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Title	Non-canonical Constructions in Japanese
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Citation	神戸言語学論叢 = Kobe papers in linguistics, 2: 181-218
Issue date	2000-05
Resource Type	Departmental Bulletin Paper / 紀要論文
Resource Version	publisher
URL	<a href="http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/handle_kernel/81001551">http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/handle_kernel/81001551</a>

Create Date: 2016-06-22



# Non-canonical Constructions in Japanese

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## 1. Introduction

Japanese is an SOV language whose canonical constructions involving intransitive and transitive predicates take the following case frames:

### (1-1) Intransitive predicates

- a. Ken ga kasiko-i.  
K. NOM smart-PRES  
'Ken is smart.'
- b. Ken ga kenkoo da.  
K. NOM healthy COP  
'Ken is healthy.'
- c. Ken ga gakusei da.  
K. NOM student COP  
'Ken is a student.'
- d. Ken ga ki kara oti-ta.  
K. NOM tree from fall-PAST  
'Ken fell from the tree.'
- e. Ken ga hasit-ta.  
K. NOM run-PAST  
'Ken ran.'

### (1-2) Transitive predicates

- a. Ken ga Jun o nagut-ta.  
K. NOM J. ACC hit-PAST  
'Ken hit Jun.'
- b. Ken ga hon o yon-da.  
K. NOM book ACC read-PAST  
'Ken read a book.'
- c. Ken ga Jun ni hon o yat-ta.  
K. NOM J. DAT book ACC give-PAST  
'Ken gave a book to Jun.'

Sentence (1-1a) has an adjectival predicate, whose present tense form ends in *-i*, while (1-1b) and (1-1c) involve nominal predicates, which require the copula *da* in the predicate function. (1-1d) contains a non-volitional (so-called unaccusative) intransitive verb, while (1-1e) contains a volitional (or unergative) intransitive verb.

Canonical transitive verbs involving an animate object and an inanimate object are shown in (1-2a) and (1-2b), both showing the same NOM-ACC case pattern. Consistent nominative *ga*-marking on S in intransitive sentences and the same marking on A of transitive sentences, in contradistinction to accusative *o*-marking on O of transitive clauses unequivocally show that Japanese is a consistent nominative-accusative type language, without a trace of the active-type language at least in terms of case marking.

Sentences (1-1a)-(1-1c) all contain non-activity (or stative) predicates, and these predicates normally trigger topicalisation when the clauses occur as independent sentences. ‘Normal’ utterances with these predicates may thus contain topic noun phrases marked by the particle *wa* as below, masking basic nominative case marking on the S nominals.

(1-3) a. Ken wa kasiko-i.

K. TOP smart-PRES

‘Ken is smart.’

b. Ken wa kenkoo da.

K. TOP healthy COP

‘Ken is healthy.’

c. Ken wa gakusei da.

K. TOP student COP

‘Ken is a student.’

The pattern of basic case marking is maintained in nominalised clauses, however, where topicalisation normally does not obtain:

(1-4) a. [Ken ga kasiko-i] koto(wa minna ga sitteiru)

K. NOM smart-PRES that TOP everyone NOM know

‘That [Ken is smart] (everyone knows).’

b. [Ken ga kenkoo na] koto

K. NOM healthy COP that

‘that Ken is healthy’

c. [Ken ga gakusei de aru] koto

K. NOM student COP be that

‘that [Ken is a student]’

The point being made here is important in considering Japanese non-canonical constructions because the ones that we are concerned with in here all involve stative predicates which ‘sound’ most natural when they contain a topic nominal rather than a nominal with basic nominative *ga* or dative *ni*. Our examples in the following sections contain the case displays of *ga/wa* and *ni*

(*wa*), as in (1-5), to indicate the basic case patterns involved (*ga* or *ni*), and to show that in the former the topic *wa* version—in the latter the *ni-wa* combination—yield more natural-sounding Japanese expressions.

- (1-5) a. Mami *ga/wa* Ken *ga* suki da.  
           M. NOM/TOP K. NOM like COP  
           ‘Mami likes Ken.’  
       b. Mami *ni* (*wa*) eigo *ga* hanaseru.  
           M. DAT (TOP) English NOM can speak  
           ‘Mami can speak English.’

## 2. Non-canonical constructions

There are several types of sentence in Japanese which deviate from the canonical patterns shown in (1-1) and (1-2) above. One type, shown below, contains O case-marked other than the accusative:

- (2-1) a. Ken *ga* Mami *ni* at-ta.  
           K. NOM M. DAT meet-PAST  
           ‘Ken met Mami.’  
       b. Ken *ga* Mami *to* at-ta.  
           K. NOM M. COM meet-PAST  
           ‘Ken met with Mami.’  
       c. Ken *to* Mami *ga* Kobe *de* at-ta.  
           K. COM M. NOM Kobe in meet-PAST  
           ‘Ken and Mami met up in Kobe.’  
       (2-2) a. Ken *ga* Jun *to* kenkasi-ta.  
               K. NOM J. COM fight-PAST  
               ‘Ken fought with Jun.’  
           b. Ken *to* Jun *ga* kenkasi-ta.  
               K. COM J. NOM fight-PAST  
               ‘Ken and Jun fought.’  
       (2-3) a. Ken *ga* Jun *ni* kat-ta.  
               K. NOM J. DAT win-PAST  
               ‘Ken beat/prevailed over Jun.’  
           b. Jun *ga* Ken *ni* sitagat-ta.  
               J. NOM K. DAT obey-PAST  
               ‘Jun obeyed Ken.’  
       (2-4) Ken *ga* isya *ni* nat-ta.  
               K. NOM doctor DAT become  
               ‘Ken became a doctor.’

- (2-5) a. Ken ga ame ni nure-ta.  
           K. NOM rain DAT get wet-PAST  
           ‘Ken got wet in the rain.’  
       b. Ken ga sake ni yot-ta.  
           K. NOM sake DAT drink-PAST  
           ‘Ken got drunk with sake.’  
       c. Ken ga hasika ni kakat-ta.  
           K. NOM measles DAT contract-PAST  
           ‘Ken contracted measles.’

(2-1a) contains a directional predicate, which can be cast in the reciprocal patterns (2-1b) and (2-1c). There aren’t very many verbs showing this pattern, another readily available one being *kisu-suru* ‘do kissing’. Regular reciprocal verbs show the patterns shown in (2-2). True reciprocal verbs do not allow the (2-1a) pattern, always being cast instead in the frame containing the comitative particle *to*, which may join two nominals in subject position (2-2b) or mark an independent argument in the clause (2-2a). In addition to lexically reciprocal verbs like *kekkon-suru* ‘to marry,’ and *kyoosoo-suru* ‘to compete,’ productive reciprocal formation is available by means of the suffix *-au*, which yields such reciprocal verb complexes as *naguri-au* ‘hit each other’ and *hanasi-au* ‘to discuss’.

The pattern shown in (2-3) is the only one available for the predicates given, as well as others such as *makeru* ‘lose (in a competition),’ *amaeru* ‘fawn upon,’ *tayoru* ‘rely on,’ and *nareru* ‘get used to’. Some of these convey a sense of directionality and resemble the translative expression in (2-4). The sentence type shown in (2-5) contains a dative argument whose meaning is more like a cause or source, in contradiction to the goal sense conveyed by the dative argument in (2-4). The expressions here are close in meaning to passive clauses, in which the agent is marked by the dative *ni* as well.

All the constructions whose case marking patterns deviate from the canonical NOM-ACC involve predicates of lower transitivity. Indeed, when these verbs are passivised, they all bring about the nuance of adversity befalling the passive subject, which is characteristic of the passives of verbs of weak transitivity including syntactically intransitive verbs. Another characteristic that these non-canonical constructions share is the use of the dative particle *ni* for one of their arguments.

The dative particle *ni*, as the name suggests, prototypically marks a goal nominal of a ditransitive clause (see (1-2c)). It also marks the goal of motion verbs, (2-6), the location of stative verbs, (2-7), the source of transfer verbs, (2-8), as well as the agent in the passive clause (2-9), and the causee in a causative, (2-10).

- (2-6) a. Ken ga Tookyoo ni it-ta.  
           K. NOM Tokyo GOAL go-PAST  
           ‘Ken went to Tokyo.’  
       b. Ken ga ie ni tui-ta.  
           K. NOM home GOAL arrive-PAST  
           ‘Ken arrived home.’

- (2-7) a. Tukue no ue ni hon ga aru.  
 desk GEN top LOC book NOM be/exist  
 'There is a book on top of the desk.'
- b. Ken ga Tookyoo ni sunde iru.  
 K. NOM Tokyo LOC live be  
 'Ken lives in Tokyo.'
- (2-8) a. Ken ga Mami ni hon o morat-ta.  
 K. NOM M. SOURCE book ACC receive-PAST  
 'Ken received a book from Mami.'
- b. Ken ga Hata-sensei ni eigo o osowat-ta.  
 K. NOM H.-prof SOURCE English ACC learn  
 'Ken learned English from Prof. Hata.'
- (2-9) a. Ken ga Mami ni naka-re-ta.  
 K. NOM M. AGENT cry-PASS-PAST  
 'Ken was adversely affected by Mami's crying.'
- b. Ken ga haha-oya ni sikara-re-ta.  
 K. NOM mother AGENT scold-PASS-PAST  
 'Ken was scolded by (his) mother.'
- (2-10) a. Ken ga Jun ni uti e kaer-ase-ta.  
 K. NOM J. CAUSEE house GOAL return-CAUS-PAST  
 'Ken had Jun go home.'
- b. Ken ga Jun ni hon o yom-ase-ta.  
 K. NOM J. CAUSEE book ACC read-CAUS-PAST  
 'Ken made Jun read a book.'

I have tentatively labelled different uses of the particle *ni* informally on the basis of the semantic role each NP plays. One of the real challenges is to offer a unified account for these diverse uses of *ni*, which could be principled but for which we presently have no ready answer. I have dwelt on the particle *ni* here precisely because it is the particle that figures most importantly in one type of non-canonical construction which we shall study in earnest below.

