on opportunities for engaging in wage labor. They have also been extraordinarily active in mobilizations and debates within the Ecuadorian nation. At the heart of these debates are ongoing dialogues over indigenous rights to exist as nations with self-determination within the larger Ecuadorian nation. And pivotal within these debates is the issue of land. The Ecuadorian government has a rational marketplace view of its natural resources as commodities for the generation of capital. Runa see their land quite differently. Runa view themselves in an affective relationship based on a sentiment of shared animacy with their land and its resources. The expression of such a stance would be inhospitably regarded within the rational arenas of discourse dominated by representatives of the Ecuadorian nation.

   Yet when Runa observe and describe their resources, they do not consider them as economic commodities. In example 2 we get a sense of Runa emotional investment in the strength and vitality of a tree. Senora Cadena is describing a tree so strong that when one attempts to chop it down, the ax blade makes a sound as if it were hitting something metallic, sending sparks flying from the point of impact. The entire description is foregrounded by a prosody of amazement and incredulity. This affective tone is greatly facilitated by the performative simulation of the sounds and images made by the ax as it hits the tree causing sparks with each blow.[4]

(2)   Shuk-a   kolog-yuk   ni-nchi,   shinki   kolog-yuk,   karbon kaspi,
        One-TOP   ember-POSS say-1PL   black   ember-POSS   carbon stick
        "There's one that we say has embers, it's a very black tree with embers
        (called) the carbon stick tree."

        Chi-ga   tʸak   chigling (pause)   chigling (pause) chigling (pause)
        That-TOP   (hitting)   (metallic sound)   (metallic sound)   (metallic sound)
        "(When striking that one) tʸak,(it sounds) chigling chigling chigling."

        Ruya, ruya-chu   mana, kai   iru-I   wakta-shka   shinarikur-in
        tree   tree-NEG   NEG thisiron-LOC   hit-PERF   like appear-3
        "Not like striking a tree (but as if) one has struck iron, (sparks) will appear,"

        hacha   kiru-mada-s   pundzhang   pundzhang   pundzhang
        ax   blade-from-INCL spark   spark   spark
        "from the blade of the ax (going) spark spark spark."

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[4] Verb Portraits Ba kuchuna

di ripinti   hacha   kiru   pakiri-g ma-n,   karbon ruya-i;
suddenly   ax   blade   break-AG be-3   carbon tree-LOC
"Suddenly the blade of the ax will break on the carbon tree."

chi   ma-n   shungu-yuk   shinki   shungu-yuk,
that   be-3   heart-POSS   black   heart-POSS
"That one has such a black heart."

Kai   intiru   ruya-ga   shinki
This   entire   tree-TOP black
 "This whole tree is black."

Kai-lʸa   wawa   tuku-sha mana   dzas   urma-nga-chu, Janet
This-LIM   little   become-COR NEGquickly   fall-3F-NEG
"Even when it has become this small it will not be felled quickly, Janis."

When Senora Cadena imitates the metallic sounds and images of sparks flying from the ax blade, she is doing more than supplying a vivid description. Through transformations in her rhythm and cadence, she momentarily becomes the source of those sounds and images. She creates what Kilian-Hatz (2001) has called an "illusion of direct participation" (p. 157) in the sounds, rhythms, and appearances by slightly but noticeably raising the pitch of her voice while repeating the ideophones, and also by pausing after each repetition.

Even when Runa do not supply elaborate metanarrative commentary, the ideophonic performances by themselves will communicate their involvement in natural processes by performing what is most salient about these processes. Example 3 is taken from a description of processing latex. Senora Cadena explains how her father would spread the liquid latex onto clothing which had been spread out onto a table and, when the latex was dry, he would peel it off in one large sheet. The act of peeling is simulated with the ideophone *shau* through strong aspiration of the initial fricative and devoicing of the following vowel sounds.[5]

(3)   Chi-ta   nuka   yaya-ga   shhauuuuu-lʸaaisa-sha   lʸuchu-g   a-ra
          that-ACC   my   father-TOP   -ADV pull-COR   peel-AG   be-PAST
          "That's what my father would peel, pulling it with a shauuuuu."

