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ATYPICAL STATIVE SENTENCES IN JAPANESE AND ENGLISH

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Abstract: Stative predicates normally mark objects in the nominative in Japanese and the non-pastive in English. However, under some conditions, Japanese uses accusative marking and English allows passivizability. Fujimura 1997 attributes the Japanese NipAcc alternation to degrees of transitivity and size. 1988 the English passivizability to subjective encoding, i.e. argue the determinants for both phenomena is boundness based on intonation.

1 Introduction

In this paper, I discuss some phenomena concerning the degree of objecthood in stative predicates. It is widely accepted that the object in stative predicates does not undergo a change of state/quality by definition, so that no transitive alternations should be observed. To the contrary, transitive alternations in stative predicates are observed in Japanese and English. In Japanese, the second NP in stative sentences tends to be merged with a non-nominative case marker go but under some conditions, it is marked with an accusative case marker o. Likewise, in English, stative predicates cannot be passivized in normal contexts but they can be passivized under some conditions. Though I detail these alternations in what follows, the following sentences exemplify these:

(1) a. Taro ga non ga yuraida. Varo Mon books non like 'Two like books.'
    b. Yoroi ga kono hos o yuriketa. Tarou non this book Acc like 'Taro likes this book.'

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2 a. The couple next door is known by John.
   b. The couple next door is thoroughly/barely known by John.

In (1a), the object is g-marked while in (1b) it is o-marked. In (2a), the sentence cannot be passivized whereas in (2b) the sentence is passivized. In this paper, we call sentences such as (1b and 2b) atypical stative sentences.

What factors determine these alternations? I claim that ±-bounded is the determining factor. If the situation is ±-bounded, it is g-marked in Japanese and passivizable in English. However, in stative, no change is brought to the object. In other words, it is not affected. Hence, the feature ±-bounded must be brought about by processes other than affectedness. I claim that individuation can also bring about the feature. Individuation is the process by which an entity appears against its background. In this sense, it can be compared to personification, fore/backgrounding, or differentiation. As far as English cases are concerned, Sack 1985 claims that some psychological processes affect passivizability in stative. I also claim that the psychological processes can be replaced by the notion of individuation.

In what follows, I will discuss the Nom/Acc alternations in Japanese in detail and then discuss passivizability in English.

2 Nom/Acc Alternations in Japanese

Since Japanese is a nominative-accusative language, a direct object is expected to be marked with the accusative case marker o, but in stative (=stative predicate) it is marked with the nominative case marker ga. In addition, Nom/Acc alternations with reference to the object are often observed. Following Kuno 1973, Shibatani 1978, 1986, and Hög 1979, I assume that the second g-marked NP in stative is a nominative object. Arguments for the subobjecthood of the second NP are given in Tsunoda 1977, Maxine 1975-6, and Dewolf 1984-5. In this paper, I will not mention the arguments for or against the objecthood of the second NP.
Case-marking is distinctive in Japanese. It contrasts with the noun/accusative alternation; the nominative usually corresponds to a subject and the accusative to an object. Such seemingly contradictory phenomena pose the following question:

(i) What motivates the Nom/Acc alternation?

As for the question above, Shibatani 1978 claims that the alternations are optional, whereas Fujimura 1989 claims that they are motivated by the degree of transitivity.

From the semantic structure of objecthood in Japanese, I infer that when an object is case-marked, it is less bounded, while when it is nominalized, it is more bounded. Further, I claim that the less an object is distinct from the subject and the background, the more naturally it should be case-marked with the subject, while the more it is distinct, the more naturally it is nominalized. In other words, when individuation is low, an object tends to be case-marked whereas when the individuation is high, the object is likely to be nominalized. This type of intransitive/transitive alternation is also evidenced by data from languages such as Finnish and Australian languages, which I will not discuss here (see Timmerlake 1976, Austin 1982, Lichtenberg 1982). What is more important is that case assignment is controlled not only syntactically but also semantically.

Case-marking environments in Japanese is a Nominative- Accusative language, so a subject is marked with the nominative case marker, that is, は, whereas an object is marked with the accusative case marker に. However, the nominative case marker は is used for the object in statives as illustrated as follows:

(i) Taro wa miso ga hana-eru (potential).
   Taro Top English noun speak
   'Taro can speak English.'

