

# The perspective-sensitive argument structure of Japanese *giving* verbs

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# Overview

- ① Introduction
- ② Perspectival centers
- ③ Other perspective-sensitive expressions
- ④ Our account

# Perspective sensitivity

- Many expressions cross-linguistically are perspective sensitive, including epithets, egophoric marking, predicates of personal taste.
  - Previous work has proposed that such expressions encode direct reference to a 'perspectival center' (PC), usually the speaker.

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- We propose a new notion of perspective-sensitivity, namely:

*relative closeness to the perspectival center.*

- **Our case study:** the Japanese ‘giving’ verbs *ageru* and *kureru*, which we argue make use of this notion.

- (1) a. *Watashi-ga Taro-ni present-o {age-ta/\*kure-ta}.*  
 I-NOM Taro-DAT present-ACC give<sub>FROM</sub>/gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 ‘I gave a present to Taro.’
- b. *Taro-ga watashi-ni present-o {\*age-ta/kure-ta}.*  
 Taro-NOM I-DAT present-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub>/give<sub>TO</sub>  
 ‘Taro gave a present to me.’

# Perspective sensitivity

- Our view: *ageru*/*kureru* encode motion away/toward an individual, henceforth the “orienter”.
  - *ageru* motion **away** from the orienter
  - *kureru* motion **toward** the orienter.
- Our hypothesis: these verbs both encode this orientation as part of their not-at-issue content.
- The verbs can assign “orienter” status to one of their arguments.



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- (2)
- a. jī:/\*chā a:pwa twan-ā  
 I/you much drank-EGO  
 I/(**\*you**) drank a lot.
- b. chā/\*jī: a:pwa twan-ā lā  
 You/I much drank-EGO Q  
 Did (**\*I**)/**you** drink a lot?



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- The egophoric suffix -ā requires that the subject is the perspectival center.
  - i.e., the speaker in a declarative, addressee in a question.

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- Is the orienter of a Japanese giving verb the same thing as a perspectival center? We say no.
- (3) **Orienter:** The individual *closer to the perspectival center than any other individual*.
- The orienter may or may not be the perspectival center.
- (4) **NAI-content of giving verbs:**
- ageru* the giver is closer to the PC than the recipient.
  - kureru* the recipient is closer to the PC than the giver.



# Our theory

- (5) We use this theory to predict:
- a. Observed constraints on reference to attitude holders.
  - b. Interactions with other perspective-sensitive expressions.
  - c. Inconsistencies in the choice of orienter across clauses.

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- (5) We use this theory to predict:
    - a. Observed constraints on reference to attitude holders.
    - b. Interactions with other perspective-sensitive expressions.
    - c. Inconsistencies in the choice of orienter across clauses.
  - (6) Our goals for the talk:
    - a. Spell out this new category of perspective-sensitive expression.
    - b. Distinguish the notions of orienter and perspectival center.
    - c. Explain how argument structure can reference features of the context.
- We aim to open up the space of possibilities for analyzing perspective-sensitive expressions cross-linguistically.



# The expression of PCs

- Kuno and Kaburaki 1977 observe restrictions on first person pronouns. No 1DAT with *ageru*; no 1NOM with *kureru*.

- (7)
- a. ***Watashi-ga*** *Taro-ni* *present-o* {***age-ta***/*\*kure-ta*}.  
 I-NOM Taro-DAT present-ACC **gave**<sub>FROM</sub>/*gave*<sub>TO</sub>  
 'I gave a present to Taro.'
- b. *Taro-ga* ***watashi-ni*** *present-o* {*\*age-ta*/***kure-ta***}.  
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- b. *Taro-ga watashi-ni present-o {\*age-ta/kure-ta}.*  
 Taro-NOM I-DAT present-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub>/gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 'Taro gave a present to me.'
- With non-1st person arguments, both verbs are acceptable.

