Discourse Basis of Ergativity in Kansai Japanese

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WS on Differential Subject Marking and Ergative Phenomena
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OVERVIEW

DSM & DOM in terms of markedness (zero-coding) (Comrie, 1979, 1983; Haspelmath, 2006)

(1) a. topical (thematic) ↔ focal (rhematic)
b. definite ↔ indefinite
c. animate ↔ inanimate
d. agent (subject) ↔ patient (object)

Zero-coded (unmarked) cases

- Elements with correlating (frequently co-occurring) features are more likely to be zero-coded.
  - e.g.,
  - topic & definite
  - focus & indefinite
OVERVIEW

DSM & DOM in terms of markedness (zero-coding) (Comrie, 1979, 1983; Haspelmath, 2006)

(2)  
   a. topical (thematic) $\leftrightarrow$ focal (rhematic)  
   b. definite $\leftrightarrow$ indefinite  
   c. animate $\leftrightarrow$ inanimate  
   d. agent (subject) $\leftrightarrow$ patient (object)

overtly coded (marked) cases

- Elements with non-correlating features (that do not co-occur frequently) are more likely to be overtly coded.
- e.g.,
- animate & patient
- definite & patient
OVERVIEW

DSM & DOM in terms of markedness (zero-coding) (Comrie, 1979, 1983; Haspelmath, 2006)

(3) a. topical (thematic) $\leftrightarrow$ focal (rhematic)
b. definite $\leftrightarrow$ indefinite
c. animate $\leftrightarrow$ inanimate
d. agent (subject) $\leftrightarrow$ patient (object)

Kansai Japanese

- Topic A & agent S are more likely to be zero-coded
- Topic patient S & P are more likely to be overtly coded
- Focus S & P are more likely to be zero-coded
- Kansai J has Erg/abs distribution although Japanese is known as nom/acc Lg.
- Focus A is more likely to be overtly coded
OVERVIEW

- Through corpus study, I also show
- complex interaction of these features such as:
  - Information structure vs. animacy vs. agentivity
  - Information structure vs. definiteness vs. agentivity
- I point out the possibility of DSM in these interactions

How should DSM & DOM be modelled theoretically?

- DSM & DOM in terms of markedness (zero-coding)
OVERVIEW OF KANSAI JAPANESE
Overview of Kansai Japanese

(4) Hanako-{$Ø/ga$} Midori-{$Ø/o$} sibai-teru-wa
    Hanako-{$Ø/ga$} Midori-{$Ø/o$} hit-PROG-PAR
    ‘Hanako is beating Midori.’
    (A & P)

(5) sensee-{$Ø/ga$} ki-hat-ta-de
    teacher-{$Ø/ga$} come-HON-PAST-PAR
    ‘The teacher came.’
    (S)

- Nom/acc distribution (if you force speakers to produce particles)
- Zero-coding is observed extensively.
LITERATURE ON ZERO-CODING IN JAPANESE

Characteristics of Ø (Kuno, 1972; Tsutsui, 1984; Kageyama, 1993; Suzuki, 1995; Ono et al., 2000; Lee, 2002; Fry, 2003; Shimojo, 2006)

(6)  
   a. Verb-adjacent O  
   b. Non-definite O  
   c. Defocused NP (Non-Contrastive Focus?)  
   d. Unaccusative S  
   e. Minor discourse boundary  
   f. No newsworthiness  
   g. Wh-word O  
   h. Animate S  
   i. Definite S  
   j. Non-Contrastive NP  
   k. Absolute specification?  
   l. Non-complex NP  
   m. Multisyllabic S  
   n. Casual style
OUTLINE

Introduction
  Overview

Information structure vs. agentivity
  Non-contrastive Focus
  Contrastive Topic

Discussion
  Summary
  Implications

Corpus study
  IS vs. agentivity
  IS vs. Animacy
  IS vs. Definiteness

Conclusion
  Summary
  Remaining issue

References
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References
**Zero vs. Overt Focus Particles**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>agent</td>
<td>patient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Contr</td>
<td>ga</td>
<td>ga/Ø</td>
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<td>Contr</td>
<td>ga</td>
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Non-Contrastive Focus A

(7) Q: What happened?
   A: neko-{{??Ø/ga} nezumi
cat-{{Ø/ga} mouse
oikake-teru
chase-PROG
‘A cat is chasing a mouse.’

