JAPANESE TOPICALIZATION:
A LEXICALIST DEPENDENCY ANALYSIS

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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper presents an analysis of a range of Japanese constructions which include constituents marked with the postposition "wa". The constructions have been studied previously independent of linguistic theories by Mikami (1960), Onoe (1981) and Teramura (1991) among others. These studies present valuable data for more theory-dependent analyses. The theory dependent studies are of two groups: multistatal multi-bar analyses and monostral one-bar analyses. The former type of analyses, represented by Kuno (1973), Kuroda (1965, 1987), and Saito (1985, 1987) among others, capture topicalization in terms of two operations: wa-attachment and the movement of the item to which the postposition "wa" has been attached. Consequently, the two adjunction sites: the locus of wa-attachment and the destination of the movement became the major issue. The issue remains yet unresolved. These studies offer us an insight on the notion of gaps and its relevance to syntactic analysis.

The monostral one-bar analyses as represented by Kitagawa (1982) captures the relation between a topic and a lexical gap and attempts to formalize the insights obtained by way of a pragmatic topic binding coupled with his evaluation process applied in the propositional argument structure. Drawing on his basic insight on the relation between a topic and a lexical gap, I will present an alternative analysis. The analysis offered is syntactically anchored, more constrained, and more explicit in formalism. It is based on a case-marking system formulated within a monostral one-bar dependency grammar of Japanese sentences. It formalizes for the first time linking rules for postposition-marked topicalization.

1 I am grateful to Dr. Stanley Starosta for his assistance, insightful comments and constructive criticism on this paper.
II. TOPICALIZED SENTENCES IN JAPANESE

In each of the following sentences, the word(s) preceding the postposition "wa" is a topic:

(1) Meizin wa sikirini tokei o mita.
   Master Tpc constantly watch Acc looked
   'The master looked at the watch constantly.'

(2) Tokyo kara wa isya ga yobaretara.
    from Tpc doctor Nom summoned
    'From Tokyo, the physician was summoned.'

(3) Kyoo wa zuibun susumimasita.
    today Tpc fairly progressed
    'Today, (You) made good progress.'

(4) Kinoo wa Taroo ga hirumesi o tukutta.
    yesterday Tpc Nom lunch Acc made
    'Yesterday, Taroo made lunch.'
    (From: Kitagawa 1982: 192 (38a))

(5) Zoo wa hana ga nagai.
    elephant Tpc trunk Nom long
    'Elephants have long trunks; An elephant is such
     that its trunk is long.'

(6) Sakana wa tai ga ii.
    Fish Tpc red snapper Nom good-is
    'Speaking of fish, red snapper is the best.'
    (From: Kuno 1973: 250 (18)a)

(7) Meizin wa Komine ga wakazinisita.
    Master Tpc Nom died prematurely
    'The master had Komine die prematurely on him.'

(8) Taroo wa Hanako ga iedesita.
    Tpc Nom ran-away-from-home
    'Taro had Hanako ran away from home on him.'
    (From: Kitagawa 1982: 175 (3) 'As for Taroo, Hanako
     ran away from home.')

Among these sentences, (1)-(4) each include a syntactic gap which corresponds to the topicalized word(s):
1'. Meizin wa GAP sikirini tokei o mita.
2'. Tokyo kara wa isya ga GAP yobaretara.
3'. Kyoo wa GAP zuibun susumimasita.
4'. Kinoo wa GAP Taroo ga hirumesi o tukutta.

Sentences (5) through (8), on the other hand, do not include such a gap. What follows after the postposition wa in (5) through (8) is a complete sentence. The distinction between these two types of topicalized sentences is observed by Kitagawa in terms of two types of targets for his topic binding: anaphoric versus non-anaphoric items (Kitagawa 1982: 186-187). We will take Kitagawa's lexicalist analysis on topic constructions as a point of departure.

III. KITAGAWA'S ANALYSIS

Kitagawa (1982 : 184) assumed that Japanese is not a configurational language, and studied topic
constructions following a model proposed earlier by Hale (1980) and Farmer (1980). Kitagawa defines the topic syntactically as a sister to V. This is indicated in his definition of topic (14a) and (14b), repeated here as (9a) and (9b):

(9a) 'Topic' in Japanese is X'-wa, where X' is [_V];
(9b) Wa indicates that the immediately preceding X' is outside of the domain of 'evaluation' in terms of the PAS of the nucleus V.

