

**Toward a Unified Analysis of Honorification Phenomena
in Japanese Existential and Possessive Constructions:
Is the Subject of Possessive Construction Really the Dative NP?***

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1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with honorification phenomena in Japanese existential and possessive constructions. In Japanese, the subject honorific form of a predicate is preferred to the plain one when the subject of a sentence refers to a person to whom a speaker should pay deference.¹

- (1) Tanaka sensei-ga hon-o {kai/o-kaki-ni nat}-ta.
 Tanaka Prof.-NOM book-ACC {write/HP-write-HONOR}-PAST
 'Prof. Tanaka wrote a book.'

In (1), for example, it is to be desired that the speaker should use the subject honorific form of the verb, i.e. *o-kaki-ni nar-*, since the subject *Tanaka sensei* designates a person who is worthy of respect. This phenomenon has been called 'subject honorification' since Harada (1976).²

On the basis of the fact observed above, Shibatani (1978) assumes that subject triggers honorification on a predicate. Then, he points out that the dative NP triggers subject honorification in the possessive construction, and claims that this NP should function as subject in this construction.

- (2) a. {Tanaka sensei/*Taro}-ni o-ko-san-ga hutari
 {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-DAT HP-son-HONOR-NOM two
 o-ari-ni nar-u.
 HP-be-HONOR-PRES
 '{Prof. Tanaka/Taro} has two children.'

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1 In this study, we use the following abbreviations. 'HP' stands for an honorific prefix, like 'o-' and 'go-'. 'HONOR' represents a part of an honorified complex verb or such an honorific title as '-san'.

2 Harada means 'respect words' by 'subject honorifics' and calls the phenomenon in which a predicate is put in the subject honorific form 'subject honorification'. For a more detailed discussion see Harada (1976).

- (2) b. Sono Kooen-ni {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ga irassyar-u.
 DET park-LOC {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'In the park is {Prof. Tanaka/Taro}.'

In (2a), which is classified as the possessive construction, its grammaticality depends on the referent of the dative NP, while in (2b), which is classified as the existential construction, its (un)grammatical status is due to the referent of the nominative NP. This observation leads Shibatani to the conclusion that the possessive construction differs from the existential one in that the dative NP, but not the nominative one, functions as subject. There are, however, some difficulties in this analysis, as fully discussed later. The main purposes of this paper are to treat honorification phenomena in the existential and the possessive construction in a unified way and to claim that the nominative NP actually functions as subject in the possessive construction as well.

This paper is organized as follows. In section 2 we will make further investigation into the relationship between subject and the phenomenon of subject honorification. Section 3 will briefly review Shibatani's (1978) analysis, and then we will provide three pieces of evidence against his analysis in section 4. In section 5 we will explicate the mechanism of honorification phenomena in the existential and the possessive construction in a unified way. Offered in section 6 are some concluding remarks.

2. Subject and the Phenomenon of Subject Honorification

In this section, we examine how subject is involved in subject honorification and propose a set of necessary conditions for this phenomenon.

As is widely assumed in the literature, a predicate can be put in the subject honorific form when the subject of a sentence refers to an honorable person (see Harada (1976), Shibatani (1977, 1978), Kitagawa (1986), and Muromatsu (1997), among others).

- (3) a. Tanaka sensei-ga o-nakunari-ni nat-ta.
 Tanaka Prof.-NOM HP-die-HONOR-PAST
 'Prof. Tanaka died.'
 b. *Taroo-ga o-nakunari-ni nat-ta.
 Taro-NOM HP-die-HONOR-PAST
 'Taro died.'

The contrast between (3a) and (3b) is attributed to the difference between the referents of their subjects. If its referent corresponds to an honorable person, the sentence whose predicate is put in the subject honorific form becomes fully

grammatical, as in (3a). Otherwise, the sentence will be ungrammatical, as in (3b).

Moreover, the contrast between (4a) and (4b) gives further evidence for the dependence of subject honorification on subject.

- (4) a. Tanaka sensei-ga Taroo-o o-home-ni nat-ta.
 Tanaka Prof.-NOM Taro-ACC HP-praise-HONOR-PAST
 'Prof. Tanaka praised Taro.'
 b. *Taroo-ga Tanaka sensei-o o-home-ni nat-ta.
 Taro-NOM Tanaka Prof.-ACC HP-praise-HONOR-PAST
 'Taro praised Prof. Tanaka.'

Note that the syntactic position occupied by the NP, *Tanaka sensei*, denoting an honorable person, is responsible for the difference in grammaticality between (4a) and (4b). Where *Tanaka sensei* is in the subject position, the sentence becomes fully grammatical, as in (4a). On the other hand, the sentence is judged to be ungrammatical when it occupies the object position, as in (4b). The contrast between these two sentences shows that subject triggers (subject) honorification, but not object.³

This is also borne out by the contrast between the following examples.

- (5) a. *Keisatu-ga Tanaka sensei-o o-utagai-ni nat-ta. (active voice)
 police-NOM Tanaka Prof.-ACC HP-suspect-HONOR-PAST
 'The police suspected Prof. Tanaka.'
 b. Tanaka sensei-ga keisatu-ni o-utagaw-are-ni nat-ta. (passive voice)
 Tanak Prof.-NOM police-DAT HP-suspect-PASS-HONOR-PAST
 'Our president was suspected by the police.'

Although (5a) and (5b) are intended to describe one and the same situation, there is an obvious difference in grammaticality between them. Note that the syntactic position occupied by the NP, *Tanaka sensei*, is responsible for this difference. The sentence (5a) becomes ill-formed since this NP occupies a position other than subject, as opposed to (5b). Thus, the fact observed here also provides evidence to show how closely honorification phenomena are related to subject.

All the observations we have made so far suggest that a predicate can be put in a subject honorific form if the subject of a sentence refers to an honorable person. This is paraphrased as the following set of necessary conditions.

3 When object refers to an honorable person, the predicate can be put in an object honorific form like 'o-V-sur-'. Harada means 'condescending words' by 'object honorifics' and calls the phenomenon in which a predicate is put in the object honorific form 'object honorification'. This phenomenon is irrelevant to our present concern. For a more detailed discussion see Harada (1976).

(6) A Set of Necessary Conditions for Subject Honorification

- a. syntactic condition: the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must be a subject.
- b. semantic condition: the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must refer to an honorable person.

Subject honorification can be triggered on a predicate only when these two conditions are both satisfied. Failure to satisfy either of them makes the sentence ungrammatical. For example, (3b) is ungrammatical since it meets the condition in (6a), but not the one in (6b). Moreover, (4b) and (5a) are ungrammatical since they violate the condition in (6a), though satisfying the condition in (6b).

3. Shibatani's (1978) Analysis

In this section, we will briefly review Shibatani's (1978) analysis. On the facts observed in the honorification phenomena in the existential and the possessive construction, Shibatani argues that possessives are different from existentials as to which NP functions as subject. Moreover, he generalizes from these phenomena to reach his claim that the verb *aru* has existential and possessive senses, but the verb *iru* has only an existential sense.

