

# The Morphology of Japanese Pred Revisited

Takayuki Akimoto (Kogakuin University)

**Synopsis:** Japanese has a rich morphology for coding predication relations: *-ku*, *-de*, and *-ni*. This paper offers a novel analysis of Japanese predication and its morphology, providing a set of evidence to show that *-ku*, *-de*, and *-ni* are NOT allomorphs of Pred *contra* Nishiyama (1999).

**Morphology of Predication:** Canonical Adjectives (CAs) are marked with *-ku*, while nominal adjectives (NAs) (and nouns) are with *-de* in primary predication (PPred) (1). In resultative secondary predication (RSP), however, CAs remain marked with *-ku*, but NAs are marked with *-ni* instead of *-de* (2).

- (1) Kabe-ga { aka<sub>CA</sub>-ku / makka<sub>NA</sub>-de } nai. PPred  
 wall-NOM red-KU red-DE not  
 ‘The wall is not red.’
- (2) Taro-ga kabe-o { aka<sub>CA</sub>-ku / makka<sub>NA</sub>-ni } si/nut-ta. RSP  
 T.-NOM wall-ACC red-KU red-NI do/paint-PAST  
 ‘Taro made/painted the soup red.’

Nishiyama (1999) argues *-ku*, *-de*, and *-ni* are allomorphs realizing Pred in the sense of Bowers (1993): *-ku* realizes when Pred is in the context of CAs; *-de* realizes when Pred is in the context of NAs; *-ni* realizes when Pred is in the context of NAs and eventive verbs (e.g. *nuru* ‘paint’).

**Proposal:** I propose that two heads are involved in syntactic predication as in (3), where Pred is a head responsible for turning aP/nP into a full-fledged predicate, and R(ELATOR) in the sense of Den Dikken (2006) establishes the predication relation between its complement (PredP) and its specifier (DP).

- (3) [RP DP [PredP aP/nP Pred] R ]

With the proposal, I argue that adjectives are projected up to RP in PPred, but only to PredP in RSP. The morphosyntax of PPred and RSP are sketched as in (4) and (5), respectively:

- (4) PPred a. CA: [RP kabe [PredP aka Pred] Pred (-ku) - R (-∅) ]  
 b. NA: [RP kabe [PredP makka Pred] Pred-R (-de) ]
- (5) RSP a. CA: [VP kabe [PredP aka Pred (-ku) ] V<sub>nur</sub> ‘paint’ ]  
 b. NA: [VP kabe [PredP makka Pred (-ni) ] V<sub>nur</sub> ‘paint’ ]

Pred for CAs is always realized as *-ku*; R is as a zero morpheme (-∅). For NAs, the realization pattern differs depending on whether adjectives are projected up to PredP or to RP. In the former case, Pred is realized as *-ni*; in the latter, the amalgam of Pred and R is realized as *-de*. This analysis straightforwardly captures the fact that CAs are consistently marked with *-ku* both in PPred and RSP, but NAs are marked with different morphemes (i.e. *-de* in PPred and *-ni* in RSP). In what follows, I present a set of evidence that empirically supports the present proposal, focusing on the behavior of NA-*ni* vs. NA-*de*.

**Diachronic change:** It has been reported that *-de* has been derived from *-ni-te*. As shown in (6), the NA *sizuka* ‘quiet’, which is marked with *-de* in contemporary Japanese, was marked with *-ni-te* in 19<sup>th</sup> century.

- (6) nagare-yuku mizu sizuka-ni-te ...  
 flow-go water quiet-NI-TE  
 ‘The way water is flowing is quiet ...’ (Shimazaki Tōson, *Wakanashu* 1897)

Furthermore, even in contemporary Japanese, *-ni-te* is sometimes used instead of *-de* like *go-byooki-ni-te* ‘HON-illness-NI-TE’ in formal contexts. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that *-de* is a contracted form of the combination of *-ni* and *-te*, which occupy different heads. It should be noted that *-ni-te* form in modern Japanese as well as in literary style follows from the present analysis: in that context, Pred and R are realized as *-ni* and *-te*, respectively.