(ii) Taro wa miru ga bon- tai (desiderative).
   Taro Top water noun drink-bus
   'Taro wants to drink water.'
To judge whether or not (3-7) are stative, I follow Fano's (1973) criterion for stativity to the effect that the non-past tense form of the stative can refer to the present, whereas that of the non-stative refers only to the future of generic or habitual action. I say Koko munka 'at this very moment' could cooccur with (3-7), which works as a syntactic test to show that these five sentences are stative. According to Vendler (1957), (3-7) are true at speech time and entail an inception/termination. The ga-marked object does not bring up the agent of the situation expressed by the predicate. In this sense, the situation with the ga-marked object is [-bounded].

Marking Environment. The Accusative is preferred in sentences where a demonstrative such as Koko 'this' modifies the object, 1st/2nd person pronoun 'watakasi/ana' is used as the object, or external conditions are given. I give the following examples to Fukuura (1997).

(8) a. Taro wa hon ga lo yoru-ku. Taro Top book 1sg/ACC read-Pot
   'Taro read a book.'
   b. Taro wa kon hon 1sga/lo yoru-ku. Taro Top book 1sg ACC like

(9) a. Hana ko wa tareo ga lo sukida. Hana ko Top Taro 1sg lo like
   'Hana likes Taro.'
   b. Hana ko wa atsatta yga/lo sukida. Hana ko Top yga like

(10) a. Hanako wa ri ga/to yomu-nai no.
Hanako Top letter noun/Acc read-Pot-Sog
'Hanako cannot read letters'
b. Ryoi no kanji Hanako wa ni = Toro ni yomu-nai.
dark because
'Because it is dark, Hanako cannot read letters.'

Basically, ri is preferred in freeicles as in the a-sentences. However, if the object is restricted to speech time, that is, the present due to Anri 'this', ri is preferred. First and second person pronouns share the same time point, that is, speech time, so both refer to the present time as well.

Fareral conditions such as kurai mode 'because it is early' limit the option of the presentivity to the present, because 'Hanako cannot read letters' as long as it is dark. Normally, Hanako can read letters but for lack of light Hanako cannot read the letters temporarily, so this situation is not general but specific, so ri is preferred.

Furthermore, ri is preferred when the object is used contrastively or specifically as in

Top beer noun/Acc drink-Des
'I want to drink beer.'
b. Bobo wa Anri yori Miller (i) ga/to nomi-
tai:
Anri rather Miller:
'I want to drink Miller rather than Anri.'

(12) a. Kurai wa hon ga/to yomi-tai.
First book noun/Acc read-Des
'I want to read a book.'
b. Wadai wa Kihou katta hon (i) ga/to yomi-tai:
yesterday bought
'I want to read the book which I bought yesterday.'

In (11a & 11b), the objects are general = less individuated; while in (12a & 12b), they are specific (= more individuated) due to comparison of
restriction.' Therefore, the former tends to be ge-
marked whereas the latter tends to be o-marked.
As regards case-marking, antimarkup is a
phenomenon worth discussing. (Observe the following
examples (Shibatani 1973, 1978).)

(13) a. *Watsu wa susi ga/*70 tube-tai.
   I top susi Hme/Acc eat-Dec
   'I want to eat sushi.'

b. Watsu wa susi 7ga/o apoko de tube-tai.
   Gen store at
   'I want to eat sushi.'

c. *Watsu wa susi 7pa/-keitu/\ni no makuo-\no road Gen \r\nside
   no makuo no tube-tai.
   "Gen store at
   'I want to eat sushi at that store across
   the road.'

From (13a) to (13c), the degrees of acceptability of
the Nominative decrease. Shibatani 1973, 1978 argues
that susi is more likely to be perceived as a subject
as the distance between susi and the predicate tube-
tai becomes larger and that to avoid such ambiguity, o
is preferred.
However, I claim that the reason why o is
preferred in (13b and c) is that the object susi is
involved in a particular situation defined by the
addition of adverbial phrases, that is, more
individualized. This is clear from:

(14) a. Watsu wa susi ga/*70 de tube-tai.
   I top susi Hme/Acc eat-Dec
   'I want to eat sushi.'

b. Watsu wa apoko de susi 7ga/o tube-
tai.
   Gen susi at
   'I want to eat sushi.'

c. Watsu wa makuon 7pa/-keitu/\ni no susi
   I top road Gen far side Gen store
   de susi 7ga/o tube-tai.
   'Gen store at
   'I want to eat sushi at that store across
   the road.'
Anti-ambiguity cannot explain (13); because su only is placed just before the predicate. However, coreference individuation is compatible with the preference shown. Thus, o is preferred when the object is more individuated.