### 3. Dative subject constructions and their variants

It is not only in Japanese that the dative case is employed in non-canonical constructions. In a very large number of languages, the case form that marks the recipient (or the indirect object) of a ditransitive clause—the dative—appears as one of the arguments of a non-canonical construction. As a simple illustration, observe the following sentences from a diverse array of languages:

- (3-1) a. maTA duwek innAwa. (Sinhala)  
 I.DAT daughter be.ANIMATE.PRES  
 'I have a daughter.'

- b. Me gusta la cerveza. (Spanish)  
I.DAT like the beer  
'I like beer.'
- c. timii-laaii bhok laagyo? (Nepali)  
you-DAT/ACC hunger attaches  
'Are you hungry?'
- d. Gelas ugvars nino. (Georgien)  
Gela.DAT he-loves-her Nino.NoI  
'Gela loves Nino.'
- e. Ban-a para lâzım. (Turkish)  
I-DAT money need  
'I need money.'
- f. Mne rabotaetsja. (Russian)  
I.DAT work.REFL  
'I can work.'
- g. mare jAvun joie. (Gujarati)  
I.DAT/ACC go needed  
'I want to go/I need to go.'

As the examples above illustrate, those predicates calling for non-canonical constructions center around the following semantic fields:

- (3-2) a. Possession/Existence ((a) above)
- b. Psychological states (b)
- c. Physiological states (c)
- d. Visual/auditory perceptions, including the notion of 'appearance'/'seeming' (d)
- e. Modal states of necessity, including the notion of obligation ('must') (e)
- f. Modal states of potentiality, including ability and the notion of permission('may') (f)
- g. Desiderative states (g)

A given language may include some verbs in other semantic domains related to those above, but the Japanese verbs calling for non-canonical constructions typically fall into these seven semantic domains.

Because of the prevalent use of the dative case for marking the possessor/experiencer nominal involved, these constructions are known as dative subject constructions. However, rarely does a language show uniform dative marking throughout these predicates, and Japanese is no exception. Japanese stative non-canonical constructions divide themselves into two types—the NOM-NOM type and the DAT-NOM type.

## (3-3) Possession/Existence

- a. Ken ga/wa atama ga ookii.  
K. NOM/TOP head NOM big  
'Ken has a big head.'
- b. Ken ni (wa) kodomo ga san-nin iru.  
K. DAT (TOP) child NOM three-person be/exist  
'Ken has three children.'
- c. Ken ni (wa) syakkin ga ooi/sukunai  
K. DAT(TOP) debt(money) NOM many/small in quantity  
'Ken has a large amount /only a small amount of debts.'

## (3-4) Psychological states

- a. Mami ni (wa) Hata-sensei ga osorosii.  
M. DAT (TOP)H.-prof NOM fearful  
'Mami is fearful of Prof. Hata.'
- b. Mami ga/wa Ken ga suki da.  
M. NOM/DAT K. NOM like COP  
'Mami likes Ken.'

## (3-5) Physiological states

- a. Taroo ga/wa atama ga itai.  
T. NOM/TOP head NOM hurting  
'Taro has a headache.'
- b. Mami ga/wa asi ga tumetai.  
M. NOM/TOP foot NOM cold  
'Mami has cold feet.'

## (3-6) Visual/audio perceptions

- a. Ken ni (wa) Huzi-san ga yoku mieru.  
K. DAT(TOP) Fuji-Mt. NOM well visible  
'Ken can see Mt. Fuji well.'
- b. Mami ni (wa) sono oto ga kikoe-nakat-ta.  
M. DAT(TOP)that sound NOM audible-NEG-PAST  
'Mami didn't hear that sound.'

## (3-7) Necessity

- a. Boku ni (wa) okane ga hituyoo da.  
I DAT(TOP)money NOM necessity COP  
'I need money.'
- b. Boku ni (wa) Ken ni au hituyoo ga aru.  
I DAT(TOP) K. GOAL meet necessity NOM be/exist  
'(lit.) I have the need of meeting Ken/ I need to meet Ken.'

## (3-8) Potentiality/ability

- a. Ken ni (wa) eigo ga hanas-e-ru.  
K. DAT(TOP) English NOM speak-POTEN-PRES  
'Ken can speak English.'



- b. Ken ni (wa) eigo ga dekiru/wakaru.  
 K. DAT(TOP) English NOM can do/understand  
 'Ken can do (has command of) English/Ken understands English.'
- d. Ken ni (wa) eigo o hanasu koto ga kanoo da.  
 K. DAT(TOP) English ACC speak that NOM possible COP  
 'It is possible for Ken to speak English.'
- d. Ken ga/wa eigo ga tokui da/nigate da.  
 K. NOM/TOP English NOM good at/bad at  
 'Ken is good at/bad at English.'
- (3-9) Desiderative states
- a. Boku ga/wa kono hon ga hosii.  
 I NOM/TOP this book NOM want  
 'I want this book.'
- b. Boku ga/wa mizu ga nomi-tai.  
 I NOM/TOP water NOM drink-DESI  
 'I want to drink water.'

The predicates involved in non-canonical case marking patterns span three major predicate types of Japanese, namely verbs (e.g. *aru* 'be/exist,' *wakaru* 'understand,' *hanas-e-ru* 'can speak'), adjectives (e.g. *hosii* 'want,' *nomi-tai* 'want to drink'), and adjectival nominals (e.g. *kanoo da* 'possible,' *tokui da* 'good at'). They represent both lexical (e.g. *wakaru* 'understand,' *hosii* 'want') and derived forms (e.g. *hanas-e-ru* 'can speak,' *nomi-tai* 'want to drink'). Owing to the productive derivations of potential and desiderative forms, non-canonical constructions are very productive in Japanese. Indeed, since possession, as well as mental and physiological conditions represent such personal states, these constructions are indeed prevalent forms of expressions, and they deserve much closer attention than hitherto accorded.

What is common to all these non-canonical constructions is that they express states rather than activities. A corollary of this is that they do not yield progressive forms by the use of the *-te iru* 'be' ending. Because of this stative character, they often trigger topicalisation, hence all of the examples above sound more natural if the topic forms, marked by *wa*, are chosen.

This stative character distinguishes these predicates from those activity predicates calling for the NOM-DAT/COM pattern discussed in section 2. Another distinguishing characteristic that sets these two types of non-canonical construction apart is word order. Whereas the activity verbs discussed in section 2 assume the NOM-DAT/COM word order as unmarked, the stative predicates discussed in this section all select the NOM-NOM and DAT-NOM as unmarked word orders. While the term 'dative subject construction' used in the literature singles out the DAT-NOM pattern, I consider the NOM-NOM constructions exemplified above to be variants of the dative subject construction—or vice versa—and argue for a unified treatment of them in the subsequent discussion.

#### 4. Alternate case frames

As in many other languages, the type of non-canonical constructions under discussion exhibit alternate case patterns. A number of the DAT-NOM predicates may occur in the NOM-NOM frame, as shown below, whereas the NOM-NOM predicates cannot occur in the DAT-NOM frame.

- (4-1) a. [Ken ni/ga eigo ga wakaru] koto  
 K. DAT/NOM English NOM understand that  
 ‘that [Ken understands English]’  
 b. [Mami ni/ga eigo ga hanas-e-ru] koto  
 M. DAT/NOM English NOM speak-POTEN-PRES that  
 ‘that [Mami can speak English]’  
 c. [Jun ni/ga okane ga hituyoo na] koto  
 J. DAT/NOM money NOM necessary COP that  
 ‘that [Jun needs money]’
- (4-2) a. [Ken ga/\*ni atama ga ookii] koto  
 K. NOM/\*DAT head NOM big that  
 ‘that [Ken has a big head]’  
 b. [Mami ga/\*ni atama ga itai] koto  
 M. NOM/\*DAT head NOM hurting that  
 ‘that [Mami has a headache]’  
 c. [boku ga/\*ni ano hon ga hosii] koto  
 I NOM/\*DAT that book NOM want that  
 ‘that [I want that book]’  
 d. [Ken ga/\*ni Mami ga suki na] koto  
 K. NOM/\*DAT M. NOM like COP that  
 ‘that [Ken likes Mami]’

Which predicates take the basic DAT-NOM pattern and which ones take the NOM-NOM pattern, why there is this distinction, and what the meaning distinction is between the alternate case frames are all interesting and challenging questions, some of which we will take up in the following discussion. Another alternate case frame some of these non-canonical constructions enter is the NOM-ACC transitive frame. As pointed out in the preceding section, predicates calling for non-canonical constructions are of two types – lexical and derived. Derived types involving transitive roots may show either the DAT/NOM-NOM pattern or the NOM-ACC pattern, maintaining the case pattern of the transitive roots, and avoiding the DAT-ACC pattern:

- (4-3) a. Mami ni/ga eigo ga hanas-e-ru.  
 M. DAT/NOM English NOM speak-POTEN-PRES  
 'Mami can speak English.'
- b. Mami ga eigo o hanas-e-ru.  
 M. NOM English ACC speak-POTEN-PRES  
 'Mami can speak English.'
- c. \*Mami ni eigo o hanas-e-ru.  
 M. DAT English ACC speak-POTEN-PRES  
 'Mami can speak English.'
- (4-4) a. Boku ga/\*ni mizu ga nomi-ta-i.  
 I NOM/\*DAT water NOM drink-DESID-PRES  
 'I want to drink water.'
- b. Boku ga mizu o nomi-ta-i.  
 I NOM water ACC drink-DESID-PRES  
 'I want to drink water.'

When intransitive verb roots are involved, the general pattern is simply NOM-PRED for both potential and desiderative derivations:

- (4-5) Ken ga/\*ni oyog-e-ru.  
 K. NOM/\*DAT swim-POTEN-PRES  
 'Ken can swim.'
- (4-6) Mami ga oyogi-ta-i.  
 M. NOM swim-DESID-PRES  
 'Mami wants to swim.'