First, Shibatani claims that subjects are assigned to different NPs in the existential and the possessive construction. According to Shibatani, the subject of the former is the nominative NP, whereas that of the latter is the dative one.

- (7) a. Kono kyoositu-ni {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ga irassyar-u.
 this classroom-LOC {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'In this classroom is {Prof. Tanaka/Taro}.'
- b. {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ni o-ko-san-ga o-ari-ni nar-u.
 {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-DAT HP-child-HONOR-NOM HP-be-HONOR-PRES
 '{Prof. Tanaka/Taro} has a child.'

(7a) is an existential construction whose predicate has an honorific form of the verb *iru*. In this case, the nominative NP functions as subject, since its grammatical status depends on the referent of this NP. On the other hand, (7b) is a possessive construction whose predicate, *aru*, is put in the honorific form. Note that here the referent of the dative NP plays a decisive role in determining the grammaticality of this sentence. This means that the dative NP, but not the nominative NP, functions as subject in possessives such as (7b), as opposed to the existentials.

Shibatani also suggests that, though the verb *aru* has both existential and possessive senses, the verb *iru* has only an existential sense.

- (8) a. Takeyama sensei-ni-wa Kyooko-san-ga irassyar-u
 Takeyama Prof.-LOC-TOP Kyoko-HONOR-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 zya ari-mas-en-ka.
 be-polite-not-Q
 'There's always Kyoko if Prof. Takeyama is in trouble.'
- b. *Takeyama sensei-ni-wa watasi-ga irassyar-u
 Takeyama Prof.-LOC-TOP I-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 zya ari-mas-en-ka.
 be-polite-not-Q
 'There's always me if Prof. Takeyama is in trouble.'

(Shibatani 1978:192)

In (8a), it is impossible to identify its subject since both the dative and nominative NPs denote honorable persons. In this case, however, the use of the NP *watasi* 'I' as a substitute for the NP *Kyooko-san* 'Miss Kyoko' makes this sentence ungrammatical, as (8b) shows. Shibatani claims from this observation that the subjects of (8a) and (8b) are the nominative NPs and thus the sentences whose predicate is the verb *iru* consistently express the existence of some entity.

4. Problems with Shibatani's (1978) Analysis

As seen above, Shibatani's (1978) analysis seems to be plausible at first sight. There are, however, some difficulties in his analysis. In this section, we provide three pieces of evidence against his analysis: (i) the honorification observed in the possessive construction whose predicate, *iru*, is put in an honorific form, (ii) possessor honorification, in the sense of Tsunoda (1990), and (iii) the phenomenon which Harada (1976) calls performative honorification. All of these phenomena will pose problems for Shibatani's analysis.

4.1. The Honorification in the Possessive Construction including the Verb 'iru'

As we have seen above, Shibatani claims on the basis of the fact observed in (8a) and (8b) that *iru* has only an existential sense, as opposed to *aru*. However, a closer examination of (8a) and (8b) sets up a question. Note that these sentences do not convey a meaning of possession such that Professor Takeyama has a brother. Roughly speaking, they mean that there's always Kyoko (or me) if Professor Takeyama is in trouble. Thus, they will be paraphrased as the following.

- (9) Takeyama sensei-ni-wa {Kyooko-san/*watasi}-ga
 Takeyama Prof.-LOC-TOP {Kyoko-HONOR/I}-NOM
 tui-te-irassyar-u zya ari-mas-en-ka.
 attend-HONORIFIED be-PRES be-polite-not-Q

'There's always {Kyoko/me} if Prof. Takeyama is in trouble.'

This implies that it is hasty to conclude on the basis of the fact observed in (8a) and (8b) that *iru* has only an existential sense, but not a possessive one.

In fact, the verb *iru* seems to have a possessive sense, contrary to Shibatani's generalization. For example, the sentence (10a) will express the meaning of possession, like the possessive sentence (10b) whose predicate is *aru*.

- (10) a. Taroo-ni-wa nyooboo kodomo-ga i-ru.
 Taro-DAT-TOP wife and child-NOM be-PRES
 'Taro has a wife and a child.'
- b. Taroo-ni-wa nyooboo kodomo-ga ar-u.
 Taro-DAT-TOP wife and child-NOM be-PRES
 'Taro has a wife and a child.'

We find no striking difference in meaning between (10a) and (10b). In what follows, then, we discuss honorification phenomena in the possessive construction with *iru* on the assumption that *iru* actually has a possessive sense.

Consider the following sentences including *iru*, which seem to convey the meaning of possession, like (10a).

- (11) a. Tanaka sensei-ni-wa okusan-ga irassyar-u.
 Tanaka Prof.-DAT-TOP wife-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'Prof. Tanaka has a wife.'
- b. *Taroo-ni-wa okusan-ga irassyar-u.
 Taro-DAT-TOP wife-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'Taro has a wife.'

Note that the difference in grammaticality between (11a) and (11b) is attributed to the difference between the referents of the dative NPs. This indicates that (11a) and (11b) will be classified as the possessive construction in which the dative NP functions as subject. Thus, the fact observed here apparently gives evidence against Shibatani's generalization that *iru* has only an existential sense if we follow Shibatani.

However, a difficult problem arises if we distinguish the possessive construction from the existential one by using honorification phenomena. Note that replacement of the NP, *okusan* 'wife', marked with the nominative case by the NP, *izi-no warui okusan* 'ill-natured wife', denoting a dishonorable person makes the sentence (11a) ungrammatical.

- (12) Tanaka sensei-ni-wa {okusan/*izi-no warui okusan}-ga
 Tanaka Prof.-DAT-TOP {wife/nature-GEN ill wife}-NOM

irassyar-u.

HONORIFIED be-PRES

'Prof. Tanaka has a(n) {wife/ill-natured wife}.'

Thus, (11a) and (12) will be categorized into the existential construction in which the nominative NP functions as subject.

The facts observed in (11b) and (12), then, pose an intricate problem for us. These facts lead to the inevitable conclusion that the sentence (11a) has two different interpretations at the same time. In other words, (11b) will express the state of someone having someone since this sentence is classified as the possessive construction. Hence, (11a), which differs from (11b) partly in the referent of the dative NP, must also convey the meaning of possession. On the other hand, (12) would refer to the existence of someone in some place since (12) is classified as the existential construction. Thus, (11a), which is different from (12) only in the referent of the nominative NP, must be construed as meaning the existence of some entity as well. In fact, however, no vital difference in meaning arises between (11b) and (12), and (11a) actually describes only a situation such that Professor Tanaka has a wife.⁴ These indicate that honorification phenomena are not proper to differentiate the possessive construction from the existential one, contrary to Shibatani's assumption that these phenomena can distinguish the two constructions.