- (8) *Hanako-ga Taro-ni present-o {age-ta/kure-ta}.*  
 H.-NOM T.-DAT present-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub>/gave<sub>TO</sub>  
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- (9)
- a. John-wa<sub>i</sub> [**kare-ga**<sub>i</sub> Hanako-ni hon-o      **age-**/\***kure-ta-to**] itta.  
 J.-TOP    pro-NOM    H.-DAT    book-ACC    gave<sub>FROM</sub>/gave<sub>TO</sub>    told  
 John said that [he gave Hanako a book.]
- b. John-wa<sub>i</sub> [Hanako-ga **kare-ni**<sub>i</sub>; hon-o      \***age**/**kure-ta-to**] itta.  
 J.-TOP    H.-NOM    pro-DAT    book-ACC    gave<sub>FROM</sub>/**gave**<sub>TO</sub>    told  
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- Newari egophoric marking also shifts in embedded contexts. Egophoric affix *-ā* signals the subject is the *attitude holder*.

- (10)    syām-ā wā a:pwa twan-ā      dhakā: dhāl-a  
 Syam    [he much drank-EGO C]      said  
 Syam said he drank too much.

# The expression of PCs

- The speaker of an unembedded declarative and the attitude holder of an embedded predicate are grouped as *the perspectival center* (PC).
- What is the connection between the orienter (chosen by *ageru/kureru*) and the PC?

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If an expression refers to the PC, it must be the orienter (agent of *ageru*, recipient of *kureru*).

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## (11) Rough generalization:

If an expression refers to the PC, it must be the orienter (agent of *ageru*, recipient of *kureru*).

- The giving verb constrains the identity of the orienter.

- (12)
- a. *Hanako-ga Taro-ni present-o age-ta.*  
 Hanako-NOM Taro-DAT present-ACC ageru
- b. *Hanako-ga Taro-ni present-o kure-ta.*  
 Hanako-NOM Taro-DAT present-ACC kureru



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(13) *Context*: John thinks his present is beautiful, but Mary thinks it's horrible. The speaker doesn't know what the present is.

- a. *John-ga; Mary-ni kireina; present-o {age-ta/??kure-ta}*.  
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# Epithets

- If an epithet like *itosii* 'dear' represents the attitude of a participant, it must be the the orienter's attitude.

(14) *Context*: Mary loves John.

- a. *Mary-ga; itosii; John-ni hana-o* {*age-ta*/?/?*kure-ta*}  
 J.-NOM dear M.-DAT flower-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub>/gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 Mary gave a flower to dear John.
- b. *Itosii; John-ga Mary-ni; hana-o* {/?/?*age-ta*/*kure-ta*}  
 Dear J.-Nom M.-Dat flower-Acc gave<sub>FROM</sub>/gave<sub>TO</sub>  
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- PoPTs and epithets signal which argument is the PC.
- The judgements above fit with our working generalization: if the PC is expressed, it must be in the orienter position.

# Our account

- Our account aims to make precise the relationship between the orienter chosen by the verb, and the PC.
- We employ a semantics in which the truth of a proposition is relativized to a perspectival center (see e.g., Anand & Nevins 2004, Lasnik 2005, Stephenson 2007, Coppock and Wechsler 2018)

(15)  $\text{Jtheft(taxation)}_{\text{K}^c}$  = T if = trump  
 = F if = sanders





# Our account

- In general, positive declarative utterances are inferred as speaker oriented: the speaker is publicly committed to identifying as .

$$(17) \quad \text{Jdelicious}_{(\text{PC})}(\text{natto})_{\mathbb{K}^{c, sp(c)}} = \text{T iff natto is delicious from } Sp\text{'s perspective}$$

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- But this inference can be suspended (Amaral et al. 2007, Harris and Potts 2009, Kaiser 2015) signalling non-speaker orientation.
- e.g., PoPTs and epithets can signal that  $c$  is some other individual.

