

**Event Cancellation Phenomena in Japanese;
With Special Reference to Fake Result-Cancel Constructions**

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In this study, I deal with sentences composed of two clauses conjoined in which a transitive verb and its morphologically related intransitive verb are used in the first conjunct and the second conjunct, respectively, as illustrated by the following:

- (1) * Tukue-o ugokasi-ta ga, ugoka-nakat-ta
(lit.) 'I moved the desk, but it didn't move.'

It is generally assumed that sentences like (1) are unacceptable. However, there are analogous sentences, which, despite their apparent similarity, are accepted:

- (2) Hahaoya-o okosi-ta ga oki-nakat-ta.
(lit.) 'I awaked my mother, but she didn't awake.'

I call this type of sentences Fake Result-Cancel Construction (hereafter FRCC). By "fake," I mean that when speakers accept FRCCs, the achievement of the event described in the first conjunct is not actually cancelled by that described in the second conjunct.

Let us consider why (2) is accepted while (1) is not. What is especially of note here is that the verbs *ugokas* and *okos* exhibit different aspectual properties. In order to clarify the difference between them, let us observe the following pairs of sentences, where the verbs are followed by *te iru*:

- (3) a. Tukue-o ugokasi-te iru.
(lit.) 'I am moving the disk.'
b. Tukue-ga ugoi-te iru
(lit.) 'The desk has been moved.'
- (4) a. Hahaoya-o okosi-te iru
(lit.) 'I am awaking my mother.'
b. Hahaoya-ga oki-te iru
(lit.) 'My mother is awake.'

The verbs behave in a different manner when they are followed by *te iru*. Interesting is the fact that (3a) and (4a) are interpreted in a different way. (3a) entails (3b); if you are moving a desk, the desk is necessarily in motion. By contrast, (4a) does not entail (4b); when you are awaking your mother, she is not awake at all. This means that there holds an entailment relationship between a transitive event of someone moving something and an intransitive counterpart of something moving, while there is no such a correspondence between a transitive event of someone awaking another and an intransitive counterpart of the latter awaking.

Taking this into consideration, let us proceed to account for the difference in

acceptability between (1) and (2). It is by now clear that in (1) the realization of that event which the first conjunct entails, i.e. that I moved the desk, is in contradiction with what is entailed by the second conjunct, i.e. that the desk didn't move, and that in (2) the realization of that event which the first entails, i.e. that I awaked my mother, is not in contradiction with what is entailed by the second, i.e. that my mother didn't awake. In this way, it is the lexical semantic properties of the verbs in question that account for the difference.

As far as such cases as we have observed are concerned, lexical semantic accounts seem to suffice. A careful inspection, however, reveals that in addition to speakers who do not accept (1) but (2), there are those who do readily accept not only (2) but also (1):

(5) */ok Tukue-o ugokasi-ta ga, ugoka-nakat-ta.

In view of this apparently contradictory situation, one might guess that speakers are divided into two types according to whether or not the verb *ugokas* counts as a causative for them. If they take *ugokas* as a causative, they judge (1) unacceptable. If they take it as a noncausative, (1) is judged to be acceptable. As for the verb *okos*, both types of speakers take it as a noncausative, which accounts for why (2) does not sound contradictory and therefore is acceptable. This amounts to the claim that lexical semantic approaches are still valid for the account for the situation. Nevertheless, it seems highly unlikely that native speakers of the same language should vary with respect to the lexical semantics which they have acquired for the same verb, *ugokas*. For, even for speakers who accept (1), sentences like *tukue-o ugokasita* 'I moved the desk' entail event realization; that is, event cancellation is possible only when *ugokas* appears in the FRCC. Truly, the first type of speaker takes into consideration only the lexical semantic information of the verb, but the second type seems to respect another kind of information.

The speakers in question draw a positive inference about FRCCs like (1) and make up appropriate interpretations of them in order to accept them as far as possible. The possible interpretations are given below:

- (6) a. Tukue-o ugoka-soo-to si-ta ga, ugoka-nakat-ta.
(lit.) 'I tried to move the desk, but it didn't move.'
- b. Tukue-o ugokasi-ta ga zibun-ga omot-ta-yori-wa ugoka-nakat-ta.
(lit.) 'I moved the desk, but it moved less than I had expected.'

When (1) is accepted by them, it is interpreted as synonymous either with (6a) or with (6b). More importantly, they judge (1) ambiguous between the two interpretations. This fact leads to an assumption that the information they make use of besides lexical semantic information is pragmatic in nature.

From these considerations, I conclude that in order to give a full account for the difference in acceptability of FRCCs among speakers, both lexical semantic and pragmatic approaches are necessary.