(8) Q: Do you know where my vase is?
   A: neko-{{??Ø/ga}
cat-{{Ø/ga}
kowasi-ta-yo
break-PAST-PAR
‘(A/the) cat broke (it).’
**NON-CONTRASTIVE FOCUS** 

AGENT S

(9) a. a **neko-{ga/Ø} arui-teru**
    oh cat-{ga/Ø} walk-PROG
    ‘Look! A cat is walking!’

b. a **kodomo-{ga/Ø} ason-deru**
    oh child-{ga/Ø} play-PROG
    ‘Look! A child is playing.’
**NON-CONTRASTIVE FOCUS patient S**

(10) a.  a  saihu-\{?ga/Ø\}  oti-teru  
    oh  purse-\{ga/Ø\}  
    ‘Look! A purse is on the road! (Lit: A purse has fallen (and  
    it’s there).)’

b.  a  kanban-\{?ga/Ø\}  taore-teru  
    oh  sign-\{ga/Ø\}  
    fall-PROG  
    ‘Look! A sign has fallen (and it is lying).’
(11) Q: What do you do?
A: tetugaku-{:o/Ø} benkyoo si-ten-nen philosophy-{:o/Ø} study do-PROG-DECL
‘I study PHILOSOPHY.’
**Zero vs. Overt TopicParticles**

<table>
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<td>Ø/wa</td>
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A: **Agent**

S: **Patient**

P: **Non-Contr**

Ø: **Contr**

wa: **zero**
**CONTRASTIVE TOPIC A**

(12) neko-{:Ø/wa} moo gohan tabe-ta-kedo inu-{:Ø/wa}
cat-{:Ø/TOP} already food eat-PAST-though dog-{:Ø/TOP}
mada tabe-te-hen
yet eat-PAST-NEG
‘The CAT has already eaten, but the DOG has not.’
**CONTRASTIVE TOPIC AGENT S**

(13) neko-{Ø/wa} ki-ta-kedo inu-{Ø/wa} koo-henkat-ta
cat-{Ø/TOP} come-PAST-though dog-{Ø/TOP} come-NEG-PAST

‘The CAT came, but the DOG didn’t.’
Contrastive Topic **Patient S**

(14) neko-{??Ø/wa} ne-teru-kedo inu-{??Ø/wa} cat-{Ø/TOP} sleep-PROG-though dog-{Ø/TOP} ne-te-hen sleep-PROG-NEG

‘The CAT is sleeping, but the DOG isn’t.’
**CONTRASTIVE TOPIC P**

(15) Q: Where are the cake and the ice cream?
A: keeki-{??Ø/wa} tabe-ta-kedo  aisu-{??Ø/wa}
cake-TOP      eat-PAST-though ice.cream-TOP
tabe-te-hen-yo
eat-PAST-NEG-PAR
‘(I) ate CAKE but didn’t eat ICE CREAM.’
**ZERO VS. OVERT FOCUS PARTICLES**

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- Ergative/absolutive
# Zero vs. Overt Topic Particles

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<th>wa</th>
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- Split-intransitive
Markedness (zero-coding)

Givón (1976); Keenan (1976); Comrie (1979, 1983)

- The case-coding systems vary depending on the information structure of a sentence following the hierarchy (16)
  - **Focus** is more frequently patient
  - **Topic** is more frequently agent

(16)

a. topical (thematic) ↔ focal (rhematic)
b. definite ↔ indefinite
c. animate ↔ inanimate
d. agent (subject) ↔ patient (object)
Markedness and Ergativity

Du Bois (1985); DuBois (1987)

- Ergative/absolutive Lgs: categorize arguments in terms of focus
- Nominative/accusative Lgs: categorize arguments in terms of topic

(17) Topic ⇐ A > agent S > patient S > P ⟷ Focus
**Markedness and Ergativity**

DuBois (1987)

- “the solidly ergative Sacapultec language displays a submerged pressure toward nominative/accusative patterning” (p. 843)
- “there must exist a latent pressure to ergativity in accusative languages, to the extent that accusative languages also exhibit PAS [(preferred argument structure)]” (ibid.)