Among the underived predicates, the NOM-NOM predicate *suki da* 'like' allows the NOM-ACC pattern rather freely:

- (4-7) [Ken ga Mami ga/o suki na] koto  
 K. NOM M. NOM/ACC like COP that  
 'that [Ken likes Mami]'

It is hard to pinpoint a possible meaning difference between DAT/NOM-NOM forms and the corresponding NOM-ACC forms. It appears that the canonical transitive NOM-ACC pattern reflects the speaker's conceptualisation of the experience as involving higher transitivity. Supporting evidence for this is that when verbal roots of high transitivity are involved, the NOM-ACC pattern is either preferred or the only option.

- (4-8) a. Boku ga/wa kono hon ???ga/o sute-tai.  
 I NOM/TOP this book NOM/ACC throw away-DESID  
 'I want to throw away this book.'

- b. Boku ga/wa Ken ???ga/o naguri-tai.  
 I NOM/TOP K. NOM/ACC hit-DESID  
 'I want to hit Ken.'
- c. Boku ga/wa kono baketu ???ga/o kettobasi-tai.  
 I NOM/TOP this bucket NOM/ACC kick away-DESID  
 'I want to kick this bucket away.'

In the case of potential derivatives, the difference being noted here is not detectable, allowing both the DAT/NOM-NOM pattern and the NOM-ACC pattern with all activity verbal roots. The lexical form, *suki da* 'like,' on the other hand, prefers a human referent for the NOM-ACC pattern, indicating that the degree of transitivity may be at work here too.

- (4-9) a. Ken ga/wa Mami ga/o suki da.  
 K. NOM/TOP M. NOM/ACC like COP  
 'Ken likes Mami.'
- b. Kodomo wa hikooki ga/???o suki da.  
 children TOP airplane NOM/ACC like COP  
 'Children like airplanes.'

There is, however, a great deal of individual variation with possibilities for alternate encoding, and some speakers appear to accept the accusative version of (4-9b), for example, quite readily (see Shibatani 1978 for relevant discussion). And unlike the alternate expressions based on the verb-adjective (or verb-adjectival nominal) contrast to be discussed in section 6, a semantic difference between the alternate forms is hard to pinpoint.

## 5. Non-canonical constructions as transitive constructions

Having surveyed the case marking patterns of non-canonical constructions in Japanese, we are now in a position to proceed to the question of their analysis. In the older tradition, the Japanese grammarians treated non-canonical constructions from a morphological point of view, although they did not examine the constructions in their full DAT/NOM<sub>1</sub>-NOM<sub>2</sub>-PRED forms typically concentrating only on the NOM<sub>2</sub>-PRED portion (because the DAT/NOM<sub>1</sub> is most often topicalised or unencoded (see below)). Since NOM<sub>2</sub> is marked by the particle *ga*, indicating the subject of both transitive and intransitive sentences, it was assumed that this nominal was a subject (e.g. Martin (1962)).

- (5-1) a. Eiga ga suki da  
 movies NOM like COP  
 '(I) like movies.'
- b. [eiga ga suki da]  
 SUBJ PRED

Among the traditional grammarians, Tokieda (1950) offered a non-conventional treatment. Recognising the fact that the NOM<sub>2</sub> of the non-canonical construction can be construed as an object (goal) toward which subjective feelings are directed, Tokieda set up a category of ‘objective’ function distinct from subject and object. Thus for the full non-canonical form, Tokieda’s analysis would assign the following grammatical functions:

- (5-2) a. Buku ga mizu ga hosii.  
           I   NOM water NOM want  
           ‘I want water.’  
       b. [boku ga mizu ga    hosii]  
           SUBJ    OBJECTIVE PRED

Arguing against the traditional analysis in (5-1), Kuno (1973) offers a straightforward transitive analysis for non-canonical constructions of the form of (5-3).

- (5-3) a. Boku ga eiga ga suki da.  
           I    NOM movies NOM like COP  
           ‘I like movies.’  
       b. [boku ga eiga ga suki da]  
           SUBJ       OBJ       PRED

Kuno’s argument against the analysis in (5-1b) is that a sentence like (5-1a) is elliptical, and that the full sentence in the form of (5-3a) contains a real subject. Kuno (1973:80) tells us that if the experiencer in (5-3a) is the subject of this sentence, then the second NP cannot be also one. He contrasts a double nominative sentence like (5-3a) with a double subject construction of the following form:

- (5-4) Bunmeikoku ga dansei no heikin-zyumyoo ga mizikai.  
       civilised countries NOM male GEN average-life-span NOM short  
       ‘It is the civilised countries that a male’s average life-span is short in.’

Kuno’s point is that a double subject construction like this yields a full (non-elliptical) sentence even if the first nominative nominal is deleted. But this is not the case with the non-canonical constructions, as the following contrast shows:

- (5-5) a. Okane ga hosii.  
           money NOM want  
           ‘(I) want money.’  
       b. Dansei no heikin-zyumyoo ga mizikai.  
           male GEN average-life-span NOM short  
           ‘It is a male’s average life-span that is short.’

In (5-5a), the speaker (“I”) is implied, whereas there is no additional information implied in the case of (5-5b).

Kuno’s analysis of non-canonical constructions as transitive has gained some support from Shibatani’s (1977) demonstration that the dative nominal of the DAT-NOM structure does possess certain subject properties such as binding of the reflexive *zibun* ‘self,’ as well as triggering of subject honorification process (see below). Indeed, the transitive analysis is in line with the researchers of the languages of South Asia such as Hindi and Sinhala, where non-canonical constructions paralleling those of Japanese have received a transitive analysis similar to Kuno’s (see Shibatani, forthcoming).

One point to keep in mind in pursuing arguments against a transitive analysis is that, while Kuno distinguishes double subject constructions such as (5-4) and (5-6a) below from non-canonical constructions of the DAT/NOM-NOM type, we treat them all alike in the proposed analysis below.

(5-6) Kuno (1973)

a. Ken ga otoosan ga sin-da. (Double subject construction)

K. NOM father NOM die -PAST

‘It is Ken whose father died.’

b. Ken ga eiga ga suki da. (Transitive construction)

K. NOM movies NOM like COP

‘Ken likes movies.’

c. Ken ni eigo ga wakar-u. (Transitive construction)

K. DAT English NOM understand-PRES

‘Ken understands English.’

Indeed, Kuno’s argument based on the elliptical nature of (5-1a) and (5-5a) loses force when we realise that a double subject construction like (5-6a) can also be elliptical without the first nominative nominal, as seen below:

(5-7) Otoosan ga sin-da.

father NOM die-PAST

‘A father died.’

In order for this expression to be complete, *otoosan* ‘father’ must be “determined” either by supplying the possessor nominal, e.g. *Ken no* ‘Ken of,’ or by associating it with another nominative in the double subject construction, as in (5-6a). In the case of physiological states involving body part the double subject construction is the only option.

(5-8) a. Atama ga itai.

head NOM hurting

‘A head is hurting.’

- b. \*Boku no atama ga itai.  
 I GEN head NOM hurting  
 ‘My head hurts.’
- c. Boku ga atama ga itai.  
 I NOM head NOM hurting  
 ‘I am hurting in the head/I have a headache.’

(5-8a) is as elliptical as (5-1a), (5-5a) and (5-7). Since only the speaker (“I”) has direct access to a mental state, predicates such as *itai* ‘hurting’ and *hosii* ‘desirable’ can only have a first person experiencer—hence the ungrammaticality of (5-8b). On the other hand, one can claim that (5-5a), (5-7) and (5-8) are all equally complete sentences, but they are only so when uttered by a first person in reference to himself. Our analysis below capitalises on this kind of dependency that the non-canonical constructions in general exhibit.

## 6. Transitive and intransitive predication

As pointed out in the beginning, those predicates that enter into non-canonical constructions in Japanese are all stative, and the majority of them are adjectives and adjectival nominals—except for the potential derivatives, which involve the verbal endings *-(r)areru* and *-eru*. Indeed, in many other languages, expressions that are couched in non-canonical frames typically involve intransitive, rather than transitive verbs; when transitive verbs are involved they tend to have a metaphoric character, as e.g. the notion of being hungry expressed as ‘hunger strikes’ in many languages of South Asia (see Shibatani, forthcoming).

In Japanese, many adjectives and adjectival nominals calling for non-canonical constructions have corresponding verbs, most of which are transitive. In table (6-1) below, most verbs enter into the canonical transitive case frame NOM-ACC, while the corresponding adjectives and adjectival nominals call for the non-canonical NOM/DAT-NOM frame, as shown in (6-2)–(6-4).

(6-1) <u>Verbs</u>	<u>Adjectives</u>	
<i>nikumu</i>	<i>nikui</i>	‘hate(ful)’
<i>natukasimu</i>	<i>natukasii</i>	‘long for’
<i>sitasimu</i>	<i>sitasii</i>	‘fraternise/to be familiar’
<i>kanasimu</i>	<i>kanasii</i>	‘sad’
<i>tanosimu</i>	<i>tanosii</i>	‘enjoy’
<i>ayasimu</i>	<i>ayasii</i>	‘suspect/suspicious’
<i>itamu</i>	<i>itai</i>	‘hurt’
<i>yurumu</i>	<i>yurui</i>	‘slack(en)’
<i>netamu</i>	<i>netamasii</i>	‘to be jealous’

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Adjectival nominals</u>	
<i>kirau</i>	<i>kirai da</i>	'dislike'
<i>suku</i>	<i>suki da</i>	'like'

- (6-2) a. Ken ga/wa Jun o nikumu.  
 K. NOM/TOP J. ACC hate(verb)  
 'Ken hates Jun.'
- b. Ken ga/wa Jun ga nikui rasii.  
 K. NOM/TOP J. NOM hateful(adjective) seem  
 'It seems that to Ken, Jun is hateful.'
- (6-3) a. Mami ga/wa Hata-sensei o natukasimu.  
 M. NOM/TOP H.-prof ACC long for (verb)  
 'Mami longs for Prof. Hata.'
- b. Mami ni (wa) Hata-sensei ga natukasii.  
 M. DAT (TOP) H.-prof NOM longing (adjective)  
 'Mami longs for Prof. Hata.'
- (6-4) a. Mami ga/wa Ken o kirau.  
 M. NOM/TOP K. ACC dislike(verb)  
 'Mami dislikes Ken.'
- b. Mami ga/wa Ken ga kirai da.  
 M. NOM/TOP K. NOM dislike COP (adj. nominal)  
 'Mami dislikes Ken.'

