

## II

### Particles

## 2<sup>†</sup>

### ***Wa* and *Ga* (Part I)—Theme, Contrast, Exhaustive Listing, and Neutral Description**

#### **1. The Uses of *Wa* and *Ga***

The distinction in meaning between *wa* and *ga* is a problem that perpetually troubles both students and instructors of Japanese. For example, what is the difference in meaning between (1a) and (1b) or between (2a) and (2b)?

- (1) a. John *wa* gakusei desu.  
           student is  
           ‘John is a student.’  
       b. John *ga* gakusei desu.
- (2) a. Ame *wa* hutte imasu ga...  
           rain   falling is   but  
           ‘It is raining, but...’  
       b. Ame *ga* hutte imasu.

Conventional grammars state that in (1a) *gakusei* ‘student’ is emphasized, while in (1b) *John* is emphasized. Then, why is there a reading of (2b) in which there is no emphasis on *ame* ‘rain’? Similarly, why is the only possible reading of (2a) one in which *ame* is contrasted with something else, while (1a) allows a reading in which *John* is not contrasted with anyone else? Likewise, why are the (b) sentences that follow ungrammatical, while (a) sentences are grammatical?

- (3) a. Dare *ga* kimasita ka?  
           Who   came   interrogative  
                                   particle  
           ‘Who came?’  
       b. \*Dare *wa* kimasita ka?
- (4) a. Dareka *ga* kimasita.  
           Someone   came  
           ‘Someone has come’  
       b. \*Dareka *wa* kimasita.

†This chapter is for all readers.

- (5) a. Oozei no<sup>1</sup> hito ga party ni kimasita.  
           many people came  
           ‘Many people came to the party.’  
       b. \*Oozei no hito wa party in kimasita.

In this chapter I shall attempt to answer all these questions by examining various uses of *wa* and *ga*, pinpointing their meanings, and defining the restrictions of their distributions.

There are two different uses of *wa* and three of *ga*. They are enumerated with brief explanations in (6):

- (6) a. *wa* for the theme of a sentence: “Speaking of . . . , talking about . . . ”

Example:

John *wa* gakusei desu.  
           student is

‘Speaking of John, he is a student.’

- b. *wa* for contrasts: “*X* . . . , but . . . , as for *X* . . . ”

Example:

Ame *wa* hutte imasu ga . . .  
   rain falling is but  
   ‘It is raining, but . . . ’

- c. *ga* for neutral descriptions of actions or temporary states

Example:

Ame *ga* hutte imasu.  
   rain falling is  
   ‘It is raining.’

- d. *ga* for exhaustive listing.<sup>2</sup> “*X* (and only *X*) . . . ” “It is *X* that . . . ”

Example:

John *ga* gakusei desu.  
           student is

‘(Of all the people under discussion) John (and only John) is a student.’ ‘It is John who is a student.’

- e. *ga* for object marking

<sup>1</sup> *No* is the attributive form of the copula. *Oozei no hito* can be literally translated as ‘people who are many’.

<sup>2</sup> The distinction between the *ga* for neutral descriptions of actions or temporary states and the *ga* for exhaustive listing was first pointed out by Sige-Yuki Kuroda (1965a).

Example:

Boku wa Mary *ga* suki desu.

I fond of am

‘I like Mary.’

These uses will henceforth be referred to as thematic *wa*, contrastive *wa*, descriptive *ga*, exhaustive-listing *ga*, and objective *ga*. Since I shall discuss the objective *ga* separately in Chapter 4 of this book, only the first four will be considered in this chapter.

## 2. The Nature of Themes

Before discussing the thematic *wa*, it is necessary to examine the nature of themes. It seems that only objects and concepts that have been mentioned and recorded in the registry of the present discourse can become themes of sentences. Nouns of unique reference in this universe of discourse, such as *the sun*, *the moon*, *my wife*, *my children*, seem to be in the permanent registry. Once their entry in the registry is established, they do not have to be reentered for each discourse. Objects of some specific reference are added to the registry of the current discourse the first time they are mentioned: “a man I saw yesterday,” “Americans whom I know,” etc. Only after this entry in the registry is accomplished can they become themes of sentences. Now, observe the following sentences:

- (7) a. Speaking of *the man* that she met, he was a hardworking accountant.  
       b. \*Speaking of a man that she met, he was a hardworking accountant.  
       c. A man that she met in the park came to see her.

*The man that she met* in (7a) has some specific referent in the universe of discourse, but he also has already been referred to, so that listeners know what the speaker is talking about. Such a noun phrase will henceforth be referred to as an *anaphoric noun phrase*.<sup>3</sup> The antecedent of an anaphoric

<sup>3</sup> What I have called *anaphoric* here is sometimes called *definite* because anaphoric noun phrases usually contain the definite article *the*. However, I have chosen to reserve the term *definite* for referring to the syntactic feature that determines the presence or absence of *the*.

The term *specific* requires some explanation also. Observe the following sentences:

- (i) Mary wants to marry a doctor. He is a specialist in brain surgery.  
      (ii) Mary wants to marry a doctor, although she does not have anyone in mind at present.

*Continued overleaf*

noun phrase may be within the same sentence, in the temporary registry (as is the case in (7a)), or in the permanent registry (as is the case with *the sun, my wife*, etc.). We can say that (7a) is grammatical because the theme is an anaphoric noun phrase. Compare this with *a man that she met* in (7b). This noun phrase also has a specific referent in the speaker's universe of discourse, but it is not anaphoric; that is, probably this is the first time that the speaker has mentioned him (hence the use of the indefinite article *a*), and therefore it has not yet been entered into the temporary registry of the present discourse. This distinction between anaphoric and nonanaphoric noun phrases, both with specific reference, will become clear by examining the following sentences:

- (8) a. \*Speaking of *three boys who came to the party*, they did not behave themselves.  
 b. Three boys came to the party. Speaking of *the three boys*, they did not behave themselves.

Both *three boys who came to the party* of (8a) and *the three boys* of (8b) have the same referents in the universe of discourse. The difference between these two sentences is that in (8a) the speaker *talks about* the three boys for the first time without previously establishing their registry entry, while in (8b) he first establishes their registry entry and then *talks about* the three boys. Hence (8a) is ungrammatical and (8b) is grammatical.

What determines whether a specific noun phrase can become a topic or not depends on whether the noun phrase is anaphoric and not whether it is definite. There are specific noun phrases that are definite and are not anaphoric. For example, in (9), the noun phrase *man who killed Robert Kennedy* is preceded by *the*, not because it is anaphoric, but because there is only one person who killed Robert Kennedy.

- (9) I know *the man who killed Robert Kennedy*.

The indefinite noun phrase *a doctor* can have either some *specific* referent, as in (i), or can be used without any specific referent, as in (ii), in the sense of 'any doctor, if there is one'. In the former case the existence of *a doctor that Mary wants to marry* is presupposed by the speaker, while in the latter there is no such presupposition. *A doctor* in (i) and (ii) are called *specific* and *nonspecific*, respectively. Similarly, the following is ambiguous with respect to the specificity or nonspecificity of *a doctor*:

- (iii) A doctor was sought.

See Kuno (1970).

The use of the indefinite article *a* would mean that there is more than one person who killed Robert Kennedy and that the speaker knows one of them. Now, assume that the speaker has been talking about President Kennedy with the hearer and that the speaker knows that the hearer does not know that Robert Kennedy was killed by an assassin. In such a situation, the speaker cannot introduce a new topic by saying:

- (10) Speaking of the man who killed Robert Kennedy, he does not seem to have been involved in any conspiracy.

The reason seems to be that *the man who killed Robert Kennedy* in this context is definite, but is not anaphoric, and thus violates the condition that the topic of a sentence be anaphoric. The speaker could use (10) for dramatic effect. In either case, the use of (10) would be a departure from the normal use of topics.

Generic noun phrases—that is, noun phrases that refer to classes such as *man* (human beings in general), *Americans* (Americans in general, all Americans, any American), and *the linguist* (linguists in general, all linguists, any linguist)—can also become topics of sentences. For example,

- (11) a. Speaking of *man*, he is mortal. (man in general)  
 b. Speaking of *cats*, they are sneaky, malicious animals. (cats in general, all cats)  
 c. Speaking of *the Japanese*, they are hardworking people. (the Japanese in general)

The italicized noun phrases in (11) are generic noun phrases; that is, they refer to classes, and not to some arbitrary members of the classes. Generic noun phrases seem to be in the permanent registry of discourse, and do not have to be reentered into the temporary registry for each discourse. In the sense that they are permanently stored in the registry of discourse, generic noun phrases are also anaphoric. The speaker of the sentences in (11) assumes that the hearer has heard about the classes of objects called *man*, *cats*, and *the Japanese*. If the speaker knows that the hearer has never heard of a certain class of objects that he is going to talk about, he cannot use the generic noun phrase for the class as the topic of a sentence. For example, if he assumes that the hearer does not know what *etas* 'social outcasts' are, he cannot start a discourse with

- (12) Speaking of *etas* in Japan, they are still socially discriminated against in the countryside.

He will have to establish an entry for *etas* in the hearer's registry of discourse by introductory statements such as

(13) In Japan, there is a class, called *eta*, of social outcasts.

Only after statement (13) has been made can the speaker use the *eta* as the topic of a sentence as in (12).

Similarly, if the speaker knows that the hearer is not aware of the fact that beavers live in Canada, he will not ordinarily use *the beaver(s)* in *Canada* as the topic of a sentence.

(14) Speaking of the beavers in Canada,<sup>4</sup> they have a longer life-span than the beavers in the States.

<sup>4</sup> Generic noun phrases with postpositional modifiers can take the "*the* + plural" form, while those with no postpositional modifiers cannot. Observe the following:

- (i) a. A beaver builds dams.
- b. Beavers build dams.
- c. The beaver builds dams.
- d. \*The beavers build dams.
- (ii) a. The beaver in Canada builds dams.
- b. The beavers in Canada build dams.
- (iii) a. The women who are old cannot work.
- b. \*The old women cannot work.
- (iv) a. The boys who are red-haired have quick tempers.
- b. \*The red-haired boys have quick tempers.

Example (i-d) is ungrammatical because *the beavers* is not followed by any postpositional modifier, while (ii-b) is grammatical because it is followed by the postpositional modifier *in Canada*. Examples (iii-a) and (iv-a), with postpositional relative clauses, are grammatical, while (iii-b) and (iv-b), with the adjectives preposed, are ungrammatical. This phenomenon lends strong support to the contention that the definite article *the* for generic noun phrases is transformationally derived, and is not in the deep structure.

As the subclass represented by a generic noun phrase containing restrictive modifiers gets smaller, it becomes difficult to use the "*the* + singular noun" form in the generic sense. Example (ii-a) is grammatical in the generic sense, but the following sentences are not:

- (iii) c. \*The woman who is old cannot work.
- d. \*The old woman cannot work.
- (iv) c. \*The boy who is red-haired has a quick temper.
- d. \*The red-haired boy has a quick temper.

According to John Haig, to whom this observation is due, the sentences in (iii) and (iv) would be grammatical in the contexts in which *the woman who is old/the old woman* and *the*

I have mentioned that topics in English must be anaphoric. When anaphoric noun phrases are quantified, as in *many Americans* (that is, many of the Americans in general) and *many of the Americans that I associated with*, some speakers of English find it difficult to use them as topics.

- (15) a. Many Americans tend to be apathetic about politics.
- b. ?Speaking of many Americans, they tend to be apathetic about politics.
- c. Many of the Americans that I associated with came to the party.
- d. ?Speaking of many of the Americans that I associated with, they came to the party.

Compare these sentences with the following:

- (15) e. Many Americans that I associated with came to the party.
- f. \*Speaking of many Americans that I associated with, they came to the party.

Example (15f) is totally ungrammatical because *many Americans that I associated with* is neither generic nor anaphoric. Examples (15b) and (15d),

*boy who is red-haired/the red-haired boy* are used as well-defined class names, as in an ecological study of some population. For example, the sentences in (iv) would be grammatical if they were preceded by

- (v) In this village, there are two kinds of boys—the boy who is red-haired (or the red-haired boy) and the boy who is blond-haired (or the blond-haired boy).

Similarly, in example (vi) *the chicken on his farm* can have only the specific interpretation—that is, some specific chicken on his farm—and not the generic interpretation.

