

Where Japanese Contrasts with Korean and Mandarin Chinese:*

Intersubjectivity, Modality and the Differential Pragmatic-Semantic Foundations across Languages*

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This paper presents two contrastive case studies, a contrastive pragmatic analysis of Japanese *noda* and Korean *kes-ita* and a contrastive semantic analysis of Japanese and Mandarin Chinese modal markers, and points to the cross-linguistically differential locus of pragmatic-semantic contrasts by adopting a modified multi-layered model of pragmatic-semantic structure based on the traditional Japanese linguistic notions of Proposition and Modality, supplemented with the layer of Discourse Modality. It is suggested that Japanese and Mandarin Chinese are different at the more fundamental layer of Modality and arguably in the manifestation of Subjectification. The differences between Japanese and Korean, in contrast, are manifested at the more peripheral layer of Discourse Modality, which presumably correlates with Intersubjectification.

Key words : intersubjectivity, modality, discourse modality, subjectification, intersubjectification

1. Introduction

Three East Asian languages, Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin Chinese, have a long history of mutual contact. Japanese and Korean, which arguably may have sprung from a common source (Martin 1991), share the basic SOV word order and agglutinating morpho-syntactic structure including the elaborate honorification system consisting of periphrastic and suffixal 'exalting' (e.g. *o-V ni naru* (J), *-si-* (K)) and 'humbling' constructions (e.g. *o-V suru* (J)) as well as sentence-final speech-level indicators. Mandarin Chinese, which is characterized by the basic SVO word order and isolating morpho-syntactic structure,

doesn't have such an elaborate honorification system. In spite of these differences, three East Asian languages share a number of lexical items of ancient Chinese origin, reflecting the intense cross-linguistic language contact since ancient times.

The three languages under consideration manifest interesting cross-linguistic contrasts in pragmatic-semantic phenomena including intersubjectivity and modality. As can be expected from the cross-linguistic differences mentioned above, the pragmatic-semantic contrast between Japanese and Korean is more subtle than it is between Japanese and Mandarin Chinese (and arguably that between Korean and Mandarin Chinese). This paper presents two contrastive case studies in pragmatic-semantic phenomena, one dealing with intersubjectivity in Japanese and Korean (Section 2) and the other analyzing modality in Japanese and Mandarin Chinese (Section 3). The pragmatic-semantic phenomena to be presented in each section are different. However, when they are synthesized, they are highly suggestive in revealing the pragmatic-semantic basis of Japanese relative to other languages, as discussed in Section 4. Section 5 presents the conclusion.

2. Intersubjectivity in Japanese and Korean

Japanese and Korean are known to manifest many similarities not only in terms of inventory of syntactic constructions but also in terms of the pragmatic-semantic functions they are put to serve contextually. A family of superficially similar syntactic constructions are shared by Japanese and Korean, including a set of constructions consisting of nominalizers and copulas. Crucially, more often than not, these constructions encode similar grammatical meanings, as in the 'experiential' constructions (1a) and (1b) (Japanese and Korean examples are abbreviated as 'J' and 'K' throughout):

- (1) J. (a) *Nihon-ni itta koto-ga aru.*
 Japan-to went:REL NOML -NOM be
 K. (b) *Ilpon-ey ka-n cek-i issta.*
 Japan-to go-REL:PAST NOML -NOM be
 'I have been to Japan.'

Japanese and Korean both have a special construction type, situated in this family of nominalizer-copular constructions, which involves a most 'versatile' sentential nominalizer in the respective languages, i.e. *no* in Japanese and *kes*, as shown in (2a) and (2b):

- (2) J. (a) Yamada-san-ga ko-nai-na. Kitto yoozi-ga aru-nda.
 YAMADA-Mr.-NOM come-NEG-SFP surely errand-NOM be-NODA
 'Mr. Yamada does not come. *It must be that* (he) has something to do'. (Noda 1997: 67)

- K. (b) Salip-mwun-i pan-ccum yellyecye iss-ess-ta. Tto tullinta.
 brushwood-door-NOM half-about opened be-PAST-DECL again hear
 Cipan-ey nwukwunka-ka wa iss-nun kes-ita.
 house-in someone-NOM come exist-REL KES-ITA
 'The brushwood door half opened. I can hear (sounds) again. *It must be*
 somebody came in the house.' (Yin 2003: 18, minor modifications added)

The so-called *noda* construction in Japanese (2a) has received focused attention from Japanese linguists for the past several decades (e.g. Kuno 1973, Tanomura 1990, Noda 1997) due to its contextual variability in pragmatic/semantic interpretations. Prominent among the pragmatic/semantic interpretations contextually available to *noda* is the speaker/writer's subjective judgement of a given linguistic or non-linguistic context as the basis for some evidential statement. More recent attempts include Najima (2007), who applied Relevance theory to the *noda* construction to explicate the mechanism through which specific pragmatic interpretations are arrived at contextually.