In addition, note that an insurmountable problem arises if we are to explain the honorification phenomena observed in (11b) and (12) by assuming that subjects are assigned to different NPs in these sentences in disregard of their semantics. The subject of (11a), which differs from (11b) and (12) partly in the referents of the NPs, will be the dative NP when the dative NP refers to a dishonorable person, as in (11b). On the other hand, when the nominative NP denotes such a person, the

4 Yamada (in preparation) points out that subjectivization is allowed in the possessive construction, but not in the existential construction, as shown by the contrast between (ia) and (ib). See also Harada (1976) and Muromatsu (1997)

- (i) a. Hanako-no heya-{ni/ga} miryoku-ga ar-u.
 Hanako-GEN room-{DAT/NOM} fascination-NOM be-PRES
 'Hanako's room has a fascination.' (possessive construction)
- b. Hanako-no heya-{ni/*ga} tyomusukii-no hon-ga ar-u.
 Hanako-GEN room-{LOC/NOM} Chomsky-GEN book-NOM be-PRES
 'There is a book by Chomsky in Hanako's room.' (existential construction)

Note that the subjectivization is possible in both (11b) and (12).

- (ii) a. Taroo-{ni/ga} okusan-ga i-ru. (=11b)
 Taro-{DAT/NOM} wife-NOM be-PRES
- b. Tanaka sensei-{ni/ga} izi-no warui okusan-ga i-ru. (=12)
 Tanaka Prof.-{DAT/NOM} nature-GEN ill wife-NOM be-PRES

The fact observed here will indicate that both (11b) and (12) should be instances of the possessive construction.

subject of (11a) will be the nominative NP, as exemplified by (12). Thus, we cannot decide which NP functions as subject until the syntactic position occupied by a dishonorable person is determined. This will be barely untenable. Hence the honorification phenomena observed in (11b) and (12) cannot be explained by Shibatani's assumption that subject triggers honorification on a predicate.

The points we have discussed here indicate that there are some cases in which a factor other than subject participates in the grammaticality of honorification. Then, it follows that this phenomenon cannot be used as a diagnosis of subjecthood as things now stand, and therefore, cannot always justify the subjecthood of the dative NP in the possessive construction.

4.2. *Possessor Honorification and Performative Honorification*

Let us turn to the second problem with Shibatani's analysis. We will give two pieces of evidence against his analysis in this section. One is the possessor honorification, in the sense of Tsunoda (1990), and the other is what Harada (1976) calls performative honorification. In these two honorification phenomena, the predicate is put in the same honorific form as observed in subject honorification. The facts observed here will also reveal that honorification cannot always ensure the subjecthood of the dative NP in the possessive construction.

First, we observe possessor honorification. In this phenomenon, the predicate can be put in the subject honorific form when the genitive NP which designates a possessor of a possessee referred by the head of the nominative NP denotes an honorable person.

- (13) a. [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{NK}kami]]-ga zuibun siroku
 Tanaka Prof.-GEN hair-NOM very white
 nar-are-ta.
 become-HONORIFIC AUX-PAST
 'Prof. Tanaka's hair became very grizzly.'
- b. *[_{NP}Taroo-no [_{NK}kami]]-ga zuibun siroku nar-are-ta.
 Taro-GEN hair-NOM very white become-HONORIFIC AUX-PAST
 'Taro's hair became very grizzly.'
- (14) a. [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{NME}]]-ga o-warui.
 Tanaka Prof.-GEN eye-NOM HP-bad
 'Prof. Tanaka is weak in sight.'
- b. *[_{NP}Taroo-no [_{NME}]]-ga o-warui.
 Taro-GEN eye-NOM HP-bad
 'Taro is weak in sight.'

Generally, subject refers to an honorable person when the predicate is put in the

subject honorific form. In (13a) and (14a), however, the subjects, *Tanaka sensei-no kami* and *Tanaka sensei-no me*, denote human body parts, i.e. Professor Tanaka's hair and Professor Tanaka's eyes, rather than honorable persons. Nevertheless, the sentences (13a) and (14a), whose predicates are put in subject honorific forms, i.e. *siroku nar-are-* 'become grizzly' and *o-warui* 'bad', are fully grammatical. Rather, the speaker's deference is paid to the reference of the genitive NP in these cases. Note that the contrast between (13a) and (13b) on the one hand, and (14a) and (14b) on the other, shows that the referent of the genitive NP plays a decisive role in determining the grammaticality. Thus, it follows that not only subject but also the genitive NP in the specifier position of the nominative NP may trigger honorification on a predicate.

Second, we discuss the phenomenon which Harada (1976) calls performative honorification. According to Harada, this honorification does not require the presence of an honorable person in the propositional content of a sentence.⁵

- (15) a. [Tanaka sensei], [karada]-ga o-hie-ni nar-i
 Tanaka Prof. (-VOC) body-NOM HP-chilled-HONOR (*nar-* means 'become')
 mas-u yo.
 POLITE
 'Prof. Tanaka, you would be chilled.'
- b. *[Taroo], [karada]-ga o-hie-ni nar-i
 Taro (-VOC) body-NOM HP-chilled-HONOR (*nar-* means 'become')
 mas-u yo.
 POLITE
 'Taro, you would be chilled.'

5 I basically agree with Harada in this respect, but there is a subtle discrepancy in the interpretation of 'performative honorification' between Harada and us. Harada means 'respect words' like 'o-V-ni nar-' by 'subject honorifics', and 'polite words' like '*des-*' and '*mas-*' by 'performative honorifics'. Thus, he regards *o-nomi-ni nar-* 'drink' as 'subject honorifics', not 'performative honorifics', in the following sentence where performative honorification is observed (see Harada 1976: 554).

(i) Tanaka sensei, koohii-o o-nomi-ni nar-i mas-u ka?
 Tanaka Prof. (-VOC) coffee-ACC HP-drink-HONOR POLITE-PRES Q
 'Prof. Tanaka, would you like some coffee?' (*Tanaka sensei* is added by us)

Of course, this is the case, since the verb *nom-* 'drink' is put in the same honorific form, *o-nomi-ni nar-*, as observed in subject honorification. However, this poses a problem for us. In this view, we can also regard *o-hie-ni nar-* 'be chilled' and *o-warui* 'bad' in (15) and (16) as subject honorifics. But at present it is difficult for us to see the honorification phenomena in (15) and (16) as instances of subject honorification, since the subject expressions refer to human body parts, not honorable persons. Then, by performative honorification we simply mean the honorification which is triggered by an NP out of the propositional content of a sentence, and we think of the honorification phenomena in (15) and (16) as instances of a kind of performative honorification, not subject honorification, though their predicates are put in the subject honorific forms.

- (16) a. [Tanaka sensei], [me]-ga o-waruku nar-i mas-u yo.
 Tanaka Prof. (-VOC), eye-NOM HP-bad become POLITE
 'Prof. Tanaka, you would be weak in sight.'
- b. *[Taroo], [me]-ga o-waruku nar-i mas-u yo.
 Taro (-VOC) eye-NOM HP-bad become POLITE
 'Taro, you would be weak in sight.'