- (vi) The chicken on his farm is healthy.

However, observe the following:

- (vii) a. The student she teaches becomes a competent linguist.
- b. The boy she dates is a boy she likes.
- c. The disciple of X's becomes a competent linguist.

These sentences are grammatical in the generic sense—for example, (vii-a) means

- (vii) d. All students that she teaches become competent linguists.

However, there is a subtle difference in meaning between (vii-a) and (vii-d). The former implies that she teaches one student at a time, while the latter does not have such an implication. The same applies to (vii-b) and (vii-c). On the other hand, sentence (vi) is ungrammatical in the generic sense because a farm ordinarily has more than one chicken at the same time.

in which quantified noun phrases are anaphoric (generic in the case of (15b)), are not acceptable to many speakers. They would say, instead:

- (16) a. Speaking of Americans, many tend to be apathetic about politics.  
 b. Speaking of the Americans that I associated with, many came to the party.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Thematic and Contrastive *Wa*

The themes of Japanese sentences, as in English sentences, must be either generic or anaphoric. Observe the following sentences:

- (17) a. *Kuzira wa honyuu-doobutu desu.*  
 whale mammal is  
 'Speaking of whales, they are mammals. A whale is a mammal.'  
 b. *John wa watakushi no tomodati desu.*  
 I 's friend is  
 'Speaking of John, he is my friend.'  
 c. *Hutari wa party ni kimasita.*  
 two to came  
 'Speaking of the two persons, they came to the party.'

<sup>5</sup> Native speakers' judgment on the grammaticality of (15b) and (15d) varies considerably. For some speakers, both are acceptable. For some others, for a reason that I cannot identify, (15d) is acceptable, but (15b) is not.

It goes without saying that quantifiers preceded by determiners can appear in topics with no difficulty.

- (i) Speaking of the *many* girl friends that he had, they were very devoted to him.

In connection with what has been said, observe that a generic noun phrase used as a theme cannot be preceded by an indefinite article.

- (ii) a. The beaver builds dams.  
 b. Beavers build dams.  
 c. A beaver builds dams.  
 (iii) a. Speaking of the beaver, it builds dams.  
 b. Speaking of beavers, they build dams.  
 c. \*Speaking of a beaver, it builds dams.

If the indefinite article *a* for generic noun phrases is to be regarded as derived from *any*, as is proposed by Perlmutter (1971b), the fact that (iii-c) is ungrammatical will be an automatic consequence of the fact that the following is ungrammatical:

- (iv) \*Speaking of any beaver, it builds dams.

- (18) a. \**Oozei no hito wa party ni kimasita.*  
 many people  
 'Speaking of many people, they came to the party.'  
 b. \**Omosiroi hito wa party ni kimasita.*  
 interesting people  
 \*'Speaking of interesting people, they came to the party.'  
 c. \**Dareka wa byooki desu.*  
 somebody sick is  
 \*'Speaking of somebody, he is sick.'

Both (17a) and (17b) are grammatical because *kuzira* 'whale' and *John* in these sentences are generic and anaphoric noun phrases, respectively. Example (17c) is grammatical only when *hutari* is taken as meaning 'the two people (under discussion)'. The sentence would be ungrammatical if it meant 'the people who came to the party numbered two', that is, if *hutari* was taken as two people with no anaphoric reference. On the other hand, the sentences in (18) are ungrammatical because *oozei no hito* 'many people', *omosiroi hito* 'interesting people', and *dareka* 'somebody' are noun phrases of specific but nonanaphoric reference and their referents have not been entered into the registry of the present discourse. Similarly, the reason that (2a) cannot be interpreted as 'Speaking of rain, it is falling' is that *ame* 'rain' in this context is neither generic nor anaphoric. If it were, grammatical sentences with the thematic interpretation would be the result.

- (19) a. \**Ame wa hutte imasu.*  
 rain falling is  
 'Speaking of rain, it is falling.'  
 b. *Asa hayaku ame ga huri dasita ... Yoru ni*  
 morning early rain falling started night-ly  
*natte mo ame wa hutte ita.*  
 becoming even rain falling was  
 Anaphoric: 'It started raining early in the morning ...  
 (Lit.) Speaking of the rain, it was still falling even when it became night.'  
 c. *Kyoo no ame wa zuibun hidoi.*  
 today's rain very violent  
 Anaphoric—unique reference: 'Today's rain is very violent.'

- d. *Ame wa sora karu huru.*  
 rain sky from fall  
 Generic: 'Speaking of the rain (in general), it falls from the sky.'

In Japanese, the *NP no Quantifier* construction can enter into the theme rather freely. Observe the following sentences:

- (20) a. *Gakusei no ooku wa dokusin desu.*  
 students many single are  
 'Many of the students are single.'  
 b. *Ooku no gakusei wa dokusin desu.*  
 many students single are  
 'Many students are single.'  
 c. *Amerika-zin no daibubun wa se ga takai.*  
 Americans 's most part stature are high  
 'Most of the Americans are tall.'  
 d. *Daibubun no Amerika-zin wa se ga takai.*  
 most part 's Americans stature are high  
 'Most Americans are tall.'  
 e. *Subete no ningen wa byoodoo desu.*<sup>6</sup>  
 all human-beings equal are  
 'All human beings are equal.'

I have mentioned that the themes of Japanese sentences must be anaphoric. The contrastive *wa*, on the other hand, can place nonanaphoric noun phrases in contrast. Consider the following sentences:

- (21) a. *\*Ame wa hutte imasu.*  
 rain falling is  
 'Speaking of rain, it is falling.'  
 b. *Ame wa hutte imasu ga, taisita koto wa arimasen.*<sup>7</sup>  
 rain falling is but serious matter not exist  
 'It is raining, but it is not much.'

<sup>6</sup> Because of the idiosyncrasy of *subete*, *ningen no subete* does not ordinarily mean 'all human beings', but means 'all about human beings'.

<sup>7</sup> Minoru Nakau (personal communication) has pointed out to me the following interesting sentence:

- (i) *Ame wa hutte imasu ga, kasa wa motte ikimasen.*  
 rain falling is but umbrella having don't got  
 'The rain is falling, but I am not taking my umbrella with me.'

- c. *\*Oozei no hito wa party ni kimasita.*  
 many people to came  
 'Speaking of many people, they came to the party.'  
 d. *Oozei no hito wa party ni kimasita ga, omosiroi*  
 many people to came but interesting  
*hito wa hitori mo imasen desita.*  
 people one person even was not  
 'Many people came to the party indeed, but there was none who was interesting.'

Since generic and anaphoric noun phrases can be followed either by the thematic *wa* or by the contrastive *wa*, ambiguous sentences should result. That this is indeed the case can be seen in (22).

- (22) a. *John wa sono hon o yonda*  
 the book read  
 'Speaking of John, he read the book.'  
 b. *John wa sono hon o yonda ga Mary wa yomanakatta.*  
 the book read did not read  
 'John read the book, but Mary didn't.'

While noun phrases preceding the thematic *wa* do not receive prominent intonation, those preceding the contrasting *wa* do.

Assume that no mention has been made in the previous conversation of the rain that is falling now. Since *ame* here does not pertain to rain in general, and also since it is not anaphoric, it cannot be the theme of the sentence according to my analysis. On the other hand, *ame* here is not contrasted with *yuki* 'snow', *mizore* 'sleet', or *hyoo* 'hail'. Neither is it the case that it is in contrast with *kasa* 'umbrella'. It seems that Japanese allows transpositions of contrastive *wa*. Sentence (i) is synonymous with

- (ii) *Ame ga hutte wa imasu ga, kasa o motte wa ikimasen.*  
 rain falling is but umbrella taking go-not

In (ii) the fact that it is raining is contrasted with the speaker's determination not to take an umbrella with him. Transpositions of contrasting words are not peculiar to Japanese. English displays a similar characteristic. For example,

- (iii) a. He can speak not only Chinese but also Japanese and Korean.  
 b. He can not only speak Chinese but also Japanese and Korean.  
 (iv) a. He teaches, not Chinese, but Korean.  
 b. He doesn't teach Chinese, but Korean.

It is not clear to me, however, under what conditions such transpositions are permissible in Japanese.

The following sentence will make the distinction between the thematic *wa* and the contrastive *wa* clearer:

- (23) *Watakusi ga sitte iru hito wa party ni kimasen desita.*  
 I know people did not come  
 a. 'Speaking of the persons whom I know, they did not come to the party.'  
 b. '(People came to the party, but) there was none whom I know.'

*Watakusi ga sitte iru hito* 'people whom I know' is ambiguous: it can mean either one or more persons whom the speaker knows, whom he has already talked about, or some persons whom the speaker knows, whom he probably has not talked about. If the first meaning is the correct one, *wa* in (23) can be regarded as thematic *wa*, and therefore the interpretation given in (23a) results. Thus (23), in this interpretation, is a statement about Mr. A, Mr. B, . . . Mr. Z, whom the speaker knows, and it proposes that they did not come to the party. On the other hand, if *watakusi ga sitte iru hito* 'people whom I know' is taken as nonanaphoric, *wa* of (23) cannot be thematic; it must be contrastive. Therefore the interpretation given in (23b) results. Example (23) in this interpretation does not have a theme: it is not a statement about Mr. A, Mr. B, . . . Mr. Z, that is, persons whom the speaker knows. *Watakusi ga sitte iru hito* 'people whom I know' is presented in this sentence in contrast to *watakusi ga siranai hito* 'people whom I don't know'.

A given sentence can have only one thematic *wa*: if there is more than one occurrence of *wa* in a sentence, only the first can be thematic: all the rest (and probably the first one also) are contrastive. Examine the following:

- (24) a. *Watakusi wa tabako wa suimasu.*  
 I cigarette smoke  
 'Speaking of myself, I do smoke.'  
 b. *Watakusi wa tabako wa suimasen.*  
 I cigarette smoke-not  
 'Speaking of myself, I don't smoke.'  
 c. *Watakusi wa tabako wa suimasu ga sake wa nomimasen.*  
 I cigarette smoke but wine drink-not  
 'Speaking of myself, I do smoke, but I don't drink.'

- d. *Watakusi wa syuumatu ni wa hon wa yomimasu.*  
 I weekend on book read  
 'Speaking of myself, I do read books on the weekend.'  
 e. *Watakusi wa syuumatu ni wa hon wa yomimasen.*  
 I weekend on book read-not.  
 'Speaking of myself, I don't read books on the weekend.'  
 f. *Watakusi wa syuumatu ni wa hon wa yomimasu ga benkyoo wa*  
 I weekend on book read but study  
*simasen.*  
 do-not  
 'Speaking of myself, I read books on the weekend, but I don't do any studying.'

Sentences (24a) and (24d) are definitely contrastive. These two sentences sound incomplete in isolation: the hearer expects to be given some statement that contrasts something with smoking or reading. Thus the concluding remark of each of (24c) and (24f) makes (24a) and (24d) natural and smooth. On the other hand, (24b) and (24e), with the negative instead of the affirmative predicate of (24a) and (24d), are perfectly natural in isolation although the contrastive nature of smoking and reading is still quite clear. This seems to be due to the fact that nonlinguistic environments are usually positive and that the negative sentences such as (24b) and (24e) are contrastive with such positive environments.<sup>8</sup> For example, *Watakusi wa tabako wa suimasen* 'As for me, I don't smoke' contrasts with the positive environment of the other party's offering a cigar to the speaker expecting that he will smoke. This predicts that if a nonlinguistic environment happens to be a negative one, positive sentences such as (24a) and (24d) will be natural, and it is indeed the case. Suppose, for example, someone is passing out "It's a boy" cigars. He knows that the speaker doesn't smoke cigarettes, and so he doesn't offer him a cigar. Then the speaker can request a cigar with (24a), which will have the connotation "Contrary to your expectation, I do smoke cigars."