Does the Korean counterpart to *noda*, i.e. *kes-ita*, induce a similar range of pragmatic/semantic interpretations contextually? The answer is obviously in the affirmative. *Noda* and *kes-ita* serve a similar pragmatic function of elaborating on what is mentioned in the preceding context. This often conveys the overtone of 'explanation' or justification, as in (3a, b) [*J*=Japanese novel, original version, *K'*=Korean translated version; *K*=Korean novel, original version, *J'*=Japanese translated version; Full bibliographical information of the Japanese and Korean novels are given in the references]:

- (3) K. (a) Na-hanthey coh-un kyeyhoyk-i iss-ta. Wusen wuli-nun
 me-DAT good-REL plan-NOM be-DECL first we-TOP
 nyesek-tul-hanthey cencayng-ul senphoha-nun ke-ta.
 guy-plural-DAT war-ACC declare-REL KES-ITA
 'I have good plans! (...) First, *it's that* we declare war against them.' (K1)

- J. (b) Ore-wa sugoi keikaku-o tateta. Mazu rentyuu-ni sensenhukoku
 I-TOP excellent plan-ACC made first guys-DAT declaration of war
 suru-nda.
 do-NODA (J1)
 'I made a great plan! (...) First, *it's that* (=let me explain in detail) we
 declare war against them.'

In contrast, there are some noticeable pragmatic cross-linguistic differences between these superficially similar constructions. Specifically, there are some pragmatic functions of *noda*, to be outlined in (i) - (iii), which are absent in *kes-ita* (see Horie and Kim(2008), Kim and Horie (in press) for a more extended discussion of the pragmatic contrast between *noda* and *kes-ita*):

(i) Reporting a speaker/writer's private confession of her/his feelings/belief, as in (4a). The Korean counterpart *kes-ita* isn't felicitous in this context and a sentence-final suffix *-ketun* is employed instead (4b).

- (4) J. (a) Sono kamigata-o kae-reba motto yoku niteru-to omou-na.
 that hair style-ACC change-COND more well resemble-QUOT think-SFP
 Dekiru mono-nara ima koko-de yatte age-tai-kedo-ne.
 can NOML-COND now here-LOC do give-wish-but-SFP
 Zitu-wo iu-to watasi-wa biyoosi-nanda.
 fact-ACC tell-COND I-TOP hair dresser-NODA (J1)
 K. (b) Heye suthail-ul pakkwu-myen com te pisushaychi-l kes kath-untey
 hair style-ACC change-COND a little more similar-guess-but
 Hal swu-man issta-myen cimkum yekise haycwu-ko siph-untey
 do:REL NOML-only be-COND now here do-wish-but
 Sasil na-nun miyongsa-ketun.
 fact I-TOP hairdresser-SFP (K1)
 'If you change that hair style, you would look more like (him) (...) If possible, I'd like to change (your hair style) here, but... (...). Actually, (*the fact is*) I am a professional hairdresser.'

(ii) Requiring an addressee's immediate attention/response to a currently relevant event/state of affairs (cf. Masuoka 2007), as in (5a). The Korean counterpart *kes-ita* isn't felicitous in this context and a plain imperative verb form is employed instead (5b).

(5) J. (a) (When explaining the rule of a game) Yoku miru-*nda-yo*.
carefully look-NODA-SFP

K. (b) Cal *pwa*.
well look: IMPER
'Please have a good look (and see how to play the game).'

(iii) Preempting a potentially face-threatening act aimed at an addressee (negative politeness strategy), as in (6a). The Korean counterpart *kes-ita* isn't felicitous in this context and the bare conclusive verb final ending form is used, as shown in (6b).