While in many other languages a contrast is seen in terms of the presence or absence of volition/control between a transitive expression and a corresponding dative subject construction (or its variant) (see below), a possible meaning difference is hard to detect in the Japanese alternate patterns being examined here (but see below). It appears that the alternate patterns largely reflect a difference in conceptualisation. Our analysis of the non-canonical constructions below goes some way in explicating what this difference is.

The alternate case patterns above also point out the limitations of an analysis that attempts to account for the dative marking in non-canonical constructions in terms of the case role of 'experiencer'. As examples (6-2)-(6-4) show, experiential states of affairs are not always encoded in non-canonical constructions, nor are experiencers always marked dative.

In this paper we are advancing the commonsensical hypothesis that adjectives and nominal adjectives are intransitive. In other words, while transitive verbs such as those on the left column in (6-1) predicate over their subject, the adjectival and adjectival nominal counterparts in the right hand column are all intransitive, and they predicate over the second nominative nominal in the DAT/NOM-NOM pattern. That is, the forms in (6-2) would receive the following analysis:



- (6-5) a. [Ken ga Jun o nikumu]  
           SUBJ                  PRED  
       b. Ken ga [Jun ga nikui] (rasii)  
                   SUBJ      PRED

Predication describes the nature of the referent of the subject nominal. Thus, in (6-5a), the verb is about Ken, while in (6-5b), the predicate describes the nature of Jun. Evidence for this difference in predication patterns obtains from the interpretation of prenominal modification forms. For example, (6-6a) means a person who hates someone, reflecting the predication pattern in (6-5a), while (6-6) means someone who inspires hatred, reflecting the predication pattern of (6-5b). Other pairs in (6-1), when comparison is possible, behave the same way, indicating that the members of the verb-adjective/adjectival nominal pairs differ in their predication pattern, as shown in (6-5).

- (6-6) a. *nikumu hito*  
           hate person  
           ‘a hating person’  
       b. *nikui hito*  
           hateful person  
           ‘hateful person’  
       (6-7) a. *kirau hito*  
               dislike person  
               ‘a person disliking (someone)’  
           b. *kirai na hito*<sup>1)</sup>  
               disliking COP person  
               ‘a person inspiring dislike’  
       (6-8) a. *natukasimu hito*  
               long for person  
               ‘a longing person’  
           b. *natukasii hito*  
               long for person  
               ‘a person inspiring longing’

The structural difference shown between the two types of predication in the diagrammatic representations in (6-5) also captures the difference in conceptualisation involved with each relevant predicates. The structure (6-5a) represents conceptualisation of a mental activity as an action similar to regular transitive activity verbs. The verb *nikumu* ‘to hate,’ for example, represents a mental state; however, the verbal form allows this state of affairs to be framed as a transitive event similar to other transitive activities. It is a way of describing a state as if it were a controllable activity. The adjectival (and adjectival nominal) predication captured in (6-5b), on the other hand, describes a property of an individual or an object in terms of a stative predicate. The construction also involves another individual who is related to this state in an indirect way. The nature of this relationship will be explicated in the next section, but the point to be made here is

that this representation—(6-5b)—makes it clear that, unlike a transitive subject nominal, the nominal representing the individual indirectly involved—*Ken ga* in (6-5b)—is not a direct argument of the predicate, and hence it has no direct control over the state of affairs expressed by the clausal predicate.

It is this difference between transitive and intransitive conceptualisations that figures importantly in some languages, where a clear semantic opposition obtains between the canonical transitive expression and the corresponding non-canonical construction in terms of the presence or absence of volitionality/control. Compare the following Sinhala forms, for example, where (6-9a) below is cast in the canonical transitive frame with an active verb form (A-form), while (6-9b) is a variant of the dative-subject construction with a non-active verbal counterpart (P-form). Notice that the latter involves an intransitive clausal predicate, which can occur as an independent intransitive sentence, as in (6-9c) (cf. the structure in (6-5b)).

- (6-9) a. lamAya kooppe binda.  
           child cup break.PAST.A  
           ‘The child (deliberately) broke the cup.’  
   b. lamAya-atin [kooppe biNduna].  
           child-INST cup break.PAST.P  
           ‘The child (accidentally) broke the cup.’  
   c. koope biNduna.  
           cup break.PAST.P  
           ‘The cup broke.’ (Wijayawardhana, et. al. 1995:113)

In the case of Japanese, the difference in conceptualisation reflected in the diagrams in (6-5) is not as pronounced as in Sinhala and some other languages; as such the difference between the (a) versions and the (b) versions in (6-2)-(6-4) is not as obvious as in the Sinhala data above.<sup>2)</sup> However, the difference can be brought into focus by examining their behaviour in a control situation. Since verbs such as *nikumu* ‘to hate’ and *kirau* ‘to dislike’ are mental activity verbs, they are not readily controllable. Accordingly, it is hard to cast them into positive imperative forms such as *Hito o nikume!* ‘Hate people!’<sup>3)</sup> Forming a negative imperative, however, as in (6-10a) below, is much easier indicating that a certain degree of controllability can be ascribed to this construction type. This is not so with the corresponding non-canonical construction—(6-10b) is not a possible imperative form.

- (6-10) a. [Hito o nikumu]no wa yamemasyoo. (cf. (6-2a))  
           people ACC hate NOMI TOP let’s stop  
           ‘Let’s stop hating people.’  
   b. \*[Hito ga nikui] no wa yamemasyoo. (cf. (6-2b))  
           people NOM hateful NOMI TOP let’s stop

Thus, the structures shown in (6-5) correspond to the different conceptualisation patterns of a similar experiential state.

## 7. Non-canonical constructions as double subject constructions

It is generally agreed that the so-called possessor ascension construction involves the following structure, which is identical to the double subject construction.

- (7-1) a. Ken ga asi ga nagai.  
           K. NOM leg NOM long  
           ‘Ken has long legs.’  
       b. [Ken ga    [asi ga    nagai]]  
           Large SUBJ Small SUBJ PRED

Parallel structures are found in a large number of languages world-wide. We use the terms ‘large subject’ and ‘small subject’ following the practice of Japanese grammatical tradition, although in this tradition the former is used in reference to the topic construction involving the particle on the first nominal (large subject). It is generally agreed that the adjectival predicate *nagai* ‘long’ predicates over the second nominal (small subject) *asi* ‘leg,’ for the sentence is saying that it is the legs that are long, not Ken. The large subject (*Ken ga*) in turn is predicated over by a clausal predicate (*asi ga nagai* ‘legs are long’), which describes a state of affairs that crucially pertains to the large subject.

As we noted immediately above, an expression like (7-1a) involving a body part or a kinship term (as in (5-7)) cannot stand alone without reference to a possessor or a relation in the latter case. Thus, the portion *asi ga nagai* ‘legs are long’ in (7-2a) below is also incomplete or elliptical, and the possessor must be determined either by means of a genitive modifier, as in (7-2b) below, or by a large subject in the double subject construction (7-1a). Indeed the same applies to comparable English expressions the English translations of (5-7), (5-8) -and (7-2a)- below either do not make sense or make a false universal proposition.

- (7-2) a. Asi ga nagai.  
           leg NOM long  
           ‘Legs are long.’  
       b. Ken no asi ga nagai.  
           K. GEN leg NOM long  
           ‘Ken’s legs are long.’

Notice that (7-2b) stands as a grammatical sentence as opposed to (7-2a); this difference is crucial in the ensuing discussion of non-canonical constructions.

Thus, once again, an expression like (7-2a) is dependent in the sense that it cannot stand alone. The large subject of the double subject construction (see (7-1b)) provides a reference point to which the clausal predication is “anchored”. To put it differently, the large subject provides a domain or a range in which the proposition expressed by the clausal predicate obtains. The large subject, in other words, is a variant of a topic about which a clausal predicate describes some crucially relevant state of affairs. Expression (7-1a) is saying that the state of affairs of *legs’ being long* is true (or obtains) in the domain of (or in reference to) the large

subject, *Ken*. In the sense that the large subject determines the domain for the clausal predicate and that the latter's truth is made dependent upon it, we can say that the large subject has dominance over the clausal predicate (and by default over the small subject, which is evident in the case of the possessor-body part relationship). The structure in (7-1b) represents in structural terms this dependency/dominance relationship.<sup>4)</sup>

We now argue that other non-canonical constructions examined in this paper are all essentially the same as the double subject construction. In other words, we are claiming that the so-called dative subject constructions of (7-3a)-type and their variants (7-4a) have the double subject structure shown below- not only in Japanese but also in other languages (see Shibatani, forthcoming).

- (7-3) a. Mami ni eigo ga waku.  
           M. DAT English NOM understand (verb)  
           'Mami understands English.'  
       b. [Mami ni [eigo ga waku]]  
           Large SUBJ Small SUBJ PRED
- (7-4) a. Mami ga/wa Ken ga kirai da.  
           M. NOM/TOP K. NOM dislike COP (adj. nominal)  
           'Mami dislikes Ken.'  
       b. [Mami ga [Ken ga kirai da]]  
           Large SUBJ Small SUBJ PRED

The double subject analysis in (7-4b) is not too surprising in view of the fact that there are, after all, two nominative nominals like the double subject construction of the possessor ascension type. What may be unexpected is to posit a dative-marked large subject for the DAT-NOM construction, as in (7-3b). We argue here that there is nothing wrong with having non-nominative case particles in large subject position. Indeed, there are expressions like the following, where postpositions do occur in large subject position:

- (7-5) a. [Kono heya kara ga [Huzi-san ga yoku mieru]]  
           this room ABL NOM Fuji-Mt. NOM well visible  
           'It is from this room that Mt. Fuji is very visible.'  
       b. [Ken to ga [itiban benkyoo ga sinikui]]  
           K. COM NOM most study NOM hard to do  
           'It is with Ken that studying is most difficult.'  
       c. [Tookyoo made ga [kuroo ga ooi]]  
           Tokyo until NOM trouble NOM many  
           'It is until Tokyo that there are many troubles.'