Individuation in the preceding sections, the environments for the nominative and the accusative were discussed, and the following conditioning factors were noticed: (i) o is preferred when the object is more generic, while (ii) o is preferred when the object is more specific. In what follows, I will discuss these semantic characteristics of the object in detail with reference to the notion of individuation.

Firstly, the object in statements with o is less distant from the background, that is, the other unindividuated objects. In

(14) Sanako vo iro ga/fo konai.
Sanako Top dog Nom/Acc fear
'Sanako is afraid of dogs.'

Jo 'dog' in general in (14) is the object of Sanako's fear kept from situation to situation, against which a particular dog emerges as a figure as in Sanako wo iro ga/fo konai 'Sanako is afraid of that dog'. As the object is more specific, the preference for o-marking increases.

Secondly, the object in statements with o is less distant from the subject. However

(15) a. Sanako vo iro ga/fo suru.
Sanako Top dog Nom/Acc exist
'Sanako has a dog.'

b. Kusira vo ha iro ga/fo aru.
whale Top long Nom/Acc exist
'The whale has a long.'

There is a family relationship between Sanako and iro ga/fo (14). Likewise, the relation between Kusira and ha in (15b) is a whole-part relation. It is not too hard to say that the objects in (15) are indiscernible parts of the subjects. This seems to be
the reason for glossing for the object as well as the subject.
To combine two generalizations, the final version should be that if the object is less distinct from the background and the subject, it prefers to be glossed, and on the contrary if it is more distinct, o-marking is preferred."

We posed a question at the beginning of this section. The answer could be as follows: What motivates the g/a alternations is the degree of the distinctness of the object from the background and the subject, this is, individuation."

Advantage I will mention two advantages of my claim, that is, we answer above with regard to the g/a alternations in comparison to two different analyses appearing in previous research. Firstly, Fukushima 1989 tries to explain g/a alternations simply by applying Hopper & Thompson’s (1980) transitivity criteria. In

\[(16a. Anko wa bokkyû no, demo tazago ga that child Top awkward but egg Nom war-eru. break-Pot
Though that child is awkward, he can break eggs.]

b. Anko wa shirugii da, demo tazago ga
allergic is take-carryers.
est-Pot
Though that child is allergic, he can eat eggs.
\]

the a-sentence seems less acceptable than the b-sentence (English translation is mine)." However, if ga in (16b) is replaced by o, on the contrary, the a-sentence becomes more acceptable than the b-sentence. And also in
The a-sentence sounds less acceptable than the b-sentence. Conversely, if o is substituted for ga in (17a,b), the a-sentence becomes more acceptable than the b-sentence.

Fujimura claims that the object in the a-sentence is more affected than that of the b-sentence, so that o is preferred. To be sure, waru 'break' and ane-　chimasu 'finish knitting' seem to bring the endpoint to their objects. But as Jacobsen, 1989, 1992 points out, the endpoint cannot be realized in statives because of the blocking of the realization by the static suffix. Jacobsen (1989, 1992) claims that in quantitative transitive the object undergoes change in real-time while in statives the object does not undergo change and the situation expresses by the predicate does not arise in real-time but describes irreal modality. I agree that no change occurs in the object in statives but disagree that the situation requires irreal modality. For me, stativity is characterized by no change of state/quality but still requires the flow of time. At any rate, it statives, no change of state/quality is admitted, so that no endpoint is given by affectedness. Therefore, Fujimura's claim, which is based on the change brought to the object, does not work.

I claim that an alternative answer to (16) and (17) is that 'war-ero' in (16a) and 'ane-　chimasu-ero' in (17a) individuate the object highly while 'take-　waru' in (16b) and 'ane-matsu' in (17b) cause the object to be less individuated. Therefore, ga matches 'ake-　wan' and 'ane-matsu' whereas o suits 'war-　ero' and 'ane-　chimasu-ero'.