(6) J. (a) Onegai-ga aru-*n desu*.
favor-NOM exist-NODA

K. (b) Pwuthak-i *iss-supnita*.
favor-NOM exist-POL
'Can I ask a favor of you?'

These cross-linguistic differences illustrated in (4) - (6) suggest that the range of pragmatic functions mapped onto a pair of superficially similar syntactic constructions differs between Japanese and Korean in a subtle but non-negligible manner. Particularly prominent is the greater elaboration of addressee-oriented or 'intersubjective' pragmatic functions with Japanese *noda*, which contrasts with the virtual absence of these functions with Korean *kes-ita*, shown in examples (5) and (6). The implications of this cross-linguistic contrast will be discussed in more detail in Section 4.

3. Modality in Japanese and Mandarin Chinese

When compared to the Japanese-Korean contrast presented in Section 2, the pragmatic-semantic contrast between Japanese and Mandarin appears to be more ostensible than subtle, reflecting the greater morpho-syntactic differences between the latter two languages.

For instance, Japanese and Mandarin Chinese are fundamentally different in terms of Talmy's 'framing' typology (Talmy 2000). Talmy proposed classifying languages into two

fundamentally distinct types depending on whether the notion of Path is encoded in the verb root, a type of open-class element, or in the ‘satellite’, a type of closed-class element which “relates to the verb root as a dependent to a head” and which “can be either a bound affix or a free word” (ibid: 102). Japanese, similarly to Romance languages, belongs to the “verb-framed” languages which encode the notion of Path in its verb roots (7a). In contrast, Mandarin Chinese (abbreviated as ‘C’ in examples), is categorized as a “satellite-framed” language, which encodes Path in its satellites (7b). Talmy notes that “Mandarin Chinese has Path satellites and constructions that are entirely homologous with those of English” (ibid: 109).

- (7) J. (a) Bin-ga tadayotte iwa-no yoko-o toori sugite itta.
 bottle-NOM float:GER rock-GEN side-ACC cross: INF pass:GER went
- C. (b) Píng-zi piāo guò shí-tóu páng-biān (Talmy 2000: 109)
 bottle float past rock ('s) side
 ‘The bottle floated past the rock.’

It is not thus very surprising that Japanese and Mandarin Chinese exhibit differing patterns of form-meaning correspondence in modal markers, which encode various deontic meanings such as obligation, ability, and epistemic meanings such as probability and possibility. One of the most noticeable differences between Japanese and Mandarin Chinese in this grammatical domain is the absence versus presence of the polysemy between deontic and epistemic modal meanings in a single modal marker. The deontic-epistemic polysemy is characteristic of many European languages including English, as shown in (8a, b). Japanese modal markers fail to exhibit such polysemy (9a, b), whereas Mandarin Chinese patterns like many European languages in encoding the two types of modal meanings by different modal markers (10a, b). Examples (9a, b) and (10a, b) demonstrate this cross-linguistic contrast between Japanese and Mandarin Chinese.

- (8) (a) You *should* go and get the ticket yourself. (deontic modality)
 (b) You *should* be kidding. (epistemic modality)
- (9) J. (a) Hayaku hontoo no koto-o iu beki da. (deontic modality)
 promptly true thing-ACC say should
 ‘You *should* tell the truth right away.’

- J. (b) *Ano hito-wa moosugu kuru hazu da.* (epistemic modality)
 that person-TOP soon come should
 'He *should* be coming soon.'
- (10) C. (a) *Yīnggāi zái sāndiǎn zhī qián qù.* (deontic modality)
 should LOC 3 o'clock TOP before go
 'You should go before 3 o'clock.'
- C. (b) *Míngtián yě yīnggāi xiàyǔ.* (epistemic modality)
 tomorrow also should rain
 'It should rain tomorrow, too.'

The deontic-epistemic polysemy, which is widely observed in European languages (8a, b), has led cognitive-functional linguists (Sweester 1990) to hypothesize that deontic modal meaning (e.g. moral obligation compels one to go, as in *You should go*) serves as source domain from which epistemic modal meaning is derived (e.g. evidence compels one to make an epistemic judgement, as in *It should be true*) through metaphorical extension, instead of vice versa. Similar grammaticalization pathways have been proposed by functional typologists (Bybee et al. 1994) for some modal markers (e.g. English *must*).