#### 4. Descriptive and Exhaustive-Listing *Ga*

With regard to the descriptive and exhaustive-listing *ga*, only the subject of action verbs, existential verbs, and adjectives/nominal adjectives that

<sup>8</sup> This observation is due to John Haig.



represent changing states can be followed by the descriptive *ga*,<sup>9</sup> while there are no such restrictions in the case of exhaustive-listing *ga*.<sup>10</sup> First, consider the following sentences:

- (25) a. John *ga* asoko ni tatte iru.  
that-place at standing is  
'John is standing there.'
- b. Tegami *ga* kita.  
letter came  
'Mail has come.'
- c. Ame *ga* hutte iru.  
rain falling is  
'It is raining.'
- (26) a. Tuke no ue ni hon *ga* aru.  
table 's top on book is  
'There is a book on the table.'
- b. Oya, asoko ni John *ga* iru.  
Oh there at is  
'Oh, John is there.'
- (27) a. Sora *ga* akai.  
sky is-red  
'Look! The sky is red.'
- d. Atama *ga* itai.  
head is-aching  
'(Lit.) Head aches. I have a headache.'
- c. Te *ga* tumetai.  
hand cold  
'My hands are cold.'

The verbs in (25) represent actions, and therefore the sentences in (25) are all neutral descriptions of some actions. The verbs in (26) represent existence, and therefore these sentences also receive the neutral-description interpretation. Because the adjectives in (27) all represent changing states, the sentences in (27) are neutral descriptions on current temporary states.

<sup>9</sup> This condition will be slightly relaxed later in this chapter.

<sup>10</sup> As has been mentioned before, this condition for the distribution of the descriptive and the exhaustive-listing uses of *ga* is due to Kuroda's insightful observations (Kuroda, 1965a).

Sentences of neutral description present an objectively observable action, existence, or temporary state as a new event.

The following sentences all have predicates that represent states:

- (28) a. John *ga* gakusei desu.  
student is  
'(Of all the people we are talking about) John (and only John) is a student; it is John who is a student.'<sup>11</sup>
- b. Saru *ga* ningen no senzo desu.  
monkey man 's ancestor is  
'It is the monkey that is the ancestor of man.'
- c. John *ga* nihongo o sitte iru.  
Japanese knowing is  
'John (and only John) knows Japanese.'
- d. John *ga* nihongo *ga* dekiru.  
Japanese can  
'John (and only John) can speak Japanese.'

<sup>11</sup> The English cleft-sentence construction "It is *X* that . . ." is used to give an exhaustive answer and is similar to the Japanese exhaustive *ga* in this respect. The cleft-sentence construction does not seem to require that *X* be definite. Observe the following sentences:

It was  $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} a \\ the \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$  boy that Mary met in the park that came to the party.

It was  $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} a \\ the \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$  seven-year-old boy who won the abacus competition.

However, *X* must be such that it can enter into the "*X* and only *X*" construction.

(\*Many people and only many people came to the party.

(\*It was many people that came to the party.

(\*Two boys and only two boys came to the party.

(\*It was two boys that came to the party.

{ Two boys and only two boys came to the party.

{ It was two boys that came to the party.

The same applies to the exhaustive-listing *ga* construction in Japanese. Observe this sentence:

Oozei no hito *ga* gakusei desu.

many people student is

'Many people are students.'

It is perfectly grammatical, but it does not mean 'Many people and only many people are students.' This problem will be discussed later in this chapter.

- e. Boku ga osusi ga tabetai.  
 I sushi want  
 'I (and only I) want to eat sushi.'

The sentences in (28) are awkward, if not ungrammatical, out of context. They require contexts that solicit exhaustive listings such as

- (29) a. Dare ga gakusei desu ka?  
 who student is  
 'Who is a student?'  
 b. Nani ga ningen no senzo desu ka?  
 what man 's ancestor is  
 'What is the ancestor of mankind?'  
 c. Dare ga nihongo o sitte iru ka?  
 who Japanese knowing is  
 'Who knows Japanese?'

If John, Mary, Tom, the speaker, and the hearer are in the current universe of discourse, and if John and Tom are students but the others are not, then (28a) would not constitute a correct answer to (29a). Sentence (29a) requires as an answer an exhaustive list of people who are students—as a matter of fact, this seems to be why *ga*, and not *wa*, is used after interrogative pronouns. Therefore the correct answer to (29a) in our assumed universe of discourse would be

- (30) a. John to Tom ga gakusei desu.  
 and student are  
 'John and Tom are students.'

If the hearer knew that both John and Tom are students and nonetheless answered with (28a), he would be telling a lie. The hearer could reply:

- (30) b. John wa gakusei desu ga ...  
 student is but  
 'John is a student, but ...'

Then he implies that he knows that John is a student but that he does not know whether the rest are students or not. Under such a circumstance the hearer could not give (28a) as an answer because (28a) implies that only John is a student and that all the rest are nonstudents.

When action verbs, existential verbs, and adjectives of changing states are in the predicates, sentences with *ga* marking their subjects can poten-

tially be ambiguous. When stative verbs and adjectives and nominals of more or less permanent states are in the predicates, only the exhaustive-listing interpretation of *ga* results.

- (31) a. John ga sinda. (neutral description)  
 died  
 'John died.'  
 b. Dare ga sinda ka? John ga sinda. (exhaustive listing)  
 who died died  
 'Who died? It is John who died.' (That is, John and only John died.)  
 (32) a. Sora ga aoi. (neutral description)  
 sky blue  
 'Look! The sky is blue.'  
 b. Sora ga aoi. (exhaustive listing)  
 'It is the sky that is blue.'  
 (33) a. John ga kita. (neutral description)  
 'John came.'  
 b. John ga kita. (exhaustive listing)  
 'It was John who came.'  
 (34) a. \*Saru ga ningen no senzo desu. (neutral description)  
 monkey man 's ancestor is  
 'Look! A monkey is the ancestor of mankind.'  
 b. Saru ga ningen no senzo desu. (exhaustive listing)  
 'It is the monkey that is the ancestor of mankind.'  
 (35) a. \*Tokyo ga ookii. (neutral description)  
 is big  
 'Look! Tokyo is big.'  
 b. Tokyo ga ookii. (exhaustive listing)  
 'It is Tokyo that is big.'  
 (36) a. \*John ga nihongo ga dekiru. (neutral description)  
 Japanese can  
 'John can speak Japanese.'  
 b. John ga nihongo ga dekiru. (exhaustive listing)  
 'John (and only John) can speak Japanese.'

In the preceding, all the (a) sentences are meant to represent the use of *ga* for neutral description. Note that (34a), (35a), and (36a) are ungrammatical in this intended interpretation because their predicates represent stable states. The (b) sentences are meant to represent the use of *ga* for exhaustive listing. For them to be fully grammatical and natural, it is necessary to supply appropriate contexts such as the one shown in (31b).

It is not the case that NP-*ga* subjects can always receive the neutral-description interpretation if their predicates represent action, existence, or changing state. Observe the following examples:

- (37) a. Kinoo, John *ga* kimasita.  
           yesterday           came  
           'Yesterday, John came (to see me).'
- b. ?Kinoo, John *ga* Boston ni ikimasita.  
           yesterday                   to went  
           'Yesterday, John went to Boston.'
- (38) a. John *ga* asoko ni imasu.  
           there at is  
           '(Look!) John is over there.'
- b. ?John *ga* Boston ni imasu.  
                                   in is  
           'John is in Boston.'
- (39) a. \*Boku *ga* Boston ni ikimasita.  
           I                   to went  
           'I went to Boston.'
- b. \*Boku *ga* koko ni imasu.  
           I           here   am  
           'I am here.'

In the preceding, the symbols ? and \* are used, not to mark the ungrammaticality of the sentences, but to indicate the fact that they are not readily amenable to the neutral-description interpretation. They are acceptable as sentences of exhaustive-listing interpretation.

Sentences that indicate the existence or coming into existence of something at the place of the speaker seem most readily amenable to the neutral-description interpretation. Example (37a) is a perfectly natural sentence because it describes John's appearance toward the speaker. On

the other hand, it is difficult to assign the neutral-description interpretation to (37b) because John's movement is away from the speaker. Similarly, (38a) is a natural sentence because it describes John's existence at the place of the speaker, while (38b) is awkward as a sentence of neutral description because John is somewhere else. It also seems that the speaker is not allowed to look at his own action or existence objectively and to describe it as if it were a new event. This seems to be why it is next to impossible to interpret sentences with the first person subject, such as (39a) and (39b), as sentences of neutral description. They almost invariably receive the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

*Ga* is used for marking the object of stative verbals, that is, a handful of transitive verbs (such as *dekiru* 'be able to', *wakaru* 'understand', *iru* 'need'), all transitive adjectives (such as *hosii* 'wants', *tabetai* 'be anxious to eat'), and all transitive nominal adjectives (such as *suki* 'be fond of', *nigate* 'be bad at'). Note that the objective *ga* does not have the exhaustive-listing connotation. For example, consider these sentences:

- (40) a. John *wa* eigo   *ga* *dekiru*.  
                           English   can
- b. Boku *wa* okane *ga* *hosii*.  
           I           money   want
- c. John *wa* Mary *ga* *suki*   *desu*.  
                                   fond of is
- d. John *ga* Mary *ga* *suki*   *desu*.  
                                   fond of is
- e. Boku *ni* *wa* nihongo *ga* *nigate* *desu*.  
           I   to   Japanese   bad at am

They have the following meanings:

- (41) a. Speaking of John, he can speak English.  
       b. Speaking of myself, I want money.  
       c. Speaking of John, he likes Mary.  
       d. John (and only John) likes Mary.  
       e. As for me, I am not good at Japanese.

They do not have the following meanings:

- (42) a. Speaking of John, he can speak English (and only English).  
 b. Speaking of myself, I want money (and only money).  
 c. Speaking of John, he likes Mary (and only Mary).  
 d. John (and only John) likes Mary (and only Mary).  
 e. As for me, I am not good at Japanese (and only Japanese).

The preceding examples suggest that the *ga* for object marking is of a nature entirely different from that of subject marking.

The distinction between the thematic *wa* and the descriptive *ga* and the exhaustive-listing *ga* becomes neutralized in subordinate clauses. All three are realized as *ga*, as shown in the following:

- (43) a. Anata wa John { *ga* } nihongo ga dekiru koto o sitte imasu ka.  
 you { *\*wa* } Japanese can that knowing are  
 'Do you know that John can speak Japanese?'  
 b. John { *ga* } suki na ko wa Mary desu.  
 { *\*wa* } fond-of is girl is  
 'The girl that John likes is Mary.'

The foregoing sentences do not respectively have the interpretation 'that John and only John can...' and 'The girl that John and only John likes...'. However, the contrastive *wa* can appear in subordinate clauses.

- (44) a. Anata wa, kinoo no party ni John wa kitta (ga Mary wa  
 you yesterday's to came but  
 konakatta) koto o sitte imasu ka.  
 came-not that knowing are  
 'Do you know that John came (but Mary did not come) to yesterday's party?'  
 b. John wa suki da ga Bill wa kirai na ko wa Mary  
 fond-of is but hateful-of is girl  
 desu.  
 is  
 'The girl whom John likes but whom Bill dislikes is Mary.'

It goes without saying that (43b) and (44b) are ambiguous: *John ga*, *John wa*, and *Bill wa* in these sentences can be the object of the nominal adjective *suki* 'fond of'. In this interpretation they mean 'The girl who likes John is Mary' and 'The girl who likes John but dislikes Bill is Mary.'

### 5. *Ga* after Quantified Noun Phrases

In the foregoing, I have discussed the neutral-description and exhaustive-listing *ga*, maintaining that only the subjects of action and existential verbs and adjectives/nominal adjectives that represent changing states can be followed by the descriptive *ga*. This statement requires some qualification. First, observe the following sentences:

- (45) a. John ga kanemoti desu.  
           rich is  
           'John (and only John) is rich.'  
 b. Kono kuni de wa, minna ga kanemoti desu.  
           this country in all rich are  
           'In this country, all are rich.'

Unquestionably (45a) is an example of the exhaustive-listing usage of *ga*. It means that among the people in the present universe of discourse, John and only John is rich. On the other hand, (45b) does not seem to have the exhaustive-listing connotation. It does not mean that all are rich (and no one else is). It is a neutral description of the wealth of the people in the country under discussion. According to the constraint on the descriptive *ga* given earlier, (45b) as a neutral description should be ungrammatical because *kanemoti desu* 'are rich' does not represent a changing state. However, it is a perfectly grammatical sentence, requiring no special context. Similarly, observe the following:

- (46) San-nin ga kanemoti desu.  
           three persons rich are  
 a. 'The three (that we have been talking about) and only they are rich.'  
 b. 'There are three who are rich.'

