

## On the Subjectivity of the Characteristic Use of *Will*\*

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### 1. Introduction

In this paper, I will deal with three uses of *will*, which are illustrated by the following sentences:

- (1) a. [On hearing the doorbell ring] That'll be the postman.  
 b. Jim'll help you – he's always willing to help a friend. (Leech (1987:86))  
 c. Oil will float on water. (Palmer (1990:136))

The *will* in (1a) expresses the speaker's prediction with respect to a present situation, while the *will* in (1b) expresses the subject's volition. I refer to the *will* in (1a) as "prediction *will*" and to the *will* in (1b) as "volition *will*". It is generally agreed that the various uses of English modal verbs are divided into two types: the epistemic use and the root use. The epistemic use is concerned with a speaker's judgement regarding the truth-value of the proposition and is characterized as a speaker-oriented use.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the root use is concerned with a condition or attribute of the subject; for example, 'obligation' *must* expresses the subject's condition of being under obligation, and 'ability' *can* expresses one of the subject's attributes—that is, an ability of the subject. This use is characterized as a subject-oriented use. With respect to *will*, the 'prediction' use and the 'volition' use are typically regarded as epistemic and root uses, respectively.

In contrast to these two uses, the use of *will* in (1c) is difficult to analyze. What makes the *will* in (1c) different from prediction/volition *will* is that the sentence in which *will* occurs expresses a characteristic of the subject: it is a so-called generic sentence (cf. Declerck (1986) and Krifka et al. (1995)). I will use the term "characteristic *will*" to refer to this type of *will*.<sup>2</sup> The 'characteristic' use of *will* is

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<sup>1</sup> Here, I use the term "proposition" simply to refer to the part of meaning borne by elements other than modal verbs in a sentence. A more detailed explanation is given in Section 3.

<sup>2</sup> Although I use the terms "volition *will*," "prediction *will*," and "characteristic *will*" in this paper, I do not mean to imply that *will* has such meanings in and of itself. Following Klinge (1993) and Papafragou (1998), among others, I assume that *will* is monosemous and that the various meanings are interpretations which each hearer puts on the whole sentence with *will*, as he considers three types of information: the (core) meaning of the modal verb, the proposition, and the pragmatic information available in the utterance situation. Regarding the type of interpretation given to (1c), I call this "characteristic interpretation" (see Sugiyama (1998) for a discussion of the semantic/pragmatic conditions on characteristic interpretation).

often regarded as both speaker-oriented and subject-oriented. For example, Declerck (1991b:87f.) and Leech (1987) say that the *will* in (1c) expresses a characteristic or predictable behavior of oil. This dual nature of characteristic *will* is attributable to the nature of generic sentences. Generic sentences express a characteristic of the subject, but the characteristic itself is a generalization based on a group of particular episodes or facts. Generic sentences tend to be associated with the notion of prediction because there is a close connection between the notion of generalization and that of prediction. A generalization involves not only observable individuals or events but also unobservable ones such as those which will exist or take place in the distant future. With respect to the latter individuals and events, we can only predict the validity of a generic statement—for example, that they will certainly have such and such a property or do such and such a thing.

The purpose of this paper is to examine whether the ‘characteristic’ use of *will* is similar to the ‘prediction’ use or the ‘volition’ use in subjectivity, using an established definition of modality as well as syntactic evidence. My discussion will be based on the definition of modality and the modal-propositional bistructure proposed by Nakau (1992, 1994). Nakau says that sentence meaning consists of the modal, subjective part and the propositional, objective part. He further introduces several domains which consist solely of propositional elements, such as *if*-clauses and *that*-complements in cleft sentences.<sup>3</sup> In this paper, before examining the subjectivity of characteristic *will*, I will make use of such propositional domains to offer the evidence that prediction *will* is subjective, but volition *will* is objective. As for characteristic *will*, I will deal with the following examples, in addition to (1c) above.

- (2) a. Dogs will bark.
- b. Basketball players will be tall.
- c. John will smoke during busy times.

These four generic sentences differ semantically from one another. I argue that there are several semantic and syntactic differences among the *will*'s themselves. However, I will conclude that these four types of characteristic *will* fall into two categories: one is subjective and akin to prediction *will*, and the other is objective and akin to volition *will*.

