What Makes the Meaning of the English Verb Make?*

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1. Introduction

The English verb make has an intriguing pair of uses shown in (1) and (2):

- (1) She made a good actress.
- (2) She made a new dress.

While the *make* in (2) has a meaning similar to *produce* or *manufacture*, the *make* in (1) has a meaning close to *become*. Thus, (1) describes a change, not an activity. To characterize these uses, Kazumi (1993) proposes two uses of *make* called "internal PRODUCE" and "external PRODUCE", assuming that *make* has an abstract meaning PRODUCE. "Internal PRODUCE" is characterized as the inner change of a person or an object and thus naturally invisible. On the other hand, "external PRODUCE" is the manufacturing of something. While in "internal PRODUCE" sentences, the subject NP and the object NP share the same referent, in "external PRODUCE" sentences, the referent of the object NP is different from the referent of the subject NP. This analysis gives a natural explanation for the difference between the two uses. In fact, "internal PRODUCE" sentences express changes as in (1) or states as in (3).

- (3) This lid makes a good ash-tray. (Cattell 1984: 255)² It also explains why (1) and (3) do not have a passive alternative, while (2) does.
 - (1') *A good actress was made (by her).
 - (2') A new dress was made (by her).
 - (3') *A good ash-tray is made (by this lid). (cf. Cattell 1984: 256)

Since in (1) and (3) the subject and the object refer to the same entity, it is not possible to pick out the object alone and bring it in focus.³

Along the line of Kazumi (1993), Kazumi (1997) proposes a revision based on various examples with the construction "NP1 make(s) NP2". Kazumi (1997) characterizes "internal PRODUCE" as "element-providing make" and "external PRODUCE" as "(external) factor-providing make" respectively⁴, assuming that make has the core meaning of "providing the essential(s) for".

This paper aims to examine the nature of the two uses of *make*, focusing on sentences with a "causative" construction "NP1 *make*(s) NP2 NP3" as well as "NP1 *make*(s) NP2". In the "NP1 *make*(s) NP2 NP3" construction discussed here, NP2, the object, and NP3, the complement, share the same referent, as in (4) and (5).

- (4) Her outspoken opinions made her a popular politician.
- (5) The win made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249)

I will show that make sentences with this construction exhibit a similar paradigm to those with the construction 'NP1 make(s) NP2". That is, in this type of sentences,

the subject refers to either key elements which constitute the referent of NP3, the complement, or key factors that produce a situation where the object and the complement share the same referent. I will also discuss what pragmatic functions these sentences have.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews Kazumi (1997). Section 2.1 illustrates "element-providing make" and "(external) factor-providing make". Section 2.2 deals with two pragmatic functions, "opinion" and "description", and gives a further discussion. In Section 3, make-sentences with the "NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3" construction will be discussed. Section 3.1 shows that they are also classified into "element-providing make" and "(external) factor-providing make". In Section 3.2, I will propose that there are three subtypes of "(external) factor-providing make" and discuss the relationship between these uses of make and their pragmatic functions. Section 3.3 deals with examples which have human-subjects. In the last section, I will try to clarify what is the general meaning of make in the examples discussed in this paper.

2. Kazumi (1997)

2.1. "Element-providing Make" vs. "(External) Factor-providing Make"

Kazumi (1997), following Kazumi (1993)'s classification, draws a line between the two different uses of *make* such as in (1) and (2).

- (1) She made a good actress.
- (2) She made a new dress.

In order to characterize the two uses, the following terms are introduced: "element-providing make" and "(external) factor-providing make". If the referent of the subject constitutes the referent of the object or possesses necessary qualities for the referent of the object, the use is called "element-providing make", and if the referent of the subject is a person who actually manufactures or produces the referent of the object, the use of make is called "(external) factor-providing make". In (1) for example, the referent of the subject had the right qualities for a good actress, thus the make is "element-providing make". On the other hand, in (2), the referent of the subject did the work to make a dress. That is, even if she had all the materials necessary to make a dress, the dress could not emerge without her actual sewing it. Thus, the make is "(external) factor-providing make".