In (15) and (16), the subjects, *karada-ga* and *me-ga*, do not denote honorable persons but human body parts, like (13) and (14). Nevertheless, the sentences in (15a) and (16a) are fully grammatical, where the predicates, *hie-* 'be chilled' and *warui* 'bad', are put in subject honorific forms. Note that the difference in grammaticality between (15a) and (15b) on the one hand, and (16a) and (16b) on the other, is attributed to the difference between the referents of the NPs marked with the vocative case, which are out of the propositional contents of these sentences. This indicates that the vocative NPs trigger honorification on the predicates, *hie-* 'be chilled' and *warui* 'bad', in (15a)-(16b). Then, it follows from the facts observed here that the NP marked with the vocative case may also trigger honorification on a predicate.

As observed in the possessor and the performative honorifications, an NP other than subject may trigger honorification on a predicate. In the former, it is the genitive NP, while in the latter, it is the vocative NP. It is crucial to point out that in these cases the subject would be the genitive or the vocative NP, according to Shibatani's assumption that subject triggers honorification. This is apparently untenable because we cannot possibly extend the notion of subject to these NPs. Rather, these honorification phenomena reveal that an NP other than subject may trigger honorification. Thus, honorification cannot be always used to justify the subjecthood of the dative NP in the possessive construction since there is the good possibility that the constituent which triggers honorification is an NP other than subject in this construction, too.

5. Analysis

We begin this section by discussing the mechanisms of the possessor and the performative honorifications. Then, we will define the possessive and the existential constructions in section 5.2. Finally we will explicate the mechanisms of honorification phenomena in the existential and the possessive constructions in sections 5.3. and 5.4.

5.1. *The Mechanisms of Possessor Honorification and Performative Honorification*

Let us begin with the condition under which the possessor and the

preformative honorifications are triggered. When these two honorifications are triggered, a kind of possessor-possessee relationship must always exist between the genitive or the vocative NP denoting an honorable person and (the head of) the nominative NP. To illustrate this, let us first consider (17a) and (17b).

- (17) a. [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{Nme}]]-ga o-warui. (=14a)
 Tanaka Prof.-GEN eye-NOM HP-bad
 'Prof. Tanaka is weak in sight.' (possessor honorification)
- b. [_{NP}Tanaka sensei], [_{NP}karada]-ga o-hie-ni nar-i
 Tanaka Prof. (-VOC) body-NOM HP-chilled-HONOR (*nar-* means 'become')
 mas-u yo. (=15a)
 POLITE
 'Prof. Tanaka, you would be chilled.' (performative honorification)

In (17a), the nominative NP as a whole, *Tanaka sensei-no me*, expresses Professor Tanaka's eyes, and the genitive NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', designates the possessor of the eyes denoted by the head, *me* 'eye', of the nominative NP. Thus, a possessor-possessee relationship is established between the genitive NP denoting an honorable person, Professor Tanaka, and the head of the nominative NP. The same holds for (17b). In this case, the nominative NP, *karada* 'body', implies Professor Tanaka's body, and thus the NP marked with the vocative case, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', refers to the possessor of the body referred to by the nominative NP. The facts observed here reveal that a possessor-possessee relationship exists between the NPs in question in the sentence in which the possessor or the performative honorification is triggered.

This is also verified by the following examples.

- (18) a. * [_{NP}Tanaka sensei], [_{NP}Taroo]-ga ongaku konkuuru-de
 Tanaka Prof. (-VOC) Taro-NOM musical contest-in
 ittoosyoo-o o-tori-ni nar-i mas-i-ta.
 first prize-ACC HP-win-HONOR POLITE-PAST
 'Prof. Tanaka, Taro won the first prize in the musical contest.'
- b. * [_{NP}Tanaka sensei], [_{NP}Taroo]-ga hon-o o-kaki-ni nari
 Tanaka Prof. (-VOC) Taro-NOM book-ACC HP-write-HONOR
 mas-i-ta.
 POLITE-PAST
 'Prof. Tanaka, Taro wrote a book.'

In both (18a) and (18b), the NP marked with the vocative case refers to an honorable person, like (17b). Nevertheless, honorification cannot be triggered on their predicates. Note that no possessor-possessee relationships such as kinship are

implied between the referents of the vocative and the nominative NPs. Thus, the contrast between (17b) and (18) gives a piece of evidence for our assumption above.

Moreover, the contrast between (19a) and (19b) on the one hand, and (20a) and (20b) on the other, shows that (the head of) an NP other than the nominative NP can trigger neither possessor honorification nor performative honorification, even if it forms a possessor-possessee relationship with an NP denoting an honorable person.

- (19) a. [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{NO}-kao]]-ga itiban o-utukusii.
 Tanaka Prof.-GEN HP-face-NOM the most HP-beautiful
 'Prof. Tanaka's face is the most beautiful.'
- b. *Taroo-ga taoru-de [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{NO}-kao]]-o
 Taro-NOM towel-with Tanaka Prof.-GEN HP-face-ACC
 o-huki-ni nat-ta.
 HP-dry-HONOR-PAST
 'Taro dried Prof. Tanaka's face with a towel.'
- (20) a. [_{NP}Tanaka sensei], [_{NP}go-zitaku]-ga zuibun
 Tanaka Prof. HP-one's house-NOM very
 o-hiroku nar-are-ta soo des-u ne.
 HP-large become-HONORIFIC AUX-PAST POLITE
 'Prof. Tanaka, I hear that your house has been very large.'
- b. *[_{NP}Tanaka sensei], Taroo-ga [_{NP}go-zitaku]-o
 Tanaka Prof. Taro-NOM HP-one's house-ACC
 o-tazune-ni nat-ta soo desu ne.
 HP-visit-HONOR-PAST POLOITE
 'Prof. Tanaka, I've heard that Taro visited your house.'

In (19a) and (19b), the NP, *Tanaka sensei-no o-kao*, means Professor Tanaka's face. In both cases, thus, the genitive NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', denoting an honorable person forms a possessor-possessee relationship with the head, *o-kao* 'face', of the NP, *Tanaka sensei-no o-kao* 'Prof. Tanaka's face'. Nevertheless, there is an obvious difference in grammaticality between (19a) and (19b). Note that this difference is due to the difference between the case markers assigned to the NP, *Tanaka sensei-no o-kao* 'Prof. Tanaka's face'. When this NP is marked with the nominative case, honorification can be triggered, as in (19a), while when it is marked with the accusative case, honorification cannot, as in (19b). The same is true of (20). In both (20a) and (20b), the NP, *go-zitaku* 'house' implies Professor Tanaka's house, and thus the vocative NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', designates the possessor of this house. In the former, however, the NP, *go-zitaku* 'house' is

assigned the nominative case, whereas in the latter, it is assigned the accusative case. This difference is responsible for the difference in grammaticality between (20a) and (20b). Thus, the facts observed here indicate that the NP denoting an honorable person must be always semantically associated with (the head of) the nominative NP.

All the facts observed so far show that the possessor and the performative honorifications can be triggered by the nominative NP only when (the head of) this NP is associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with an NP denoting an honorable person. This is reduced to the following set of necessary conditions.⁶

(21) A Set of Necessary Conditions for Possessor and Performative Honorifications

- a. syntactic condition: (the head of) the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must be (that of) the nominative NP.
- b. semantic condition: (the head of) the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must be associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with an NP denoting an honorable person.