The organization of the present paper is as follows. In Section 2, I discuss the difference between the ‘characteristic’ use and the ‘prediction/volition’ uses of *will*. I also discuss differences among the four generic sentences and among the four

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<sup>3</sup> I will refer to linguistic expressions that constitute the propositional part of sentence meaning as “propositional elements,” and to expressions constituting the modal part as “modal elements.”

characteristic *will*'s. In Section 3, I offer an overview of Nakau's modal-propositional bistructure and outline his definition of modality. In Section 4, I introduce four domains where only propositional elements can occur and examine whether prediction/volition *will* can appear in these domains. Then, in Section 5, I also examine the four characteristic *will*'s for the possibility of occurrence in the same domains, and discuss their subjectivity. Section 6 makes concluding remarks.

## 2. The 'Characteristic' Use of *Will*

### 2.1. Characteristics of the 'Characteristic' Use of *Will*.

One of the characteristics common to sentences with modal verbs, whether epistemic or root, is that the speaker does not take the situation described by the proposition as a fact, but rather as a situation possible at the time of utterance (cf. Klinge (1993:324f.)). In the case of the epistemic use in (1a), for example, the speaker does not take it that the person who has just rung the doorbell is the postman; rather, he just believes so. In the case of the root use, as in (1b), the speaker knows that the described situation is not yet actualized but the subject, *Jim* desires it to occur; that is, the situation is not regarded as a fact. It is in this respect that the 'characteristic' use differs from the 'prediction'/'volition' uses of *will*. As I assert in Sugiyama (1998), generic sentences are associated with two kinds of situations: one is an abstract stative situation, as when the subject has such and such a characteristic; the other is a set of individual situations, each of which is assumed to exist at some particular time from the past to the future. The speaker in question takes at least the former situation as a fact. This is indicated by the examples in (3-6). It is clear from the context that the speaker of the sentence with *will* takes the characteristic of the subject as a fact.

(3) Child: I want a dog.

Mother: We can't have one. Our house is too small and dogs *will* bark.

(4) John: What is this floating on the water?

Sister: It's oil. John, did you know that? [Talking proudly] Oil *will* float on water.

(5) A: [Seeing a group of men, in surprise] How tall they are!

B: They are members of a basketball team. It shouldn't be any surprise; basketball players *will* be tall.

(6) A: Yesterday, I saw John smoking for the first time.

B: He *will* smoke during busy times. (Sugiyama (1998:303))

This claim is further reinforced by the fact that we can use the corresponding simple sentences, such as *Oil floats on water* for (4), in the same contexts. Generally, the

speaker of a simple sentence is interpreted to make straightforward statement of fact, as is pointed out by Lyons (1977:797).

## 2.2. *Different Types of Characteristic Will*

Here, I will show that there are several differences among the four characteristic *will*'s in (1c) and (2a-c). For the sake of convenience, these examples are repeated as follows:

- (7) a. Oil will float on water.  
 b. Dogs will bark.  
 c. Basketball players will be tall.  
 d. John will smoke during busy times.

Although all of these sentences are regarded as generic sentences, we can observe several semantic differences among them. First, we can see a difference between (7d) and the others. While (7d) describes a characteristic (or habit) of an individual, the other sentences all describe characteristics of classes. Fukuzawa (1985:1) also points out this difference; He says that sentences like (7d) are not generic in that they do not make a generic statement about a class.

Secondly, we can differentiate between (7c) and the others. (7c) contains a stative predicate, expressing a generalization based on the properties of individuals; on the other hand, each of the other sentences contains a nonstative predicate, expressing a generalization over events. Krifka et al. (1995:17) classify generic sentences into two types in this respect; they call generic sentences like (7c) "lexically characterizing sentences" and those like (7a,b) and (7d) "habitual sentences."

Thirdly, there is a difference between (7a) and the others; (7a) expresses a scientific fact to which exceptions can hardly ever be evoked, while the others express a typical behavior or property of the subject, and exceptions can be more easily evoked. This difference leads to a difference in the interpretation of characteristic *will*, which is discussed later.