The referent of the subject in "element-providing *make*" sentences is classified into three types: (i) all the elements that are necessary, (ii) the key element, or (iii) the last element. The following examples correspond to these three cases respectively.

- (1) She made a good actress.
- (6) Those little bows round the neck really make the dress! (CIDE)

(7) Today's earthquake makes five since the beginning of the year.⁵ (CIDE)

Kazumi (1997) assumes that *make* has the core meaning "providing the essential(s) for". The difference between "element-providing *make*" and "(external) factor-providing *make*" is thus considered the difference in focus. For example, in "element-providing *make*" sentences, focus is on what constitutes the resultant. In this case, "elements" appear in the subject position. On the other hand, in "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences, focus is on what causes a resultant. Thus, "(external) factors" appear in the subject position.

2.2. Opinions vs. Descriptions

Kazumi (1997) also discusses "element-providing *make*" and "(external) factor-providing *make*" from a pragmatic point of view. In this section, I will consider this point a little further.

First, let me illustrate the two pragmatic functions discussed in Kazumi (1997). In Kazumi, "element-providing *make*" sentences such as (1) are characterized as an opinion or view of the speaker, while "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences such as (2) are characterized as a simple description of a particular situation.

- (1) She made a good actress.
- (2) She made a new dress.

Kazumi assumes that in "element-providing make" sentences the speaker plays an important role in making a link between two concepts or objects, that is, elements and a resultant composed of these elements. In (3) for example, the speaker is connecting the lid and "a good ashtray" in his/her mind.

(3) This lid makes a good ash-tray. (Cattell 1984: 255)

In (2), on the other hand, the speaker is just stating a fact.

The pragmatic difference between (1) and (2) becomes clearer when they are embedded in the larger sentences beginning with "I think".

- (1") I think she made a good actress.
- (2") I think she made a new dress.

While (1) can be expanded into (1") without a change in meaning, (2) and (2") have different meanings. That is, in (2) the speaker knows that the person made a dress but in (2") the speaker is not certain whether she did so or not. This supports that (1) expresses the speaker's opinion and (2) describes a fact.

Here it should be noted that "element-providing *make*" sentences refer to qualities of people or things. It is quite difficult to describe such qualities objectively. It can be said that this characteristic of "element-providing *make*" sentences makes them personal opinions. On the other hand, "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences refer to the manufacturing process, which can be observed and described easily.

To look at the difference from another point of view, consider the following

sentence.

(8) Those seven stars make a dog.

What is expressed by the statement is the speaker's personal way of looking at things. When two people are looking at the same set of stars, they often associate them with different objects. Thus, (8) can be challenged as in (9):

- (9) A: Those seven stars make a dog.
 - B: Really? To me, they look like a rabbit.

Thus "element-providing *make*" sentences express the speaker's opinion, idea, or way of looking at things, while "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences simply describe or state facts.

Now I will turn to another case. In Kazumi (1997), examples such as (10) are characterized as "element-providing *make*", which therefore implies the speaker's personal opinion.

(10) Two and two make four.

Since the subject of (10) refers to "elements", the sentence should be characterized as an opinion based on the assumption made in Kazumi (1997). While (10) is different from (1), (6), and (8), no convincing explanation is given in Kazumi (1997). Instead, only the following suggestion is made: if a person wants to say something purely arithmetic, he/she can use be rather than make. The following examples are classified into the same type as (10) since they describe facts.

- (7) Today's earthquake makes five since the beginning of the year. (CIDE)
- (11) Oxygen and hydrogen make water.

It should be noted here that (7) can be considered an opinion even though it implies the adding "4 + 1". In (7), it is the speaker who characterizes the earthquake as the fifth. The fact that the earthquake is the fifth is not noted until the speaker says (7). Thus, the speaker is transforming a simple statement of the earthquake to more complex one by adding his/her observation of the event. Thus, (7) is different from (10) and (11).

It seems useful to consider (12) and (13) before dealing with (10) and (11).