The fact that we do not obtain a large subject with a *ni-ga* combination in the dative subject construction is that there is a general prohibition against combining central case markers of *ga*, *o*, *ni*, which express grammatical functions rather than semantic relations like the ablative, the comitative and other peripheral particles do. For example, the genitive particle *no* can combine

with *e* 'to,' *kara* 'from,' *to* 'with,' *made* 'until,' and *de* 'in/at,' but it cannot combine with *ga*, *o*, or *ni*. It might be worth noticing that the topic particle *wa* is slightly more tolerant of case particles, and allows the dative *ni* to combine with it, but it cannot combine with the accusative *o* or with the nominative *ga*:

- (7-6) a. [Mami ni wa [eigo ga waku]] (cf. (7-3b))  
 M. DAT TOP English NOM understand  
 'Mami understands English.'  
 b. [Kono hon (\*o) wa [Mami ga yonde -iru]]  
 this book(\*ACC)TOP M. NOM read-be  
 'As for this book, Mami is reading it.'  
 c. [Mami (\*ga) wa yoku benkyoo suru]  
 M. (\*NOM)TOP hard study do  
 'Mami studies hard.'

## 8. The degree of dependency of clausal predicates

Studies of dative subject constructions in general have recognised that their occurrence is centred around the semantic domains of possession/existence, psychological states, physiological states, and a few others, as described in section 3 of this paper (see 3-2). Without a unifying notion of dependency, it is a curious fact why possession, psychological states and physiological states receive a similar grammatical treatment. For example, why is it that the following three expressions entail similar grammatical structure?

- (8-1) a. Boku ni (wa) [kodomo ga san-nin iru]  
 I DAT (TOP) children NOM three-person exist  
 'I have three children.'  
 b. Boku ga/wa [Mami ga suki da]  
 I NOM/TOP M. NOM like COP  
 'I like Mami.'  
 c. Boku ga/wa [atama ga itai]  
 I NOM/TOP head NOM hurting  
 'I am hurting in the head.'

Is there anything common between having children and liking someone? Probably nothing in terms of case relation. To call the possessor nominal in (8-1a) an experiencer is stretching the case role of experiencer too far (although having children is certainly a worthwhile experience!). What unifies these two expressions is the notion of dependency. First, existence is defined in terms of the location in which it obtains. If a place is involved, we have an existential expression, and if it is a person, we obtain a possessive expression like (8-1a). Thus, existence and the structure that expresses it is dependent upon a locative expression. Likewise, psychologi-

cal states and physiological states obtain only in relation to (i.e. are dependent upon) a person who feels and/or recognises them; they cannot occur apart from a cogniser. Indeed, the following are decidedly odd unless they are understood in relation to the speaker or some other entity (such as a location for (8-2a)) in the context.

- (8-2) a. Kodomo ga san-nin iru.  
 children NOM three-person exist  
 'Three children exist.'  
 b. Mami ga suki da.  
 M. NOM like COP  
 'Mami is likeable.'  
 c. Atama ga itai.  
 head NOM hurting  
 '(lit.) Head is hurting.'

What the above discussion boils down to is this. There are certain states of affairs that cannot happen or obtain independently from a domain in which they occur, while certain other states of affairs can. For the latter, observe the following:

- (8-3) a. Ken ga hasitta.  
 K. NOM run-PAST  
 'Ken ran.'  
 b. Tikyuu wa marui.  
 earth TOP round  
 'The earth is round.'  
 c. Mami wa kirei da.  
 M. TOP pretty COP  
 'Mami is pretty.'

What is described here are independently obtaining states of affairs. For example, Ken's running has taken place regardless of my observing it. Similarly, the property of roundness and that of prettiness obtain with regard to the earth/Mami whether or not they are recognised by a particular person; they are universally held descriptions of the properties of these entities. Needless to say, some of these descriptions might not be universally agreed upon especially with properties such as prettiness characterisable by relative degrees. Under such circumstances, one may "personalise" the state of affairs and make it dependent upon a specific domain, as in the following expression.

- (8-4) [Boku ni wa [Mami ga kirei da]]  
 I DAT TOP M. NOM pretty COP  
 'To me, Mami is pretty.'

Notice the strangeness of “personalising” a universal description.

- (8-5) ???[Boku ni wa [tikyuu ga marui]<sup>5)</sup>  
 I DAT TOP earth NOM round  
 ‘To me, the earth is round.’

The above discussion already indicates that there is a degree of independence among various clauses. (8-3b), for example, is more independent than (8-3c), which can be “personalised,” and, this in turn is more independent than those in (8-2), which cannot stand independently from the domain framing the states of affairs they describe. We shall now show that this kind of degree of dependency determines the form of non-canonical constructions —whether they exhibit the NOM-NOM pattern or DAT-NOM pattern—, and that it has significant syntactic repercussions in the overt expressions of subject properties of the two subjects involve— i.e. large subject and small subject.

One might be surprised at our inclusion of an expression like the following under the heading of possession ( see (3-3)).

- (8-6) a. [Ken ga [atama ga ookii]]  
 K. NOM head NOM big  
 ‘Ken has a big head.’  
 b. [Mami ga [yubi ga kirei da]]  
 M. NOM fingers NOM beautiful COP  
 ‘Mami has beautiful fingers.’

The reason for describing these expressions in terms of possession is because they fill a gap found in the possessive constructions.<sup>6)</sup> Japanese has the possessive expression involving the verb *motu* ‘to have/possess,’ but this can be used only with inalienably possessed objects.

- (8-7) a. \*Ken ga ookina atama o motte iru.  
 K. NOM big head ACC have be  
 ‘Ken has a big head.’  
 b. \*Mami ga kireina yubi o motte iru.  
 M. NOM beautiful fingers ACC have be  
 ‘Mami has beautiful fingers.’  
 c. Ken ga takusan hon o motte iru.  
 K. NOM a lot book ACC have be  
 ‘Ken has a lot of books.’  
 d. Mami ga yoi kuruma o motte iru.  
 M. NOM nice car ACC have be  
 ‘Mami has a nice car.’

(8-7a) is only possible when (carnivorous) Ken has a big detached head. The existential verb *aru*, which calls for the DAT-NOM case frame, cannot be used with body parts, and thus, the first two expressions below are not possible.

- (8-8) a. \*Ken ni (wa) ookina atama ga aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP) big head NOM exist  
 'Ken has a large head.'
- b. \*Mami ni (wa) kireina yubi ga aru.  
 M. DAT (TOP) beautiful fingers NOM exist  
 'Mami has beautiful fingers.'
- c. Ken ni (wa) ookina hokuro ga aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP) big mole NOM exist  
 'Ken has a big mole.'
- d. Mami ni (wa) siraga ga aru.  
 M. DAT(TOP) grey hair NOM exist  
 'Mami has grey hair.'

While possession of pathological features such as moles and grey hair is expressible in the DAT-NOM case frame, possession of a body part is not. We construe this to mean that the NOM-NOM case frame expresses a higher degree of dependency between the large subject and the predicate clause than the DAT-NOM frame does.<sup>7)</sup>

Kuno (1973:90-91) lists predicates taking the DAT-NOM pattern as well as those taking the NOM-NOM pattern, which have been arranged below for our purposes:

(8-9) DAT-NOM predicates:

verbs: -*reru* (potential derivatives), *dekiru* 'can do,' *wakaru* 'understand'  
*aru* 'have/exist,' *nai* 'do not have/non-extent,' *iru* 'exist'  
*mieru* 'visible,' *kikoeru* 'audible'

Adjectives: *omoshiroi* 'fun/enjoyable,' *osorosii* 'fearful,' *tanosii*  
 'enjoyable,' *arigatai* 'thankful'

Adjectival nominals: *hituyoo da* 'necessary,' *kanoo da* 'possible' *konnanda*  
*da* 'difficult,' *yooi da* 'easy,' *nigate da* 'not good at doing something'

(8-10) NOM-NOM predicates

verbs: *iru* 'need'

Adjectives: -*tai* (desiderative derivatives), *hosii* 'want,' *nikurasii*  
 'hateful,' *itosii* 'dear,' *hazukasii* 'ashamed,' *kawaii* 'cute,'  
*netamasii* 'jealous,' *kutiosii* 'mortifying' *umai* 'good at,'  
*urayamasii* 'envious,' *mazui* 'bad at,' *muzukasii* 'difficult'

Adjectival nominals: *heta da* 'bad at,' *zyoouzu da* 'good at,' *kirai da*  
 'hateful,' *suki da* 'like,' *tokui da* 'good at,' *zannen da* 'sorry'

Although it is not quite absolute, there appears to be a general tendency in that the predicates occurring in the DAT-NOM frame have an independent use, while those belonging to the NOM-NOM class appear to have less of one. For example, predicates such as *omoshiroi* 'enjoyable' and *osorosii* 'fearful,' can be used independently of the cogniser, as stating general properties of the subject nominals:<sup>8)</sup>



- (8-11) a. Kono hon wa omosiroi.  
           this book TOP enjoyable  
           ‘This book is enjoyable.’  
       b. Ano hito wa osorosii.  
           that person TOP fearful  
           ‘That person is fearful.’

These expressions are used when there is sufficient ground for the speaker to believe that the described properties of the subject nominals are likely to be met with agreement from others, i.e. construable as universal truths. Or, they may be personalised and delimited to a particular domain i.e. to a particular cogniser in which the statement is claimed to hold true, by tacking them onto a dative nominal, as below:

- (8-12) a. Boku ni (wa) kono hon ga omosiroi.  
           I DAT (TOP) this book NOM enjoyable  
           ‘To me, this book is enjoyable.’  
       b. Boku ni (wa) ano hito ga osorosii.  
           I DAT (TOP) that person NOM fearful  
           ‘To me, that person is fearful.’