Based on the three differences noted above, we can characterize the four generic sentences in (7) as follows: one which expresses a scientific fact (=7a), one which expresses a nonstative characteristic of some class (=7b), one which expresses a stative characteristic of some class (=7c), and one which expresses a habit of some individual (=7d). In the following, I will refer to the four types of *will*'s occurring in these sentences as "scientific-characteristic *will*," "nonstative-characteristic *will*," "stative-characteristic *will*," and "individual-characteristic *will*," respectively.

Next, let us turn to the differences among the four types of characteristic *will*. To begin with, we can identify several differences with respect to backshift in indirect speech. The term "backshift" generally refers to a change in the tense form of a verb

or modal verb in indirect speech; if the reporting clause is in the past tense in indirect speech, the tense form in the reported clause should be the past form, too (i.e. should be “backshifted”). This grammatical rule applies to prediction *will* and volition *will*, as in the following:

- (8) a. [On hearing the doorbell ring] “That’ll be the postman,” I said.  
 →I said that {\*it’ll /it would} be the postman.  
 b. I knew he liked her. “He will help you,” I said to her.  
 →I said that he {\*will/would} help her.

However, as is often pointed out, present forms may be retained when the reported clause describes a situation which is true or valid at the time of reporting. Here are examples taken from Declerck (1991a:523):

- (9) a. The ancient Greeks did not know yet that the earth {is/was} round.  
 b. The teacher said that the beaver builds dams.

Declerck says that in (9a) the use of *is* implies that the speaker believes the reported utterance (i.e. “The earth is round”), while the use of *was* means that he does not commit himself on the truth of it. As for (9b), Declerck observes that the use of *would* in this sentence would suggest the speaker’s doubt or disbelief as to the reported utterance.

Now, let us consider the four characteristic *will*’s.

- (10) a. “Oil will float on water,” I said.  
 →I said that oil {will/\*would} float on water.<sup>4</sup>  
 b. “Dogs will bark,” I said.  
 →I said that dogs {will/\*would} bark.  
 c. “Basketball players will be tall,” I said.  
 →I said that basketball players {\*will/\*would} be tall.  
 d. “John will smoke during busy times,” I said.  
 → I said that John {will/would} smoke during busy times.

Let us first consider the difference in acceptability of the various present forms of *will*. Stative-characteristic *will* is different from the others in that it cannot occur in the reported clause in the present form. In addition, it cannot occur even in the past form. I will discuss this example further in Section 5.2.

Next, let us consider the acceptability of the past form of *will*. Only individual-characteristic *will* can be backshifted. A possible explanation for this difference is

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<sup>4</sup> *Would* in (10a) is acceptable when the *will* in the original utterance is regarded as prediction *will*, that is, the original sentence is uttered by someone who is going to demonstrate oil floating on water. In contrast, *would* is not acceptable even in the sense of prediction in (10b), unless the subject is changed to an NP which refers to specific dogs—for example, *I said that those dogs would bark*.

that knowledge of a habit of an individual is not generally shared by many people; therefore, it is relatively easy to imagine speakers who report an utterance containing characteristic *will* while they do not believe it or do not commit themselves on the truth of the original utterance.

Stative-characteristic *will* differs from the others in another respect: Only the former cannot occur in the following context:

(11) A: Tell me something that is characteristic of {oil/dogs/basketball players/  
John}.

B: It will float on water/They will bark/\*They will be tall/He will smoke  
during busy times.

Needless to say, B could use all the corresponding simple sentences to reply in this context. We shall return to this example in Section 5.2.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the four characteristic *will*'s differ from one another.

### 3. Nakau's (1992, 1994) Thesis

In this section, I will offer an overview of Nakau's (1992, 1994) thesis on the modal-propositional bistructure of sentence meaning and his definition of modality.

