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## Humanness and the Kind-Level Interpretation

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0. This paper will deal with the two superficially unrelated phenomena which, however, show an interesting parallelism in a respect: one involves the Japanese quantifier-floating construction and the other the English *wh*-question. In the two constructions we can observe a parallel variation in grammaticality which seems to link up with the semantic type of the relevant NP. A little more specifically, under some circumstances the NP which possesses the semantic feature of [+human] produces ungrammaticality whereas the NP of [-human] makes the same sentence pattern perfectly acceptable. In this paper I will propose to account for this difference in acceptability in terms of the possibility of the *kind*-level interpretation in the sense of the term that is often contrasted with *individual*. Furthermore it is suggested that the fact that the *kind*-level construal is generally possible for [-human] NPs, but not for [+human] NPs, might come from some cognitive factor.

1. Japanese has "numeral"-floating constructions like (1a-b), both of which are perfectly grammatical.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. Hanako-ga sake-o nihon nonda.  
'Hanako-Nom sake-Acc two bottles drank'  
"Hanako drank two bottles of sake."  
b. Hanako-ga otoko-o futari nagutta.  
'Hanako-Nom man-Acc two people hit'  
"Hanako hit two men."

As Watanabe (1990) reports, however, the relative sentences in (2a-b) which are constructed by making the relative heads out of

the object host NPs from which numeral quantifiers have floated exhibit a sharp distinction in acceptability.<sup>2</sup>

- (2) a. [[Hanako-ga e<sub>i</sub> nihon nonda] sake<sub>i</sub>]-wa  
 'Hanako-Nom two bottles drank sake -Top  
 totemo oishi soodatta.  
 very tasty seemed'  
 "(lit.) The sake which Hanako drank two bottles (of it) seemed very tasty."
- b. \*[[Hanako-ga e<sub>i</sub> futari nagutta] otokoi]-wa  
 'Hanako-Nom two people hit man -Top  
 hansamu datta.  
 handsome Cop'  
 "(lit.) The men who Hanako hit two (of them) were handsome."

Likewise, the floating constructions in (3a-b), in which numerals move from the NPs in the form of sono (that) + N, are evidently different in acceptability.

- (3) a. Hanako-ga [sono tori]-o sanwa katteiru.  
 'Hanako-Nom that bird-Acc three birds keep'  
 "(lit.) Hanako keeps three of that bird."
- b. \*Hanako-ga [sono isha]-o sannin shitteiru.  
 'Hanako-Nom that doctor-Acc three people know'  
 "(lit.) Hanako knows three of that doctor."

The difference in grammaticality between (2a) and (3a), on the one hand, and (2b) and (3b), on the other, seems to be attributed to the selection of the host NP from which numeral quantifiers float, since the other parts of the constructions in (2)-(3) are roughly equivalent. What is, then, the property that distinguishes the host NPs in (2a) and (3a) from those in (2b) and (3b)? It seems to be the humanness. The host NPs in the former constructions are [-human] (sake 'sake' and tori

'bird'), while those in the latter are [+human] (otoko 'man' and isha 'doctor'). This analysis can be confirmed by several other data quoted in (4)-(5), which include [-human] and [+human] host NPs respectively.

- (4) a. [[Taro-ga ei nihiki tabeta] sakana<sub>1</sub>]-wa ima-ga  
 'Taro-Nom two fish ate fish -Top now-Nom  
 shun da.  
 in season Cop'  
 "(lit.) The fish which Taro ate two (of it) is now  
 in season."  
 b. Maruzen-ga [sono hon]-o jussatsu  
 'Maruzen-Nom that book-Acc ten copies  
 shiireta.  
 got in stock'  
 "(lit.) Maruzen got in a stock of ten of that book."  
 (5) a. \*[[Taro-ga ei sannin damashita] gakusei<sub>1</sub>]-wa  
 'Taro-Nom three people cheated student -Top  
 boku-no tomodachi da.  
 my friend Cop'  
 "(lit.) The students who Taro cheated three (of  
 them) were my friends."  
 b. \*Taro-ga [sono onna]-o juunin yatotta.  
 'Taro-Nom that woman-Acc ten people hired'  
 "(lit.) Taro hired ten of that woman."