The last two examples involved simulating sensations that were catalyzed by human agency. Even when ideophones simulate processes that are independent of human agency, we find evidence from the intonational contour of the performance of Runa perceptions of the inherent intelligence of natural processes. Natural processes are intelligent insofar as they can be identified with purposeful, selective activity. In this respect, Runa share the Ionian Greek view of nature as a world of ceaseless but orderly motion that is governed by an intelligence (Collingwood, 1976). Example 4 features a performance of the pattern by which a type of cocoa tree bears fruit in clusters that attach at its trunk. The pitch of the repeated ideophones goes up and then down in a pattern which communicates an idea of all-overness and a thoroughness that is orderly and intelligent.[6]

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[5] Verb Portraits Aa anchurina
[6] Verb Portraits Aa aparina

(4)   Sapi-manda tika   tika   tika   tika   tika   apari-n   pai-ga.
        trunk-from (cluster) (cluster) (cluster) (cluster) (cluster) bear-3   it-TOP
        "It bears (fruit) from the trunk in clusters clusters clusters clusters clusters."

If we go beyond trees and tree sap and move into domains where life forms and their processes are more obviously animate, we see increasing evidence for Runa identification with such life forms. In the next example, we hear a bird's singing ideophonically performed and characterized anthropopathistically with human emotion.[7]

(5)   Wakamaya garaanng garaannng garang   garang   waka-shapuri-n
        wakamaya (singing) (singing) (singing) (singing) cry-COR walk-3
        "The wakamaya goes about crying garaanng garaannng garang garang"

        pai   warmi-ta huanuchi-kpi   lʸaki-sha
        his   wife-ACC kill-SWRF   be sad-COR
        "feeling sad that his wife has been killed"

        yapa   lʸaki-g   ma-n wakamaya!
        "The wakamaya is such a feeler of sadness!"

The trailing off in performativity of the bird's song illustrates the gradient nature of ideophonic performances. The last two articulations of *garang* are uttered with much less performative extension and prosodic elaboration, because the speaker is shedding her role as ideophonic performer and empathizer and resuming her role as narrator. It is noteworthy that there is no way to describe the narrator's empathy with this bird without assuming a marked frame. The very existence in English of a term like *anthropopathism* imposes a critical framework upon a mode of thought which Runa engage in freely and unselfconsciously, with no concern for oversentimentalization. The ideophonic performance serves as a vehicle for connecting and aligning oneself with the bird. Moreover, the explanation for the bird's sadness reveals another dimension of Runa alignments with nonhuman nature. As is true for the Achuar described by Descola (1996), Runa view nature as an extension of their social world. This is evident by the reference to the bird's having a social relationship in the form of a wife.

Continuing in the domain of avian life forms, we see another kind of evidence for Runa alignments with nonhuman nature. Not only do Runa consider birds as having social relationships, they also consider birds to engage in communicative behavior with people. Runa accounts of their experiences reveal the belief that birds and other life forms can at times communicate with them by means of auditory and atmospheric signals, which Runa ideophonically perform and which they refer to with volitional verbs such as *rimana* "to speak," *silbana* "to whistle," and *kantana* "to sing." It is not only the words and actions of humans, but the sounds and configurations of the nonhuman world that matter in Runa interpretations of their experiences. This "dialogization of nature" is illustrated by example 6 from a personal experience narrative. Senora Cadena is recounting one of her father's hunting stories, during which a jaguar caught and killed one of his best hunting dogs. What is significant for our purposes is that the jaguar's presence was said to have been indexed by signals from a bird called the *kwal kwal bird*. The example begins by

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[7] Verb Portraits Ab kantana

describing her father's inner thoughts as he wonders about the meaning of the bird's signals he has just heard.[8]

(6)   Ima-shi?   Ima-ta-shi   ima-ta-shi   kasna   hatari-nchi
        What-EV   what-INT-EV   what-INT-EV   like this   rise-1PL
        "(Wondering) what is it? What could it be? We get up (to look)."

        pai-ba   yaya-shi ni-g   a-shka   puma al^{y}ku ma-n, kai-ga   ni-shka
        he-POSS father-EV say-AG be-PERF jaguar dog   be-3   this-TOP say-PERF
        "His father used to say that this one is the jaguar's dog."