#### 3.1. *The Modal-Propositional Bistructure*

Before explaining the modal-propositional bistructure in Nakau (1994), I will outline his view of the infrastructure of sentence meaning. Nakau (1994:15) argues that the meaning of a sentence has a hierarchical structure, as represented below:

(12)  $[_{M(s)2}D\text{-modality} [_{M(s)1}S\text{-modality} [_{Prop4}Polarity [_{Prop3}Tense [_{Prop2}Aspect$   
 $[_{Prop1}Pred. Arg.]]]]]]]$

"M(s)," "Prop," "D-modality," "S-modality," "Pred.," and "Arg." are abbreviations for "sentence meaning," "proposition," "Discourse-modality," "Sentence-modality," "predicate," and "argument," respectively. This structure consists of the six distinct layers "M(s)<sup>2</sup>," "M(s)<sup>1</sup>," "Prop<sup>4</sup>," "Prop<sup>3</sup>," "Prop<sup>2</sup>," and "Prop<sup>1</sup>" and the five operators "D-modality," "S-modality," "Polarity," "Tense," and "Aspect". Except for the bottommost layer (Prop<sup>4</sup>), all layers involve an operator-operand relation. The scope of each operator is the component immediately to its right; for example, the scope of S-modality is Prop<sup>4</sup>. In this paper, I will not deal with the subdivision of propositions. The semantic structure in (12) can thus be simplified as follows:

(13) [D-modality [S-modality [proposition]]]

(13) shows that sentence meaning has a modal-propositional bistructure. The modal component, which consists of D-modality and S-modality, is characterized as a subjective component, while the propositional component is characterized as an

objective component.

### 3.2. *The Definition of Modality: S-modality and D-modality*

Nakau (1992:5) defines modality as follows:

- (14) (i) a mental attitude (ii) on the part of the speaker (iii) only accessible at the time of utterance, where the time of utterance is further characterized as the instantaneous present (as opposed particularly to the durational present and the past).

This definition consists of three different conceptual components. Nakau states that if a linguistic expression satisfies all three conditions, then that expression qualifies as a prototypical expression of modality. The expression *I think* is one example of such expressions. However, the expressions *he thinks* and *I always think* fail to meet the second condition of speaker involvement and the third condition of the instantaneous present, respectively; therefore, these are not prototypical expressions of modality.

Now let us consider the two types of modality. S-modality is concerned with the speaker's commitment to the proposition. Nakau (1994:54) divides S-modality expressions into the following five types:

- (15) a. Modality of truth judgement (*will, perhaps, I think, I say*)  
 b. Modality of judgment withholding (*I wonder, It is said*)  
 c. Modality of (dis)approval (*I doubt, I admit*)  
 d. Modality of value judgment (*I regret, to my surprise*)  
 e. Modality of deontic judgment (*I promise, must, I want to*)

For example, in the case of modality of truth judgement, the speaker commits himself, to a greater or lesser degree, to the truth-value of the proposition. In the case of modality of deontic judgement, the speaker commits himself to the proposition in the sense that he imposes some action described by the proposition on the hearer or himself.

Next let us turn to D-modality. To put it simply, D-modality is concerned with the way the speaker conveys information to others. Nakau (1994:59) distinguishes the following types:

- (16) a. Modality of discourse (text) formation (*and, but, since, therefore*)  
 b. Modality of speech act manner (*briefly, if I may ask, frankly*)  
 c. Modality of informational salience (*even, it/wh-cleft construction*)  
 d. Modality of interpersonal relation (*polite mas-u/des-u, please*)  
 e. Modality of interjection/ritual convention (*oh, yes, Merry Christmas*)

### 3.3. *Hypothesis Made in This Paper*

For the present, we shall discuss which part of sentence meaning the three types of *will* (i.e. prediction *will*, volition *will*, and characteristic *will*) constitute, on the basis





#### 4.1. *If-clauses*

It is a well-known fact that epistemic modal verbs cannot occur in *if*-clauses, as in the following examples:

(18) a. If it {*\*may/ \*must*} rain, I'll take an umbrella.

(Asakawa & Kamata (1986:210))

b. *\*If* John will come, Mary will leave.

(Palmer (1990:171))

This is also true of the prediction *will* in (1a), as we see below:

(19) If that {is /*\*will* be} the postman, you might receive a birthday card.

On the other hand, as is pointed out by Palmer (1990:178), this restriction does not apply to the subject-oriented use of *will*. Palmer takes the following examples:

(20) a. If only people will vote in sufficient numbers to put the Liberal back!

b. I know that if medicine will save him, he'll be safe.