**Coordination:** It is argued that coordinated phrases must be of the same category (Chomsky 1957). In (7a), both *aka-ku* and *makka-de* are coordinated with another adjective *kara-ku* ‘spicy’ by *te* ‘and’, which indicates that the conjuncts are of the same category (RP in our analysis). In (7b), by contrast, neither *aka-ku* nor *makka-ni* can be coordinated with another adjective in the same fashion.

- (7) a. Kono-suupu-wa [kara-ku *te* {aka-ku / makka-de}] at-ta.  
 this-soup-TOP spicy-KU & red-KU / red-DE be-PAST  
 ‘This soup should be hot and red.’  
 b. \*Taro-ga kono-suupu-o [kara-ku *te* {aka-ku / makka-ni}] si-ta.  
 T.-NOM this-soup-ACC spicy-KU & red-KU / red-NI do-PST  
 ‘Taro made this soup spicy and red.’

This result is unexpected if, as Nishiyama (1999) argues, *-ku*, *-de* and *-ni* are allomorphs of the same category Pred. In our analysis, this contrast can be accounted for as follows: in adjectival contexts, conjuncts coordinated by *-te* must be RP, not PredP.

**Entailment:** Further evidence supporting the present analysis comes from the entailment relation between an NA and its antecedent/subject. As is well known, NA is marked with *-de* not only in PPred but also in depictive secondary predicates (DSP) (Koizumi 1994). Compare DSP (8a) with RSP (8b):

- (8) a. Taro-ga gyuuniku-o nama-de tabe-ta. DSP  
 T.-NOM beef-ACC raw-DE be-PAST  
 ‘Taro ate beef raw.’  
 b. Taro-ga kabe-o makka-ni nut-ta. RSP  
 T.-NOM wall-ACC red-NI paint-PST  
 ‘Taro painted the wall red.’

Of importance here is the fact that (8a) entails that *beef is raw*, whereas (8b) does not always entail that *the wall is red*. To put it differently, (8a) means *Taro ate raw beef* but (8b) does not mean *Taro painted the red wall*. The wall may be black, white, or brown, and its color was changed into red by painting it. If *-de* and *-ni* realizes Pred which establishes the predication relation between an NA and its antecedent/subject, it is difficult to account for this fact. In our analysis, DSP and RSP are roughly analyzed as in (9).

- (9) a. DSP [Taro [VP gyuuniku<sub>i</sub> [RP PRO<sub>i</sub> [PredP nama Pred] R] V<sub>tabe</sub> ‘eat’ ]]  
 b. RSP [Taro [VP kabe [PredP makka Pred] V<sub>nur</sub> ‘paint’ ]]

In (9a), the accusative object in DSP is co-indexed with the subject PRO of RP: hence, the entailment. Since RSP lacks RP in (8b), the object is not construed as the subject of NA-*ni*: the lack of such entailment.

**Theoretical Extension:** The present analysis is nicely compatible with Nishiyama’s (2005) insightful hypothesis to the effect that P is equivalent to Pred, which is based on the observation that *-ni* and *-de* are used as locative postpositions as in (10). Nishiyama (2005) then proposes a new category termed **Pre(d/p)**.

- (10) a. Taro-ga kooen-ni iku. b. Taro-ga kooen-de asobu.  
 T.-NOM park-NI go T.-NOM park-DE play  
 ‘Taro goes to a park.’ ‘Taro plays in a park.’

Applying the hypothesis to our analysis, we have (11a) for (10a) and (11b) for (10b), respectively.

- (11) a. [VP Taro [Pre(d/p)P kooen Pre(d/p)(= -ni)] V<sub>iku</sub> ‘go’ ]  
 b. [VP Taro<sub>i</sub> [VP [RP PRO<sub>i</sub> [Pre(d/p)P kooen Pre(d/p)] Pre(d/p)-R(= -de)] V<sub>asobu</sub> ‘play’ ] v ]

**Selected References:** Nishiyama, K. 1999. Adjectives and copulas. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 8:183–222.  
 Nishiyama, K. 2005. Verbs, adjectives, and Pred: Review of Mark C. Baker, *Lexical Categories*. *English Linguistics* 22: 133–161.