The sentence is ambiguous. Of course, a part of the difference in meanings can be attributed to the fact that in one interpretation *san-nin* is an anaphoric noun phrase representing three persons uniquely identifiable in the

present universe of discourse, while in the second interpretation it is not anaphoric at all. However, this alone cannot account for the fact that in the first interpretation *ga* has the exhaustive-listing sense, while in the second it does not. Example (46) in the second sense is a neutral description with no exhaustive-listing connotation.

The generalization seems to be that when the subject contains a numeral or a quantifier, it can be followed by the descriptive *ga* even if its predicate represents a stable state.

- (47) a. Watakushi no class de wa, go-nin      ga otoko de,  
           I            of            in      five-persons      male and  
           roku-nin      ga onna desu.  
           six-persons      female are  
           'In my class, five are boys and six are girls.'
- b. Amerika-zin no ooku      ga kanemoti desu.  
           Americans      many      rich      are  
           'Many of the Americans are rich.'
- c. Daibubun no gakusei      ga dokusin desu.  
           most            students      single      are  
           'Most students are single.'
- d. Gakusei no daibubun      ga dokusin desu.  
           'Most of the students are single.'
- e. Subete no gakusei      ga dokusin desu.  
           all            students      single      are  
           'All students are single.'

This phenomenon is not peculiar to Japanese. In English and in many other languages, as a general rule, a specific but nonanaphoric noun phrase cannot become the subject of a predicate that denotes a more or less stable state.<sup>12</sup> For example,

- (48) a. \*A boy was tall.  
       b. \*A man that she met was a hardworking accountant.

However, when the subject contains a stressed numeral or quantifier, we obtain a grammatical sentence.

<sup>12</sup> See Perlmutter (1971b).

- (49) a. Oñe boy was tall.      Compare: \**Ǻ* bóy was tall.  
       b. Tŵo boys were tall.      Compare: \**Tŵo* bóys were tall.  
       c. Ałł boys were tall.      Compare: \**Ałł* bóys were tall.<sup>13</sup>

There is a parallelism between the Japanese and English usages. In English, when *stressed* numerals and quantifiers are not found in the subjects of stative predicates, ungrammatical sentences result. In Japanese, when numerals and quantifiers are not found in the subjects of stative predicates, sentences of only the exhaustive-listing *ga* interpretation result. On the other hand, when they are found in the subjects, grammatical sentences result in English, and sentences of the descriptive *ga* (and probably of the exhaustive-listing *ga* as well) interpretation result in Japanese.

## 6. Summary of *Wa* and *Ga* Uses

The uses of *wa* and *ga* discussed in this chapter are summarized here:

*Wa*:

- (i) *Wa* is either *thematic* or *contrastive*.
- a. Thematic:  
       *John wa* gakusei desu.  
           student is  
       'John is a student.'
- b. Contrastive:  
       *Ame wa* hutte imasu ga ...  
           rain falling is but  
       'Rain is falling, but ...'
- (ii) Themes must be anaphoric or generic. Nonanaphoric nongeneric themes result in ungrammaticality.
- \**Oozei no hito wa* party ni kimasita.  
       many people to came  
       'Many people came to the party.'

<sup>13</sup> The starred sentences in (48) and (49) are acceptable in a peculiar context when *boy(s)* is contrasted with, say, *girls*. For example,

- Speaker A: No one under ten is tall in this group.  
   Speaker B: Oñe six-year-old boy is tall.  
                   One six-year-old bóy is tall.  
                   A six-year-old bóy is tall.

- (iii) On the other hand, nonanaphoric nongeneric noun phrases can be contrasted. Thus

*Oozei no hito wa party ni kimasita ga,*  
many people to came but  
*omosiroi hito wa kimasen desita.*

interesting people came-not

'Many people came to the party, but there was none who was interesting.'

*Ga:*

- (iv) *Ga* marks the subject of the sentence in either *neutral description* or *exhaustive listing*.

- a. Neutral description:

*John ga kita.*

came

'John came.'

- b. Exhaustive listing:

*John ga gakusei desu.*

student is

'John and only John is a student. It is John who is a student.'

- (v) If the predicate represents an action, existence, or temporary state, the subject with *ga* is ambiguous between neutral description and exhaustive listing.

*John ga kita.*

- a. Neutral description:

'John came.'

- b. Exhaustive listing:

'It was John who came.'

- (vi) If the predicate represents a stable state, the subject with *ga* can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

*John ga gakusei desu.*

student is

- a. Neutral description:

nonexistent

- b. Exhaustive listing:

'It is John who is a student.'

- (vii) However, when the subject contains a numeral or quantifier, the neutral-description interpretation is possible even with a stative predicate.

*Gakusei no daibubun ga dokusin desu.*  
student's most single is

Neutral description:

'Most of the students are single.'

- (viii) *Ga* also marks the *object* of stative transitive verbals:

*John wa eigo ga dekiru.*

English can

'John can (speak) English.'

## Wa and Ga (Part II)—Subjectivization

### 1. Introduction

The theme (NP-*wa*) of Japanese sentences has received two different treatments in the framework of the generative theory of transformational grammar. Some<sup>1</sup> claim that the theme does not exist as such in the deep structure but that it is produced by the process of attaching *wa* to some major constituent in the sentence and preposing the “constituent + *wa*” to the beginning of the sentence. To them, sentence (1) has the deep structure corresponding to (2a).

- (1) Kono hon *wa* John ga yonda.  
       this book           read  
       ‘Speaking of this book, John has read it.’
- (2) a. [John] [kono hon] [yonda] + *wa*.  
           this book read

This is realized as (1) by the following intermediate stages:

- (2) b. [John]-ga [kono hon]-o [yonda] + *wa*. (subject and object marking)  
       c. [John]-ga [kono hon]-o-*wa* [yonda]. (*wa* attachment)  
       d. [Kono hon]-o-*wa* [John]-ga [yonda]. (theme preposing)  
       e. [Kono hon]-*wa* [John]-ga [yonda]. (deletion of particles before other particles)

Others, on the basis of sentences such as (3), claim that themes must be in the deep structure as such.

- (3) Sakana *wa* tai                   ga oisii.  
       fish           red snapper   delicious-is  
       ‘Speaking of fish, red snapper is the most delicious.’

To them, (1) is derived from the deep structure corresponding to (4),

<sup>†</sup>This chapter is basically for students and teachers of Japanese and for the linguists who are interested in the double- and triple-subject constructions in Japanese.

<sup>1</sup> For example, see Kuroda (1965a).

which is realized as (1) via the deletion of the identical noun phrase in the main clause.

- (4) [Kono hon]<sub>theme</sub> John kono hon yonda.

On the other hand, it has been generally believed that the NP-*ga*, whether it is that of neutral description or of exhaustive listing, is in the subject position in the deep structure. In this chapter I shall clarify in what contexts the NP-*ga* assumes the connotation of exhaustive listing, and show that certain uses of the exhaustive-listing NP-*ga* must be derived, as is the case with the theme, either by a movement transformation or, alternatively, by placing it as a special phrase in the deep structure.

### 2. Interpretation of NP-Ga

English allows the exhaustive-listing interpretation not only of the subject but also of the other parts of the sentence depending upon where the stress is placed.

- (5) a. Jóhn likes Mary = It is John who likes Mary/Only John likes Mary.  
       b. John likes Máry = It is Mary whom John likes/John likes only Mary.  
       c. \*Jóhn likes Máry = Only John likes only Mary.

Example (5c) shows that only one major constituent in a given sentence can receive the exhaustive-listing interpretation. Generally speaking, this is true also for Japanese.

- (6) a. Jóhn ga Mary ni okane o yatta.  
   money gave  
       = It was John who gave the money to Mary.  
       b. John ga Máry ni okane o yatta.  
       = It was to Mary that John gave the money.  
       c. John ga Mary ni okáne o yatta.  
       = It was the money that John gave to Mary.

However, when the *ga* that can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation is present in a sentence, it takes precedence, and no other elements can be given the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

- (7) John *ga* mainiti gakkoo ni iku.  
           every-day school go  
 'John (and only John) goes to school every day.'

Since the predicate of (7) represents a habitual action, *John ga* can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation, and (8) in the specified interpretation is ungrammatical.

- (8) \*John *ga* mainiti gakkoo ni iku.  
 'It is to school that John (and only John) goes every day.'

That (9) can mean only 'It is John who likes Mary', and not 'It is Mary that John likes', therefore, is a corollary of the preceding generalization.

- (9) John *ga* Mary *ga* suki da.

Now, observe the following sentences:

- (10) a. Kono class<sup>2</sup> *wa* dansei *ga* yoku dekiru.  
           this male well are-able  
           'Speaking of this class, the boys do well (at studies).'  
 b. Kono class *wa* John *ga* yoku dekiru.  
           'Speaking of this class, John does well (at studies).'

Kuroda<sup>3</sup> has observed that (10a) is ambiguous: it can mean (i) 'Speaking of this class, boys and only boys do well' (exhaustive-listing interpretation on *dansei ga* implying that the girls don't do well); and (ii) 'As for this class, the boys do well' (neutral-description interpretation on *dansei ga*). What (10a) represents in its second interpretation is that in some classes boys do well in their studies, and in some other classes they do poorly, and that 'this class' can be characterized as a class in which the boys do well. The sentence does not say anything about the girls in the class. It

<sup>2</sup> The word "class" is used here in the sense of Japanese *kurasu*. It means, not 'course meetings' but 'a body of around thirty students in the same year'. They take courses together, and once a student is put in, say, Class X, he is identified as a member of that class (and of no other "classes") during that school year.

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication (October 1969). Mikami (1963, pp. 32-33) has also observed that sentences such as (i) in isolation give the impression that there is something missing, and they are often realized with themes, as in (ii).

- (i) Dansei *ga* yoku dekiru. 'The boys do well in their studies.'  
 (ii) Kono class *wa* dansei *ga* yoku dekiru. 'Speaking of this class, the boys do well.'

Mikami seems to have been aware of the phenomenon under discussion.

might be that the girls in this class do even better than the boys. This is what is meant by saying that *ga* in interpretation (ii) is of neutral description.

On the other hand, (10b) can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation: 'In this class, John is the only person who does well.' Similarly, (11a) is ambiguous between exhaustive listing and neutral description with respect to the interpretation of *dansei ga*, while (11b) has only one interpretation, that is, the one that gives the exhaustive-listing reading to *Tokyo ga*.

- (11) a. Nihon *wa* dansei *ga* tanmei desu.  
           Japan male short-life-span are  
           'As for Japan, men have a short life-span.'  
 b. Nihon *wa* Tokyo *ga* sumi-yoi.  
                                   easy-to-live-in  
           'As for Japan, Tokyo is comfortable to live in.'

Observe that the themeless version of (10a) and (11a) can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

- (10) a'. Kono class no dansei *ga* yoku dekiru.  
           this 's male well are-able  
           'It is the boys in this class that do well.'  
 (11) a'. Nihon no dansei *ga* tanmei desu.  
           Japan 's male short-life-span are  
           'It is men in Japan that have a short life-span.'

This observation may suggest that the NP-*wa*, which appears in (10a) and (11a), optionally neutralizes the exhaustive-listing *ga* that follows, and turns it into the *ga* of neutral description. That is, in (10a'), the *dansei ga* 'men' receives only the exhaustive-listing interpretation because its predicate, *yoku dekiru* 'do well', represents a state, while the *dansei ga* of (10a) can receive both the exhaustive-listing and neutral-description interpretations because the previously mentioned condition has been neutralized by the presence of an NP-*wa* (*Nihon wa*) at the beginning of the sentence. According to this suggestion, (10b) and (11b) are unambiguous because the neutral-description interpretation of these sentences, although claimed to be syntactically possible, is semantically implausible. That is, semantically, it would not make sense to say, "As for this class, in contrast to other classes, John does well" unless more than one student



with the name 'John' is being compared, or unless John belongs to more than one class and his performance in this class is contrasted with that in his other classes. However, the following examples show that this explanation does not seem to hold:

- (12) Nihongo wa John ga heta desu.  
 Japanese bad-at is  
 'As for Japanese, it is John who is bad at it.'
- (13) Atama wa John ga warui.  
 head is-wrong  
 '(Lit.) As for the head, it is John who is weak.'
- (14) Dansei wa kono class ga yoku dekiru.  
 male this class well are-able  
 '(Lit.) As for men, it is this class that does well.'
- (15) Dansei wa Nihon ga tanmei desu.<sup>4</sup>  
 male short-life-span are  
 '(Lit.) As for men, Japan has a short life-span.'