Palmer observes that the *will* in (20a) expresses volition and that the *will* in (20b) expresses power (of *medicine*). The volition *will* in (1b) can also occur in an *if*-clause, as the following shows:

(21) If he {helps /will help} her, she'll cut the grass.

With respect to *if*-clauses, Nakau gives the following explanation: the elements which may occur in *if*-clauses are limited to those which can become the object of our truth judgment, and thus *if*-clauses should consist of only objective elements, i.e. propositional elements. Therefore, prediction *will*, which cannot occur in an *if*-clause, is a modal element; volition *will*, which can occur in such a clause, is a propositional element.

It is worth noting, in passing, that there are cases in which modal verbs with the sense of prediction occur in *if*-clauses such as the following:

(22) a. If it may be raining, you should take your umbrella. (Lyons (1977:805))

b. If it will amuse you, I'll tell you a joke. (Palmer (1990:178))

Lyons observes that the modal verb in (22a) expresses objective modality.<sup>6</sup> Nakau (1994:251) deals with (22b), saying that the *will* expresses an objective prediction like *If it is {predicted/likely} that it amuses you,...*

#### 4.2. *Cleft Sentences*

The cleft sentence is a grammatical device that enables the speaker to select which element of the sentence will be highlighted. The *cleft* sentence in (23b) is available as an alternative to the simple sentence in (23a).

(23) a. You might be thinking of his father.

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<sup>6</sup> Lyons (1977:806) notes that there are few utterances such as (22a) in English because it is much more natural to use modal verbs for subjective than objective.

b. It might be his father that you are thinking of. (Nakau (1994:140))

In (23b), the speaker highlights the element *his father*, presupposing the semantic content of the *that*-clause. Nakau (1994:139) claims that propositional elements are divided into two parts in a cleft sentence: the focal part in the main clause and the presupposed part in the *that*-clause. In (23b), for example, the focal element *his father* constitutes the single proposition *You are thinking of his father*. It must be noted that in cleft sentences, modal elements can only occur in the main clause, while propositional elements can appear in both the main clause and the subordinate clause. For example, the following cleft sentence, which contains the modal element *might* in the *that*-clause, is anomalous.

(24) \*It is his father that you might be thinking of. (Nakau (1994:141))

Nakau explains this restriction on modal elements as follows: a modal element has to encompass the proposition as an operator; however, if a modal element occurs in the *that*-clause of cleft sentences, it cannot encompass the focal element in the main clause; hence the anomaly. That is to say, any modal element should stand to the left of the focal element in cleft sentences.

Let us consider the case of prediction/volition *will*. (25a,b) contain volition *will* and prediction *will* respectively, and they both contain a *because*-clause as well. When we highlight the *because*-clauses, with the *will*'s in the *that*-clauses, we get (26a,b):

(25) a. That will be the postman because the door bell has rung three times.

b. John will help her because he likes her.

(26) a. \*It is because the doorbell has rung three times that it will be the postman.

b. It is because he likes her that he will help her.

The unacceptability of (26a) indicates that prediction *will* is a modal element. In contrast, the acceptability of (26b) shows that volition *will* is a propositional element.

#### 4.3. That-Clauses of Non-Factive Predicates

As we discussed in Section 3.1, Nakau (1994) argues that S-modality encompasses proposition. His hierarchical structure of sentence meaning entails that an S-modality expression cannot occur in a proposition, which is objective. Consider the following:

(27) a. \* Max realizes that {I hereby warn you not to be late again/I take it that you were sick}.

b. \* Bill's claim that {I hereby promise (you)/I take it} that we will file early is ridiculous. (Nakau (1994:93))

Nakau argues that the complements embedded under the expressions *realize (that)* in

(27a) and *claim (that)* in (27b) consist of propositional elements. Thus the anomaly of these sentences is reduced to the occurrence in the complements of the prototypical modality expressions *I hereby promise* (S-modality of deontic judgement (cf. (15e)) and *I take it* (S-modality of truth judgement (cf. (15a))).

