

Ni: Dative Case Marker or Postposition?

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Abstract: This paper proposes a consistent analysis of the suffix/particle *ni* in Japanese as a dative Case marker, contrary to previous analyses which suggest that *ni* is ambiguous between a dative Case marker and a postposition (cf. Sadakane and Koizumi 1995). Examining the behavior of *ni* in nominalized clauses, I provide a new analysis for *ni*-marked DPs, which may lead to new perspectives for the discussion of the Japanese Case marking system. I also suggest some new ideas for the derivation of nominalization structures.

0. Introduction

In this paper, I provide a set of data which indicates that the suffix/particle *ni* in Japanese is not ambiguous between a dative Case marker and a postposition, as opposed to previous analyses; I propose that *ni* always is a dative Case marker. I also discuss the implications of the results obtained in the investigation for the theory of grammar.

Ni has many usages. It can be associated with various theta roles and appear in numerous syntactic constructions. This is unusual, not only for Japanese, but also for other languages. Therefore, the exploration of *ni* has consequences for the study of many other construction types and lead to many interesting perspectives, although more work needs to be done. Dative particles in Romance languages are said to pose similar problems (cf. Kayne 1975).

The paper is organized in the following way: In section 1, I discuss the proposal by Sadakane & Koizumi (1995; henceforth: S&K), which represents the standard analysis of *ni*; subsequent studies seem to accept this account. S&K claim that *ni* is ambiguous between a Case marker and a postposition, basing their assumption on three tests. In section 2, I will show some problematic data for S&K's approach, and in section 3, I will propose an alternative analysis for *ni*. Section 4 discusses the Japanese Case marking system, both with regard to clauses and nominalizations. Section 5 provides a tentative new analysis of nominalizations. Section 6 concludes the paper.

1. S&K's Analysis of *ni*

S&K discuss the behavior of *ni* and argue that there are two homophonous particles *ni* in Japanese, i.e. a dative Case marker and a postposition. They divide the usage of this particle into 31 categories (e.g. indirect object, causee, etc.) and examine the syntactic behavior of *ni* by testing it in the following three syntactic environments: (i) the floating numeral quantifier (FNQ) construction, (ii) the cleft construction with a particle, and (iii) the cleft construction without a particle. Based on the results of these tests, *ni* is described as a Case marker or a postposition.

According to the first test, only DPs can associate with a FNQ, while PPs cannot (cf. Miyagawa 1989). Consider the following examples:

- (1) a. ^{OK} [DP Gakusee-ga] 3-nin piza-o tabeta.
 student-NOM 3-CL pizza-ACC ate¹
'Three students ate pizza.'
- b. * John-ga [PP [DPgakusee] kara] 3-nin purezento-o moratta.
 John-NOM student from 3-CL presents-ACC received
'John received presents from three students.'
 (S&K: 8)

Ga in (1a) is a nominative Case marker, as can be seen from the DP *gakusee-ga* 'student-NOM,' which relates to the FNQ *3-nin*. In contrast, *kara* 'from' in (1b) is a postposition, as becomes evident from *gakusee-kara* 'student-from,' a (postpositional) PP. This PP cannot co-occur with a FNQ. Based on this observation, S&K conclude that *ni* is a dative Case marker when a *ni*-marked DP can be associated with a FNQ. The relevant example is shown in (2a). On the other hand, when a *ni*-marked DP cannot be associated with a FNQ, *ni* has to be a postposition, according to S&K. The example is given in (2b).

- (2) a. ^{OK} Kanta-wa yuuenti-de uma-ni 3-too notta.
 Kanta-Top amusement park-at horse-NI 3-CL rode
'Kanta rode three horses at the amusement park.'
- b. * Mika-wa sensee-ni 3-nin inu-o home-rare-ta.
 Mika-Top prof.-NI 3-CL dog-ACC praise-Passive-Past
'Mika was affected by three teachers' complimenting her dog.'
 (S&K: 12-13)

The second test involves a cleft construction with a particle. It is known that only PPs can appear in the cleft focus position, whereas DPs with Case markers such as *ga* (NOM) or *o* (ACC) cannot be clefted in this manner. Some examples are given below.