All these sentences have, unambiguously, the exhaustive-listing interpretation on the italicized NP-*ga*, and it is not possible to assign the neutral-description interpretation to them, although semantically it should be possible. For example, there should be nothing wrong semantically with using (12) in the context "As for Japanese, John is bad at it, but as for other languages, he is not bad at them." Therefore, the explanation must be sought elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> Examples (12)–(15) involve a word-order inversion, as well as changes in particles, from the more ordinary

- (12') John wa nihongo ga heta desu.  
 Japanese bad-at is  
 'John is bad at Japanese.'
- (13') John wa atama ga warui.  
 head is-wrong  
 'John is weak in the head.'
- (14') Kono class wa dansei ga yoku dekiru.  
 this male well are-able  
 'As for this class, the boys do well.'
- (15') Nihon wa dansei ga tanmei desu.  
 Japan male short-life-span are  
 'As for Japan, men have a short life-span.'

All of these have ambiguous readings of the NP-*ga* between exhaustive listing and neutral description.

First note that, corresponding to some of the NP-*wa* NP-*ga* . . . sentences that we have been using as examples, there are NP-*ga* NP-*ga* . . . sentences. For example,

- (16) a. Kono class wa dansei ga yoku dekiru (=10a)  
 this male well are-able  
 'Speaking of this class, the boys do well.'  
 (*dansei ga*: exhaustive listing and neutral description)
- b. Kono class ga dansei ga yoku dekiru.  
 'It is this class that the boys do well in.'  
 (*dansei ga*: neutral description)
- (17) a. Nihon wa dansei ga tanmei desu. (=11a)  
 Japan male short-life-span are  
 'Speaking of Japan, men have a short life-span.'  
 (*dansei ga*: exhaustive listing and neutral description)
- b. Nihon ga dansei ga tanmei desu.  
 'It is Japan that men have a short life-span in.'  
 (*dansei ga*: neutral description)

As has been noted, (16a) and (17a) have ambiguous readings with respect to whether *dansei ga* receives the interpretation of exhaustive listing or neutral description. On the other hand, (16b) and (17b) are unambiguous, and *dansei ga* can receive only the neutral-description interpretation. The latter fact seems to be consistent with the observation previously made (see example (8)) that when the *ga* that can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation is present in a sentence, it takes precedence, and that no other elements can be given the exhaustive-listing interpretation. The preceding generalization seems to work from left to right in a sentence, so that when there is more than one NP-*ga* in a sentence that can potentially receive the exhaustive-listing interpretation, the leftmost one takes precedence, and the rest are interpretable only as neutral description.

It is not the case, however, that all NP-*wa* NP-*ga* . . . sentences have corresponding NP-*ga* NP-*ga* . . . sentences. Observe the following:

- (18) a. Kono class wa John ga yoku dekiru. (=10b)  
 this well is-able  
 'Speaking of this class, it is John who does well.'  
 (*John ga*: exhaustive listing)

- b. \*Kono class *ga* John *ga* yoku dekuru.  
'It is this class that John does well in.'
- (19) a. Nihon *wa* Tokyo *ga* sumi-yoi. (=11b)  
'Speaking of Japan, Tokyo is easy to live in.'  
(Tokyo *ga*: exhaustive listing)
- b. \*Nihon *ga* Tokyo *ga* sumi-yoi.  
'(Lit.) It is Japan that Tokyo is easy to live in.'
- (20) a. Nihongo *wa* John *ga* heta desu. (=12)  
Japanese bad-at is  
'As for Japanese, it is John who is bad at it.'  
(John *ga*: exhaustive listing)
- b. \*Nihongo *ga* John *ga* heta desu.  
'It is Japanese that John is bad at.'

Note that when the *NP-wa NP-ga*... sentences have ambiguous readings, as in (16a) and (17a), the corresponding *NP-ga NP-ga*... sentences are grammatical, as shown in (16b) and (17b), while when the *NP-wa NP-ga*... sentences have only the exhaustive-listing interpretation, as in (18a), (19a), and (20a), the corresponding *NP-ga NP-ga*... sentences are ungrammatical. Or, conversely, when an *NP-ga NP-ga*... sentence is grammatical, the corresponding *NP-wa NP-ga*... sentence can receive an ambiguous interpretation, and when an *NP-ga NP-ga*... sentence is ungrammatical, the corresponding *NP-wa NP-ga*... sentence can receive only the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

### 3. Distribution of Multiple-Subject Constructions

Before explaining the phenomena observed here, we must consider under what circumstances *NP-ga* appears where it is not ordinarily expected to appear. The source of (16b) and (17b) seems to be

- (21) Kono class *no* dansei *ga* yoku dekuru.  
this 's male well are-able  
'This class's boys (and only they) do well.'
- (22) Nihon *no* dansei *ga* tanmei desu.  
Japan 's male short-life-span are  
'Men of Japan (and only they) have a short life-span.'

Similarly,

- (23) a. John *no* otoosan *ga* sinda.  
's father died  
(i) 'John's father died.'  
(ii) 'It is John's father that has died.'
- b. John *ga* otoosan *ga* sinda.  
'It is John whose father died.'
- (24) a. Yama *no* ki *ga* kirei desu.  
mountain 's trees pretty are  
(i) 'It is trees in the mountains that are pretty.'  
(ii) '(Look!) The trees in the mountains are pretty.'
- b. Yama *ga* ki *ga* kirei desu.<sup>5</sup>  
(i) 'It is the mountains that trees are pretty in.'  
(ii) '(Look!) The mountains—their trees are pretty.'

<sup>5</sup> The word *kirei* 'pretty' can be used both for describing a more or less stable state and for depicting the current state. For example,

- (i) Sora *ga* kirei desu.  
sky pretty is

This is ambiguous between (a) 'Out of all the things that we have been talking about, the sky and only the sky is pretty,' and (b) 'Oh, look! The sky is pretty!' In the latter usage, the sentence is often followed by *ne* 'isn't it.' On the other hand, observe this sentence:

- (ii) Nihon *no* ki *ga* kirei desu.  
Japan 's trees pretty are

It can receive only the interpretation of exhaustive listing because it is usually taken as a generic statement meaning '(Of all the things under discussion) it is the trees in Japan that are pretty.' This is because statements of neutral description require that the referent of the subject be something that the speaker can observe and point to. One can call the portion of the sky that he can see *sora* 'the sky', and those trees on the mountains that he can see *yama no ki* 'the trees in the mountains'—hence the grammaticality of (24a) and of (i). On the other hand, one cannot refer to the Japanese trees that he is looking at as *Nihon no ki* 'the trees in Japan'—hence the ungrammaticality of (ii). He can, of course, say

- (iii) Nihon *no* ki *wa* kirei desu.  
'Speaking of Japanese trees, they are pretty.'

However, *Nihon no ki* in this sentence is used, not to refer to the trees that one is looking at at present, but as a generic noun phrase meaning 'the trees in Japan in general'.

- (25) a. John *no* kodomo ga sensei ni sikarareta.  
           's child           teacher by was-scolded  
       (i) 'John's child was scolded by the teacher.'  
       (ii) 'It is John's child that was scolded by the teacher.'
- b. John *ga* kodomo ga sensei ni sikarareta.<sup>6</sup>  
       'John—his child was scolded by the teacher.'

On the other hand, if NP-*no* is in the middle of a sentence, and not at the leftmost position, we get ungrammatical sentences:

- (26) a. Sensei ga John *no* kodomo o sikatta.  
           teacher           's child       scolded  
           'The teacher scolded John's child.'
- b. John *no* kodomo o sensei ga sikatta.  
       'John's child, the teacher scolded.'
- c. \*John *ga* sensei ga kodomo o sikatta.  
       'John—the teacher scolded his child.'

On the basis of this observation, let us tentatively assume that there is a transformational process, which I shall call Subjectivization, that makes the leftmost NP-*no* of a sentence its new subject. Note that this transformation applies to sentences that maintain their basic word order, that is, before (26a) is changed to (26b) by the Scrambling Rule. This process can be applied iteratively as shown in the following example:

- (27) a. Bunmeikoku no dansei no heikin-zyumyoo ga mizikai.  
           civilized   's male   's average life-span   is-short  
           countries  
           'It is the average life-span of men of civilized countries that is short.'

<sup>6</sup> The ordinary adversity-passive construction is preferred:

John ga kodomo o sensei ni sikarareta.  
       child       teacher by was-scolded  
       'To John's chagrin, his son was scolded by the teacher.'

However, I can accept (25b) as grammatical. Even to those speakers who do not accept (25b) as grammatical, the difference in degree of grammaticality between (25b) and (26c) that follows should be obvious.

- b. Apply Subjectivization to *bunmeikoku no dansei* 'men of civilized countries':  
       Bunmeikoku no dansei ga heikin-zyumyoo ga mizikai.  
       'It is men of civilized countries that the average life-span is short in.'
- c. Apply Subjectivization to *bunmeikoku* 'civilized countries' of (b):  
       Bunmeikoku ga dansei ga heikin-zyumyoo ga mizikai.  
       'It is civilized countries that men—their average life-span is short in.'

On the other hand, if we had applied Subjectivization to *bunmeikoku* 'civilized countries' of (a), we would obtain

- (27) d. Bunmeikoku ga dansei no heikin-zyumyoo ga mizikai.  
           'It is civilized countries that men's average life-span is short in.'

It goes without saying that in all these examples, only the newly formed first NP-*ga* can receive the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

#### 4. Derivation of Multiple-Subject Constructions

I am now ready to present a set of ordered rules to account for the phenomena under discussion in this chapter.

- (28) a. *Subjectivization* (tentative formulation) [optional]:  
       Change the sentence-initial NP-*no* to NP-*ga*, and make it the new subject of the sentence.
- b. *Marking for Exhaustive Listing* [obligatory for the matrix sentence]:  
       If the predicate of a sentence represents a state or a habitual/generic action, and if the sentence-initial NP-*ga* does not contain a numeral or quantifier, mark that NP-*ga* as [+exhaustive listing].
- c. *Thematization* [optional]:  
       Add *wa* to an NP + *particle*, and prepose the NP + *particle* + *wa* to the beginning of the sentence.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> It is not clear what types of NP's can be made themes and what types cannot be. What is clear, however, is that Thematization has a much wider scope than Subjectivization. For example,

- (i) Sensei ga John *no* kodomo o sikatta.  
       teacher           's child       scolded  
       \*John ga sensei ga kodomo o sikatta.  
       John wa sensei ga kodomo o sikatta.  
       'The teacher scolded John's child.'

(Continued overleaf)

The preceding analysis is based on the view that the exhaustive-listing interpretation of (29) is no different from that of (30) because of a general rule of Japanese which says that any major constituent can receive a prominent stress (unless there is already one) and can receive the exhaustive-listing interpretation.

(29) *Jóhn ga kita.*

'John came.'

(30) *John ga hón o yonda.*

'John read the book.'

On the other hand, the analysis claims that the exhaustive-listing reading of (31) is something special and should be dealt with differently from (29) and (30).

(31) *Inu ga doobutu desu.*

dog animal is

'The dog (and only the dog) is an animal.'

Now let us examine how these rules can account for some of the crucial examples previously mentioned. First, observe the following derivation:

(32) a. *Kono class no dansei yoku dekiru.* (deep structure)

this 's male well are-able

'This class's boys do well.'

b. *Kono class no dansei ga yoku dekiru.* (Subject Marking)

If we do not apply Subjectivization to (32b), the application of the obligatory marking for exhaustive listing yields

(32) c. *Kono class no dansei ga [+exhaustive] yoku dekiru.*

'It is the boys of this class that do well.'

This in itself is a grammatical sentence. If we thematize *kono class no* of (32c), we obtain

(32) d. *Kono class wa [+theme] dansei ga [+exhaustive] yoku dekiru.*

'Speaking of this class, the boys (and not the girls) do well.'

This derivation accounts for one reading of (10a).