Interestingly enough, we can find in the English interrogative construction a parallel variation in acceptability depending on the humanness of the WH-phrase. Compare the sentences in (6).

- (6) a. What is in every room?  
 b. #Who is in every room?

To the question in (6a) we can answer, for example, "There is an

old desk in every room." On the other hand, we have no appropriate way to answer the question in (6b). An answer such as "John is in every room." is impossible because John cannot exist simultaneously at more than one place, let alone in "every" room, unless he is an omnipresent being like God. An answer like "A beautiful lady is in every room." is also inappropriate because the interrogative phrase who, unlike what, seems to demand as its answer an expression with rather firm referentiality, and a phrase like a beautiful lady in the above answer is not specific enough to meet this requirement. Thus (6b) is an unacceptable question in contrast to the well-formed (6a).<sup>3</sup>

A similar observation can be made on the basis of the following examples as well.<sup>4</sup>

- (7) a. What did every girl read?  
 b. Who did every girl dance with?

(7a-b) are different in that what in (7a) can take a so-called narrow, as well as wide, scope with respect to every girl, while who in (7b) permits only a wide scope reading. One can answer the question in (7a) by saying, for example, "Every girl read a newspaper", in a situation in which some girl read, say, today's Asahi Shinbun, another girl read Yesterday's Mainichi Shinbun, still another read the day before yesterday's Yomiuri Shinbun, and so on. This is a narrow scope reading for what. On the other hand, who in (7b) lacks this type of reading<sup>5</sup>; the existence of a specific person, say John, who every girl danced with is required to answer the question in (7b). This wide scope reading is available here because it is possible that each girl danced with a specific person at a different time. Thus (7b) can be a grammatical sentence unlike the unacceptable (6b), but exhibits only a limited possibility of interpretation as compared with (7a).

2. In the preceding section we have observed that [+human] NPs

are more limited in their syntactic or semantic distribution than [-human] NPs: The former are ruled out in some environments (i.e., certain quantifier-floating constructions and WH-quantifier sentences) in which the latter can occur grammatically or have an acceptable interpretation. This behavioral difference between [+human] and [-human] NPs should be considered to come from some very general property of language, not from some factors specific to particular constructions, in view of the fact that the contrast in question can be observed in such diverse constructions as Japanese quantifier floating sentences and English WH-questions.

I suggest that that general property be something like the following:

- (8) In certain environments, an interpretation as a kind-denoting expression is possible for [-human] NPs, but not for [+human] NPs.

Here a kind is used as a concept that should be contrasted with an individual or a token. An individual is a thing or person with a certain kind of spatial and temporal integrity; on the other hand, a kind is a category which includes as its members individuals with certain extent of similarity (see Carlson (1980), Jackendoff (1983) and others for relevant discussion). In sentence (9), for example, Pochi refers to an individual and a clever dog represents a kind.

- (9) Pochi is a clever dog.

In short, kinds and individuals have the relationship of is an instance of or is exemplified by: an individual is an instance of a kind and, conversely, a kind is exemplified by an individual (Cf. Jackendoff (1983)).