(18)  $\text{Jhappy}_{(\text{PC})}(\text{dear}_{(\text{PC})}(\text{john}))_{\mathbb{K}^{c, \text{mary}}} =$   
 implies John is 'dear' from Mary's perspective

## An initial hypothesis (to be discarded)

- Can we simply assume the orienter must refer to the PC? i.e., the orienter would be like a Newari egophor (Zu 2017, 2018, Coppock and Wechsler 2018).

(19) **ageru**(book)(Taro<sub>rec</sub>)(Hanako<sub>ag</sub>)

= *Not-at-issue*: **Hanako** = PC

*At-issue*: **give**(book)(Taro<sub>rec</sub>)(Hanako<sub>ag</sub>)

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- We argue against this theory.
- (the *perspectival center*) need not be the same as the individual designated by *ageru/kureru* (the *orienter*).

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- The main clause and 'since'-clause can disagree on the orienter. If the orienter refers to the PC, we predict two different PCs.

(21) *Taroo-wa<sub>i</sub> [Hanako-ga **kare-ni**<sub>i</sub> okane-o **kureta** node] Yoko-ni*  
 T.-TOP H.-NOM 3SG-DAT money-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub> since Y.-DAT  
*hon-o **kureta***  
 book-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 Taro gave the book to Yoko as Hanako had given him[T.] money.  
 = *Predicted: yoko = PC & taro = PC*



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 Taro gave the book to Yoko as Hanako had given him[T.] money.  
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- If this is permitted, why is (22) worse than (21)? NB: we see a parallel effect with relative clauses.

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 T.-TOP H.-NOM 3SG-DAT money-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub> since  
***Hanako-ni** hon-o **kureta***  
 Y.-DAT book-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 Taro gave the book to Hanako as Hanako had given him[T.] money.  
 = Predicted: **hanako** = PC & **taro** = PC

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- We employ a notion of ‘perspectival closeness’  $_x$ , such that:

- (24)
- Nothing is closer to the center than the center  
( $y = d : d \text{ }_d y$ )
  - $_x$  is transitive and antisymmetric
  - $_x$  is a contextually supplied parameter

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- A semantics for *ageru/kureru*:

(25) 

- ageru*     $\lambda x \lambda y \lambda z : Z \text{ }_{PC} y . \mathbf{give}(x_{th})(y_{rec})(Z_{ag})$
- kureru*     $\lambda x \lambda y \lambda z : y \text{ }_{PC} Z . \mathbf{give}(x_{th})(y_{rec})(Z_{ag})$

# First person cases

- In ordinary declaratives, the PC is usually the speaker.

- (26)
- a. *Hanako-ga Taro-ni present-o age-ta*  
 I-NOM Taro-DAT present-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub>  
 = *Not-at-issue*: Hanako is closer to *Sp* than Taro
- b. *Hanako-ga Taro-ni present-o kure-ta*  
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- (27) a. *watashi-ga Yoko-ni present-o ageta*  
 b. *Yoko-ga watashi-ni present-o kureta*  
 = *Not-at-issue*: *Sp* is closer to *Sp* than Yoko

- (28) a. \**Yoko-ga watashi-ni present-o ageta*  
 b. \**watashi-ga Yoko-ni present-o kureta*  
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# PoPTs/Epithets

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- The above cases assume that the perspectival center is the speaker, but contextual factors and overt signals can suspend this assumption.
- Here the epithet *itosii* 'dear' combined with the contextual assumption means = Mary. PoPTs are treated similarly.

(29) *Context*: Mary loves John.

- a. *Mary-ga; itosii; John-ni hana-o age-ta*  
 J.-NOM dear M.-DAT flower-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub>  
 Mary gave a flower to dear John.  
 = *Not-at-issue*: Mary is closer to Mary than John.
- b. #*Mary-ga; itosii; John-ni hana-o kure-ta*  
 J.-NOM dear M.-DAT flower-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 Mary gave a flower to dear John.  
 = *Not-at-issue*: #John is closer to Mary than Mary.