- (3) a. ^{OK} John-ga tegami-o moratta no-wa [PP Mary-kara] da
 John-NOM letter-ACC received NL-Top Mary -from Cop
'It's from Mary that John received a letter.'
- b. * Kinoo piza-o tabeta no-wa [DP Mary-ga] da
 yesterday pizza-ACC ate NL-Top Mary-NOM Cop
'It's Mary who ate pizza yesterday.'
- c. ?? Kinoo Mary-ga tabeta no-wa [DP piza-o] da
 yesterday Mary-NOM ate NL-Top pizza-ACC Cop
'It's pizza that Mary ate yesterday.'
 (S&K: 9)

In (3a), the PP *Mary-kara* can occupy the focus position. In contrast, *Mary-ga* in (3b) and *piza-o* in (3c) are Case-marked DPs, and thus are unable to move into this position. S&K use this be-

¹ The abbreviations used throughout this paper are ACC (accusative), CL (classifier), Cop (Copula), DAT (dative), GEN (genitive), NL (nominalizer), NOM (nominative), and Top (topic).

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havior to determinate the status of *ni*: If a *ni*-marked item can be clefted, it must be a PP and *ni* a postposition. The relevant example is given in (4b). On the other hand, if such an element cannot occur in the cleft focus position, it has to be a DP and *ni* a Case marker as shown in (4a).

- (4) a. ^{??} Kanta-ga yuuenti-de notta no-wa uma-ni da.
 Kanta-NOM amusement park-at rode NL-Top horse-NI Cop
'It's a horse that Kanta rode at the amusement park.'
- b. ^{OK} Mika-ga inu-o home-rare-ta no-wa Tanaka sensee-ni da.
 Mika-NOM dog-ACC praise-Passive-Past NL-Top Tanaka prof.-NI Cop
'It's by Prof. Tanaka that that Mika was affected by his complimenting her dog.'
 (S&K: 12-14)

The third test – clefting without a particle – shows that Case markers must be omitted in clefts, whereas the option of dropping a postposition in clefts depends on the context, according to S&K.

- (5) a. ^{OK} Kinoo piza-o tabeta no-wa Mary da.
 yesterday pizza-ACC ate NL-Top Mary Cop
'It's Mary that ate pizza yesterday.'
- b. ^{OK} Kinoo Mary-ga tabeta no-wa piza da.
 yesterday Mary-NOM ate NL-Top pizza Cop
'It's pizza that Mary ate yesterday.'
- c. ^{*/??} John-ga tegami-o moratta no-wa Mary da.
 John-NOM letter-ACC received NL-Top Mary Cop
'It's(from) Mary that John received a letter.'
- d. [?] John-ga keeki-o kitta no-wa kono naifu da.
 John-NOM cake-ACC cut NL-Top this knife Cop
'It's (with) this knife that John cut the cake.'
 (S&K: 10)
- (6) a. ^{OK} Mary-ga kinoo piza-o tabeta. (the unclefted version of (5a-b))
 Mary -NOM yesterday pizza-ACC ate
'Mary ate pizza yesterday.'
- b. ^{OK} John-ga Mary-kara tegami-o moratta. (the unclefted version of (5c))
 John-NOM Mary-from letter-ACC received
'John received a letter from Mary.'
- c. ^{OK} John-ga kono naifu-de keeki-o kitta. (the unclefted version of (5d))
 John-NOM this knife -with cake-ACC cut
'John cut the cake with this knife.'

In the unclefted version of (5a) and (5b), that is, in (6a), *Mary* and *piza* would be assigned some form of Case marker. As can be seen, these Case markers must be omitted in clefting sentences. In the unclefted version of (5c), that is, in (6b), *Mary* would be associated with a postposition, and this postposition may not be omitted in a cleft construction. In (5d), however, the postposi-

tion in the unclefted version (6c) may be dropped. In other words: PPs can or cannot be omitted, depending on the contexts. S&K adopt the argument that the focus constituent in this type of cleft construction is not syntactically related to any particular position in the cleft clause (cf. Hoji 1987) and claim that these tendencies in (5) depend on the accessibility of the focused constituent (cf. Hoji 1987). When the accessibility ranks high, the element will be dropped. S&K adopt the accessibility hierarchy in Inoue (1976), which is shown in (7).

- (7) Subject[nominative] ≥ direct object[accusative] ≥ indirect object[dative] ≥ locative ≥ goal ≥ instrumental ≥ standard ≥ ablative ≥ genitive ≥ source ≥ comitative ≥ reason ≥ comparative
(S&K: 10)

Nominative and accusative DPs in (6a) rank high and thus they are dropped in the cleft construction. On the other hand, the postposition in (6b) shows ablative, which ranks low in (7), and thus it is difficult to drop this postposition. The postposition in (6c) expresses instrumental and it ranks higher than ablative. As a result, (5d) is much easier to accept. S&K conclude that if *ni* can be omitted in the cleft construction, it is a Case marker or a postposition; if such element can't be omitted, it must be a postposition. (8b) is unacceptable and then this *ni* is a postposition; (8a) is acceptable and thus such element is a Case marker or a postposition.