With rough definitions of kinds and individuals like these in mind, let us return to the data observed in section 1. My

suggestion is that [-human] NPs like sake in (2a), tori in (3a), sakana in (4a), and hon in (4b) can be interpreted as representing a kind, whereas [+human] NPs like otoko in (2b), isha in (3b), gakusei in (5a), and onna in (5b) cannot be assigned such an interpretation. This contrast is easy to see in the construction of (3a-b) in which quantifier floating has taken place from the NP in the sono + N form. Sono tori 'that bird' in (3a) does not refer to a bird as an individual. This is obvious from the fact that (3a) states that Hanako keeps three birds in actuality. Rather this phrase is interpreted as expressing a kind of bird, for example, a parrot as a species. And this construal as a kind enables the floating quantifier sanwa to have a proper interpretation in which what Hanako keeps is three individuals of a certain kind of bird, or, three parrots for short. On the other hand, sono isha 'that doctor' in (3b) cannot be interpreted as representing a kind of doctor, say, a pediatrician, but it refers to a doctor as an individual, as in "kinoo machi-de [sono isha]-ni atta." '(I) met that doctor on the street yesterday.' This is why (3b) is ungrammatical. That is, in (3b) the floating quantifier sannin 'three people' cannot be assigned any proper interpretation, since the host NP sono isha, being [+human], cannot have an interpretation as a kind-denoting expression which would license the proper construal of sannin as above, and though sono isha can be construed as referring to a doctor as an individual, this reading is semantically incompatible with sannin. Our reasoning here predicts that if sono isha is changed into an expression like sono te no isha which necessarily represents a kind just because of its lexical meaning, the sentence revives. This prediction is borne out by an example like (10), in which the quantifier sannin can be properly interpreted:

- (10) Hanako-ga [sono te no isha]-o sannin  
 'Hanako-Nom that kind of doctor-Acc three-people

shitteiru.

know'

"Hanako knows three doctors of that kind."

The same account holds for (4b) and (5b) as well. (4b) is grammatical because sono hon 'that book', being [-human], can be interpreted as representing a kind of book, say, Semantics and Cognition,<sup>6</sup> and this enables the floating quantifier jussatsu 'ten copies' to have an acceptable interpretation like "ten copies of Semantics and Cognition." On the other hand, (5b) is ungrammatical because the [+human] sono onna 'that woman' cannot be taken as expressing a kind, and thus the floating quantifier juunin 'ten people' cannot be assigned any proper interpretation. When sono onna is replaced by sono te no onna, as in (11), the sentence becomes acceptable, as predicted.

- (11) Taro-ga [sono te no onna]-o juunin  
 'Taro-Nom that kind of woman-Acc ten-people  
 yatotta.  
 hired'  
 "Taro hired ten women of that kind."

Next, turn to the relative constructions in (2a-b), (4a), and (5a). The grammatical contrast between (2a) and (2b) also seems to be connected with the fact that the [-human] NP sake in (2a) can be interpreted as representing a kind, while the [+human] NP otoko in (2b) cannot. In (2a) the NP [[Hanako-ga nihon nonda] sake] represents a kind or, more appropriately, a brand of sake, for example, Kizakura (a Japanese sake brand). It is that kind of sake in general, not the two particular bottles of sake which Hanako drank, that (2a) states seemed very tasty. It is instructive here to compare (2a) with (12), which is different from (2a) in that the quantifier nihon is contained in the relative head rather than within the relative clause.

- (12) [[Hanako-ga ei nonda] nihon no sake<sub>i</sub>]-wa  
 'Hanako-Nom drank two bottles of sake -Top  
 totemo oishi soodatta.  
 very tasty seemed'  
 "The two bottles of sake which Hanako drank seemed  
 very tasty."

In (12) the NP [[Hanako-ga nonda] nihon no sake] need not be interpreted as representing a brand, say, Kizakura. It can denote two different brands of sake or the two particular bottles of sake which Hanako drank. The difference between the (2a) and (12) constructions becomes explicit by using a predicate like nurui 'lukewarm' which exhibits only an accidental property of sake.

- (13) a.??[[Hanako-ga ei nihon nonda] sake<sub>i</sub>]-wa  
 'Hanako-Nom two bottles drank sake -Top  
 nurukatta.  
 was lukewarm'  
 "(lit.) The sake which Hanako drank two (of it)  
 was lukewarm."  
 b. [[Hanako-ga ei nonda] nihon no sake]-wa  
 'Hanako-Nom drank two bottles of sake -Top  
 nurukatta.  
 was lukewarm'  
 "The two bottles of sake which Hanako drank was  
 lukewarm."