(ii) *John wa kono hón o yonda.*

this book read

\**Kono hón ga John ga yonda.*

*Kono hón wa John ga yonda.*

'John read this book.'

On the other hand, if we apply Subjectivization to (32b), we obtain

(32) e. *Kono class ga dansei ga yoku dekiru.*

This, in turn, undergoes the obligatory marking for exhaustive listing, yielding

(32) f. *Kono class ga [+exhaustive] dansei ga yoku dekiru.*

'It is this class that the boys do well in.'

If we thematize *kono class ga* of the preceding sentence, we obtain

(32) g. *Kono class wa [+theme] dansei ga yoku dekiru.*

'Speaking of this class, the boys do well.'

Note that *dansei ga* in the preceding sentence is not marked as [+exhaustive], thus allowing the neutral-description interpretation. This accounts for the second reading of (10a).

To return to (32f), if Thematization is applied, not to *kono class ga*, but to *dansei ga*, the following sentence is obtained:

(32) h. *Dansei wa [+theme] kono class ga [+exhaustive] yoku dekiru.*

'Speaking of the boys, this class (and only this class) does well.'

Observe that, in this sentence, *kono class ga* receives the interpretation of exhaustive listing, which is the only possible interpretation for the sentence.

On the other hand, assume that we have the following deep structure:

(33) a. *Kono class no John yoku dekiru.*

this 's well is-able

'John, who is in this class, does well.'

After application of Subject Marking, we obtain

(33) b. *Kono class no John ga yoku dekiru.*

Now, for some reason<sup>8</sup> *kono class no*, although it is the sentence-initial

<sup>8</sup> It seems that when the NP-*no* of "NP-*no* NP" phrases is a nonrestrictive modifier of the second NP, and not a restrictive one, it cannot undergo Subjectivization. In (33), *kono class no John* means, not 'the John who is in this class (and not other Johns)', but 'John, who is in this class'. In this sense, *kono class no* is nonrestrictive. On the other hand, in (32), *kono class no dansei* means 'the boys who are in this class', and thus *kono class no* plays a role of a restrictive modifier of *dansei*. Similarly,

(Continued overleaf)

NP-*no*, cannot undergo Subjectivization. Therefore, we cannot get

- (33) c. \**Kono class ga John ga yoku dekiru.*

Therefore, the following derivation is ruled out:

- (33) d. \**Kono class ga* [+exhaustive] *John ga yoku dekiru.* (Marking for Exhaustive Listing)

- (33) e. \**Kono class wa* [+theme] *John ga yoku dekiru.* (Thematization)

Hence, there is no possibility of obtaining the interpretation in which *ga* of *John ga* is of neutral description. In (33b), Marking for Exhaustive Listing is obligatorily applied to *kono class no John ga*, resulting in

- (33) f. *Kono class no John ga* [+exhaustive] *yoku dekiru.*  
'It is John, who is in this class, that does well.'

If Thematization is applied to *kono class no* of the preceding sentence, we obtain

- (33) g. *Kono class wa* [+theme] *John ga* [+exhaustive] *yoku dekiru.*  
'Speaking of this class, John and only John does well.'

In this sentence *John ga* receives the interpretation of exhaustive listing. If Thematization is applied to *kono class no John ga* of (33f), we obtain

- (33) h. *Kono class no John wa* [+theme] *yoku dekiru.*  
'Speaking of John, who is in this class, he does well.'

The ambiguity of (24b) can be explained in the following manner. It has, as its deep structure,

- (34) a. *Yama no ki kirei desu.*  
mountain 's trees pretty are  
'The trees in the mountains are pretty.'

- (i) *Sooridaizin no Ikeda-si ga sinda.*  
prime-minister Mr. died  
'Mr. Ikeda, (who is) Prime Minister, has died.'

- (ii) \**Sooridaizin ga Ikeda-si ga sinda.*

No in this example is the attributive form of the copula *da*. It is not altogether clear what other types of sentence-initial NP-*no* can or cannot undergo Subjectivization. What is definitely clear is that the semantic relationship between the first and the second NP plays a decisive role here.

After the application of Subject Marking, we obtain

- (34) b. *Yama no ki ga kirei desu.*

Now, assume that we do not apply Subjectivization to *yama no*. If *kirei desu* is taken as representing a generic statement, (34b) undergoes the obligatory application of Marking for Exhaustive Listing, resulting in

- (34) c. *Yama no ki ga* [+exhaustive] *kirei desu.*  
'It is the trees of mountains which are pretty.'

Sentence (34c) can further undergo Thematization either of *yama no ki ga* or of *yama no*:

- (34) d. *Yama no ki wa* [+theme] *kirei desu.*  
'Speaking of the trees of mountains, they are pretty.'  
e. *Yama wa* [+theme] *ki ga* [+exhaustive] *kirei desu.*  
'Speaking of mountains, it is the trees that are pretty.'

On the other hand, *kirei desu* of (34b) can be taken as representing the current temporary state. In that case, Marking for Exhaustive Listing does not apply. Thus, we obtain

- (34) f. *Yama no ki ga kirei desu (ne).*  
'Look! The trees of that mountain are pretty (aren't they).'

Sentence (34f) can further undergo Thematization either of *yama no ki ga* or *yama no*, resulting in

- (34) g. *Yama no ki wa* [+theme] *kirei desu (ne).*  
'Speaking of the trees of that mountain, they are pretty (aren't they).'
- h. *Yama wa* [+theme] *ki ga kirei desu (ne).*  
'Speaking of that mountain, the trees are pretty (aren't they).'

In sentence (34b), if we do apply Subjectivization, we obtain

- (34) i. *Yama ga ki ga kirei desu.*

Now again, depending upon whether *kirei desu* represents a generic statement or not, the marking of *yama ga* for exhaustive listing is or is not applied.

- (34) j. *Yama ga* [+exhaustive] *ki ga kirei desu*.  
 'It is mountains that trees are pretty in.'  
 k. *Yama ga ki ga kirei desu (ne)*.  
 'That mountain—its trees are pretty (aren't they).'

Thematization can be applied to *yama ga* of the preceding sentence, yielding

- (34) l. *Yama wa* [+theme] *ki ga kirei desu*.  
 'Speaking of mountains, their trees are pretty.' (generic statement)  
 m. *Yama wa* [+theme] *ki ga kirei desu (ne)*.<sup>9</sup>  
 'Speaking of that mountain, the trees are pretty (aren't they).'

I have mentioned that Subjectivization applies to the sentence-initial NP-*no*. There are apparent counterexamples to this rule:

- (35) a. New York *ga* *koosoo-kentiku* *ga* *ooi*.<sup>10</sup>  
           high-rise-building are-many  
 'It is New York that there are many high-rise buildings in.'

<sup>9</sup> This has an unpleasant consequence in that *Yama wa ki ga kirei desu (ne)* with *ki ga* as neutral description has two different derivations: one as shown here, and the other as shown for (34h). Sentence (34m) is different from (34h) in that it has gone through one additional stage—that is, the changing of *yama no* to *yama ga*. A similar phenomenon can be observed in

- (i) *John ga* [+exhaustive] *nihongo ga nigate da*.  
           Japanese bad-at is  
 'John is bad at Japanese.'  
 (ii) (Thematization):  
       *John wa* [+theme] *nihongo ga nigate da*.  
 (iii) a. (*Ga/ni* change):  
       *John ni* *nihongo ga nigate da*.  
       b. (Thematization):  
       *John ni wa* *nihongo ga nigate da*.  
       c. (Particle Deletion):  
       *John wa* [+theme] *nihongo ga nigate da*.

As shown above, *John wa nihongo ga nigate da* can be derived either directly from (i) as shown in (ii) or through three steps as shown in (iii). I do not have any answer at present as to how this problem of multiple derivations for unambiguous sentences can be avoided when *wa* is involved.

<sup>10</sup> This example is due to Kuroda (personal communication, October 1969).

- b. New York *ga* *koosoo-kentiku ga takusan aru*.  
   many exist  
 'It is New York that many high-rise buildings exist in.'  
 c. New York *ga* *koosoo-kentiku ga takusan tatte-iru*.  
   many standing-exist  
 'It is New York that many high-rise buildings exist standing in.'

Note that *New York ga* in the preceding sentences cannot be derived from *New York no* as shown in (35d).

- (35) d. \*New York *no* *koosoo-kentiku ga ooi*.  
           '(Lit.) New York's high-rise buildings are many.'

However, we have, for example,

- (36) a. New York *ni* *koosoo-kentiku ga takusan aru*.  
   in  
           'In New York there are many high-rise buildings.'  
 b. New York *ni* *koosoo-kentiku ga takusan tatte-iru*.  
           'In New York there are many high-rise buildings standing.'

If (36) is the source for (35), it should be noted that this *NP-ni*→*NP-ga* change,<sup>11</sup> that is, the subjectivization of locative NP-*ni*, seems to be restricted to cases involving existential statements.

- (37) a. *Gakusei ga* New York *ni* *itta*.  
           student to went  
           'The students went to New York.'  
 b. New York *ni* *gakusei ga itta*.  
   to students went  
           'The students went to New York.'  
 c. \*New York *ga* *gakusei ga itta*.  
           'It is New York that the students went to.'

Note that (37a), where we have a directional particle *ni* 'to' instead of

<sup>11</sup> This change, which is regarded here as a process of subjectivization, should not be confused with the *NP-ga*→*NP-ni* change, to be discussed in the next chapter.

*John ga nihongo ga nigate desu*.  
*John ni nihongo ga nigate desu*.  
 'John is bad at Japanese.'

- (3) a. Dare *ga* eiga *ga* suki desu ka?  
           who movie fond-of is  
           'Who likes movies?'  
       b. Watakusi *ga* eiga *ga* suki desu.  
           I movie fond-of am  
           'I like movies.'

If we accept the analysis that says that *eiga* is the subject of *suki desu*, then we have to say that (3a) and (3b) have two subjects: *watakusi/dare*, on the one hand, and *eiga*, on the other hand. This would be a very peculiar analysis, to say the least.

It would not do to regard (3a) and (3b) as double-subject sentences of the same type as those discussed in the previous chapter. For example,

- (4) Bunmeikoku *ga* dansei no heikin-zyumyoo *ga* mizikai.  
       civilized countries male 's average-life-span short-is  
       'It is the civilized countries that males' average life-span is short in.'

This sentence clearly has double subjects: *bunmeikoku* 'civilized countries' and *dansei no heikin-zyumyoo* 'average life-span of males.' However, one of the characteristics of these double-subject constructions is that we obtain a nonelliptical sentence even without the first subject.

- (5) Dansei no heikin-zyumyoo *ga* mizikai.  
       male 's average-life-span short-is  
       'It is males' average life-span that is short.'

On the other hand, the deletion of the first NP-*ga* from (3a) and (3b) would result in elliptical sentences:

- (6) a. Eiga *ga* suki desu.  
           movie fond-of is  
           '(I am, he is, etc.) fond of movies.'  
       b. Okane *ga* hosii.  
           money want  
           '(I) want money.'

Furthermore, for (4) there is a corresponding single-subject sentence, namely,

- (7) Bunmeikoku *no* dansei no heikin-zyumyoo *ga* mizikai.  
       civilized country 's male 's average-life-span short-is  
       'It is the average life-span of males of civilized countries that is short.'

However, it is not the case for (3a) and (3b).

- (8) a. \*Watakusi *no/ni* eiga *ga* suki desu.  
           I movie fond-of is  
           'I am fond of movies.'  
       b. \*Watakusi *no/ni* okane *ga* hosii.  
           I money want  
           'I want money.'

In what follows, I shall show that *ga* is used not only for marking the subject but also for marking the object of all transitive adjectives and nominal adjectives (*keiyoo-doosi*) and of a certain class of transitive verbs. I shall further show that these verbals which take *ga* for object marking have the common semantic characteristic that they represent, not actions, but states. Since it is inherent in the nature of adjectives and nominal adjectives to represent states, this generalization automatically accounts for the fact that all transitive adjectives and nominal adjectives take *ga* for object marking.