Secondly, the approach using the notion of individuation is more general in explaining ga/o
According to Kuno, *ga* is used if *mizu* is considered to be the object of the derivative as a whole, that is, *mizu-tai*, whereas *o* is used if *mizu* is treated as the object of only the transitive verb stem, that is, *nomi*. For Muraki, *ga* cooccurs with the focus on *nomi* as in (18a), while *o* cooccurs with the focus on *mizu* as in (18b). Sugimoto states that the semantic structure for (18) is given as [SP[VP[NP-PP]]], which transforms to look like [NP[NP-VP-PP]] by predicate merger (P = verb stem nomi; P = relative marker (fix -tai; NP = Muraki, NP = Mizu). NP is predicted by (P-n) and then marked with *ga* due to the in-transitivity. On the other hand, if the transitivity of P prevails over the in-transitivity of P, NP is marked with *o*.

The shift between transitive verb stems and complex predicates as a whole in (18) cannot apply to simple predicates such as *mizu* 'like', *kowai* 'fear', *iri* 'melt', etc. In contrast, the notion of individuation can explain not only complex, but also simple predicates, whereas the individuation is encoded linguistically or non-linguistically. Notice that *aru* 'exist' does not allow the *ga/o* alternations as shown in (15). The lack of case alternations with *ari* 'need' are left to future research.

The scheme for the *ga/o* alternations in Japanese is given as follows:
Rice 1985 discusses etymological passives in English and claims that a transitive prototype should be defined based on subjective as well as objective encoding of the situation referred to by a given sentence rather than only based on objective encoding as given in Hooper & Thompson's case. In other words, for Rice, Hooper & Thompson's transitivity components are necessary but not sufficient conditions as determining factors for passivisibility in English sentences.

Rice 1985 turns to some psychological processes in producing or parsing given sentences, which she calls 'subjective control of quanta' (rime 1985:411). To be sure, every evening accompanies its psychological processes of pasting or producing but the psychological processes are normally considered not to affect the formation of the meaning of a sentence. For example, the mathematical expression 'one and one make two' accompanies some psychological processes which vary from situation to situation, and consequently cannot be involved in the meaning of the expression. However, Rice 1985 claims that some concurrent psychological endpoint enables some etymological sentences to be passivized and that such endpoints are not given within Hooper & Thompson's criteria. My hypothesis is that passivisibility in English is conditioned by [+/-bounded], which is conditioned by the degree of individuation.

First, Rice 1985 discusses propositional verb constructions with reference to passivisibility. Observe,
(20) a. John was rushed to by Mary, who needed advice.
   b. *The countryside was rushed to by Mary, who needed a rest.

(20a) is grammatical but (20b) is not. By analogy, 'rush to' works as a transitive verb in (20a) but does not in (20b). According to Niew, the distinction between the discreteness or specificity of 'John' and the diffuseness of 'the countryside' plays a significant role in passivisability in (20). Also, she claims that the more diffuse or generic the endpoint is, the less likely it will serve as a participant to the action and the more likely it will be construed as a setting. This is exactly the same as what the notion of individualization inopper's Thompson's sense means.

Second, here discuss imperfectives, which include conceptual, syntactical and configurational imperfectives. 'Know' and 'find' are examples of conceptual imperfective imperfectives. 'Resemble' is an example of a syntactical imperfective, and 'incline' and 'occupy' are examples of configurational imperfectives. The following are examples of conceptual imperfectives.

(21) a. *The couple next door is known by John.
   b. The couple next door was known by John.
   c. The couple next door is not known by John.
   d. The couple next door is thoroughly/barely known by John.
   e. The couple next door is only known by John.
   f. The couple next door should be known by John (since he married their daughter).