The NP [[Hanako-ga nihon nonda] sake] represents a kind. Thus it is compatible with a predicate like oishii which exhibits an "intrinsic" property applicable to kinds, but not with a predicate like nurui which describes an "extrinsic" temporary state of individuals. On the other hand, the NP [[Hanako-ga nonda] nihon no sake] can represent both kinds and individuals. Accordingly it is compatible with both kinds of predicate just

mentioned.

Let us turn to a relative NP including the [+human] head. Consider the sentence in (14), which does not contain a numeral quantifier in the relative clause, unlike (2b), and thus is perfectly grammatical.

- (14) [[Hanako-ga e<sub>i</sub> nagutta] otoko]-wa hansamu datta.  
 'Hanako-Nom hit man -Top handsome Cop'  
 "The man who Hanako hit was handsome."

The relative NP in (14) cannot represent a kind in a parallel way that sake in (2a) does. Suppose, for example, that the man who Hanako hit was a twenty-year-old person from Hokkaido. But sentence (14) can never be interpreted as claiming that twenty-year-old men in general were handsome or that men from Hokkaido in general were handsome. What (14) conveys is nothing more than the information that the particular man who Hanako hit was handsome.

In this way, [+human] and [-human] NPs behave contrastively, as posited in (8). It is this contrast that accounts for the difference in grammaticality between (2a) and (2b). Recall from the discussion of the quantifier floating from the NP in the sono + N form that for floating numerals to be interpreted, the host NPs must represent a kind; in other words, if the host NPs denote particular individuals, floating numerals cannot be licensed. The same is true for the case under consideration. In relative constructions like (2a-b), let us assume that the head NP and the co-indexed empty category (e<sub>i</sub>) contained within the relative clause share the same interpretive feature(s). Then, in (2a) the empty e inherits an interpretation as a kind-denoting expression from the [-human] head sake, while in (2b) the empty e<sub>i</sub> shares an interpretation as an individual-referring expression with the [+human] head otoko. Therefore, in (2a) the floating numeral quantifier nihon can be properly interpreted through connecting with the empty category

which is taken as representing a kind, but in (2b) the floating quantifier futari cannot find an appropriate host to depend on because the empty category has the status of an individual-referring expression which is unable to license the floating quantifier. Hence the grammaticality of (2a) and the ungrammaticality of (2b).

Exactly the same explanation applies to (4a) and (5a). In (4a) the [-human] head sakana represents a kind of fish, say, rainbow trout. The co-indexed empty e<sub>i</sub> inherits that interpretation and licenses the floating numeral quantifier nihiki. In (5a), on the other hand, the head NP gakusei, being [+human], denotes particular individuals. This interpretation is transmitted to the co-indexed empty e<sub>i</sub> and thus the floating quantifier sannin has no appropriate host NP. Hence (4a) is perfectly grammatical, but (5a) is ungrammatical.

Our factual observation above is that the relative construction whose head is [+human] does not permit the presence of a floating quantifier within the relative clause, as seen in (2b) and (5a). There is an apparent counterexample to this, however. Consider sentence (15):

- (15) [[ [sono kaisha]-ga mainen e<sub>i</sub> futari  
       'that company-Nom every year two people  
       saiyoosuru] hishoka-no josei]-wa  
       hire the secretarial section-of lady -Top  
       totemo kirei da.  
       very beautiful Cop'  
       "(lit.) The ladies in the secretarial section who  
       that company hires two (of them) every year are  
       very beautiful."