# Embedded cases

- Following Bylinina et al 2014, Coppock and Wechsler 2018, the perspectival center is a content parameter.
- It can be bound without context shifting ('monsters').

(30)  $\mathbb{J}\text{say}(\text{rain!})(\mathbb{j})\mathbb{K}^{c,w} = \mathbf{T}$  iff for all worlds  $v$  compatible with what John says at  $w$ ,  $\mathbb{J}\text{rain!}\mathbb{K}^{c,v,\text{john}} = \mathbf{T}$

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(31) a. John-wa; [**kare-ga**; Hanako-ni hon-o **age-ta-to**] itta.  
 J.-TOP pro-NOM H.-DAT book-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub> told  
 John said that [Hanako gave him a book].  
 = *Not-at-issue*: John is closer to John than Hanako.

# Embedded cases

- Following Bylinina et al 2014, Coppock and Wechsler 2018, the perspectival center is a content parameter.
- It can be bound without context shifting ('monsters').

(30)  $\text{Jsay}(\text{rain!})(\text{j})\mathbb{K}^{c,w}$  = **T** iff for all worlds  $v$  compatible with what John says at  $w$ ,  $\text{Jrain!}\mathbb{K}^{c,v,\text{john}} = \text{T}$

- (31) a. John-wa; [**kare-ga**; Hanako-ni hon-o **age-ta-to**] itta.  
 J.-TOP pro-NOM H.-DAT book-ACC gave<sub>FROM</sub> told  
 John said that [Hanako gave him a book].  
 = *Not-at-issue*: John is closer to John than Hanako.
- b. #John-wa; [kare-ga; **Hanako-ni** hon-o **kure-ta-to**] itta.  
 J.-TOP H.-NOM pro-DAT book-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub> told  
 = *Not-at-issue*: #Hanako is closer to John than John.

- (b) is bad due to *kureru* assigning a distinct individual as perspectivally closer to the PC (John) than the PC himself.

# Shifting across clauses

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(32) *Taroo-wa*; [*Hanako-ga kare-ni*; *okane-o kureta node*] *Yoko-ni*  
 T.-TOP H.-NOM 3SG-DAT money-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub> since Y.-DAT  
*hon-o kureta*  
 book-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 Taro gave the book to Yoko as Hanako had given him[T.] money.  
 = *Not-at-issue*: **yoko** <sub>PC</sub> **taro & taro** <sub>PC</sub> **hanako** (Consistent!)



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- If the ranking is inconsistent, we get infelicity.

(33) ??*Taroo-wa*; [*Hanako-ga kare-ni*; *okane-o kureta node*]  
 T.-TOP H.-NOM 3SG-DAT money-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub> since  
*Hanako-ni hon-o kureta*  
 Y.-DAT book-ACC gave<sub>TO</sub>  
 Taro gave the book to Hanako as Hanako had given him[T.] money.  
 = *Not-at-issue: hanako* <sub>PC</sub> **taro & taro** <sub>PC</sub> **hanako** (Inconsistent!)

## Center vs. orienter

- If the orienter is *not necessarily* the PC, how are they different?

(34) **Perspectival center** ( ): An individual parameter, referenced in the evaluation of certain perspective sensitive expressions (PoPTs, epithets, Newari egophors etc.).

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  - We suggest that perspective-sensitive expressions need not directly refer to the PC, but can encode the PC as *part* of their meaning.
- (35) **Orienter (of *ageru/kureru*)**: The individual ranked above some competitor as being 'closer' to the perspectival center.
- In the formal account, we leave 'closeness' un-deconstructed.
    - We hypothesize that if *x* is closer than *y* to PC, then PC is more willing to report *x*'s epistemic state than *y*'s.

# Conclusion

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- We suggest *ageru/kureru* signals how arguments are ranked via (b).
- Though other phenomena may encode reference to the PC directly (e.g., egophoricity, Japanese *zibun* (McCready 2007)).
- The various ways expressions can encode perspective-sensitivity gives rise to the variety.

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