## 2. Semantic Classification of Verbals Used with Object-Marking Ga

Transitive adjectives and nominal adjectives can be classified in the following semantic categories:

- (9) Competence: *zyoozu* 'good at', *nigate* 'bad at', *heta* 'bad at', *tokui* 'good at, proud of', *umai* 'good at'.  
       a. Dare *ga* eigo *ga* *zyoozu* desu ka?  
           who English good-at is  
           'Who is good at English?'  
       b. Boku *ga* nihongo *ga* *nigate/heta* na koto wa minna  
           I Japanese bad-at am fact-that everyone  
           yoku sitte imasu.  
           well know  
           'Everyone knows well that I am bad at Japanese.'  
       c. Dare *ga* nihongo *ga* *umai* desu ka?  
           who Japanese good-at is  
           'Who is good at Japanese?'

- d. John wa hito o damasu koto *ga umai*.  
 others deceive to good-at  
 'John is good at deceiving others.'
- (10) Adjectives and Nominal Adjectives of Feeling: *suki* 'fond of', *kirai* 'hateful of', *hosii* 'want', *kowai* 'be fearful of'
- a. John ga Mary *ga suki/kirai* na koto wa yoku  
 fond-of/hateful-of is fact-that well  
 sitte imasu.  
 know  
 'I know very well that John likes/dislikes Mary.'
- b. Boku wa Mary *ga kowai*.  
 I am-fearful-of  
 'I am afraid of Mary.'
- c. Boku wa okane *ga hosii*.  
 I money want  
 'I want money.'
- d. Kimi wa nanigo *ga tokui* desu ka?  
 you what-language good-at are  
 'What language are you good at?'
- e. Boku wa oyogu koto *ga suki* da.  
 I swim to fond-of am  
 'I like swimming.'
- (11) -*Tai* Derivatives: *yomitai* 'want to read', *tabetai* 'want to eat', etc.  
 Although *ga* is preferred, *o* can be used for marking objects.
- a. Boku wa eiga { *ga* } mitai.  
 I movie { *o* } see-want  
 'I am anxious to see movies.'
- b. Boku ga osusi { *ga* } *tabe-tai* koto o, nando ittara  
 I sushi { *o* } eat-want fact-that how-often if-I-said  
 wakaru no desu ka?  
 understand that is  
 'How many times is it that I have to tell you that I am anxious to eat sushi?'

Incidentally, *tai* derivatives 'be anxious to' and *kowai* 'be fearful of', *hosii* 'want', *tokui da* 'be good at', and several others constitute the small class of verbals in Japanese which require that their subject be in the first person if they are used in isolated affirmative sentences. Consider the following:

- (12) a. *Boku wa eiga ga mitai*.  
 I movie want-see  
 'I am anxious to see movies.'
- b. \**John wa eiga ga mitai*.  
 'John is anxious to see movies.'
- c. *Kimi wa eiga ga mitai?*  
 you  
 'Are you anxious to see movies?'
- d. \**John wa eiga ga mitai?*  
 'Is John anxious to see movies?'
- (13) a. *Boku wa okane ga hosii*.  
 I money want  
 'I want money.'
- b. \**John wa okane ga hosii*.  
 'John wants money.'
- c. *Kimi wa okane ga hosii?*  
 you  
 'Do you want money?'
- d. \**John wa okane ga hosii?*  
 'Does John want money?'

Examples (12) and (13) show that *mitai* 'be anxious to see' and *hosii* 'want' require that their subject be the first person in affirmative sentences and that it be the second person in interrogative sentences. These verbals represent an internal feeling. The speaker has no basis for making an affirmative judgment on the second or third person's internal feeling. He can express only his own internal feeling. Hence, only the first person subject is allowed in (12) and (13) in affirmative sentences. The speaker can ask about the internal feeling of the hearer, but not about the internal feeling of some third person. He cannot ask the hearer about his (the



speaker's) own feeling, either. Hence, only the second person is allowed for questions. Because the phenomenon under discussion is much more complex than has been implied when subordinate clauses are involved, when certain final particles follow these verbals, or when they appear in narratives, I shall leave this problem for future discussions<sup>1</sup> and proceed to the more central matter of *ga* for object marking.

Now, when the subject is a second or third person, *garu* forms are used instead. Observe the following sentences:

- (14) a. John wa eiga  $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} o \\ *ga \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$  *mi-ta -gatta.*  
           movie see-want-showed a sign of  
           'John showed a sign of being anxious to see movies.'  
       b. John wa okane  $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} o \\ *ga \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$  *hosi -gatta.*  
           money want-showed a sign of  
           'John showed a sign of wanting money.'

*Garu* means 'to show a sign of, to behave like -ing', and it changes verbals of internal feeling into those of outward manifestation of internal feeling. Note that *mitagaru* 'show a sign of being anxious to see' and *hosigaru* 'show a sign of wanting', both of which represent actions, can no longer take *ga* for object marking. This can be accounted for automatically by the generalization that action verbals take *o* and state verbals *ga* for object marking, since *mitai* 'be anxious to see' and *hosii* 'want' are state verbals while *mitagaru* and *hosigaru* are action verbals.

There are only a small number of transitive verbals that take *ga* for object marking. They fall into the following semantic categories:

- (15) Competence: *dekiru* and *re/rare* forms  
       a. Dare ga nihongo *ga dekiru* ka?  
           who Japanese can  
           'Who can (speak) Japanese?'  
       b. Dare ga nihongo *o hanasu koto ga dekiru* ka?  
           who Japanese speak to can  
           'Who can speak Japanese?'  
       c. Dare ga nihongo  $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} ga \\ o \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$  *hanas-e-ru* ka?  
           who Japanese speak-can  
           'Who can speak Japanese?'

<sup>1</sup> See Kuroda (1971) for some interesting discussions on this subject.

- d. Amerika de wa oisii osusi *ga tabe-rare-nai.*  
       America in delicious sushi eat-can-not  
       '(We) cannot eat good sushi in America.'

Observe that the noun clause *nihongo o hanasu koto* 'to speak Japanese' is the object of *dekiru* in (15b).<sup>2</sup> Note also that *re/rare* forms can take *o* for object marking, although *ga* is usually preferred. This, together with the observation made for the *-tai* derivatives, leads to the generalization that the *ga/o* alternative is allowable only when *stative* derivatives are involved. If the noun phrase is taken to be the object of the derivatives as a whole, which are stative by assumption, *ga* is used as the object case marker. On the other hand, if the noun phrase is taken to be the object of only the verb stems, which are action verbs, then *o* is used for marking the object.

- (16) Nonintentional Perception: *wakaru* 'understand', *kikoeru* 'hear', *mieru* 'see'  
       a. Anata wa nihongo *ga wakarimasu* ka?  
           you Japanese understand  
           'Do you understand Japanese?'  
       b. John ga nihongo *ga wakaranai* kara, eigo  
           Japanese not-understand since English  
           de hanasimasyoo.  
           in let's speak  
           'Let's speak in English because John does not understand Japanese.'  
       c. Anata ga kono oto *ga kikoenai* no wa toozen desu.  
           you this sound not-hear fact-that natural is  
           'It is natural that you should not hear this sound.'  
       d. Anata ga kokuban no zi *ga mienai* no wa  
           you blackboard's letters not-see fact-that  
           toozen desu.  
           natural is  
           'It is natural that you should not see what is written on the blackboard.'

<sup>2</sup> Note that *nihongo* 'Japanese' is followed by *ga* in (15a), but by *o* in (15b). This is because it is the object of a state verb *dekiru* 'can' in the former, but not in the latter, where it is the object of *hanasu* 'speak'.

Compare the preceding with *siru* 'get to know', *kiku* 'listen to', and *miru* 'look at', all of which are action verbs:

- (17) a. Watakusi wa kono koto o kyoo hazimete sitta.  
 I this thing today for-the-first-time got-to-know  
 'I got to know this for the first time today.'  
 b. Watakusi wa sono ongaku o kiita.  
 I the music listened-to  
 'I listened to the music.'  
 c. Watakusi wa sono e o mita.  
 I the picture looked-at  
 'I looked at the picture.'

While *wakaru* 'understand' is a state verb, *siru* is an action verb. *Siru* is ordinarily translated as 'to know', but this is a mistranslation. It means 'to get to know'. This is why we cannot say *Watakusi wa sore o sirimasu*, implying 'I know it'.<sup>3</sup> We must say *Watakusi wa sore o sitte-imasu*. In the negative form, however, *sitte-inai* is usually realized as *siranai*. Therefore, *Watakusi wa sore o siranai* is used for 'I don't know it'. Anyway, since *siru* is an action verb, it takes *o* for object marking, in contrast to *wakaru*, a state verb, which takes *ga* for object marking.

- (18) Possession, Need: *aru* 'have', *iru* 'need'
- a. Anata ga okane ga aru koto wa minna ga sitte imasu.  
 you money have fact-that everyone knowing is  
 'Everyone knows that you have money.'  
 b. Anata ga okane ga nai koto wa minna ga sitte imasu.  
 you money not-have that everyone knowing is  
 'Everyone knows that you don't have any money.'  
 c. Watakusi wa okane ga iru.  
 I money need  
 'I need money.'

Note that *nai* in (18b) is a form derived from *\*aranai* 'not have'. Conventional grammars say that *aru* and *nai* are intransitive verbs meaning 'to exist' and 'not to exist', respectively, implying that *okane* 'money' is the subject of these verbs in (18). This explanation fails for two reasons:

<sup>3</sup> This matter will be discussed more systematically in Chapter 10 ("Stative and Non-stative Verbals").

First, if *okane* were the subject of *aru/nai*, then what would *anata* 'you' be? Second, *aru/nai* of this usage behaves differently from *aru/nai* of 'to exist'. Observe the following sentences:

- (19) a. \*Heya ni kodomo ga aru.  
 room in children  
 'There are children in the room.'  
 b. Heya ni kodomo ga iru.  
 (20) a. Heya ni teeburu ga aru.  
 room table  
 'There is a table in the room.'  
 b. \*Heya ni teeburu ga iru.  
 (21) a. \*Heya ni kodomo ga nai.  
 room children  
 'There are no children in the room.'  
 b. Heya ni kodomo ga inai.

These sentences show that when the subject of "there are, there exist" is an animate noun, *aru* cannot be used and that *iru* is used instead. Now observe the following sentences:

- (22) a. Boku wa kodomo ga aru/nai.  
 I children  
 'I have/don't have children.'  
 b. Boku wa kodomo ga iru/inai.

In (22a), *aru* is used with animate *kodomo*. What this implies is that (22a) is of a construction different from that of (19), (20), and (21). If *kodomo* is regarded as the object of transitive verb *aru* 'to have',<sup>4</sup> as is proposed in this study, this phenomenon can be automatically accounted for. *Aru* 'to have', like most other verbs, does not change forms regardless of whether it has an animate subject or not. In (22a), *boku* is the subject of *aru*. Since *aru* 'to have' is a state verb, its object is marked, not by *o*, but by *ga*.

<sup>4</sup> It is not surprising that the verb *aru*, which originally meant 'to exist', has come to be used in the sense 'to have'. There are many languages in which the *be* verb and the *have* verb interchange. For example: "There is a flower in the vase" and "The vase has a flower in it." In French the verb *avoir* 'to have' is used in the *y avoir* construction: "Il a un livre" (He has a book) and "Il y a un livre sur la table" (There is a book on the table).

Hence, *kodomo ga* in (22a). In (22b), on the other hand, *kodomo* is the subject of *iru/inai* 'to exist/not exist'. *Boku wa* is probably a contraction of *boku ni wa*. Therefore, (22b) can be literally translated as 'As for me, there are (are no) children'.

### 3. *Ga/Ni* Conversion

I have shown that all transitive adjectives and nominal adjectives, as well as verbs of competence, nonintentional perception, possession, and need, take NP-*ga* as their objects.<sup>5</sup> I have also pointed out that all these verbals can be characterized semantically as representing states rather than actions. What this implies is that, given a verb and its semantic content, we can predict to some extent whether it takes *o* or *ga* for object marking.

When we have  $NP_1 ga NP_2 ga$  Verbal constructions,  $NP_1 ga$  can change to  $NP_1 ni$  in many instances.<sup>6</sup> Observe the following sentences:

- (23) a. Dare *ga* kore *ga* dekiru ka?  
who this can  
'Who can do this?'  
b. Dare *ni* kore *ga* dekiru ka?
- (24) a. Dare *ga* kono uta *ga* utaeru ka?  
who this song sing-can  
'Who can sing this song?'  
b. Dare *ni* kono uta *ga* utaeru ka?
- (25) a. Dare *ga* kono uta *o* utaeru ka?  
who this song sing-can  
'Who can sing this song?'  
b. \*Dare *ni* kono uta *o* utaeru ka?
- (26) a. Dare *ga* sugu nemuremasu ka?  
who immediately sleep-can  
'Who can fall asleep immediately?'  
b. \*Dare *ni* sugu nemuremasu ka?