- (8) a. ^{OK} Kanta-ga yuuenti-de notta no-wa uma da.
Kanta-NOM amusement park-at rode NL-Top horse Cop
'It's a horse that Kanta rode at the amusement park.'
b. * Mika-ga inu-o home-rare-ta no-wa Tanaka sensee da.
Mika-NOM dog-ACC praise-Passive-Past NL-Top Tanaka prof. Cop
'It's Prof. Tanaka that Mika was affected by his complimenting her dog.'
(S&K: 12–14)

In sum, these three tests discriminate between a Case marker and a postposition as stated in (9).

(9)

	FNQs	Clefting with a particle	Clefting without a particle
Case-marked	OK	*/??	OK
With Postposition	*	OK	*/??/OK

(S&K: 11, with a slight modification)

2. Discussion of S&K's Account

Applying the above tests, S&K arrive at the conclusion that *ni* has dual status (Case marker vs. postposition). As we will see, this conclusion is problematic, since the tests do not necessarily deliver the correct results.

As for the FNQ test, the acceptability of such sentences varies from person to person. Therefore, this test seems inadequate for a characterization of *ni*. Consider the examples in (10). The test sentence with a FNQ, (10b), is not given in S&K. I assume (10b), which is based on the

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original sentence in S&K. Judgment is their own.

- (10) a. Emi-wa tomodati-ni 3-nin bara-no hanataba-o ageta.
 Emi-Top friend-NI 3-CL rose-GEN bouquet-ACC gave
 ‘Emi gave a bouquet of roses to three of her friends.’
 (S&K: 13)
 Judgments: S&K: ^{OK}
 My own (AI): ^{OK}
- b. Emi-wa kodomo-ni 3-nin omotya-o katta.
 Emi-Top children-NI 3-CL toy-ACC bought
 ‘Emi bought toys to three of her children.’
 Judgments: S&K: *
 My own (AI): ^{OK}

S&K observe that only the FNQ construction in (10a), but not the one in (10b) is acceptable. Therefore they conclude that *ni* must be a dative Case marker in (10a) and a postposition in (10b). However, in my and other native speakers’ judgment, both (10a) and (10b) are fine. The conclusion must be that such native speakers are able to consistently use *ni* as a dative marker, which is different from S&K’s judgments. Thus, due to the individually varying acceptability, this test cannot produce a straightforward result.

Let us move to the second test, involving clefting with a particle. It appears that S&K’s assumption with regard to the impossibility of clefting Case-marked DPs has numerous counter-examples. One such example is given in (11).

- (11) ^{OK} Taro-ga tabeta no-wa [DP kono ringo-o] da.
 Taro-NOM ate NL-TOP this apple-ACC Cop
 ‘It’s this apple that Taro ate.’
 (Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002: 36)

In (11), the suffix *-o* in *kono ringo-o* is a clear Case marker, and since this DP can occupy the focus position, one must conclude that this test, too, is problematic and should not be used to determine the status of *ni*.

The third test – clefting without a particle – questionable as to its applicability: Since it seems that PPs can more or less be used in cleft constructions, this tests must be rejected as well.

In sum, S&K’s findings cannot unequivocally show that *ni* possesses the purported dual morphosyntactic status. Therefore a new analysis is warranted.²

3. *Ni*: A Dative Case marker

In this section, I propose an alternative analysis of *ni*, which is based on new morphosyntactic evidence. To do so, the behavior of nominalized phrases will be demonstrated first. I argue that

² Some of the data above may be due to idiolectal variations, but I will put this issue aside here.

ni-marked DPs behave in a uniform manner when nominalized, which will explain the status of *ni* straightforwardly.

In the literature, a distinction between two types of nominalizations is maintained, i.e. a syntactic nominalization (such as English gerunds) and a lexical nominalization. For our purposes, the process of the syntactic nominalization is most relevant. In Japanese, this may result in a shift from a “sentential” to a nominalized clause. As is well-known, Japanese nominalized clauses are derived by adding the suffix such as *kata* ‘way,’ *yoo* ‘manner,’ *puri* ‘manner’ and so on, to the verb. In syntactic terms, a vP is assumed to merge with the nominalizer *kata*. This derivation is shown in (12) (cf., e.g., Kishimoto 2006, Sugioka 1992).