Other predicates in this group that can be used independently include the following:

- (8-13) a. Koko kara yama ga mieru.  
           here from mountain NOM visible  
           ‘A mountain is visible from here.’  
       b. Yoi oto ga kikoeru.  
           good sound NOM audible  
           ‘A good sound is audible/you can hear a good sound.’  
       (8-14) a. Ken ga kite kureta no wa arigatai.  
               K. NOM come gave that TOP grateful  
               ‘It is gratifying that Ken came(for us).’  
           b. Eiga ni iku koto wa tanosii.  
               movies to go that TOP fun  
               ‘It is fun going to movies.’  
       (8-15) a. Kono zidoosya o kau koto wa yooi da/kanoo da/konan da.  
               this car ACC buy that TOP easy/possible/difficult  
               ‘It is easy/possible/difficult to buy this car.’

While it is difficult for predicates like *wakaru* ‘understand,’ *nigate da* ‘bad at,’ and the existential verbs *aru* ‘exist/have,’ *nai* ‘not exist/not have’ and *iru* ‘exist’ to occur independently of a cogniser/possessor/location, others taking the DAT-NOM frame can.

Potential derivatives require some historical explanation. First, some of them can occur independently as below:

- (8-16) a. Koko de wa Nihon-go ga hanas-e-ru.  
 here at TOP Japanese NOM speak-POTEN-PRES  
 'Here, Japanese can be spoken/One can speak Japanese here.'  
 b. Kono hon wa kantan-ni yom-e-ru.  
 this book TOP easily read-POTEN-PRES  
 'This book can be read easily.'  
 c. Kono mizu wa nom-e-ru.  
 this water TOP drink-POTEN-PRES  
 'This water is potable.'

Potential expressions historically arose from spontaneous/passive constructions. These constructions did not have to overtly express an agent, as in the passive of many other languages. The potential developed by using an agentless passive/potential clause as a clausal predicate. Indeed, we can observe the potential/passive split in terms of how a (potential) agent is expressed; when it is expressed clause internally and as an optional adjunct, we obtain a passive expression. In the potential expression, on the other hand, the potential agent is expressed in sentence initial position. (8-17a), for example, is ambiguous between the two readings as indicated by the translations. By inserting the (potential) agent in the manner of (b) and (c), we obtain either a potential or a passive construction.

- (8-17) a. Kono kodomo-tati wa osie-rare-ta.  
 this children TOP teach-PASS/POTEN-PAST  
 'These children were teachable/These children were taught.'  
 b. Ken ni wa [kono kodomo-tati ga osie-rare-ta]  
 K. DAT TOP this children NOM teach-POTEN-PAST  
 'Ken could teach these children.'  
 c. Kono kodomo-tati wa Ken ni osie-rare-ta.  
 this children TOP K. by teach-PASS-PAST  
 'These children were taught by Ken.'

Thus, although in Modern Japanese the potential ending has diverged from the passive morpheme when the verb root ends in a consonant, changing from *-(r)are* to *-e*, the historical evidence suggests that it arose from a passive/potential clause in the manner described above. (When a verb root ends in a vowel, the potential and the passive suffixes are still identical in Modern Japanese, as the examples in (8-17) show.) In other words, the potential verbals calling for the DAT-NOM case frame arose from an independent clause of the type shown in (8-17a). Other DAT-NOM verbs such as *dekiru* 'can do,' *wakaru* 'understand,' *kikoeru* 'be audible,' and *mieru* 'be visible' also developed from spontaneous middle expressions.

Compared to the above, many of the predicates calling for the NOM-NOM frame are highly dependent in that they cannot occur independently of a cogniser nominal. Again, some predicates belonging to the adjective and the adjectival nominal class, e.g. *kawaii* 'cute,' *mutukasii*

'difficult,' *heta da* 'bad at,' *zannen da* 'sorry,' seem to be able to form independent clauses. Others, however, require a cogniser nominal, and there is no possibility for the them to stand as independent sentences (i.e. without implicit cognisers) the following are all elliptical sentences:

- (8-18) a. Kono hon ga/wa iru.  
           this book NOM/TOP necessary  
           'This book is necessary (for someone).'  
       b. Mizu ga/wa hosii.  
           water NOM/TOP want  
           '(I) want water.'  
       c. Kono hon ga/wa yomi-tai.  
           this book NOM/TOP read-DESI  
           '(I) want to read this book.'  
       d. Mami ga/wa suki da.  
           M. NOM/TOP like COP  
           '(Someone) likes Mami.'

## 9. The syntax of double subject constructions

One of the motivations for analysing dative subject constructions as transitive has been the fact that the dative nominal possesses certain subject properties (see Kachru, et al. 1976, Shibatani 1977). This fact alone does not really argue for the transitive analysis, however, for we know that the large subject of the double subject construction (or the possessor ascension construction) also shows subject properties. In the Relational Grammar framework, the Relational Succession Law is posited to capture this fact (Perlmutter 1983). If dative subject constructions are analysed as double subject constructions, then the fact that dative nominals exhibit some subject properties comes as no surprise. What is not made clear in this framework is why the facts behind the Relational Succession Law obtain. Certainly the structural relationship between the large subject and the small subject indicates that the former dominates the latter. But clearly this dominance relationship is a reflection of a semantic dominance or dependency that obtains between the large subject and the clausal predicate in the relevant constructions. In what follows, we shall examine how this notion of dependency interacts with syntax; i.e. how the distribution of subject properties over the large subject and the small subject correlates with the notion of dependency discussed earlier.

First, let us examine a straightforward case of double subject constructions involving body parts, where there are two nominatively marked contenders for subject properties:

- (9-1) a. [Hata-sensei ga/wa [se ga takai]]  
 H-prof. NOM/TOP height NOM high  
 ‘(lit.) Prof. Hata’s height is high/Prof. Hata is tall.’  
 b. [Hata-sensei ga/wa [atama ga ookii]]  
 Hata-prof. NOM/TOP head NOM big  
 ‘Prof. Hata has a big head.’  
 c. [Hata-sensei ga/wa [ha ga itai]] yooda  
 H.-prof NOM/TOP tooth NOM hurting seem  
 ‘Prof. Hata seems to have a toothache.’

That the large subject in these constructions has the properties of reflexive binding, subject honorification, and control of the gap in the clausal conjunct is clear from the following:

- (9-2) [Hata-sensei ga/wa [se ga go-zibun no musuko-san yori o-takai]]  
 H.-prof NOM/TOP height NOM HON-self GEN son than HON-high  
 ‘Prof. Hata is taller than his own son.’  
 (9-3) [Hata-sensei ga [ha ga itaku]]-te [ø, okomari da]  
 H.-prof NOM tooth NOM hurting-and troubled COP  
 ‘Prof. Hata has a toothache and is troubled.’

In (9-2) the adjectival predicate *takai* ‘tall/high,’ has an honorific prefix, which is triggered by the subject as in a simple adjectival predicate sentence. In this example, it is triggered by the large subject nominal *Hata-sensei ga*. Indeed, the small subject *se* ‘height,’ which is directly predicated by the adjectival predicate *takai*, does not trigger the subject honorification prefix, as shown in (9-4a) below; it is only when there is a large subject that the honorification prefix occurs.

- (9-4) a. \*Hata-sensei no se ga o-takai.  
 H. -prof GEN height NOM HON-high  
 ‘(lit.) Prof. Hata’s height is tall.’  
 b. [Hata-sensei ga [se ga o-takai]]  
 H. -prof NOM height NOM HON-high  
 ‘(lit.) Prof. Hata has a tall height.’

In (9-2) the large subject also binds the reflexive form *go-zibun* ‘HON-self’ a property also shared by the prototypical subject in Japanese.<sup>9)</sup>

(9-3) shows that the large subject can control a gap in a clausal conjunct. On the other hand, it is not easy to show that a large subject can be the target of coordinate reduction. (9-5a) may appear to indicate that this is indeed possible. However, it is not entirely clear whether (9-5a) has the coordinate structure indicated. It seems more likely that the coordination takes place at the level of a clausal predicate, as shown in (9-5b). The situation, thus, remains unclear with regard to this property.

- (9-5) a. [Hata-sensei<sub>i</sub> ga [ke ga usuku]]-te [ $\emptyset_i$  [atama ga hagate iru]]  
 H. -prof NOM hair NOM thin -and head NOM balding  
 'Prof Hata has thin hair and (his) head is balding.'
- b. [Hata-sensei ga [ke ga usuku-te atama ga hagate iru]]  
 H. -prof NOM hair NOM thin -and head NOM balding  
 'Prof. Hata is thin-haired and bald-headed.'

The problem with the phenomena of reflexive binding and honorification is that they call for a human referent, and when there is only one nominal with a human referent as in the examples involving body parts it is not entirely clear whether the distribution of these subject properties is due to the lop-sided distribution of this humanness property. It is therefore imperative for us to examine a phenomenon in which both a human nominal and a body part nominal can be a conceivable controller of the relevant process. The control of a gap in a coordinated structure appears to provide the appropriate context. In (9-6a) below, there is only one subject *Ken no asi* 'Ken's legs,' and indeed it controls the gap in the clausal conjunct. However, when the expression is cast in the double subject construction with both a large and a small subject, the latter cannot control the gap (9-6b), while the former can as seen above (9-3) and in (9-6c) below:

- (9-6) a. [Ken no asi<sub>i</sub> ga nagaku]-te [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  beddo kara tukideteiru]  
 K. GEN leg NOM long -and always bed from stick out  
 'Ken's legs are long and always stick out from the bed.'
- b. \*[Ken ga [asi<sub>i</sub> ga nagaku]]-te [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  beddo kara tukideteiru]  
 K. NOM leg NOM long -and always bed from stick out  
 'Ken is long-legged and always sticks out.'
- c. [Ken<sub>i</sub> ga [asi ga nagaku]]-te [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  komatteiru]  
 K. NOM leg NOM long -and always troubled  
 'Ken is long-legged and is always troubled.'

In double subject constructions involving body parts, it appears to be the case that the large subject usurps the subject properties of the small subject, which the predicate actually predicates over. Our claim is that this is due to the high degree of dominance that the large subject has over the clausal predicate, whose subject is a body part inalienably possessed by the large subject. From this hypothesis, we would expect that if the clausal predicate contains a small subject with an alienable referent, it may assert its subject status more strongly than in a case involving an inalienably possessed body part. This predication is borne out. In (9-7) below, it is the small subject that triggers subject honorification, binds the reflexive form, and controls the gap in the second conjunct clause.