(21a) is grammatical. However, the grammaticality is more or less improved in (21b-f). As Rice points out, what is interesting is that the addition of negative adverbs 'not' in (21c) and 'barely' in (21d) to an 'is' nominal 'should' is (21f) are expected up define the transitivity of the sentences but to the contrary, they enhance transitivity. Rice claims that the reason for the improved grammaticality in (21b-f) are that an endpoint is subjectively superimposed on
the objective reading of such sentences. However, the differences in topically are observed between (21a) and (21b-f). Likewise, in Japanese translation of (21), the subjects in (21b-f) are required to be marked with a topic marker wa. From this, we could infer that the subject in (21a) is pronominal, whereas the subjects in (21b-f) are topically coreferential. According to Tunderlake 1975b, 1977, topicality is one of the components of individuation. Therefore, the degree of individuation is larger in (21b-f) than in (21a). This is why (21b-f) are somewhat passivizable in comparison to (21a). Furthermore, if the situation referred to by the predicate is more individuated, it is also (more) bounded while if it is less individuated, it is also (less) bounded. Therefore, the boundedness is a determining factor for passivizability in English too. So far I have discussed only conceptual perspectives. The same arguments are more clearly applicable to syntactical and configurational perspectives.

(22) a. The swimming pool is contained by the yard.
   b. The swimming pool is enclosed by the yard.

Rich 1985:432 claims that the perimeter of the swimming pool is fixed mentally. From this, we may infer that such mental trajectory brings about a conceptual boundedness. Rather, the swimming pool is more distinct from the background, namely, the yard, in (22b) than in (22a). The swimming pool in (22b) is more individuated. Thus, the subjective encoding can be paraphrased by the notion of individuation.

6 Summary

Boundedness is the determinant for the transitive alternations in stative. Subject alternations in Japanese and passivizability in English are both conditioned by the same determinant. However, the problem is how the object can be bounded. In stative, the notion of individuation is present in that if something is affected, it requires some change, which cannot be given in stative by
definition. The entity cannot be affected in statives but it could be individuated, either completely or incompletely. If the entity is individuated completely, that is, distinctively differentiated from the background, it is \textit{\(\text{\L}}\text{-bound\)}, on the contrary, if it is not completely individuated, it is \textit{\(\text{\L}_{-}\text{bound\)}}. In short, the transformative alternations in Japanese and English are correlated with the degrees of individuation.

\textbf{NOTES}

I am grateful to John Haig, William O'Grady, Michael Jacoby, Frederic Lee and Greg Lee for useful comments, as well as to an anonymous MRS reviewer. All errors are my own.

The example next door is known to John O'Grady. personal communication.

In Japanese, an indirect object is marked with a deritive case marker as in follows.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{\(\text{\L}\) out}
  \item \textit{\(\text{\L}\) of your book}
  \item \textit{\(\text{\L}\) gave them a book.}
\end{itemize}

See also Shibatani 1978.

Following Roderer 1970 and Cole 1974, I assume that a state or stative predicate is characterized by no change of state/quality.

\(\text{\L}\) alternations are relative in rather not absolute but relative, but if we take a contrastive pair (i.e., a\(_{\text{\L}}\) sentences, the choices of the case markers seem to become more stable. I adopt this method from Feldman 1979, which statistically deals with the relevant data.

Hattori 1975 claims that \(\text{\L}\) appears as impersonal potentials while \(\text{\L}_{-}\) occurs as personal potentials as in
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{\(\text{\L}\) wrote a letter}
  \item \textit{\(\text{\L}\) wrote a letter but I can write a book.}
\end{itemize}
Hopper & Thompson 1980 define individuation as follows: The component of individuation refers back to the distinctiveness of the patient from the (transitive subject) and from its own backgrounds. The components are given by Tindale (1974a, 1977) as participant hierarchies: proper/common, concrete/abstract, near/far, animate/inanimate, singular/plural.

"When the pronouns are singular, and the noun or noun phrase is in the 3rd person, the subject is labeled with the personal ending -des (either 'he' or 'she'). If the noun or noun phrase is in the 2nd person, an impersonal -des is used. In Japanese, the subject is labeled with the personal ending -des. The personal ending is used to indicate that the subject is a human being."

For (46-7). I see more/less acceptable instead of non/less preferred with no change in meaning.

Pecky 1981 proposes three determining factors for non/less in Japanese: status, perceived direction, and individuation, where the priority decreases in this order. In contrast, I claim that the notion of individuation is the only determining factor for non/less in Japanese.

"This form in known as yu-jiru in UT, as pointed out by Jacobs (personal communication). In this case, the subject is modified by a demonstrative 'hi-ga', which makes the subject highly individuated.
REFERENCES