        Puma-ta   riku-sha   pai kasna   kanta-g   a-n ni-shka;
        Jaguar-ACC   see-COR   he   like this   sing-AG   be-3 say-PERF
        "'When seeing the jaguar he sings like this', he said."

        Pai   laro-l^{y}a   puri-g   ma-n   ni-shka
        His   side-LIM   travel-AG   be-3 say-PERF
        "'He travels right beside him', he said."

        Chi-ga   nuka   yaya na   waiku   pugru-ta   ri-u-shka   chi
        That-TOP my   father   then ravine   valley-ADV go-DUR-PERF that
        "So then my father, had gone walking along the valley of a ravine, and then"

        Kasna-i p^{h}axx rarararara kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal
        Like this-LOC (darting out) (flying motion) (sound of bird's singing x 9)
        "(Darting out) like this p^{h}axxx and(flying off) rarararara (and singing)
        kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal kwal"

        Pawa-sha   ri-g   kasna   riku-kpi   uku-ta
        Fly-COR   go-AG like this   see-SWRF   in-ADV
         "Flying off he goes, and (my father looks) that way and what he sees is that"

        Tsiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii-shi   puma   shamu-shka-ra
        (smooth movement)-EV   jaguar   come-PERF-PAST
        "A jaguar had come tsiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii (moving stealthily)."

What we have here is a fairly standard formula for constructing a meaningful experience. When bad or dangerous things happen, people reconstruct the experience by retrospectively realizing that the incident was in fact indexed by some signal from nonhuman nature, whether a bird's cry, a strange rustling sound, or an unusual whistling sound. The performative simulation of such signals allows one to enact what is seen as a kind of dialogue between the human and nonhuman. While not inherently an act of communication with another being, the bird's signalized reflex of the jaguar's presence is turned into a volitional act by lexicalizing its sounds and then performatively simulating them. This performance communicates volitionality by the multiplicity of its repetitions of kwal, which suggest the bird's persistence and determination to warn the people of the jaguar. Recent ethnographic work by Kohn (2002) on the Avila Runa of the upper Napo has found similar reports among Napo Runa, leading Kohn to describe the Napo view of

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[8] Tape IIIA, Transcript File, 123

nature as ecosemiotic, because nonhuman life forms are viewed as "different kinds of communicating subjects" (p. 143). Kohn's work builds on the ideas of Viveiros de Castro (1998) who argues that Amazonian cultures may be characterized generally as perspectival in the sense that people are inclined to empathetically engage in the perspectives of different life forms.

Having outlined the various facets of ideophonic performance and explained how such performances enact for Runa a sentiment of shared animacy, I turn now to a discussion of concepts of nature which may variously inhibit or encourage ideophony. In advancing the claim that animistic cosmologies provide a congenial climate for the development of ideophony, I argue by counterexample. Specifically, I suggest that several underlying assumptions embedded within our own nonanimistic cosmology act to constrain the development of ideophony. The former poet laureate Robert Hass has explained that one of the main differences between Christian and Buddhist thought is that, in Christian thought, nature is fallen (Hass, 1994, p. xiii). We see evidence for this sentiment of fallen nature in the writings of Edward Abbey, whose fictional portrayal of environmental guerrillas inspired the founding of the group Earth First! His reflections on the amorous activities of two gopher snakes in Desert Solitaire culminates in his own sardonically self-critical question: "How can I descend to such anthropomorphism?" (Abbey, 1990, p. 684). The implied lowering of his human status by accepting these snakes' activities as analogous to humans' offers a striking contrast to my earlier example where a bird was portrayed as a "feeler of sadness." Yet the sentiment expressed here by Abbey is not really his own. He utters this thought more in the spirit of anticipating criticisms from the commonly held attitudes of his fellow human beings. He admits finally that he is "obliged to spread the news, painful and bitter though it may be for some to hear, that all living things on earth are kindred" (Abbey, 1990, p. 685).