According to these necessary conditions, (18a) and (18b) become ungrammatical since they crucially infringe the semantic condition. In other words, (the head of) the nominative NP cannot trigger honorification because it is not associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with the vocative NP denoting an honorable person. On the other hand, the ill-formedness of (19b) and (20b) is due to the violation of the syntactic condition, not to that of the semantic condition. Although these sentences contain a possessor-possessee relationship between NPs, the relationship exists between the genitive and the accusative NPs on the one hand, and the vocative and the accusative NPs on the other. Hence, these sentences become ungrammatical, since they do not satisfy the syntactic condition.

On the basis of a set of necessary conditions in (21), let us show the mechanisms of the possessor and the performative honorifications by the following diagrams.

6 In fact, this formalization is not sufficient. Koichi Nishida (p.c.) pointed out to me that there are some cases where an NP other than the nominative NP triggers honorification. For example:

(i) Tanaka sensei-wa migi te-kara o-waruku nar-are-ta soo da.
 Tanaka Prof.-TOP right hand-from HP-bad become-HONORIFIC AUX-PAST

'I've heard that Prof. Tanaka had something wrong with his right hand first.'

The sentence (i) will not be a counterexample to our analysis, since *kara* 'from' can be replaced by the nominative case, *ga*. However, (i) apparently indicates that we need a little modification to this condition.

(22) a. The Mechanism of Possessor Honorification

(i) Speaker's Deference

[_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no] [_{Nme}]-ga o-warui. (=17a)

(ii) Possessor-Possessee Relationship (iii) Honorification

b. The Mechanism of Performative Honorification

(i) Speaker's Deference

[_{NP}Tanaka sensei], [_{NP}karada]-ga o-hie-ni nar-i mas-u yo. (=19b)

(ii) Possessor-Possessee Relationship (iii) Honorification

These diagrams demonstrate that (the head of) the nominative NP triggers the possessor or the performative honorification by being associated in a possessor-possessee relationship with the genitive or the vocative NP denoting an honorable person.⁷ Note that here we distinguish the element which triggers honorification on a predicate syntactically from the element which triggers honorification on a predicate semantically. It is (the head of) the nominative NP that functions as the former element, while it is an honorable person that corresponds to the latter element. In most cases, the latter element coincides with the former element, but it is sometimes assigned to an NP other than the nominative NP, as in the possessor and the performative honorifications. It is crucial to see that even in such cases, the nominative NP functions as subject. In this way, we can explain the mechanisms of the possessor and the performative honorifications without regarding as subject the NP marked with the genitive or the vocative case which refers to an honorable person.

Finally, we integrate into a whole the two sets of necessary conditions in (6) and (21) we have proposed so far.

(23) A Set of Necessary Conditions for Honorification

- a. syntactic condition: (the head of) the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must be (that of) the nominative NP; and,

7 Notice that now we need not regard the honorification phenomena in (15) and (16) as instances of performative honorification, though for convenience's sake, we still use this term for these phenomena. In these cases, it is the nominative NP or subject that syntactically triggers honorification on a predicate, *hie*- 'be chilled' or *warui* 'bad'. Thus, we can now regard the honorification phenomena in (15) and (16) as instances of subject honorification. This may also account for the reason why those predicates are put in subject honorific forms.

b. semantic condition:

- (i) (the head of) the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must refer to an honorable person; or,
 (ii) (the head of) the NP which triggers honorification on a predicate must be associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with an NP denoting an honorable person.

Both of the syntactic and semantic conditions must be satisfied for a successful honorification. The semantic condition consists of two sub-conditions, and either of them must be satisfied. For example, subject honorification is triggered by satisfying the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (i), while possessor and performative honorifications are triggered by satisfying the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (ii).

5.2. *Definitions of Possessive and Existential Constructions*

Before going into the mechanisms of honorification phenomena in the existential and possessive constructions, we will define these two constructions in broad terms.

Let us begin with the definition of possessive construction. In this study, we define as a possessive construction the sentence including the verb *iru* or *aru* which contains a possessor-possessee relationship in a broad way between the dative and the nominative NPs. First, let us consider the following possessive sentences, which include *iru* as a predicate.

- (24) a. Taroo-ni-wa okusan-ga i-ru.
 Taro-DAT-TOP wife-NOM be-PRES
 'Taro has a wife.' (marital relation)
- b. Taroo-ni-wa kodomo-ga hutari i-ru.
 Taro-DAT-TOP child-NOM two be-PRES
 'Taro has two children.' (kinship)
- c. Hanako-ni-wa osiego-ga takusan i-ru.
 Hanako-DAT-TOP (former) pupil-NOM many be-PRES
 'Hanako has many former pupils.' (the relation of teacher and student)

Note that in (24a)-(24c), the nominative NPs have a possessor-possessee relationship with the dative NPs. This is because each of them is filled by what is called a relational term. A relational term is a term whose referent cannot be determined independently. The NP filled by this term is semantically dependent on another NP, and so its referent can be determined. In (24a), for instance, *okusan* 'wife' cannot decide its referent independently. In this case, however, the dative NP, *Taroo* 'Taro', denotes the possessor of the wife, i.e. her husband, and the nominative NP

acquires the meaning of Taro's wife by being associated with this NP by a kind of possessor-possessee relationship, that is, a marital relation.

The same is true of (24b) and (24c). In these cases, too, the nominative NPs, *kodomo* 'child' and *osiego* '(former) pupil', cannot determine their referents independently. So they gain the meanings of Taro's children and Hanako's pupils by being associated with the dative NPs, *Taroo* 'Taro' and *Hanako* 'Hanako', by possessor-possessee relationships, i.e. a kinship and the relation of teacher and student. Thus, the facts observed here indicate that there is always a possessor-possessee relationship between the dative and the nominative NPs when a sentence is construed as conveying the meaning of possession.

Moreover, the definition of possessive construction above makes it possible for us to differentiate (24a)-(24c) from the following example.

(25) *Taroo-ni-wa Hanako-ga i-ru.*

Taro-LOC-TOP Hanako-NOM be-PRES

'There's always Hanako if Taro is in trouble.'

The sentence (25) does not mean possession, but convey a meaning such that there's always Hanako if Taro is in trouble. Note that in this case the nominative NP is not filled by a relational term, but by a proper name. For this reason (25) does not have a possessor-possessee relationship between the dative and the nominative NPs, and does not convey the meaning of possession. Thus, this sentence cannot be regarded as an instance of the possessive construction by definition.

Next, let us consider the possessive sentences which include *aru* as their predicates. These sentences also always contain some kinds of possessor-possessee relationships between the dative and the nominative NPs.