- (12) Wool makes warm clothing. (KNEJD5)
- (13) Cold tea makes an excellent drink in summer. (KNEJD5)

While these two sentences are usually regarded as opinions, they also appear to be descriptions. What differenciates (12) and (13) from (1), (6), and (8) is that the former two are generally acceptable notions while the latter three are merely personal opinions. Since (12) and (13) are considered general knowledge, they seem to be factual statements. However, they are not scientific universals since wool is sometimes used for summer clothes, and cold drinks could be unhealthy for people with sensitive stomachs. Thus, they are personal opinions after all.

Now turn to the sentences in (10) and (11). It might be possible to consider them special cases of apparent descriptions such as (12) and (13): while in (12) and (13), most people characterize the referent of the subject NP in the same way, in (10) and (11), everybody associates the referent of the subject and the referent of the object. However, they are factual statements rather than personal opinions. In this paper, I will regard them as exceptions to the characterization of "element-providing make" sentences. It should be noted here, however, that they are not scientific equations. In fact, they are simple statements which can be made in explanation to children. This kind of examples need further investigation.

3. NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3 Construction

This section examines examples with the construction "NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3". I will point out here that such examples can be characterized in a similar way to examples with "NP1 make(s) NP2". That is, these examples are classified into either "element-providing make" or "(external) factor-providing make" and the difference in two uses appears in the subject position.

3.1. Elements vs. (External) Factors

First, compare the following examples.

- (4) Her outspoken opinions made her a popular politician.
- (5) The win made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249)

Sentences (4) and (5) have the same construction "NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3" and NP2 and NP3 share the identical referent: in (4) it is the person referred to as "her" that became a popular politician; in (5) it is "Sally" that became a rich woman.

However, there is a clear difference between the examples: while in (4) it was her own opinions that made her a popular politician, in (5) what made the person rich was the win, an event out of her control. The following examples will make this point clear.

- (14) She had something that made her a popular politician.
- (15) ??She had something that made her a rich woman.

People cannot have something that makes them rich.

To look at this from another point of view, consider the sentences below.

- (16) Her talents made her a good politician.
- (17) Her success in movies made her a popular politician.

These two examples are quite different in that the subject NP in (16) refers to what is needed, that is, the "elements" for the woman to be a good politician; while the subject NP in (17) refers to a reason why the woman became a popular politician, that is, an "external factor". Though success in movies is not usually necessary to be a popular politician, in this case, her public recognition and charisma helped her campaign.

A similar parallel is observed in the following pair.9

- (18) His acting really makes the film impressive.
- (19) Its win at the International Film Festival made the film instantly popular. In both (18) and (19), the subject NP refers to what is the key for the film's success. However, there is a clear difference in the relation between the subject NP and the object NP. In (18), his acting is a part of the film in question; while in (19), the win at the festival is not. Stated differently, the subject NP of (18) refers to what is unseparable from the film, while the subject NP in (19) refers to an event that is external to the film. Thus, (19) is neutral about whether the film was good or not. In fact, the
 - (20) Even though the film was bad, its win at the International Film Festival made it instantly popular.

Another difference between the two uses of *make* is in passivizability: while "element-providing *make*" sentences do not have a corresponding passive alternative, "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences do. The difference is also observed between (4) and (5).

- (4) Her outspoken opinions made her a popular politician.
- (4') *She was made a popular politician (by her outspoken opinions).
- (5) The win made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249)
- (5') Sally was made a rich woman (by the win). (Cattell 1984: 250)

This suggests that being rich is merely a situation in which people are completely separate from the fact. Therefore, examples with the "NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3" construction should also be divided into two types of make uses: "element-providing make" and "(external) factor-providing make".

3.2. Subclasses of External factors

sentence can occur with a clause such as:

3.2.1. External factor [producer] vs. External factor [influence]

So far, I have shown that examples with the construction "NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3" are classified into "element-providing make" and "(external) factor-providing make" as well as examples with the construction "NP1 make(s) NP2". A comparison of such different uses and/or constructions will be useful to discover their similarities and differences.