Assumptions from Renaissance cosmology and modern science are also hostile to an animistic outlook. In his lucid survey, Collingwood (1976) analyses conceptions of nature from Greek through Renaissance and up to modern philosophy. While Ionian Greek thought was, essentially, a hylozoetic or animistic cosmology, conceiving nature as an organism permeated by mind, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took a radically different view of nonhuman nature. When Copernican astronomy destroyed the idea that the universe had any kind of a center, the organismic conception of nature was, according to Collingwood (1976, p. 97), also destroyed. The world was conceived for the first time as a mechanism, created by a God that was distinct from it. The laws of physics were applied to inert substances. Runa, on the other hand, do not have an indigenous conception of inert substance. Their world is ensouled in a way that includes even the most seemingly insignificant pebble.

The final notion of relevance for our own ideas of nature has to do with modern conceptions of nature as a set of processes that release energy. Collingwood traces this particular conception to historical, evolutionary views which see processes as coming to a conclusion through a spending or dissipation of energy. This results, according to Collingwood, in the natural scientist thinking of events in nature as mostly destructive. The natural world is thought of "as running down like a clock, or being shot away like a store of ammunition" (1976, p. 26). When Runa discuss nature, they convey a very different attitude. When talking about their resources, they communicate the impression of an infinite abundance. This is evident when they confess an inability to make an inventory of all of the fruit bearing trees, all of the types of food that can be found in the forest, or all of the plants that have medicinal value. Senora Cadena would often say "How can I ever

do it? There's too much!" This kind of remark can be juxtaposed with certain assumptions in Runa magical practices, which are built around the idea that the energies and forces of nature can be channeled and used by people (Nuckolls, 2004). Ideophonic performances are, I believe, another way of participating in this infinite store of energy. The idea that language is a code of infinite, creative possibilities is made particularly salient by ideophones' productivity and performative freedom. As a class ideophones are open and productive. New ideophones can be coined by individuals (Childs, 2001, p. 67). Speakers have a great deal of freedom in the degree of performative elaboration they impose upon an ideophone.

Despite their very different assumptions about nonhuman nature, changing experiential frameworks are having an effect on Runa ideophony. Ecuador's indigenous people are experiencing tremendous social upheaval. They are considerably more active in national level politics than they have ever been in the past. For instance, a member of the Indigenous Peoples' Confederation participated in the military junta which attempted to overthrow a president in January of 2000. A few indigenous people have even been elected to the country's National Congress. Perhaps their most impressive accomplishment was in April 1992, when Runa organized a 240 kilometer march from the lowlands to Quito for the purpose of acquiring legal titles to two million hectares of continuous rainforest territory (Sawyer, 1997). Such changes are affecting all aspects of Runa lives, including their speaking habits. Based on comparative observations of Runa in Ecuador and a year's work writing a Quechua grammar and teaching it with the help of a man in the United States, I suggest that, among Runa who identify strongly with Hispanic cultural practices either through their political activism or through their economic activities, ideophony is becoming restricted.