- Kansai Japanese show this pressure towards ergativity in nominative/accusative languages
Predictions from discussion

- In natural spoken data,
- **Agent Topics** are more frequently *zero-coded* rather than overtly coded
- **Patient Foci** are more frequently *zero-coded* rather than overtly coded
CORPUS

- Manzai corpus
- a popular style of stand-up comedy typically performed by two people
- 15 sessions of manzai
- Each session consists of 2-30 minutes

Coding

- Determined the information structure of the NP simply based on whether it can be potentially coded by the case markers (ga or o) or the topic marker wa in written Japanese
  - Can be coded by ga or o: Focus
  - Can be coded by wa: Topic
**Focus Elements: Raw Frequency**

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<tr>
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<th>zeroF</th>
<th>overtF</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
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- P > S > A
OVERT VS. ZERO **FOCUS CODING RATIO**

![Graph showing the overt vs. zero focus coding ratio]

- **A** > **S** > **P**
**TOPIC ELEMENTS: FREQUENCY**

- **S > A > P**
- Most As are zero pronouns (DuBois, 1987)
OVERT VS. ZERO TOPIC CODING RATIO

- A > S > P (against our prediction)
- 11/13 overt-coding examples are first person pronoun
- Due to many contrastive examples?
Prediction

(18)  

a. topical (thematic) $\leftrightarrow$ focal (rhematic)  
b. definite $\leftrightarrow$ indefinite  
c. animate $\leftrightarrow$ inanimate  
d. agent (subject) $\leftrightarrow$ patient (object)

- Focal & animate: more likely to be overtly coded  
- Topical & inanimate: more likely to be overtly coded
**Animacy & Focus**

- **Animate & focus** elements are less frequent
- **Animate & focus** elements more likely to be overtly coded
ANIMACY & FOCUS

- Animate & focus S elements are more likely to be overtly coded
- Differential subject marking?
**Animacy & Topic**

- Inanimate & topic elements are less frequent
- Inanimate & topic elements are more likely to be overtly coded
**Animacy & Topic**

- Inanimate & topic S elements are more likely to be overtly coded
- Differential subject marking?
DEFINITENESS

Prediction

(19)

a. topical (thematic) $\leftrightarrow$ focal (rhematic)

b. definite $\leftrightarrow$ indefinite

c. animate $\leftrightarrow$ inanimate

d. agent (subject) $\leftrightarrow$ patient (object)

- Focal & definite: more likely to be overtly coded
- Topical & indefinite: more likely to be overtly coded
DEFINITENESS

Note:

- There is no definite markers in (Kansai) Japanese
- Full N vs. pronoun
Definite & Focus elements are equally likely to be overtly coded

Cf. Standard J: Definite & focus elements are more likely to be overtly coded
**Definite & topic**

- **Definite & topic elements are more to be zero-coded**
Definite & Topic elements are more to be zero-coded
SUMMARY

- Markedness (zero-coding) in Kansai Japanese
- Frequent types are zero-coded
- Rare types are overtly coded
- DSM & DOM in terms of markedness
REMAINING ISSUE

- Subtle acceptablility judgement
- Subtle information structural differences
- Multi-dimensional scaling analysis
- Crosslinguistic definition of topic and focus
LITERATURE ON CASE-CODING IN OTHER LGS

Japonic

▶ Mitsukaido (Sasaki, 2006): Clear case of DOM
▶ Kikai (Matsumoto, 2004): split-intransive?
▶ Standard J (Nakagawa, 2013): split-intransitive in non-contrastive focus context

Other Lgs.
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References I


REFERENCES II

REFERENCES III