- (12) [DP[_{VP} John [_{VP} hon yomu]] *kata*]
 John book read way
 ‘the way in which John reads a book’

Particles such as Case markers or postpositions can be added to nominalized clauses. However, they must change their form, as captured in the widely accepted generalization (13) (see, e.g., Kishimoto 2008, Tsujioka 2011):

- (13) *No* ‘GEN’ substitutes Case particles such as *ga* ‘NOM’ and *o* ‘ACC’ and attaches postpositions such as *de* ‘by/at’ and *kara* ‘from.’
 (Tsujioka 2011: 125)

The effects of (13) are illustrated in (14b) and (15b), which are the nominalized counterparts of clauses (14a) and (15a).

- (14) a. ^{OK} John-ga heya-de hon-o yonda.
 John-NOM room-in book-ACC read
 ‘John read a book in the room.’
 b. ^{OK} John-no heya-de-no hon-no yomi-kata
 John-GEN room-in-GEN book-GEN read-way
 ‘the way in which John reads a book in the room’
- (15) a. ^{OK} John-ga ginko-kara okane-o karita.
 John-NOM bank-from money-ACC borrowed
 ‘John borrowed money from a bank.’
 b. ^{OK} John-no ginko-kara-no okane-no kari-kata.
 John-GEN bank-from-GEN money-GEN borrow-way
 ‘the way in which John borrows money from a bank’

Now, consider the behavior of *ni*: There seems to be a ban on the co-occurrence of *ni* and *no*, as stated in (16) (cf. Kishimoto 2008 and Tsujioka 2011).

- (16) For some reason, *ni-no* ‘NI-GEN’ is excluded and *e-no* ‘to-GEN’ is used instead.

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This generalization stems from the observation of sentences such as the following ones, where not *ni-no* but *e-no* is allowed in the b-examples.

- (17) a. ^{OK} John-ga booru-o douro-ni nageta.
 John-NOM ball-ACC street-NI threw
'John threw a ball to a street.'
 b. John-no booru-no douro-^{OK}{e-no/*ni-no} nage-kata.
 John-GEN ball-GEN street-{to-GEN/NI-GEN} throw-way
'the way in which John throws a ball to a street'
- (18) a. ^{OK} John-ga Mary-ni mondai-o toka-seta.
 John-NOM Mary-NI test question-ACC solve-cause
'John had Mary solve test questions.'
 b. John-no Mary-^{OK}{e-no/*ni-no}mondai-no toka-se-kata.
 John-GEN Mary-{to-GEN/NI-GEN} test question- GEN solve-cause-way
'the way in which John had Mary solve test questions'

However, I would like to claim that it is not *ni* that has been changed in these cases, but rather that a postposition *e* has been changed to *e-no*. Note that *ni* can alternate with *e* in the clausal varieties, as shown in (19–20).

- (19) John-ga booru-o douro-^{OK}{e/^{OK}ni} nageta.
 John-NOM ball-ACC street-{to_e/to_{ni}} threw
'John threw a ball onto a street.'
- (20) John-ga Mary-^{OK}{e/^{OK}ni} mondai-o toka-seta.
 John-NOM Mary-{to_e/to_{ni}} test question-ACC solve-cause
'John had Mary solve test questions.'

It seems then that the generalization in (16) – “As to *ni*, in nominalized clauses, *ni-no* is excluded in favor of *e-no*” – must be rejected. However, the important point in this formulation is the first part, i.e. the fact that *ni-no* is excluded. *Ni* can receive various theta roles (e.g. GOAL, SOURCE, and others). Whatever theta roles *ni* receives, *ni-no* is excluded, i.e. *ni-no* cannot be used in nominalizations at all. Based on the generalization in (13), I argue that *ni* cannot be a postposition, because the sequence [postposition + *no*] is not allowed. The prediction, then, is that if *ni* can be changed into *no*, it is a Case marker. This predication is borne out, as shown in (21–23). In other words: The use of *no* instead of *ni* in the nominalized b-versions is perfectly fine.