The putative universality of such pragmatic-semantic extension/pathway has been cast in doubt in the face of modal markers in Japanese (9a, b), which fails to exhibit the primacy of deontic meaning as source domain from which epistemic meaning is derived, either synchronically or diachronically (Horie 1997, Narrog 2002). Acquisition of Japanese modal markers thus poses a challenge to those speakers whose first language differs from Japanese in terms of the absence/presence of the deontic-epistemic polysemy, such as Mandarin Chinese and English.

The following figures respectively present the correct/incorrect answers given by Mandarin Chinese native speakers, in the beginning, intermediate, and advanced stages, to multiple-choice questions which require deontic *bekida* (Figure 1) and epistemic *hazu-da* (Figure 2). As shown in (9-10), the two Japanese modal markers correspond to a single modal marker *yīnggāi* in Mandarin Chinese. Examples of multiple-choice questions requiring *bekida* and *hazuda* are respectively given in (11) and (12) (See Tamaji and Horie (2007) for further information on the experiments and the functional-typological analysis):

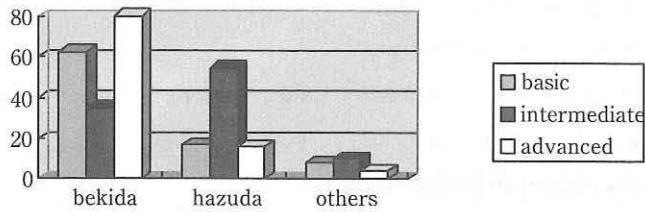


Figure 1. Learners' response to questions requiring BEKIDA

- (11) J. *Sake-wa tomokaku tabako-wa* ().
 alcohol-TOP if not tobacco-TOP
 '() tobacco, if not alcohol.'
- (a) *herasa nai monoda* (b) *herasu wakeda*
 '(You) do not naturally cut down on' 'No wonder (you) cut down on'
- (c) *herasu hazuda* (d) *herasu bekida*
 'It is expected that (you) will' '(You) ought to cut down on'

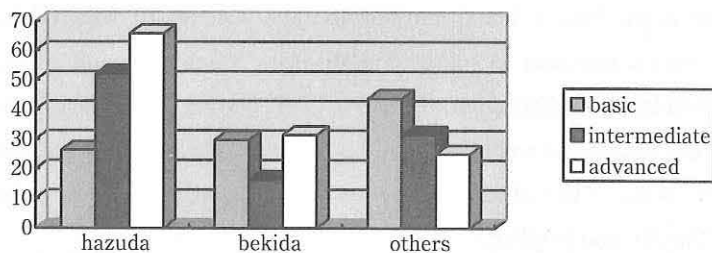


Figure 2. Learners' response to questions requiring HAZUDA

- (12) J. *Benkyoo si-nai de, gookaku dekiru* ().
 study-NEG if pass can
 'If (one) doesn't study, () that one will pass (an exam).'
- (a) *hazu ga nai* (b) *mono de wa nai*
 'it can't be expected that' 'it won't usually be the case'

- (c) *mono da*
'it usually happens that'
- (d) *beki de wa nai*
'it shouldn't be allowed that'

Figures 1 and 2 highlight (i) the tendency for beginning learners to overuse deontic *bekida* irrespectively of the correct answer, and (ii) the reverse tendency for intermediate learners to overuse epistemic *hazuda* indiscriminately.

What these figures suggest is that the distinction between deontic *bekida* and epistemic *hazuda* is considerably difficult for Mandarin Chinese speakers to acquire. The tendency observed with beginning learners (i) is arguably a reflection of the primacy of deontic modal meaning of *yīnggāi* in their L1, from which the corresponding epistemic meaning derived historically (Li 2003). The reverse tendency observed with intermediate learners (ii) can be interpreted as the learners' newly acquired (over)-sensitivity (an 'interlanguage' phenomenon) to the epistemic modal meaning coded by *hazuda*, which is the derivative/secondary modal meaning of *yīnggāi*.

The pragmatic-semantic challenge posed by a pair of Japanese modal markers *bekida* and *hazuda* to Mandarin Chinese speakers is indicative of the rather fundamental pragmatic-semantic 'distance' across two languages. This issue and the related pragmatic-semantic contrast between Japanese and Korean will be addressed in Section 4.