(15) seems to me perfectly grammatical. This sentence is the same in its syntactic structure as the ungrammatical (2b) and (5a), but differs from them in that (15) is a generic-like sentence. The important point is that this genericity of the sen-

tence gives the head NP hishoka-no josei a property of representing a kind or class. It is a class of ladies, i.e., ladies belonging to the secretarial section in general, not some particular secretaries, that (15) claims are very beautiful. Thus the floating quantifier futari within the relative clause can be properly interpreted because the host empty e<sub>i</sub> inherits the class-level interpretation from the head NP. Sentence (15) is, therefore, not a real counterexample to our analysis at all. In this case, although the kind-level interpretation that is needed for licensing floating quantifiers is not given by the nature of the head NP (josei is [+human]), it comes instead from the genericity of the whole sentence. It is why sentence (15) is grammatical.

Finally, the difference in acceptability between the English WH-questions in (6a) and (6b) can be accounted for along the same line. If we assume, in accordance with (8), that in certain circumstances, the [-human] WH what can have a kind-level interpretation whereas the [+human] WH who cannot, the grammatical difference in question immediately follows. Given that who requires as its answer an expression which refers to a specific person as an individual, say, John, (6b) is ruled out, since as noted above, a single particular person cannot exist simultaneously at more than one place, let alone in "every" room, unless (s)he is an omnipresent being like God. On the other hand, (6a) is grammatical because what demands only a kind-level identity and permits a reading in which what actually exists in every room is individual things of that kind (for example, old desks), which is a possible situation in the actual world. The difference in the possibility of interpretation between (7a) and (7b) can also be accounted for by our assumption. The so-called narrow scope reading of the WH-phrase is possible for (7a) because what permits a kind-level construal; we can answer (7a) by saying "a newspaper", with the following situation in mind: every girl read different tokens of newspaper. On the other hand, this kind-level construal is impossible for who,

and thus a so-called narrow scope reading of the WH phrase is not available in (7b).

3. Thus far we have seen several cases in which [-human] NPs can be interpreted as representing kinds, resulting in the grammaticality of the sentence or an additional reading, whereas [+human] NPs cannot be assigned such an interpretation, hence the unacceptability of the sentence or the lack of the relevant reading. A question to be addressed in this section is: Why is it that [-human] NPs permit a kind-level interpretation, but [+human] NPs do not?

As a clue to answering this question, let us turn our attention to the notion of the basic level of categorization which has been discussed in the field of psychology and recently introduced into cognitive semantics (cf. Lakoff (1987)). The initial study of basic level categories is made by Roger Brown in his paper "How shall a thing be called?" (1958). Brown first pointed out, on the basis of his well-known example using a dime, that objects have many names: "The dime in my pocket is not only a dime. It is also money, a metal object, a thing, and, moving to subordinates, it is a 1952 dime, in fact, a particular 1952 dime with a unique pattern of scratches, discolorations, and smooth places" (p.14). Likewise, the spoon, for example, "is also a piece of silverware, an artifact, and a particular ill-washed restaurant spoon" (p.16). Although objects have many names in a category hierarchy, Brown's real point is that a particular name at a particular level of categorization "has a superior status"; that is, a dime is called dime far more often than metal object, thing, or 1952 dime and "the spoon is seldom called anything but spoon." This level, at which a name has a superior status, is the basic level of categorization.

According to Brown, this basic level is the level of usual utility. The preference for the name dime over metal object or 1952 dime, for instance, "corresponds to the community-wide practice of treating" dimes as equivalent to all other coins of

the same denomination but distinct from coins of different denominations; "in the grocery one dime is as good as another but quite different from any nickel or penny." Likewise the preference for the word spoon "corresponds to the community-wide practice of treating spoons as equivalent but different from knives and forks. There are no proper names for individual spoons because their individuality seldom signifies." The same may be true for other things, or more precisely, other non-human entities, like trees, books, gold, water, fish, and so on. The basic level in categorizing these things is the "species", or kind, level. On the other hand, people in general have individual names like John, Mary, Hanako, and Taro. Individuality is of much significance for humans, because we commonly regard a person as an independent being with his own differentiated ego. The basic level in characterizing humans is, then, considered to be the individual rather than the kind level.