- (9-7) a. [Jun-kun ga [ryoosin ga go-kenzai da]]  
 J. -FAMILIAR NOM parents NOM HON-alive COP  
 'It is Jun whose parents are alive.'

- b. [Hata-san ga [okusan ga zibun no kaisya o keiei-site iru]]  
 H. -Mr NOM wife NOM self GEN company ACC manage-do be  
 'It is Mr. Hata whose wife runs (her) own company.'
- c. [Hata-san ga [musukosan<sub>i</sub> ga kasikoku]]-te [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  yoku hataraku]  
 H. -Mr NOM son NOM smart -and always hard work  
 'It is Mr. Hata whose son is smart and works hard.'
- d. [Hata-san<sub>i</sub> ga [musukosan ga kasikoku]]-te [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  ziman-site iru]  
 H. -Mr NOM son NOM smart -and always boast-do be  
 'It is Mr. Hata whose son is smart and who is always boasting.'

All the large subjects in the above examples can be converted to the genitive form showing the parallelism with the possessor ascension constructions involving body parts. These constructions, however, differ markedly from the earlier double subject constructions in that it is the small subject that asserts its subject status with respect to the relevant phenomena. In (9-7a), the large subject has a familiar title *-kun*, whose presence prevents the honorification of its referent. Hence, it is the small subject *ryoosin* 'parents' that triggers subject prefixation on the predicate. Needless to say, this causes difficulty for the Relational Succession Law postulated in conjunction with the possessor ascension analysis proposed in Relational Grammar (Perlmutter 1983). In (9-7b), though there are two nominal binding candidates of the reflexive form, only the small subject can in fact bind the reflexive in this construction. (Japanese reflexive binding crosses clausal boundaries.) (9-7c) and (9-7d) show that a gap in the second conjunct clause can be controlled either by the small subject or the large subject. However, a large subject appears to be a stronger contender to this kind of interclausal syntax, hence of (9-7c) and (9-7d), the latter seems easier to accept than the former.

Among the predicates that call for the DAT-NOM case frame, the verbs *iru* 'exist/have' and *aru* 'exist/have' show a somewhat subtle but interesting contrast. With a locative nominal, these verbs express the existence of an entity, and are sensitive to its animacy.

- (9-8) a. Asoko ni kodomo ga iru/\*aru.  
 there LOC child NOM exist/exist  
 'There is a child over there.'
- b. Asoko ni takai ki ga \*iru/aru.  
 there LOC all tree NOM exist/exist  
 'There is a tall tree over there.'

When a human possessor occurs instead of a location, certain animate entities may co-occur with the verb *aru*, as in (9-9b) below:

- (9-9) a. Hata-sensei ni (wa) kireina okusan ga iru.  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) beautiful wife NOM exist  
 'Prof. Hata has a beautiful wife.'

- b. Hata-sensei ni (wa) kireina okusan ga aru.  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) beautiful wife NOM exist  
 'Prof. Hata has a beautiful wife.'

Despite the superficial similarity between the *iru* and the *aru* possessive constructions, they exhibit a contrastive behaviour with regard to some syntactic phenomena. First, observe the honorification pattern:

- (9-10) a. Hata-sensei ni (wa) kireina okusan ga iru/oideni naru.  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) beautiful wife NOM exist/exist.HON  
 'Prof. Hata has a beautiful wife.'  
 b. Hata-sensei ni (wa) sirami ga iru/#oideninaru.  
 H. -prof DAT(TOP) lice NOM exist/exist.HON  
 'Prof. Hata has lice/Prof. Hata is lice-infested.'
- (9-11) a. Hata-sensei ni (wa) kireina okusan ga aru/oarini naru.  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) beautiful wife NOM exist/exist.HON  
 b. Hata-sensei ni (wa) bakudaina syakkin ga aru/oarini naru.  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) large debt NOM exist/exist.HON  
 'Prof. Hata has a large debt.'

In the *iru* possessive construction, it is the small subject that triggers honorification, as indicated by the inappropriateness of the honorific version of (9-10b), which honorifies the lice. If the dative nominal *Hata-sensei* 'Prof. Hata' were a controlling subject, then we would expect (9-10b) to be appropriate with an honorific form. In contradistinction to this, it is the large subject that triggers honorification in the *aru* possessive construction. Thus, unlike (9-10b), (9-11a) is quite appropriate with the honorific verbal form. This contrast between the *iru* and the *aru* constructions can be further confirmed by the following examples. In (9-12a), a nominative nominal triggers honorification and an appropriate honorific expression obtains. In (9-12b), on the other hand, a dative subject triggers honorification, rendering the honorific version inappropriate; one does not show deference to a familiar person with the second person form *kimi* 'you'. The sentence would be perfectly natural, however, if the dative nominal in (9-12b) contained a deferential second person form such as *anata-sama*.

- (9-12) a. Kimi ni (wa) rippana ryoosin ga iru/oideni naru.  
 you.FAM DAT(TOP) great parents NOM exist/exist.HON  
 'You have great parents.'  
 b. Kimi ni (wa) rippana ryoosin ga aru/#oarini naru.  
 you.FAM DAT(TOP) great parents NOM exist/exist.HON  
 'You have great parents.'

Another phenomenon showing a parallel contrast between these two possessive constructions is quite subtle; observe the following:

- (9-13) a. [Hata-sensei ni (wa) utukusii okusan<sub>i</sub> ga i]-te  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) beautiful wife NOM exist-and  
 [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  tanosi sooni siteirassyar<sub>i</sub>]  
 always happy look doing.HON  
 ‘Prof. Hata has a beautiful wife and (she) is always looking happy.’
- b. [Hata-sensei<sub>i</sub> ni (wa) utukusii okusan ga at]-te  
 H. -prof DAT (TOP) beautiful wife NOM exist-and  
 [itumo  $\emptyset_i$  tanosi sooni siteirassyar<sub>i</sub>]  
 always happy look doing.HON  
 ‘Prof. Hata has a beautiful wife and (he) is always looking happy.’

Here the contrast is admittedly subtle, but the above interpretation appears highly plausible, indicating that in the *iru* possessive construction the small subject controls the gap in the second conjunct clause, while in the *aru* counterpart the large subject has the control property. This pattern is consistent with the honorification pattern seen above.

The phenomenon of reflexive binding is too subtle to be able to distinguish between the two constructions. Still, the honorification pattern examined in (9-10)-(9-12) is robust enough to warrant a separate treatment of the distribution of subject properties over the large and small subjects. We would like to claim that the fact that the large subject asserts its subject status more strongly than the small subject in the *aru* possessive construction is due to a greater dependency that the clausal predicate has on the large subject in this construction. Compared to this, the *iru* possessive construction involves a more independent clausal predicate. This contrast can be observed by examining the nature of possessed entities allowed in the *aru* possessive construction.

What can be possessed in the *aru* possessive construction is rather limited. The best candidates are 1) (mostly acquired) bodily features such as *siraga* ‘grey hair,’ *nikibi* ‘pimples,’ *siwa* ‘wrinkles’; 2) personal traits and possessions such as *warui kuse* ‘bad habit,’ *sainoo* ‘ability,’ *tie* ‘wisdom,’ *kangae* ‘idea,’ *zoosyo* ‘personal book collection,’ *tyosyo* ‘authored works,’ (for some reason *syakkin* ‘debt’ belongs here); and 3) close kin and associates such as *okusan* ‘wife,’ *musuko* ‘son,’ *tomodati* ‘friends,’ and *desi* ‘disciples’. We noted earlier that inalienable possession of body parts cannot be expressed by the possessive construction; they need to be couched in a possessor ascension-type double subject construction. Thus, while *aru* possessive constructions require entities closely related to the possessor, they cannot contain ones that are very closely connected like body parts.<sup>10)</sup>

The *iru* possessive construction, on the other hand, allows a larger class of entities, though these are limited to animates and typically humans. Observe the following, which illustrate the difference in the range of possessed entities permitted between the two constructions.



- (9-14) a. Ken ni (wa) yoi tomodati ga takusan iru/aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP)good friends NOM many exist/exist  
 'Ken has many good friends.'
- b. Ken ni (wa) siensya ga iru/??aru  
 K. DAT (TOP) sponsor NOM exist/exist  
 'Ken has a sponsor/supporter.'
- c. Ken ni (wa) inu ga sanbiki iru/??aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP)dog NOM three exist/exist  
 'Ken has three dogs.'
- d. Ken ni (wa) sirami ga iru/\*aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP) lice NOM exist/exist  
 'Ken has lice.'
- e. Ken ni (wa) takusan huan ga iru/\*aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP) many fan NOM exist/exist  
 'Ken has a lot of fans (followers).'
- f. Ken ni (wa) teki ga iru/\*aru.  
 K. DAT (TOP)enemy NOM exist/exist  
 'Ken has an enemy.'

An interesting reflection of Japanese culture in this regard is that, while a husband can possess his wife, a wife cannot possess her husband in the *aru* construction:

- (9-15) a. Hata-san ni (wa) yoi okusan ga iru/aru.  
 Hata-Mr DAT (TOP)good wife NOM exist/exist  
 'Mr. Hata has a good wife.'
- b. Mami-san ni (wa) yoi gosyuzin ga iru/???aru.  
 M. -Ms DAT(TOP) good husband NOM exist/exist  
 'Mami has a good husband.'

These observations show that the large subject has a greater dominance over the small subject (and hence the clausal predicate as a whole) in the *aru* possessive construction than in the *iru* construction, which permits a wider range of possessed entities. The difference in the syntax of honorification between the two constructions is a reflection of this difference in the dominance relationship.

Finally, NOM-NOM predicates such as *suki da* 'like' and *kirai da* 'dislike' are highly consistent in the syntax of honorification, showing a high degree of clausal predicate dependency on the large subject. Thus, the large subject consistently triggers honorification, and the small subject never does.

- (9-16) a. Hata-sensei ga Mami ga o-suki da.  
 H. -prof NOM M. NOM HON-like COP  
 'Prof. Hata likes Mami.'