- (21) a. ^{OK} John-ga booru-o douro-ni nageta.
 John-NOM ball-ACC street-NI threw
'John threw a ball to a street.'
 b. John-no booru-no douro-^{OK}{*ni-no/^{OK}no} nage-kata.
 John-GEN ball-GEN street-{NI-GEN/ GEN} throw-way
'the way in which John throws a ball to a street'

- (22) a. ^{OK} John-ga Mary-ni mondai-o toka-seta.
 John-NOM Mary-NI test question-ACC solve-cause
'John had Mary solve test questions.'
- b. John-no Mary-{*ni-no/^{OK}no} mondai-no toka-se-kata.
 John-GEN Mary-{NI-GEN/GEN} test question- GEN solve-cause-way
'the way in which John had Mary solve test questions'
- (23) a. ^{OK} John-ga kouen-de uma-ni notta.
 John-NOM park-at horse- NI rode
'John rode a horse at the park.'
- b. John-no kouen-de-no uma-{*ni-no/^{OK}no} nori-kata.
 John-NOM park-at-GEN horse-{NI-GEN/GEN} rode-way
'the way in which John rode a horse at the park'

Before hastening to a conclusion, we have to consider one other possibility: If *ni* could have been changed into another case marker, e.g. *ga* or *o*, in the sentential versions, the form *no* in the nominalized examples would stem from the transformation of these items, and not from *ni* directly. But *ni* is unable to alternate with these Case markers in (24). This means that it is *ni* that has changed into *no*, and nothing else.

- (24) a. John-ga booru-o douro-^{OK}{ni/*ga/*o} nageta.
 John-NOM ball-ACC street-{NI/NOM/ACC} threw
'John threw a ball onto a street.'
- b. John-ga Mary-^{OK}{ni/*ga/*o} mondai-o toka-seta.
 John-NOM Mary-{NI/NOM/ACC} test question-ACC solve-cause
'John had Mary solve test questions.'
- c. John-ga kouen-de uma-^{OK}{ni/*ga/*o} notta.
 John-NOM park-at horse-{NI/NOM/ACC} rode
'John rode a horse at the park.'

Summing up, I have proposed an alternative analysis for *ni*-marked DPs in this section. This analysis demonstrates the parallel behavior of *ni*-DPs with other case-marked DPs in nominalized clauses and underpins the assumption that *ni* is always a dative Case marker.

4. Case Marking in Nominalized Clauses

It appears that the hypothesis stated above runs into a problem: *No*-marked DPs may lead to a degraded status in some cases, cf. the examples in (25–26), where the b-versions represent the nominalized counterparts of the a-clauses.

- (25) a. ^{OK} John-ga Mary-ni hon-o ageta.
 John-NOM Mary-DAT hon-ACC gave
'John gave a book to Mary.'

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- b. ^{???} John-no Mary-no hon-no age-kata.
 John-GEN Mary-GEN book-GEN give-way
 ‘the way in which John gives a book to Mary’
- (26) a. ^{OK} John-ga Mary-ni nagu-rare-ta.
 John-NOM Mary-DAT hit-Passive-Past
 ‘John was hit by Mary.’
- b. ^{???} John-no Mary-no nagu-rare-kata.
 John-GEN Mary-GEN hit-Passive-way
 ‘the way in which John is hit by Mary’

(25) contains a double object construction and (26) a direct passive construction. According to S&K, *Mary-ni* in (25) has a GOAL theta role, while *Mary-ni* in (26) has an underlying AGENT role. Both b-sentences are more or less ungrammatical, which might be construed as an argument against *ni* as a Case marker. However, I would like to suggest that this is due to a constraint which prevents a nominal phrase from having some DPs being marked with *no*. I will call this constraint a ‘some *no* constraint,’ although the details of this constraint need to be worked out in future investigations. I suggest that this constraint is of the same sort as the well-known ‘double *o* constraint,’ which prevents a clause from having two DPs marked with the accusative marker *o*. Note, though, that there appear to be two different types of this constraint, as shown in (27).³

- (27) a. * Taro-wa Ziroo-o sakana-o tabe-saseta
 Taro-TOP Ziroo-ACC fish-ACC eat-cause
 ‘Taro had Ziro eat a fish.’
 (Harada 1973: 201)
- b. ^{??} Taro-wa Hanako-o hamabe-o aruka-seta
 Taro-TOP Hanako-ACC beach-ACC walk-cause
 ‘Taro had Mary walk on the beach.’
 (Hiraiwa 2006: 283)

(27a) contains a causative construction involving a transitive verb; however, the two accusative DPs in this sentence render ungrammaticality. (27b) shows a causative construction involving an intransitive verb with the adjunct *hamabe-o*; also this sentence has two accusative DPs, but it is slightly better than (27a). I would like to claim that the suggested ‘some *no* constraint’ is related to the type of constraint that applies to examples like (27b).