In this way, human beings and non-human entities seem to be treated very differently in the cognitive component of the human mind where categorization judgments are performed; the former are identified mainly at the individual level, but the latter tend to be recognized at the kind level. It is quite reasonable to consider that this difference of cognitive origin leads directly to the difference in interpretation between [+human] and [-human] NPs posited in (8): an interpretation as a kind-denoting expression is possible for the latter, but not for the former. In short, the interpretive difference between [+human] and [-human] NPs that we have been concerned with through this paper can be considered to come from the following difference which is presumably attributable to some cognitive considerations: the basic level of categorization for human beings is the individual level, while that for non-human entities is the kind level.

4. This paper has observed that in both the Japanese quantifier-floating construction and the English wh-question,

[+human] and [-human] NPs behave in a different way. We have proposed to account for this fact by postulating that a kind-level interpretation is possible for [-human] NPs but not for [+human] NPs. It is suggested that this difference in the interpretive possibility come originally from certain cognitive considerations.

## NOTES

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1. In this paper I will not commit myself to any particular syntactic analysis of the quantifier-floating construction. Thus it remains an open question here whether or not a floating quantifier actually moves from the host NP in its derivation, although I will adopt a locution that might suggest the analysis in terms of syntactic movements.

Below the following abbreviations will be used:

Nom: Nominative Case-marker  
 Acc: Accusative Case-marker  
 Top: Topic Marker  
 Cop: Copula  
 Q : Interrogative Marker

2. The relative constructions in (i) below are both grammatical, where the quantifier is contained in the relative head NP rather than in the relative clause.

(i) a. [[Hanako-ga ei nonda] nihon no sake]-wa  
           'Hanako-Nom drank two bottles of sake -Top

totemo oishi soodatta.

very tasty seemed'

"The two bottles of sake which Hanako drank seemed very tasty."

- b. [[Hanako-ga ei nagutta] futari no otoko]-wa  
 'Hanako-Nom hit two people of man -Top  
 hansamu datta.  
 handsome Cop.'

"The two men who Hanako hit were handsome."

3. A parallel contrast in grammaticality is observed between nani 'what' and dare 'who' in Japanese WH questions as well. Compare (ia) and (ib):

- (i) a. nani-ga [dono heya]-ni mo aru no.  
 'what-Nom every room in also is Q'  
 "What is in every room?"  
 b. #dare-ga [dono heya]-ni mo iru no.  
 'who-Nom every room in also is Q'  
 "Who is in every room?"

Shinsuke Homma (personal communication) points out another interesting difference between nani and dare. Quantifier floating is possible from nani, but not from dare, as seen in (ii):

- (ii) a. Taro-wa nani-o sanbon nonda no.  
 'Taro-Top what-Acc three bottles drank Q'  
 "(lit.) What did Taro drink three of it?"  
 b. \*dare-ga futari yattekita no.  
 'who-Nom two people came Q'  
 "(lit.) Who two of them came?"

4. Here special attention should be paid to the fact that quan-

tified NPs with full nominal heads like every girl in (7a-b) do not permit a so-called family-of-questions interpretation, although the near analogue everyone allows that interpretation, as May (1985) observes in an example like (i). Cf. Williams (1986).

(i) What did everyone buy for Max?

5. In fact there is an answer to (7b) which corresponds to the narrow scope reading for who. Thus, her father is a possible answer. This type of answer, which Engdahl (1986) calls the relational answer, has a curious property that it is so specific as to be able to meet the referentiality requirement imposed on the answer to who, but not completely specific nevertheless, so that it can have a narrow scope reading. In this paper below, however, I will eliminate this type of relational answer from discussion.

6. Under our common understanding of books, a book like Semantics and Cognition is usually regarded as not a kind but an (abstract) individual. When considered relative to books as concrete things (i.e., copies of a book), however, we can see that in fact it represents a kind, not an individual.

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