First, compare the following examples with the same "element-providing make" but with different constructions.

- (6) Those little bows round the neck really make the dress! (CIDE) [NP1 make(s) NP2]
- (4) Her outspoken opinions made her a popular politician. [NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3]

In both (6) and (4) the referent of the subject NP plays an essential role. In (6), the

subject refers to the best feature of the dress. In other words, the dress would not be good without the bows. Similarly, in (4), the woman's outspoken opinions are necessary "elements" for her to be a popular politician.

Next, compare the following sentences with different uses of *make* and constructions.

(1) She made a good actress.

[NP1 make(s) NP2]

(21) The right training made her a good actress.

[NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3]

The make in (1) is "element-providing make", while the make in (21) is "(external) factor-providing make". While in (1) the woman possessed the qualities to be a good actress, in (21) her talents alone were not enough and she needed training as well. That is, in both (1) and (21), the person possessed necessary talents. The difference is in focus: what was crucial appears in the subject position of each sentence. Putting this difference aside, however, it can be said that (1) is nested in a larger construction which has one more argument, the subject in (21). Note that (21), an "(external) factor-providing make" sentence, is considered an opinion rather than a description. I will discuss this point later in 3.2.2.

Now, consider the following pair of "(external) factor-providing make" examples.

- (2) She made a new dress.
- (22) She made the fabric into a new dress.

These sentences can describe the same situation. In that case, the object NP in (2) and the object NP of *into* in (22) refer to the same dress and the subject NP in (2) and that in (22) refer to the same person. The difference is whether materials are referred to or not.

As stated above, the referent of the subject in "element-providing make" sentences is classified into three types: (i) all the elements that are necessary, (ii) the key element, or (iii) the last element. Are there any subtypes of the subject in "(external) factor-providing make" sentences? In order to consider this, first let us compare (22) with (5). The subject of (5) is similar to the subject of (22) in that the referent has a strong influence on the relevant transforming event.

(5) The win made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249)
Still, it seems difficult to deal with sentences such as (5) and (22) in completely the same way: in (2), the person intended to produce a dress, while in (5), the outcome of the event, her win in this case, was not decided by a sentient being. For this reason, I propose to divide "(external) factor" into "(external) factor [producer]" for sentences such as (2) and (22), and "(external) factor [influence]" for sentences such as (5). The

two types of "(external) factor-providing make" sentences both have a passive alternative.

- (5') Sally was made a rich woman (by the win). (Cattell 1984: 250)
- (22') The fabric was made into a new dress (by her).

3.2.2. External Factor [Stimulant]

In this section, I will discuss "(external) factor-providing make" examples such as (21). Kazumi (1997) considers "element-providing make" sentences an opinion of the speaker and "(external) factor-providing make" sentences a description of facts or situations. However, as suggested in 3.2.1, the subject in (21) refers to an "external factor" while the whole sentence is considered an opinion. I will give some other examples.

- (23) The right training will make him a good teacher. (cf. Cattell 1984: 257)
- (24) Dressing in white made her a pretty bride. (cf. Cattell 1984: 257)
- (25) Turning it upside down makes this lid a good ash-tray. (Cattell 1984: 257)

In these sentences, the referent of the object iteself is not changed in a visible way. For example, in (23) the person will learn how to teach well but it is not true that he will change into a different person. Similarly, in (24), the woman herself was not changed. In (25), the lid will remain as it is even after being turned upside down since it has basic characteristics necessary to be a good ashtray. In each example, the subject refers to the "external factor" which arranges or brings out the characteristics of the referent of the object. However, (23) - (25) are quite different from (5), in which the event referred to by the subject NP has a strong influence on the referent of the object NP.