Let us now examine the behavior of occurrence of prediction/volition *will* in the propositional complement. Here, I will use the expression *my claim that*, as in the following:

- (28) a. My claim that {\*it'll be/it's} the postman is based on past experience.  
 b. My claim that Jim will help her is based on the fact that he likes her.

These examples show that prediction *will* cannot occur in a propositional complement, while volition *will* can. It follows from this that prediction *will* is a modal element and volition *will* is a propositional element.

Predicates such as *claim* and *realize* are the type of predicate which Kiparsky & Kiparsky (hereafter, K&K) (1970) call “non-factive predicates”. The counterpart to this category is that of “factive predicates”. (29) and (30) exemplify these two types of predicate.

- (29) a. It is likely that it is raining. (non-factive predicate)  
 b. I suppose that it is raining.  
 (30) a. It is odd that it is raining. (factive predicate)  
 b. I regret that it is raining.

(K&K (1970:147))

One of the essential properties of non-factive predicates is that the speaker asserts the content of the *that*-clause to be true. In the case of factive predicates, the speaker presupposes its truth.

According to Nakau's (1994) definition of modality, the fact that the speaker has already supposed an expression to be true at the time of utterance means that the expression in question cannot be a modality expression. Thus I assume that the complement of a factive predicate consists solely of propositional elements. In the next section, I will examine the possibility of occurrence of prediction/volition *will* in the complement of a factive predicate.

#### 4.4. *That-Complements of Factive Predicates*

K&K (1970) give many examples which show that the two types of predicates in question are different. (31b) is one such example.

- (31) a. It is {significant/likely} that the dog barked during the night.  
 b. The fact {that the dog barked/of the dog's barking} during the night is {significant/\*likely}. (K&K (1970:144))

From the difference in acceptability in (31b), they argue that only factive predicates

can take the noun *fact* with a complement (a *that*-clause or a gerund) as in (31a).

Now let us look at the case of prediction/volition *will*. Here I use the same predicate as the one in (31), *significant*.

- (32) a. The fact that {it is/\*it'll be} the postman is significant.<sup>7</sup>  
 b. The fact that he'll help her is significant.

These results suggest that prediction *will* is a modal element, while volition *will* is a propositional element.

To sum up, in this section I have outlined the four propositional domains and presented evidence which shows that prediction *will* is a modal element, while volition *will* is a propositional element: the former is subjective, while the latter is objective.

## 5. The Subjectivity of Characteristic *Will*

### 5.1. Two Types of Characteristic Will

Let us investigate the behavior of the four types of characteristic *will* (scientific-characteristic *will*, nonstative-characteristic *will*, stative-characteristic *will*, and individual-characteristic *will*) in the four propositional domains discussed above.

- (33) a. If oil {floats/will float} on water, we can then make the following statement.  
 b. If this kind of animal {barks/will bark} like a dog, most people won't want to have one as a pet.  
 c. If cricket players {are/\*will be} tall like basketball players, we'll need to order more fabric than usual.<sup>8</sup>  
 d. If John {smokes/will smoke} during busy times, we may see him smoking at work.
- (34) a. It is because oil is lighter than water that it {floats/will float} on water.  
 b. It is because dogs have DNA B that they {bark/will bark}.<sup>9</sup>  
 c. It is because basketball teams set up a height restriction that basketball players {are/\*will be} tall.  
 d. It is because smoking increases his concentration that he {smokes/will smoke} during busy times.
- (35) a. My claim that oil {floats/will float} on water is based on the following fact.

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<sup>7</sup> If the complement is interpreted as expressing some future situation, the 'it'll be' sentence becomes acceptable.

<sup>8</sup> This utterance could be made, for example, by a tailor who has received an order for uniforms for a cricket team.

<sup>9</sup> The assumption here is that "DNA B" is a gene that makes an animal bark.

- b. My claim that this kind of animal {barks/will bark} is based on the following fact.
  - c. My claim that cricket players {are/\*will be} tall is based on statistical evidence.
  - d. My claim that John {smokes/will smoke} during busy times is based on the following evidence.
- (36) a. The fact that oil {floats/will float} on water is significant.
- b. The fact that dogs {bark/will bark} is significant.
  - c. The fact that basketball players {are/\*will be} tall is significant.
  - d. The fact that he {smokes/will smoke} during busy times is significant.