4. Discussion: Differential Pragmatic-Semantic Foundations across Languages

The two case studies presented in Sections 2 and 3 respectively dealt with rather different pragmatic-semantic phenomena, i.e. differential manifestations of intersubjectivity and modality across two different pairs of languages, i.e. Japanese/Korean and Japanese/Mandarin Chinese. However, these two findings have implications for the pragmatic-semantic basis of Japanese when they are viewed from the perspectives of differential pragmatic-semantic foundations across languages (Horie 2000) as well as of the unidirectional pathways of pragmatic-semantic change in grammaticalization (Traugott 2003).

The first author (Horie) has been engaged in revealing the pragmatic-semantic foundations of Japanese and other languages, particularly Korean, through a contrastive/typological and cognitive-functional analysis of grammatical and grammaticalization phenomena (Horie 2000, 2007, Horie and Taira 2002, Horie and Narrog, to appear, Horie and Kim 2008, Kim and Horie, in press). One of the findings gleaned from these studies is that Japanese and Korean, which exhibit a close resemblance in lexico-grammatical structure including the SOV word order and the agglutinating predicate

structure, are both aptly describable by means of the layered sentence-level pragmatic-semantic structure model (13). The hierarchical model (13), which was employed as an analytical framework in Horie and Taira (2002), is rooted in the analytical tradition of Japanese linguistics (e.g. Masuoka 1991, 2000, Nitta 1991; see also Shinzato 2007) and has been extended to incorporate the layer of ‘Discourse Modality’ based on Maynard (1993). Actual manifestation of the three-layer structure is illustrated with Japanese and Korean examples in (14a, b) :

(13) [Proposition [Modality [Discourse Modality]]]

- (14) J. (a) [Gogo yuki-ga huru *[ka mo sirenai]* **[ne]**]
 afternoon snow-NOM come may SFP
 K. (b) [Ohwu-ey nwun-i o-l *[ci to molla]*]
 afternoon-LOC snow-NOM come-FUT may
 ‘It may snow in the afternoon (you know).’

As discussed extensively in Horie and Taira (2002), Horie (2003), and Horie and Narrog (to appear), Japanese and Korean manifest a close resemblance to each other in terms of morpho-syntactic coding (e.g. case-marking system, agglutinating predicate structure, ordering of grammatical morphemes) and its pragmatic-semantic representation at the level of ‘Proposition’ (Propositional Content) (‘unmarked’ portions in (14a, b)).

However, cross-linguistic differences are progressively more conspicuous at the level of ‘Modality’ (italicized portions in (14a, b)) , which primarily expresses the speaker/writer’s subjective construal/assessment of the Proposition (cf. Horie 2003), and most prominent at the level of ‘Discourse Modality’ (the bold portion in (14a)), which encodes the speaker’s attention to/assessment of the addressee’s belief/feeling-state (cf. Horie and Taira 2002, Horie and Narrog, to appear).

Concretely, at the level of Modality, both Japanese and Korean exhibit the absence of deontic-epistemic polysemy (Horie 2003). That is, both languages have distinctive sets of deontic and epistemic modal markers, with the Korean intention (deontic)/prediction (epistemic) modal suffix *-keyss-* (which corresponds to *-(y) oo* (intention) and *-daroo* (prediction) in Japanese) as a possible exception.

At the outermost layer of Discourse Modality, as extensively discussed in Horie and Taira (2002), Japanese exhibits a higher degree of systematicity in its inventory of sen-

tence-final particles which serve to monitor and facilitate the flow speaker-addressee interaction, with addressee-oriented *ne* and speaker-oriented *yo* as core members. Though Korean does have a superficially similar set of sentence-final suffixes (e.g. *-kwun*, *-ney*, *-ci*), they are less interaction/addressee-oriented than their Japanese counterparts and instead encode some additional pragmatic-semantic functions such as evidentiality (e.g. *-kwun*, *-ney*) and the speaker's commitment (e.g. *-ci*) (see Horie and Taira (2002) for an extended discussion). The pragmatic-semantic contrast presented in Section 2 provides yet another piece of evidence in favor of a more elaborate linguistic coding of Discourse Modality in Japanese relative to Korean.

Unlike Japanese and Korean, Japanese and Mandarin Chinese start to diverge at the more fundamental pragmatic-semantic layer of Modality. Concretely, Japanese follows patterns with Korean in formally distinguishing deontic and epistemic modality by means of different sets of modal markers, while Mandarin Chinese, similarly to English, tends to exhibit the deontic-epistemic polysemy and the primacy of deontic modal meaning from which epistemic meaning derives historically.