- b. Hata-sensei ga Mami ga o-kirai da.  
 H. -prof NOM M. NOM HON-dislike COP  
 'Prof. Hata dislikes Mami.'
- (9-17) a. #Mami ga Hata-sensei ga o-suki da.  
 M. NOM H -prof NOM HON-like COP  
 'Mami likes Prof. Hata.'
- b. #Mami ga Hata-sensei ga o-kirai da.  
 M. NOM H. -prof NOM HON-dislike COP  
 'Mami likes Prof. Hata.'

In (9-17) honorification is triggered by the large subject *Mami*, not by the small subject *Hata-sensei*, hence the inappropriateness of the forms. Most predicates calling for a NOM-NOM case frame show the above honorification pattern, reflecting the high degree of dependency of the clausal predicate on the large subject.

## 10. Summary and conclusion

This paper has examined the semantics and the syntax of non-canonical constructions in Japanese. Non-canonical constructions come in two large varieties depending on the nature of the predicates. Action predicates calling for non-canonical constructions display the NOM-DAT/COM pattern. Stative predicates entering non-canonical constructions come in two sub-varieties, one displaying a NOM-NOM pattern and the other a DAT-NOM pattern, with some predicates in the latter alternately exhibiting the NOM-NOM pattern. The main focus of this paper was on stative non-canonical constructions, since they have analogues in a large number of languages.

Stative predicates entering the non-canonical constructions centre around specific semantic domains, most notably possession/existence, physiological states, mental states, and certain modal states. We have argued that what unifies these semantic domains is the notion of dependency of the state of affairs that the relevant predicates express. That is, possession/existence is defined by a location or possessor, hence a possessive/existential state of affairs does not obtain without these elements. Similarly, psychological and physiological states obtain only when they are recognised by a cogniser. Modal states are also bound to an individual upon which their potential realisation is predicated.

All of the stative non-canonical constructions were analysed as involving double subject constructions of the following form:

- (10-1)a. [NP-NOM [NP-NOM PRED]]  
 Large SUBJ Small SUBJ  
 b. [NP-DAT [NP-NOM PRED]]  
 Large SUBJ Small SUBJ

The clausal predicate represents a state of affairs whose realisation depends on the large subject. The large subject, which the clausal predicate modifies, specifies a domain in which the de-

scribed state of affairs obtains. The dependency relationship between the large subject and the clausal predicate (and the small subject in it) varies in its degree. Thus, while none the following sentences can stand as complete expressions, we observe a varying degree of dependency among them.

- (10-2)a. Okusan ga utukusii.  
           wife NOM beautiful  
           ‘A wife is beautiful.’  
 b. Atama ga ookii.  
           head NOM big  
           ‘A head is big.’  
 c. Okusan ga iru.  
           wife NOM exist  
           ‘A wife exists.’  
 d. Okusan ga aru.  
           wife NOM exist  
           ‘A wife exists.’  
 e. Atama ga itai  
           head NOM hurting  
           ‘A head is hurting.’  
 f. Mizu ga hosii.  
           water NOM want  
           ‘Water is desirable.’  
 g. Mami ga suki da.  
           M. NOM like COP  
           ‘Mami is likeable.’

(10-2a) contains a relational nominal, *okusan* ‘wife,’ and unless it is further specified, the sentence cannot stand as a complete expression. The same is true with (10-2b). These forms, however, can become independent expressions by specifying the “possessor” in genitive form, as below. Indeed, these predicates can form independent sentences without a possessor as well.

- (10-3) a. Hata-san no okusan ga utukusii.  
           H. -Mr GEN wife NOM beautiful  
           ‘Mr. Hata’s wife is beautiful.’  
       b. Ken no atama ga ookii.  
           K. GEN head NOM big  
           ‘Ken’s head is big.’  
 (10-4) a. Mami ga utukusii.  
           M. NOM beautiful  
           ‘Mami is beautiful.’  
       b. Zoo ga ookii.  
           elephant NOM big  
           ‘An elephant is big.’

The forms in (102-a) and (102b) can form non-canonical constructions by predicating over a kin person or a possessor as below:

- (10-5) a. [Hata-san ga [okusan ga utukusii]]  
           H. -Mr NOM wife NOM beautiful  
           ‘It is Mr. Hata whose wife is beautiful.’  
       b. [Ken ga [atama ga ookii]]  
           K. NOM head NOM big  
           ‘It is Ken whose head is big.’

Because (10-5b) has a body part small subject, the subject syntax of this kind of construction is controlled by the possessor large subject, which has total semantic dominance over the small subject. On the other hand, the small subject in (10-5a) is an entity independent of the large subject, albeit one with a close affinity to it. Accordingly, the small subject in this kind of construction asserts its subject status.

(10-2c) and (10-2d) contain existential predicates, and call for either a location or a possessor by which the existence of the entity can be defined. They differ from (10-2a) and (10-2b) in that they can never stand as complete expressions without a large subject expressing a location or a possessor.

- (10-6) a. [Hata-san ni [okusan ga iru]]  
           H. -Mr DAT wife NOM exist  
           ‘Mr. Hata has a wife.’  
       b. [Hata-san ni [okusan ga aru]]  
           H. -Mr DAT wife NOM exist  
           ‘Mr. Hata has a wife.’

It was noted that the latter, *aru*-possessive construction, involved a higher dependency relationship between the large subject and the small subject than the former, and this difference was reflected in the syntax.

(10-2e), containing a body part and a predicate expressing a physiological state, is even more dependant on the presence of a cogniser. Unless someone feels pain, there is none. Thus, unlike (10-3b), (10-7a) below is ungrammatical. Since Japanese imposes a stringent evidentiality requirement on the cogniser choice, the only possible one for physiological and psychological states would a first person (“I”).

- (10-7) a. \*Boku no atama ga itai.  
           I GEN head NOM hurting  
           ‘My head hurts.’  
       b. [Boku ga [atama ga itai]]  
           I NOM head NOM hurting  
           ‘It is I whose head is hurting/I have a headache.’

Finally, psychological states expressed by those in (10-2f,g) also require a cogniser without which the said psychological states could not obtain. Hence the forms in (10-2f,g) are highly dependent on a large subject cogniser calling for the following non-canonical structure:

- (10-8) a. [Boku ga [mizu ga hosii]]  
           I     NOM water NOM want  
           'I want water.'  
       b. [Ken ga [Mami ga suki da]]  
           K.    NOM M.    NOM like COP  
           'Ken likes Mami.'

Needless to say, large subjects control subject behavioural properties in these constructions.

We have also discussed the point that these non-canonical constructions reflect a particular pattern of conceptualising states of affairs distinct from the conceptualisation pattern that entails transitive constructions. Many languages show relevant meaning contrasts between canonical and non-canonical constructions along the line of the presence vs. absence of volitionality control, reflecting the differences between these two patterns of conceptualisation. Japanese too shows a subtle meaning contrast. Thus, it would be totally incorrect to consider non-canonical constructions as transitive.

List of abbreviations:

A	agent of a transitive clause
ABL	ablative case particle
ACC	accusative case particle
AGENT	agent-marking particle
CAUSEE	causee-marking particle
COM	comitative case particle
COP	copula
DAT	dative case particle
DESID	desiderative
FAM	familiar
GEN	genitive case particle
GOAL	goal case particle
HON	honorific
LOC	locative case particle
NOM	nominative case particle
NOMI	nominaliser
O	a second non-agentive nominal of a transitive clause
OBJ	object
PASS	passive
PAST	past tense
POTEN	potential
PRED	predicate
PRES	present tense
REFL	reflexive
S	Subject of an intransitive clause
SOURCE	source particle
SUBJ	subject
TOP	topic particle

## Footnotes:

- 1) In Japanese the prenominal modification of this type is indistinguishable from the relative clause modification. If a true relative clause is involved with relevant arguments, both the 'subject' and the 'object' readings are possible as in: *Hanako ga kirai na hito* 'the person who dislikes Hanako/the person who Hanako dislikes'. Also with an 'understood' argument, the following interpretation is also possible: (*nattoo ga*) *kirai na hito* 'the person who dislikes (*nattoo* -fermented soy beans).'
- 2) Indeed, it is unlikely that the relevant verbal predicates in (6-1) are used as such in a straightforward manner. They are typically used in the stativized form by means of the ending- *te iru* 'to be,' minimizing the contrast between the relevant pairs even more; e.g. *Mami wa Ken o nikun de iru* vs. *Mami wa Ken ga nikui* 'Mami hates Ken.'
- 3) If a specific context is provided, an imperative is more readily formed with some of these verbal predicates; e.g. *Boku o nikumitakereba, nikume* 'If you want to hate me, hate (me).'
- 4) A legitimate question here is concerned with the difference between the double subject construction and the topic construction involving the particle *wa*; e.g. *Zoo ga hana ga nagai* vs. *Zoo wa hana ga nagai* 'An elephant has a long trunk'. A major difference between them is that in the former, a more stringent 'aboutness' condition applies than in the latter. The clausal predicate in the double nominative construction must express a state of affairs that is construable as a reasonable way of characterising the large subject. Thus while it is possible to say *Kyotoo wa boku no ani ga sunde iru* 'As for Kyoto, my brother lives (there)' is a possible topic construction, its double subject counterpart \**Kyotoo ga boku no ani ga sunde iru* is not, since it is decidedly odd to characterise Kyoto in terms of my brother's living there. See Shibatani and Cotton (1977) on this.
- 5) That this expression sounds all right when uttered by a dissenter of the Flat Earth Society underscores the point being made here.
- 6) The other possibility is using the verbal expression *site iru* '(lit.) doing,' as in *Ken wa ooki na atama o site iru* 'Ken has a large head'.
- 7) Notice that the possessor ascension construction in subject position, where the NOM-NOM pattern is observed, typically involves inalienable possession in other languages as well.
- 8) See Tokieda (1950) and Kuno (1973) for related discussion.
- 9) See Tsunoda (1995) for a relevant discussion on the honorification of possessed entities.
- 10) See Tsunoda (1995) for a relevant discussion on different types of possessive expressions in Japanese.

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