It should be noted that in (33b,c) and (35b,c), I use generic sentences which differ from the original sentences, for pragmatic reasons. However, since the modified sentences contain the same types of subject and predicate as the original sentences, this modification does not affect the present analysis.

Now let us consider the native-speaker judgments in (33-36). The results are clear: all the (c) sentences are unacceptable, which shows that stative-characteristic *will* cannot occur in any of the four propositional domains. This leads us to the conclusion that stative-characteristic *will* is a modal element and thus subjective, while the others—scientific-characteristic *will*, nonstative-characteristic *will*, and individual-characteristic *will*—are all propositional elements and thus objective. We stated in Section 3.2 that characteristic *will* might be either a propositional element or D-modality expression. Now that it has been made clear that stative-characteristic *will* is not a propositional element, the only possibility left is that it is a D-modality expression. On the basis of the preceding observations, the representation given in (17) can be modified as follows:

- (37) [ D-modality [ S-modality [ proposition ] ] ]  
 stative-ch. *will* prediction *will* volition *will*/scientific-ch. *will*  
 nonstative-ch. *will*/ individual-ch. *will*

In the next section, I will explore certain syntactic phenomena associated with stative-characteristic *will*, which were discussed briefly in Section 2.2.

### 5.2. *The Subjectivity of Stative-Characteristic Will*

We have seen above that stative-characteristic *will* differs from the other types of characteristic *will* in that the former cannot be used in the context of (11), repeated here as (38):

- (38) A: Tell me something that is characteristic of {oil/dogs/basketball players/  
 John}.
- B: It will float on water/They will bark/\*They will be tall/He will smoke

during busy times. (= (11))

Let us dialogue this context with the one in (5), where the use of stative-characteristic *will* is acceptable:

(39) A: [Seeing a group of men, in surprise] How tall they are!

B: They are members of a basketball team. It shouldn't be any surprise;  
basketball players {will be/are} tall. (= (5))

In both of these cases B regards the proposition as a fact; however, in (39) B seems to be emphasizing a characteristic of basketball players. In fact, this speaker does not utter the sentence in question just to inform the hearer of a generic fact, but to make the hearer evoke a piece of knowledge he already possesses, implying "you must be aware of such a fact which is so self-evident." The fact that the occurrence of stative-characteristic *will* is restricted to contexts that involve emphasis lends credence to the claim that this type of *will* is a D-modality expression. This claim is also supported by (10c), repeated below as (40), which shows that we cannot use stative-characteristic *will* in the reported clause, either in the present form or in the past.

(40) "Basketball players will be tall," I said.

→I said that basketball players {\*will/\*would} be tall. (= (10c))

The unacceptability of these forms suggests that stative-characteristic *will* is actually speaker-oriented or discourse-oriented, in so far as it does not make sense when extracted from the original context and embedded in a reported clause. As we saw in (8a), prediction *will*, which is an S-modality expression, can occur in the reported clause. It thus follows that stative-characteristic *will* is more subjective than prediction *will*.

## 6. Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I have discussed the subjectivity of the 'characteristic' use of *will* in comparison with the 'prediction'/'volition' uses of *will*. Referring to Nakau's (1992, 1994) modal-propositional bistructure of sentence meaning, I gave syntactic evidence for the assumption that prediction *will* is a subjective, modal element, while volition *will* is an objective, propositional element: I introduced the four types of propositional domains proposed by Nakau (1994) (*if*-clauses in conditional sentences, *that*-clauses in cleft sentences, *that*-clauses of factive predicates, and those of non-factive predicates) and examined whether or not prediction/volition *will* can occur in these domains. Further, I considered the four types of characteristic *will* (scientific-characteristic *will*, nonstative-characteristic *will*, stative-characteristic *will*, and individual-characteristic *will*) and concluded that stative-characteristic *will* is a modal element associated with D-modality and thus akin to prediction *will*, and that the

others are propositional elements and thus akin to volition *will*. I also argued that stative-characteristic *will* is discourse-oriented and that it is more subjective than prediction *will*, which is an S-modality expression.

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