The category PAS is taken from Farmer's 'propositional argument structure'. The PAS "supplies the information regarding the argument requirements of a given verb", with each argument position corresponding "to a thematic relation" (Farmer 1980: 88, quoted in Kitagawa 1982: 183). Kitagawa further assumes that the parsing strategy for topic structure assignment is called for at the pragmatic level, following Dik's suggestion that assignment of topic function operates on the output of the assignment of syntactic and semantic function (Kitagawa 1982: 184).

Based on these assumptions, Kitagawa proposes that the structure of a topic construction is in accordance with the schema (10), with the accompanying well-formedness condition (11):

(10) [Top X'-wa] [Pred X'* V] (=Kitagawa's (15))
(11) Topic Binding

The Topic X' must be bound pragmatically to an X' which is in the domain of Predication (Pred) (=Kitagawa's (16))

Kitagawa's formulation of the Predication or Pred in (10) follows Hale's formulation for the Japanese instantiation of endocentric X-bar schema, X' --> X'*X. Hale's schema asserts that each phrasal category has a single level of structure and that each is nucleus-final. Therefore, in (10) Kitagawa assumes that the nucleus, or head, which is represented as V may be preceded by any number of complements (including none). Hale interpret the symbol X in the schema as a node-marker, devoid of categorial content but associated with an exponent indicating the level of structure (zero for the terminal, or lexical, level and one bar for the phrasal level) (Hale 1980: 185). Categorial content is given to the terminal and phrasal nodes by lexical insertion. The categorial features associated with lexical items (inserted at the terminal nodes, (X) are projected to the phrasal level (X'), so that after lexical insertion, V is dominated by V', N by N', P by P', and so on (Hale 1980: 186).

Topic Binding (11) as a process of pragmatic evaluation is achieved in terms of co-indexing at the level of topic structure assignment (9a). According to
Kitagawa, this evaluation then insures that the topic X' is linked to an X' that is semantically anchored in the PAS of the nucleus V. This framework of analysis will enable each specific analysis of topic constructions to be presented as a triplet composed of: (i) the surface string of overt arguments with semantic evaluation completed in terms of the PAS; (ii) the PAS with evaluation completed; and (iii) the topic structure assignment with pragmatic evaluation completed by means of Topic Binding.

Let us examine Kitagawa's 'topic binding' using his analysis of example (17), repeated here as (12). In the following I have constructed trees for his (18a) and (18c) under (12a) and (12c). His (18b) is repeated here as (12b).

(12) Naomi-wa udon-o tabe-ta.
    top noodle-acc eat-past
    'Naomi ate udon noodles.' (=Kitagawa (17))
(12a)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
N' \\
 | \\
N \\
 | \\
N \\
 | \\
N' \\
| \\
V \\
\end{array}
\]

Naomi-wa udon-\text{om} tabe-ta.
\[
[v'\mathbb{[N'Naomi]}]-wa [N'[\mathbb{[Nudon]}]-\text{om} [y\text{tabe-ta}]]
\]

(=Kitagawa (18a))

The subscript 'm' attached to the accusative marker 'o' in (12b) shows that 0 argument in the propositional argument structure, (12b), is evaluated by the overt NP 'udon-o', or 'noodle-acc'.

(12b) PAS: (GA O\text{m} tabe-) (=Kitagawa (18b))

The subscript 'm' attached to O-argument in propositional argument structure (12b) indicates that the semantic evaluation was completed for this argument. The GA-argument in the same propositional argument structure remains unevaluated, since 'wa' in 'Naomi-wa' indicates that Naomi is outside of the domain of semantic evaluation, as specified in the definition of the topic as a sister to V by Kitagawa in (10).

(12c) Top Pred
\[
\begin{array}{c}
N'i \\
| \\
N'i \\
| \\
N'i \\
| \\
V \\
\end{array}
\]

Naomi-wa Pro udon-om tabe-ta.
\[
[\text{Top}[N'i\text{Naomi}]-wa] [\text{Pred}[N'i\text{Pro}] [N'[\text{udon}]-\text{om} [y\text{tabe-ta}]]
\]

(=Kitagawa (18c))

The pairing (12a) and (12b) show that the O argument position in the PAS is evaluated by the overt NP udon-o 'noodle-acc', while the GA argument position remains