This observation accords with what has been described by numerous linguists working on languages in Africa. The factors most commonly cited for the diminution or disappearance of ideophones include urbanization (Amha, 2001; Childs, 1996, 2001; Kabuta, 2001), westernization (Mphande, 1992), and literacy (Kunene, 2001). What is desperately needed is more work along the lines of Childs (1996), who conducted a sociolinguistic survey on attitudes toward ideophone use among Zulu speakers of South Africa. Childs discovered that urban dwelling Zulu speakers wishing to convey an image of masculinity and toughness used a slang version of Zulu called *Isicamtho*, which was purged of any ideophones. He concludes that the diminution of ideophones among young Zulu speakers indicates a strong desire to shed their traditional identity. His study also alludes to the disturbing possibility that the disappearance of ideophones may point to the loss of a language's vitality and ultimately to its demise.

Material conditions such as urbanism, literacy, and market economy activities do not by themselves explain these trends. Underlying these conditions are constructions of nature embedded within Judeo-Christian thought and perpetuated by global forces which undermine the kind of alignments enacted between people and their environment through ideophonic performances. The discursive norms of scientific culture have been built with the help of these constructions, acting as yet another constraining influence on the development of ideophony. Ideophonic expression is stigmatized by the kind of abstract and logical conceptual styles of expression which scientific culture privileges. This is particularly evident in the linguistic sciences. Language is a tool for symbolizing the world, but is distinct from that world and, therefore, unaligned with respect to it.

If extralinguistic factors are as important as I believe they are to the vitality or moribundity of ideophone use, then comparative data from Asian linguistic traditions is essential. Japanese speakers, even those in highly urbanized environments, use ideophones quite freely. They have been characterized as essential to Japanese linguistic culture (Gomi Taro, 1989). And much has been said about traditional Japanese culture's investment in nature. Shintoism and Buddhism emphasize human alignments with nature. This emphasis is clearly evident in literary traditions such as Haiku poetry, extended prose novels, and many genres of visual art. Hass (1994) has suggested that certain forms of aesthetic stylization in Haiku poetry reflect "traces of an earlier animism" (p. 255). He describes the style of the poet Issa as consisting of "lots of onomatopoeia and direct address to animals (1994, p. 14). He translates the poet Basho's statement that "[e]very form of insentient existence—plants, stones, or utensils—has its individual feelings similar to those of men" (1994, p. 237). The large ideophonic inventory in Japanese and the strong animistic undercurrents of its traditional cultural fabric do not, however, mean that Japanese speakers will use ideophones the way Runa do. Childs (2001, p. 70) has noted that many Japanese ideophones seem to be semantically concerned with psychological states.[9]

Newman (2001) has recently suggested a paradigm shift for ideophone studies. He believes that linguists have, for the past hundred years, placed too much emphasis on ideophones' exotic, extra-systematic qualities. He argues that in Hausa, ideophones may stretch the system, with unusual phonotactics, for example, but that they do not totally disregard the system (p. 251). My own work on Quechua ideophones has emphasized their role in the aspectual subsystem. They encode aspectually neutral verbs or predicates, with values of completiveness, instantaneousness, or durativity (Nuckolls, 1996, 2001). Given the recent insights from ideophone studies which have emphasized the systematicity of ideophone patterning, it is clear that their alleged exotic and aberrant features have been exaggerated. The time has therefore come for linguists to come to terms with ideophones' true oddness. When Runa break into fleeting moments of ideophonic performance, they are engaging in a kind of rational exuberance which comments on their alignments with the nonhuman lifeworld. Because such enactments are fundamentally at odds with Standard Average European speakers' abstract and logical styles of scientific discourse, we exist in a state of ideophonic impoverishment. Ideophones are, at best, a quasi-universal. Whether a language does or does not develop them is going to be determined by at least some of the extralinguistic factors outlined here.

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[9] The illustrated dictionary of ideophones compiled by Gomi Taro (1989) depicts many such states, including *sugo sugo*, an ideophone describing the way one "leaves a place in low spirits, dejectedly" (p. 88), *sowa sowa*, which describes "someone who is nervously excited about something" (p. 98), and *hiya hiya*, which describes "being very frightened because of danger or uncertainty" (p. 143).

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