- (5) The win made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249)

 The events referred to by the subjects of (23) (25) do not have such a strong influence: they are rather a kind of "stimulant" or "catalyst". As shown below, these events can be stated as a condition.
 - (23') He will make a good teacher if he gets the right traininig.
 - (24') She made a pretty bride when she dressed in white.
 - (25') This lid makes a good ash-tray if it is turned upside down.
- In (23) (25), the event referred to by the subject draws out necessary qualities from the referent of the object NP. In (23) for example, the training will stimulate the person's qualities necessary to be a good teacher. In (24), the white dress brought out her prettiness. In (25), turning the lid upside down draws out the qualities needed to make a good ashtray. Thus, (23) (25) are similar to "element-providing make" examples in that "elements" appear in sentences. Observe that (5") is strange because it is not possible for a person to have necessary qualities to be rich.
 - (5") ??Sally would have made a rich woman if she had won.

Here I introduce the third "(external) factor", "(external) factor [stimulant]" to clarify the difference between the event in (5) and those in (23) - (25). When the event is a "stimulant", it is implied that the referent of the object possesses necessary qualities to be the referent of the complement. On the other hand, if the event is an "influence", there is no such implication. Thus, (23) - (25) are opinions, while (5) is a description.

3.3. Humans in the Subject Position

In the sentences discussed in 3.1 and 3.2, the subject refers to a non-human external factor: for example in (5) and (17), a non-human event referred to by the subject affects the referent of the object NP. In (23) - (25), however, the subject NP implies that there is somebody who causes/caused the event. For example, in (25), a person turns the lid upside down.

(25) Turning it upside down makes this lid a good ash-tray. (Cattell 1984: 257)

In spite of this difference, the subject in (23) - (25) cannot be given an agent role. These examples are different from "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences with the construction "NP1 *make*(s) NP2". The subject of the latter is agentive and can be either human and volitional as in (2) or non-human and non-volitional as in (26). Both (2) and (26) are descriptions.

- (2) She made a new dress.
- (26) An electric blender makes soups, purees and puddings in a few seconds. (COBUILD1)

There are also examples with the "NP1 make(s) NP2 NP3" construction in which a person appears in the subject position.

- (27) The Prime Minister made him transport minister. (cf. COBUILD2)
- (28) He made his son a lawyer.

Here, the person referred by the subject has the intention to cause the relevant event. In this respect, (27) and (28) are the same as (2). At the same time, (27) and (28) are similar to (5) with a non-human subject in that the referent of the subject does not affect the inside of the referent of the object.

(5) The win made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249) That is, appointing a person to a particular position does not change his/her qualities, nor does making a person a lawyer. Note that the referent of the subject in (28) is considered to have absolute power or perform a kind of magic.¹⁰

Since the referent of the subject NP in these sentences does not affect the inside of the referent of the object, it is an "influence". Thus, these sentences are descriptions and not opinions. This assumption naturally explains why (27) and (28) have corresponding passive sentences:

- (27') He was made transport minisiter (by the Prime Minister).
- (28') He was made a lawyer (by his father).

As stated above, the referent of the subject has the intention to cause the situation where the object and the complement share the same referent. Thus, the subject can also be regarded as an abstract "producer".

4. Conclusion

I have shown that the uses of *make* discussed above are classified into two major types, (I) "element-providing *make*" and (II) "(external) factor-providing *make*". While in type (I) sentences "elements" appear in the subject position, in type (II) sentences "(external) factors" appear in the subject position. The "(external) factors" subject is further classified into three subclasses: (i) producer, (ii) influence, and (iii) stimulant. Sentences with the "producer"/"influence" subject have a passive alternative and are characterized as a description. On the other hand, though sentences with "stimulant" subject are classified as "(external) factor-providing *make*" sentences, they do not have a passive alternative and are considered opinions. In this respect, sentences with "stimulant" subject are similar to "element-providing *make*" sentences.

I would like to discuss here what meaning is shared by four different types of make. First, let us consider the reason why there are two types of subjects. The situation might be compared to completing a jigsaw puzzle. To do a puzzle, both a person and pieces are needed. To describe the completion of the puzzle, however, it is possible to focus on either the person or the pieces. In "element-providing make" sentences, the pieces appear in the subject position, while in "(external) factor-providing make" sentences, the person who completes the puzzle appears in the subject position. In fact, there are even differences in the emphasis on these factors. For example, the subject in (2), "(external) factor [producer]", is the strongest of the three. The subject in (5), "(external) factor [influence]", is weaker than the subject in (2), but is stronger than the subject in (21), "(external) factor [stimulant]".