(26) a. *Taroo-ni-wa saisi-ga ar-u.*

Taro-DAT-TOP wife and child-NOM be-PRES

'Taro has a wife and a child.' (marital relation and kinship)

b. *Watasi-ni-wa tuma-ga ar-u.*

I-DAT-TOP wife-NOM be-PRES

'I have a wife.' (marital relation)

(27) a. *Taroo-ni-wa tairyoku-ga ar-u.*

Taro-DAT-TOP physical strength-NOM be-PRES

'Taro has physical strength.' (property)

b. *Watasi-ni-wa bakudaina syakkin-ga ar-u.*

I-DAT-TOP vast debt-NOM be-PRES

'I have a vast debt.' (property)

In (26a)-(27b), all of which convey the meanings of some kinds of possession,

possessor-possessee relationships are established between the dative and the nominative NPs without exception. In (26a) and (26b), the nominative NPs are all filled by relational terms, *nyooboo kodomo* 'wife and child' and *tuma* 'wife', and cannot decide their referents independently. They are associated with the dative NPs, *Taroo* 'Taro' and *watasi* 'I', by possessor-possessee relationships, i.e. marital relation and kinship, and marital relation, so that they acquire the meanings of Taro's wife and child, and my wife, and they can determine their referents.

The same holds for (27a) and (27b). In (27a), the nominative NP, *tairyoku* 'physical strength', implies Taro's physical strength. This indicates that the nominative NP forms a possessor-possessee relationship, i.e. property, with the dative NP, *Taroo* 'Taro'. Likewise, such a relationship is established between the NPs in question in (27b). The nominative NP, *bakudaina syakkin* 'vast debt', implies my vast debt, and therefore it is associated with the dative NP, *watasi* 'I', by a possessor-possessee relationship, i.e. property. The facts observed here verify our definition of possessive construction.

As for (26a) and (26b), it is important to point out that the nominative NPs refer to animate things. Generally speaking, there is a difference in the selectional restriction between the verbs *aru* and *iru*.

- (28) a. Kono tikaku-ni {honya/*watasi-no yuuzin}-ga takusan ar-u.
 DET near-LOC {bookstore/I-GEN friend}-NOM many be-PRES
 'There are many {bookstores/friends of mine} near here.'
- b. Kono tikaku-ni {*honya/watasi-no yuuzin}-ga takusan i-ru.
 DET near-LOC {bookstore/I-GEN friend}-NOM many be-PRES
 'There are many {bookstores/friends of mine} near here.'

The contrast between (28a) and (28b) reveals that *aru* and *iru* exhibit complementary distribution in the selectional restriction of the nominative NP. In other words, the former selects for the nominative NP which refers to an inanimate thing, as in (28a), while the latter selects for the one whose referent is an animate thing, as in (28b).

There are, however, some cases where this difference between *aru* and *iru* disappears. For example, these two verbs are interchangeable in the following contexts.

- (29) a. Ano hito-wa nyoooboo kodomo-ga {i-ru/ar-u}-n-da yo.
 DET man-TOP wife child-NOM {be-PRES/be-PRES}
 'That man has a wife and a child.' (Shibatani 1978:191)
- b. Tattyan-ni koibito-ga {i/at}-ta nante ne.
 Tattyan-DAT lover-NOM {be/be}-PAST

'Tachchan had a girlfriend.' (ibid.)

In both (29a) and (29b), the referents of the nominative NPs correspond not to inanimate things, but to animate things. Nevertheless, *aru* can be used as a substitute for *iru*.

As for these sentences, Shibatani (1978) just states that it is possible to replace *iru* with *aru* only when the nominative NP denotes a living thing. In fact, however, such an alternation does not always happen even if the nominative NP refers to a living thing.

(30) a. Taroo-ni-wa kodomo-ga {i-ru/ar-u}.
 Taro-DAT-TOP child-NOM {be-PRES/be-PRES}
 'Taro has a child.'

b. Taroo-ni-wa Hanako-ga {i-ru/*ar-u}.
 Taro-LOC-TOP Hanako-NOM {be-PRES/be-PRES}
 'There's always Hanako if Taro is in trouble.'

Although the referents of the nominative NPs are living things, there is an obvious difference in grammaticality between (30a) and (30b) when *aru* is used as a substitute for *iru*. Note that the difference between the referents of nominative NPs is related crucially to the grammaticality contrast between them. In (30a), the nominative NP is filled by a relational term, *kodomo* 'child', while in (30b) it is filled by a proper name, *Hanako* 'Hanako'. Hence, it follows that the nominative NP can denote a person in sentences including *aru* only when it corresponds to a relational term.

Moreover, (30a) differs from (30b) in meaning, together with the difference in the referent of the nominative NP. That is, the former expresses the meaning of possession, whereas the latter conveys a meaning such that there's always Hanako if Taro is in trouble. Note that in the former *iru* can be replaced by *aru*, while in the latter it cannot. This means that the nominative NP can refer to an animate thing only when the sentence with *aru* is construed as a possessive construction.

Finally, we briefly discuss the definition of existential construction. For convenience's sake, we define as an existential construction the sentence including *iru* or *aru* as its predicate which contains no possessor-possessee relationship between the locative and the nominative NPs.

(31) a. Sono kooen-ni Taroo-ga i-ru.
 DET park-LOC Taro-NOM be-PRES
 'In the park is Taro.'

b. Izu-ni Taroo-ga i-ru.
 Izu-LOC Taro-NOM be-PRES

- 'In Izu is Taro.'
- (32) a. Sono kooen-ni watasi-no zitsensya-ga ar-u.
 DET park-LOC I-GEN bike-NOM be-PRES
 'In the park is my bike.'
- b. Hondana-ni tyomuskii-no hon-ga ar-u.
 bookshelf-LOC Chomsky-GEN book-NOM be-PRES
 'There is a book by Chomsky on the bookshelf.'

In (31)-(32), all the sentences are interpreted as meaning the (transitory) existence. Note that in these cases they have no possessor-possessee relationships between the locative and the nominative NPs. Thus, no possessor-possessee relationship exists between the NPs in question when the sentence whose predicate corresponds to *iru* or *aru* is construed as conveying the meaning of existence. According to this definition, the sentence (25) will also be a kind of existential construction, though it carries the meaning that there's always Hanako if Taro is in trouble, .

5.3. The Mechanism of Honorification in Existential Construction

In this section, we discuss the mechanism of the honorification in the existential construction. As discussed in the previous section, the existential sentence contains no possessor-possessee relationship between the locative and the nominative NPs. For this reason, the grammatical status of the existential sentence whose predicate is put in an honorific form is basically due to the referent of the nominative NP. Thus, the mechanism of the honorification in this sentence is explained by the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (i) in (23). These two conditions require that (the head of) the nominative NP trigger honorification if it denotes an honorable person.

To illustrate, first, let us consider the existential sentence whose predicate, *iru*, is put in an honorific form.