We can illustrate the cross-linguistically differing locus of pragmatic-semantic contrasts between two pairs of languages as in (13').

(13') [Proposition [Modality [Discourse Modality]]]

J vs. C J vs. K

It should be noted that the hierarchical pragmatic-semantic structure model (13) presents interesting an parallelism with the diachronic pathway of pragmatic-semantic change in grammaticalization proposed by Traugott (2003), whereby meaning changes from 'non-subjective' (or propositional) to 'subjective' to 'intersubjective', rather than vice versa (15):

(15) non-subjective > subjective > intersubjective

'Non-subjective' (or objective) meaning in (15) directly corresponds to the layer of Proposition in (13), which provides the semantic building block of a sentence.

The change from 'non-subjective' meaning to 'subjective' meaning is called 'subjectification'. 'Subjective' meaning is mapped on to the layer of Modality, which indexes a speaker/writer's subjective construal/assessment of the Proposition. This is the layer

where languages can differ rather fundamentally, as in the form-meaning contrast between Japanese and Mandarin Chinese modal markers.

'Intersubjective' meaning is primarily represented in the layer of Discourse Modality, which encodes the speaker's attention to/assessment of the addressee's belief/feeling-state. This is the layer most relevant to the contextual, addressee-oriented pragmatic interpretation of a sentence. The concomitant tendency toward 'intersubjectification' (Traugott 2003, Horie (in press)), i.e. the tendency for a grammatical form/construction to acquire intersubjective (or addressee-oriented) meaning, is particularly prominent with the Japanese *noda* unlike its counterpart *kes-ita*. Similar pragmatic-semantic contrasts in terms of intersubjectification has been attested with other pairs of syntactic constructions in Japanese and Korean, e.g. a completive aspectual construction *-te simau* (> *-tyau*) and its Korean counterpart *-e pelita* (Strauss and Sohn 1998), and the so called 'double causative' constructions in Japanese (e.g. *yoma-sa-sase-te itadaku* 'be allowed to read (to someone superior), 'literally: receive the favor of making (someone) let (me) read') and Korean (e.g. *mek-i-key hata* 'make someone have someone else eat') (Ishihara, Horie, and Pardeshi 2006).

The proposed pathway of pragmatic-semantic change (15), informed by the multi-layered pragmatic-semantic structure model (13), can lead to the following hypothesis (16) :

(16) Typological-structural differences between languages correlate with the locus of pragmatic-semantic contrasts in synchronic and diachronic dimensions. Specifically, languages that are typologically more similar can differ at the layer of Discourse Modality and in the manifestation of Intersubjectification, though not necessarily at the layer of Modality or in the manifestation of Subjectification. Languages that are typologically less similar can differ at the layer of Modality and in the manifestation of Subjectification, as well as at the layer of Discourse Modality and in the manifestation of Intersubjectification.

The testing of the hypothesis (16) in view of pragmatic-semantic phenomena/changes across languages of varying typological profiles is in our future agenda.

5. Conclusion

This paper presented two contrastive case studies, a contrastive pragmatic analysis of Japanese *noda* and Korean *kes-ita* and a contrastive semantic analysis of Japanese and Mandarin Chinese modal markers, and pointed to the cross-linguistically differential

locus of pragmatic-semantic contrasts by adopting a modified multi-layered model of pragmatic-semantic structure based on the traditional Japanese linguistic notions of Proposition and Modality, supplemented with the layer of Discourse Modality. It was suggested that Japanese and Mandarin Chinese are different at the more fundamental layer of Modality, while the differences between Japanese and Korean are manifested at the more peripheral layer of Discourse Modality. These differential cross-linguistic pragmatic-semantic differences, and possibly the directionality of pragmatic-semantic change, arguably correlate with the degree of typological morpho-syntactic contrasts between two pairs of East Asian languages.

Abbreviations:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| ACC: Accusative | COND: Conditional | DAT: Dative | DECL: Declarative |
| FUT: Future | GEN: Genitive | GER : Gerund | IMPER: Imperative |
| INF: Infinitive | LOC: Locative | NEG: Negative | NOM: Nominative |
| NOML : Nominalizer | POL : Polite | QUOT: Quotation | REL: Relative |
| SE: Sentence Ender | SFP: Sentence Final Particle | TOP: Topic | |

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