- (2) She made a new dress.
- (5) The win the made Sally a rich woman. (Cattell 1984: 249)
- (21) The right training made her a good actress.

In defining the core meaning of *make*, I would like to maintain what is proposed in Kazumi (1997): *make* has the meaning "providing the essential(s) for". In Kazumi (1997), it is suggested that with "element-providing *make*" sentences, which are regarded as opinions, the speaker fulfills the role of an abstract "external factor". That is, if the speaker does not associate "elements" with the resultant (situation), the relation between them cannot be recognized. In this sense, the speaker of "element-providing *make*" sentences can be regarded as a very abstract "producer". This suggests that it might

be possible to state the core meaning of *make* simply as PRODUCE, as proposed in Kazumi (1993).

The English verb *make* appears in many other constructions such as "She made him laugh". Since this paper is a preliminary work illustrating the nature of make, it needs future research to examine these other uses of make.

NOTES

- * I am grateful to Shoichi Yamada, Hiroaki Konno and Seong-Sik Chae for their insightful comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank Carla Curry for acting as an informant, offering a number of useful examples and reading earlier versions of this paper.
- As discussed in Kazumi (1993), it is quite difficult to decide the grammatical function of the NP following *make* in sentences such as (1). In this paper, I will tentatively use the word "object" for the NP immediately following the verb.
- ² Cattell (1984) gives a variety of interesting examples of *make*. His focus, however, is on composite predicates and their constructions, which is why I do not review his analysis here.
 - ³ For detailed discussion of passivizability, see Kazumi (1993: 256-7).
- ⁴ In Kazumi (1997), these terms are introduced in Japanese, thus "element-providing make" and "(external) factor-providing make" are "koosei yooso-o teikyoo-suru make" and "gaiteki yooso-o teikyoo-suru make". In order to clarify the difference between what constitutes an entity and what causes the emergence of an entity, I will use "element" for the former and "(external) factor" for the latter.
 - ⁵ Example (7) is an informal version of (i).
 - (i) Today's earthquake makes the fifth since the beginning of the year.
- ⁶ In fact, Kazumi (1997) uses the expression "hanashite-no hyooka naishi handan" (p. 222), which can be literally translated as "speaker's evaluation or judgement". This term, however, is better glossed as "speaker's opinon or view", since in Kazumi (1997) it refers to a speaker's cognitive association of two different things such as "a lid" and "an ashtray".
- One might consider a particular sentence an opinion because of the types of adjectives in the object NP, for adjectives such as "good" presuppose evaluation scales. Whether a sentence is an opinion or not, however, can be considered independent of which adjective appears in the object NP.

As pointed out in Kazumi (1993), the object NP in examples such as (1) is unusual: there must be an adjective in the NP.

(ii) *She made an actress.

This sentence is acceptable if the subject NP and the object NP refer to different entities, for example, when "an actress" refers to a doll which can actually be manufactured. Adjectives are also necessary when nouns in the object NPs refer to roles in society or occupations.

(iii) *She made a {lawyer/doctor/mother}.

However, in the following examples, the subject NP and the object NP with no adjective can refer to

the same thing.

- (iv) This lid will make an ashtray.
- (v) Those seven stars make a dog

In (iv), the speaker thinks that the lid has necessary qualities to be an ashtray. In (v), the speaker thinks that the stars have qualities to form the shape of a dog. Thus, these examples are opinions.

- According to my informant, "Two and two is four" and "Two plus two equals four" are common expressions in math classes at school. Her intuition is that (10) sounds a little strange because of the unfamiliarity of *make* as a copula in such sentences.
- ⁹ In (18) and (19), the complement is an adjective. Although I will not discuss the construction in this paper, it also needs further investigation.
- ¹⁰ If "into" is put before "a lawyer", the sentence becomes more natural: the sentence with "into" implies that the father helped his son become a lawyer.

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