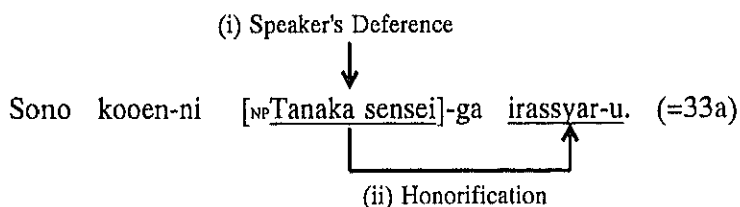
- (33) a. Sono kooen-ni {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ga irassyar-u.
 DET park-LOC {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'In the park is {Prof. Tanaka/Taroo}.'
- b. Izu-ni {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ga irassyar-u.
 Izu-LOC {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'In Izu is {Prof. Tanaka/Taroo}.'

In both (33a) and (33b), the locative NPs, *sono kooen* 'the park' and *Izu* 'Izu', form no possessor-possessee relationship with the nominative NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka' or *Taroo* 'Taro'. So the grammaticality of these sentences depends exclusively on the referent of the nominative NP. When the nominative NP denotes an honorable person, for example, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', the sentence is fully

grammatical. The sentence becomes ill-formed when the nominative NP does not refer to such a person. Hence, the (un)grammaticality is explained by the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (i) in (23).

Then, the mechanism of the honorification in the existential construction is basically as follows.

(34) The mechanism of the Honorification in Existential Construction



This diagram shows that if (the head of) the nominative NP refers to an honorable person, then it can trigger honorification on a predicate.

Moreover, the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (i) in (23) can account for the following example, which means that I'm all right because there's always Professor Tanaka (or Taro) if I'm in trouble.

- (35) *Watasi-ni-wa* {*Tanaka sensei*/**Taroo*}-*ga* *irassyar-u*
 I-LOC-TOP {*Tanaka Prof./Taroo*}-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
kara daizyoobu desu.
 because all right POLITE
 'I'm all right because there's always {Prof. Tanaka/Taro} if I'm in trouble.'

Interestingly, the locative NP plays no important role in honorification; in this case, it designates a dishonorable person like the first person singular, *watasi* 'I'. Nevertheless, this sentence is grammatical. This is because no possessor-possessee relationship exists between the locative and the nominative NPs. So the grammaticality of this sentence is determined only by the referent of the nominative NP, as predicted by the syntactic condition and the semantic condition in (23).

Finally, let us illustrate the honorification in the existential construction whose predicate, *aru*, is put in the honorific form. As pointed out in section 5.2, the sentence whose predicate is the verb *aru* is always interpreted as meaning possession when an animate thing occupies the nominative NP. So there is no existential construction with the verb *aru* in which the nominative NP is occupied by a person.

So we will observe the following examples where the head of the nominative NP is associated in a possessor-possessee relationship with the genitive NP denoting an honorable person.

- (36) a. *Sono mise-ni [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{NGO}-tyosyo]]-ga
 DET store-LOC Tanaka Prof.-GEN HP-book-NOM
 o-ari-ni nar-u.
 HP-be-HONOR-PRES
 'There're some books by Prof. Tanaka in the store.'
- b. *Kooen-ni [_{NP}Tanaka sensei-no [_{NO}-kuruma]]-ga
 park-LOC Tanaka Prof.-GEN HP-car-NOM
 o-ari-ni nar-u.
 HP-be-HONOR-PRES
 'In the park is Prof. Tanaka's car.'

In (36a), the head of the nominative NP, *go-tyosyo*, means (some) books, and the genitive NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', denotes the writer of the books; in (36b), the head of the nominative NP, *o-kuruma*, means a car, and the genitive NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', refers to its owner. In both cases, thus, there is a kind of possessor-possessee relationship between the genitive NP, *Tanaka sensei* 'Prof. Tanaka', denoting an honorable person and the head of the nominative NP, *go-tyosyo* 'book' or *o-kuruma* 'car'. This means that these two sentences satisfy both the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (ii) in (23). The two conditions require that (the head of) the nominative NP trigger honorification on a predicate if it is associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with an NP denoting an honorable person. Then, it should be predicted that the sentences (36a) and (36b) become grammatical, but both of them are actually judged to be ungrammatical, contrary to our prediction. Thus, these sentences seem to pose a problem to the two conditions in (23).

Tsunoda's (1990) suggestion is relevant to this point. Tsunoda claims on the basis of observation on possessor honorification phenomena that the acceptability of these phenomena depends on the following possession cline (for a more detailed discussion see Tsunoda 1990).

(37) Possession Cline

a physical part > a property > (a relative) > a pet > a product > the other
 possessions (Tsunoda 1990: 17)

This cline shows that there is a difference in acceptability among the sentences in which the possessor honorification is observed, owing to which category one's possession or possessee belongs to, and the acceptability decreases from the physical part to the other possessions. With this in mind, a closer look at (36a) and (36b) reveals that the possessee which occupies the head of the nominative NP correspond to products or the other possessions. In (36a), for example, the books are the

products by Professor Tanaka. Therefore, the unacceptability of (36a) and (36b) will be explained by the possession cline, and will pose no problem to the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (ii) we proposed in (23).

In this section, we have explicated the basic mechanism of the honorification in the existential construction. This phenomenon is effectuated by satisfying the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (i) in (23). Syntactically speaking, (the head of) the nominative NP triggers honorification on a predicate. As is generally assumed, there is a correspondence between subject and nominative case.⁸ Thus, it follows that the nominative NP functions as subject in the existential construction.

5.4. *The Mechanism of Honorification in Possessive Construction*

In this section, we will explicate the mechanism of the honorification in the possessive construction, and claim against Shibatani's analysis that the nominative NP functions as subject in this construction as well.

As discussed in section 5.2, a possessor-possessee relationship always exists between the dative and the nominative NPs in the possessive construction. Thus, the honorification in the possessive construction is triggered by satisfying the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (ii) in (23). In other words, (the head of) the nominative NP, even if it does not denote an honorable person, can trigger honorification on a predicate by being associated in a possessor-possessee relationship with the dative NP which refers to an honorable person.

To illustrate this, let us consider the following possessive sentences whose predicates, *aru* and *iru*, are put in honorific forms.

- (38) a. {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ni-wa saisi-ga o-ari-ni nar-u. (=26a)
 {Tanka Prof./Taro}-DAT-TOP wife and child-NOM HP-be-HONOR-PRES

8 There are, however, at least three possibilities for the correspondence between subject and nominative case. One is the possibility for two-way correspondence between them. According to this, (ia) will have two subjects in a sentence, and the accusative NP of (ib) will not be regarded as subject.

- (i) a. Zoo-ga hana-ga nagai.
 elephant-NOM trunk-NOM long
 'The elephant has a long trunk.'
 b. Taroo-ga [_{NP}Hanako-o utukusii]-to omot-ta.
 Taro-NOM Hanako-ACC beautiful-C think-PAST
 'Taro thought that Hanako was beautiful.'

A second possibility is the one that if an NP is marked with the nominative case, it always functions as subject in the sentence. In this case, the nominative NPs of (ia) will be both subjects, while the accusative NP of (ib) are not necessarily excluded from subject. A third possibility is the one that if an NP functions as subject in a sentence, the nominative case is always assigned to the NP. In (ia), then, not both the nominative NPs will be subjects, whereas the accusative NP will not be regarded as subject in (ib). At present, we will leave these issues open.