To show this, a more exact definition of such a constraint is required, because it is unclear how many and what type of *no*-marked phrases are prohibited. Consider the following examples:

³ The explanation of the ‘double *o* constraint’ is still an object of debate since it is unclear what exactly is included under this constraint (cf., e.g., Harada 1973, Kuroda 1978, Hiraiwa 2002, 2006, 2010). I will not pursue this matter any further here.

- (28) a. ^{OK} John-ga *pro* hon-o ageta.
 John-NOM book-ACC gave
 ‘John gave a book to him/her/them.’
- b. ^{OK} John-no *pro* hon-no age-kata
 John-GEN book-GEN give-way
 ‘the way in which John gives a book to him/her/them.’
- (29) a. ^{OK} John-ga Mary-ni *pro* ageta.
 John-NOM Mary-DAT gave
 ‘John gave it/them to Mary.’
- b. ^{??} John-no Mary-no *pro* age-kata
 John-GEN Mary-GEN give-way
 ‘the way in which John gives it/them to Mary’

The b-examples in (28–29), the nominalized counterparts of a-examples, equally contain double object constructions, the difference between them being that a *pro* replaces the GOAL object in (28), whereas a *pro* replaces the THEME object in (29). Japanese, a *pro*-drop language, allows sentential examples such as (28a) and (29a). However, when nominalized, only GOAL object, but not THEME object seemed to be licensed. What are the constraints that govern these configurations? This question requires further research. I would like to suggest, though, that the ‘some *no* constraint’ is a PF-constraint, based on the assumption that Japanese Case marking takes place at PF component (see, e.g., Fukui and Sakai 2003), and thus it has no influence on a narrow syntax.⁴

In section 3, I proposed that *ga*, *o* and *ni* behave in a uniform manner in nominalized clauses. I suggest that these three markers behave similarly in regular clauses as well. Although further research is needed with regard to Case marking in Japanese, the new account opens an important perspective to the Japanese Case marking system.

5. Reanalyzing Nominalizations

Nominalizations are interesting operations in that both verbal and nominal characteristics are present. A relevant example is given in (30).

- (30) John’s singing the aria
 (Baker 1985: 1)

In (30), *John’s* displays genitive case, which is a nominal feature. On the other hand, *the aria* is marked for accusative, which is a verbal feature. Japanese syntactic nominalizations with *kata* ‘way’ are said to turn a verbal constituent into a nominal one. However, I would like to propose that Japanese nominalized clauses are derived differently than the illustration in (12) above indicates, cf. (31).

⁴ Note, also, that the previous generalization does not explain why *ga-no* and *o-no* are not allowed. Such an explanation could then be applied to the ban on *ni-no*, too.

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- (31) [DP John [DP hon [DP yomu-kata]]]
John book read-way
'the way in which John reads a book'

In this derivation *yomu* 'read' first merges with *kata* 'way,' and a complex predicate *yomu-kata* 'read-way' is formed. *Yomu-kata* is then changed into *yomi-kata* 'read-way' for morphological or phonological reasons. In the next step, *hon* 'book' merges with the complex predicate, and finally *John* merges with *hon yomu-kata*. The first Merge of *yomu* and *kata* is a syntactic operation.

The reason why I propose this derivation is that Japanese nominalizations do not appear to have the same derivation as their English equivalents due to the agglutinative character of Japanese. Furthermore, Japanese Case markings in nominalizations are different from those in English in that all DPs are assigned genitive Case, clearly a nominal quality. Hence, it is plausible to assume that Japanese nominalizations do not involve vPs. This novel train of thought may be extended to compounds as well, which are derived both syntactically and lexically. In other words, all compounds may be derived by Merge in a narrow syntax. Various effects need to be considered.

6. Conclusion

To sum up: In this paper, I have rejected the idea that the particle *ni* is not ambiguous between a dative Case marker and a postposition, and argued that it is a consistent dative marker. I provided a new analysis for *ni*-marked DPs, based on the behavior of *ni* in nominalized clauses. This analysis not only sheds light on the characteristics of *ni*-marked DPs but also may open up a new perspective for future investigations of the Japanese Case marking system. Finally, I have provided an outline for a new way of treating nominalizations in Japanese.

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