<sup>5</sup> I shall discuss in Chapter 27 ("Case Marking in Japanese") how these occurrences of *ga* and *o* can be predicted on the basis of the semantic features of verbals and on the basis of the deep structures in which the verbals can appear.

<sup>6</sup> This analysis is originally due to Inoue (1966). However, her analysis of what I regard as *ga* for object marking is entirely different from mine.

Sentences (23) and (24) are examples that show this  $NP_1 ga NP_2 ga \rightarrow NP_1 ni NP_2 ga$  change. Examples (25b) and (26b) are ungrammatical because, although *re/rare* forms can potentially undergo this change, (25a) and (26a) do not fulfill the required *ga...ga* pattern. More examples follow:

- (27) a. Dare { *ga* } nihongo *ga* wakaranai ka?  
who { *ni* } Japanese understand-not  
'Who does not understand Japanese?'  
b. John { *ga* } nihongo *ga* wakaranai kara, eigo de  
{ *ni* } Japanese understand-not since English in  
hanasimasyoo.  
let's speak  
'Let's speak in English because John doesn't understand Japanese.'  
c. Anata { *ga* } kono oto *ga* kikoenai no wa toozen desu.  
you { *ni* } this sound not-hear that natural is  
'It is natural that you should not hear this sound.'  
d. Anata { *ga* } kokuban no zi *ga* mienai no wa  
{ *ni* } blackboard's letters not-see that  
toozen desu.  
natural is  
'It is natural that you should not see the letters written on the blackboard.'  
e. Anata { *ga* } okane *ga* aru koto wa minna *ga* sitte imasu.  
you { *ni* } money have that everyone knowing is  
'Everyone knows that you have money.'  
f. Dare { *ga* } okane *ga* iru no desu ka.  
you { \**ni* } money need that is  
'Who is it that needs money?'

Sentence (27f) shows that *iru* 'to need' is an exception to this optional change. That this is a strictly idiosyncratic phenomenon can be seen from the following examples:

- (28) a. Dare { *ga* } eigo *ga* zyoozu desu ka.  
who { \**ni* } English good-at is  
'Who is good at English?'

- b. Boku { *ga* } nihongo *ga* heta na koto...  
 I { *\*ni* } Japanese bad-at am that  
 'That I am bad at Japanese...'
- c. John { *ga* } Mary *ga* suki/kirai na koto...  
 { *\*ni* } fond-of/hateful-of  
 'That John likes/dislikes Mary...'
- d. Boku { *ga* } nihongo *ga* nigate na koto...  
 { *ni* } bad-at  
 'That I am bad at Japanese...'
- e. Boku { *ga* } eiga *ga* mitai koto...  
 { *\*ni* } movie see-want that  
 'That I want to see movies...'

#### 4. Verbals Taking *Ga* for Object Marking

The following is a more or less exhaustive list of Japanese verbals that take *ga* for object marking. In the list, (1st) indicates that an entry to which it is attached can take only the first person subject in ordinary constructions; (koto)/(no) indicates that the entry can take a noun clause object ending with *koto* and *no* as its object; (*\*ni*) shows that the entry cannot undergo *ga/ni* alternations; (obj = higher animal), (obj = human), etc., indicate that the entry can take as its object only higher animals or humans, respectively.

##### (29) Verbs

- reru/rareru 'to be able to'  
 aru/nai 'to have'  
 dekiru 'to be able to' (koto)  
 iru 'to need' (*\*ni*)  
 kikoeru 'to hear'  
 mieru 'to see'  
 wakaru 'to understand'

##### (30) Adjectives

- tai 'to be anxious to' (1st), (*\*ni*)  
 arigatai 'to be grateful for' (1st), (koto/no)  
 hazukasii 'to be bashful of, be ashamed of' (1st), (*\*ni*),  
 (koto/no)  
 hosii 'to want' (1st), (*\*ni*)

- itosii 'to think tenderly of' (1st), (*\*ni*), (obj = human)  
 kawaii 'to hold dear' (1st), (*\*ni*), (obj = higher animal)  
 kutosii 'to be regretful of' (1st), (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 mazui 'to be bad at' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 natukasii 'to miss, to feel yearning for' (1st), (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 netamasii 'to be jealous of' (1st), (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 nikurasii 'to be hateful of' (1st), (*\*ni*), (obj = higher animal)  
 omosiroi 'to be interested in' (1st), (koto/no)  
 osorosii 'to be afraid of, to be fearful of' (1st), (koto/no)  
 tanosii 'to enjoy' (1st), (koto/no)  
 tumaranai 'to be disinterested in' (1st), (koto/no)  
 umai 'to be good at' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 urayamasii 'to be envious of' (1st), (*\*ni*), (koto/no)

##### (31) Nominal Adjectives

- heta 'to be bad at' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 hituyoo 'to need' (koto)  
 kanoo 'to be able to' (koto)  
 kirai 'to dislike' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 konnan 'to be difficult at' (koto/no)  
 nigate 'to be bad at' (koto/no)  
 suki 'to be fond of' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 tokui 'to be good at' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 yooi 'to be easy' (koto/no)  
 zannen 'to regret' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)  
 zyoozu 'to be good at' (*\*ni*), (koto/no)

#### 5. Dual Nature of Some Object-*Ga* Verbs

I have proposed in this chapter, first, that *okane ga* and *Mary ga* of (32) are not the subject, but the object of the verbals *hosii* and *suki da* and, second, that all stative verbals that are transitive (and no action verbals) take *ga* for object marking.

##### (32) a. Watakusi wa *okane ga* hosii.

- I money want  
 'I want money.'

##### b. Watakusi wa *Mary ga* suki da.

- I fond-of am  
 'I am fond of Mary.'

The second of the two proposals is original with me, but the first is not. For example, see Tokieda (1941, 1950) and Tamura (1969).

Tokieda (1941) notes that verbals such as *hosii* 'want' and *suki da* 'be fond of' represent subjective feelings of their subjects toward certain objects. They do not represent attributes of *okane* 'money' or *Mary*. On the other hand, in (33), *omosiroi* 'interesting' can be taken as representing not only the subject's subjective feeling but also an attribute of the plot of the story.

- (33) *Watakusi wa kono hon no suzi ga omosiroi.*  
 I this book's plot interesting-am  
 'I am fond of (find interesting) the plot of this book.'

Thus, in (34), *kono hon no suzi* can be regarded as the subject of *omosiroi*.

- (34) *Kono hon no suzi ga omosiroi.*  
 this book's plot interesting-is  
 'It is the plot of this story that is interesting.'

In that interpretation, *omosiroi* no longer represents any subjective feeling but is a property of the plot of the story.

The foregoing explanation by Tokieda seems to account for the dual nature of some of the verbals that I have discussed in this chapter. Stative verbals that are transitive and represent only the subjective feelings (or competence, etc.) of the grammatical subject yield elliptical sentences when their subject is missing. For example,

- (6) a. *Eiga ga suki da.*  
 movie fond-of is  
 '(I am, he is, etc.) fond of movies.'
- b. *Okane ga hosii.*  
 money want  
 '(I) want money.'
- (35) a. *Gohan ga tabe-ta-i.*  
 meal eat-want  
 '(I) want to eat.'
- b. *Nihongo ga hanas-e-ru.*  
 Japanese speak-can  
 '(I, he, etc.) can speak Japanese.'

These all sound highly elliptical. On the other hand, stative verbals that can represent both the subjective feelings of the subject and the objective attributes (or properties) of the object do not yield elliptical sentences when their subjects are missing. For example,

- (36) a. *Hen na oto ga kikoeru.*  
 strange is sound { hear  
   audible-is  
 'A strange sound is audible.'
- b. *Yama ga mieru.*  
 mountain { see  
                                 visible-is  
 'A mountain is visible.'
- c. *Kono inu wa kowai.*  
 this dog { fear  
                                 fearful-is  
 'This dog is fearful.'

These sentences are, in fact, ambiguous. They can be intransitive sentences, as translated here, with the verbals representing the objective attributes of their subjects *hen na oto* 'strange sound', *yama* 'mountain', and *kono inu* 'this dog'. Alternatively, they can be transitive sentences, with the speaker as the understood subject. In the latter interpretation, the sentences mean 'I hear a strange sound', 'I see a mountain', and 'I am afraid of this dog'. Note that in these interpretations the verbals no longer represent the objective attributes of *hen na oto* 'strange sound', *yama* 'mountain', and *kono inu* 'this dog' but indicate instead the subjective feeling (or the competence) of the speaker toward these objects.

#### 6. Stative Verbs That Cannot Take Ga

It was mentioned that the *-tai* derivatives and *re/rare* potential forms can take either *ga* or *o* for object marking. For example,

- (37) a. *Boku wa eiga ga/o mitai.*  
 I movie see-want  
 'I want to see a movie.'
- b. *Dare ga nihongo ga/o hanaseru ka?*  
 who Japanese speak-can  
 'Who can speak Japanese?'

It is not the case, however, that this option is allowed for all verbs in their *-tai* derivatives and potential forms. Tamura (1969) notes that (38b) is grammatical, but (38a) is extremely awkward.

- (38) a. ??Syoka *ga* koonyuúsitai.  
bookcase buy-want  
'I want to buy a bookcase.'  
b. Syoka *o* koonyuúsitai.

Compare (38) with the following:

- (39) a. Syoka *ga* kaitai.  
bookcase buy-want  
'I want to buy a bookcase.'  
b. Syoka *o* kaitai.

Both *koonyuusuru* and *kau* mean 'to buy'. The former is a verb of Sino-Japanese origin, while *kau* is of Japanese origin.

The potential form of *suru* 'do' is *dekiru* 'can (do)'. Therefore, the Sino-Japanese verbs form their potential derivatives by adding *dekiru* to their nominal stems. Tamura observes the following interesting phenomenon:

- (40) a. Syoka *ga* kaeru.  
bookcase buy-can  
'(I) can buy a bookcase.'  
b. Syoka *o* kaeru.  
(41) a. ??Syoka *ga* koonyuu-dekiru.  
buy can  
'I can buy a bookcase.'  
b. Syoka *o* koonyuu-dekiru.  
(42) a. Tennis *ga* dekiru.  
'I can play tennis.'  
b. ??Tennis *o* dekiru.

It seems that the use of *ga* for object marking, which is purely of Japanese origin, is not compatible in style with verbs of Sino-Japanese origin,<sup>7</sup> most

<sup>7</sup> Note that all stative verbs are of purely Japanese origin. The Sino-Japanese verbs are all nonstative because they are formed by adding *suru* 'do' (which represents an action, not a state) to Sino-Japanese nouns.

of which have a rather formal or literary flavor. Hence, low acceptability results when the desiderative and potential derivatives of the Sino-Japanese verbs appear in the *NP-ga NP-ga* pattern.<sup>8</sup> The result is the extreme awkwardness of (38a) and (41a). Example (41b) is grammatical because *koonyuu* 'buying', in spite of the fact that its verbal ending *suru* 'do' has disappeared, still has a verbal force. Thus, *syoka* 'bookcase' can be regarded as the object of the action verb *koonyuu* 'buy', and not of the stative *koonyuu-dekiru* 'can buy'. On the other hand, (42b) is ungrammatical because *suru* of *tennis o suru* '(lit.) to do tennis, to play tennis' has completely disappeared, leaving no action verb that can take *o* for object marking. Since *dekiru* itself is stative, it must take *ga* for object marking. Note, as has been mentioned previously, that the *ga/o* alternative is allowable only when we have stative derivatives.

<sup>8</sup> Those Sino-Japanese verbs such as *benkyoosuru* 'to study' which have completely lost the literary flavor can appear in the *NP-ga NP-ga* pattern. For example,

- (i) Nihongo *ga* benkyoositai.  
Japanese *o* study-want  
'I want to study Japanese.'  
(ii) Nihongo *ga* benkyoo-dekiru.  
Japanese *o* study-can  
'I can study Japanese.'