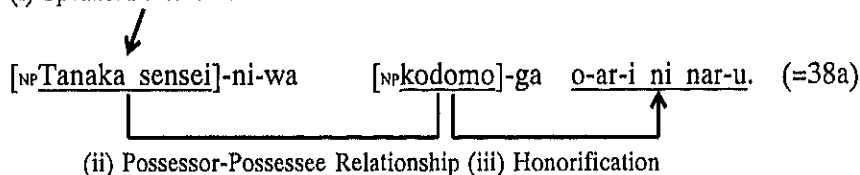
- '{Prof. Tanaka/Taro} has a child.' (marital relation and kinship)
- b. {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ni-wa tairyoku-ga
 {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-DAT-TOP physical strength-NOM
 o-ari-ni nar-u. (=27a)
 HP-be-HONOR-PRES
 '{Prof. Tanaka/Taro} has physical strength.' (property)
- (39) a. {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ni-wa okusan-ga irassyar-u. (=24a)
 {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-DAT-TOP wife-NOM HONORIFIED be-PRES
 '{Prof. Tanaka/Taro} has a wife.' (marital relation)
- b. {Tanaka sensei/*Taroo}-ni-wa kodomo-ga hutari
 {Tanaka Prof./Taro}-DAT-TOP child-NOM two
 irassyar-u. (=24b)
 HONORIFIED be-PRES
 '{Prof. Tanaka/Taro} has two children.' (kinship)

In (38a)-(39b), all the sentences have a possessor-possessee relationship between the dative and the nominative NPs. Thus, according to the syntactic and the semantic condition (ii) in (23), (the head of) the nominative NP can trigger honorification when the dative NP refers to an honorable person, for example, Professor Tanaka.

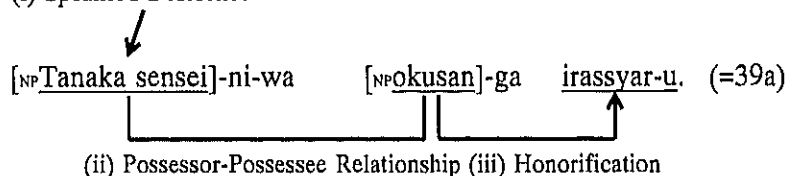
The procedure proceeds as follows.

(40) The Mechanism of the Honorification of Possessive Construction

- a. (i) Speaker's Deference



- b. (i) Speaker's Deference



These diagrams show that if the dative NP denotes an honorable person, then (the head of) the nominative NP can trigger honorification on a predicate.

Note that this mechanism is exactly the same as those of the possessor and the performative honorifications. As discussed in section 5.1, the element which triggers honorification syntactically should be differentiated from the element which triggers it semantically, in the possessor and the performative honorifications. It is (the head of) the nominative NP that plays the former role, whereas it is an

honorable person that plays the latter role. Likewise, these two elements should be distinguished from each other in the honorification phenomena in the possessive construction. Though Shibatani (1978) claims that the dative NP functions as subject in the possessive construction, this is untenable. The fact that we regard the subject of this construction as the dative NP means the fact that we see the latter element, i.e. an honorable person, as subject. So the subject must be the NP marked with the genitive or vocative case in the sentences which show the possessor or the performative honorification. In fact, however, the subjects of these sentences are the nominative NPs. In other words, subject corresponds not to the latter element, but to the former element, i.e. the NP marked with the nominative case. Thus, it follows that the nominative NP actually functions as subject in the possessive construction as well. This also gives a unified analysis of the honorification phenomena in the existential and possessive constructions in that the nominative NP syntactically triggers honorification.

Finally, we discuss an apparent problem for our analysis.

- (41) Tanaka sensei-ni-wa {okusan/*izi-no warui okusan}-ga
 Tanaka Prof.-DAT-TOP {wife/nature-GEN ill wife}-NOM
 irassyar-u. (=12)
 HONORIFIED be-PRES
 'Prof. Tanaka has a(n) {wife/ill-natured wife}.'

This sentence satisfies both the syntactic condition and the semantic condition (ii) in (23), since the nominative NP is associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with the dative NP which refers to an honorable person, Professor Tanaka. So it is predicted that the sentence in (41) should be grammatical. Nevertheless, (41) becomes ungrammatical when the nominative NP denotes such a dishonorable person as an ill-natured wife. Therefore, this sentence seems to be a counterexample to the set of necessary conditions in (23) at first sight.

In fact, however, we can regard this phenomenon as a kind of agreement between the possessor and the possessee. When the possessor corresponds to an honorable person, the possessee is frequently but not always accompanied by an honorific prefix.

- (42) a. Tanaka sensei-no go-yuuzin
 Tanaka Prof.-GEN HP-friend
 'Prof. Tanaka's friend'
 b. Tanaka sensei-no o-kuruma
 Tanaka Prof.-GEN HP-car
 'Prof. Tanaka's car'

In these cases, each of the genitive NPs denotes an honorable person, Professor Tanaka. Moreover, note that honorific prefixes (HPs) are assigned to the heads of the nominative NPs. This may be because, since the possessor, i.e. Professor Tanaka, corresponds to an honorable person, the speaker feels like paying deference to the entities he possesses, i.e. his friend or his car.

The same will also apply to (41). In this case, the dative NP refers to an honorable person, Professor Tanaka. This drives a speaker to feel like paying deference to his possession, i.e. his wife, which is referred to by the nominative NP. Nevertheless, the nominative NP denotes a dishonorable person, an ill-natured wife, so the sentence (41) becomes ungrammatical. Thus, this sentence will provide no evidence against the set of necessary conditions in (23).

6. Concluding Remarks

In this study, we have considered the mechanisms of the honorification phenomena in the existential and the possessive constructions. Shibatani (1978) claims on the basis of honorification that the dative NP functions as subject in the possessive construction. In fact, however, this phenomenon cannot be used to justify the subjecthood of the dative NP. We gave three pieces of evidence against Shibatani's (1978) analysis: (i) the honorification in the possessive sentence whose predicate, *iru*, is put in an honorific form, (ii) the possessor honorification, and (iii) the performative honorification. In particular, it is definitely shown by the latter two honorifications that subject cannot be always identified with the NP which refers to an honorable person. Thus, the fact that replacement of an honorable person denoted by the dative NP with a dishonorable person makes the sentence ungrammatical doesn't mean that the dative NP functions as subject in the possessive construction. The syntactic condition and the semantic condition (ii) in (23) we proposed on the basis of the possessor and the performative honorifications require that (the head of) the nominative NP or subject trigger honorification if it is associated by a possessor-possessee relationship with an NP denoting an honorable person. In the present study, we claim that these two conditions provide a unified account of honorification phenomenon in the possessive construction, too. As a result, it follows that the nominative NP functions as subject in the possessive construction as well as the existential construction.

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