Speech Act Phrase, Conjectural Questions, and Hearer
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Speas & Tenny (2003) proposed Speech Act Phrase, which takes, as arguments, discourse roles like Speaker, Hearer, and Utterance Content. Miyagawa (2012) discusses the role played Hearer in Japanese information-seeking WH-questions ending with the complementizer *ka*. This paper deals with conjectural questions in Japanese, which do not require Hearer, and examines their relevance to Speech Act Phrase.

Japanese has the sentence final particle *yara*, which is employed exclusively for conjectural questions. The behavior of *yara*-questions is different from that of *ka*-questions, as observed by traditional Japanese linguists. For instance, information-seeking questions can end with *ka* but not with *yara*, which requires the conjectural question interpretation.

(1) a. Dare-ga   ki-masu   ka?   b. Dare-ga   kuru yara.
       who-NOM come-POLITE Q   who-NOM come yara
       'Who will come?'   'I am not certain who will come.'

Ka-questions can be Case-marked, but *yara*-questions cannot.

(2) a. Dare-ga   kuru-ka (ga)   wakaranai. b. Dare-ga   kuru-yara (*ga)   wakaranai.
       who-NOM come-Q NOM know.not   who-NOM come-yara NOM know.not
       'I don't know who will come.'   'I don't know who will come.'

Yara-questions pattern in the relevant respects with *ka*-conjectural questions involving the modal *daroo* such as (4a). These questions, on a par with *yara*-questions, fail to be Case-marked, as in (4b).

(4) a. Dare-ga   kuru daroo ka?
       who-NOM come MOD Q
       'I wonder who will come.'
    b. Dare-ga   kuru daroo ka(*o),   watasi-wa siranai
       who-NOM come MOD Q ACC   I-TOP   know.not
       'I don't know who will come.'

Interestingly, *yara*-questions do not allow *daroo*.

(5)   Dare-ga   kuru (*daroo) yara.
       who-NOM come   MOD yara
       'I am not certain who will come.'

Given Nitta's (1991) observation that one sentence can only have one instance of a genuine modal like *daroo*, I assume that *yara*-questions involve a silent modal element like *daroo*.

I propose that *yara*-questions and *daroo*-questions have structures like the following.

(6)   [$_{SAP}$ Speaker [$_{SA'}$ [$_{CP}$ [$_{ModP}$ POV [$_{Mod'}$ TP Mod^0]] C^0] SA^0]]

In (6) the highest projection is Speech Act Phrase, whose Spec is occupied by Speaker and whose complement position is filled by CP (Utterance Content). ModP intervenes between CP and TP. The sequence of Mod^0 and C^0 is realized as *daroo ka* in questions like (4a) and as *yara* in ones like (1b). [Spec, ModP] contains the Point-of-View operator, which is licensed by a sentient element which c-commands it (Speaker, in this case).

Note that (6) does not involve Hearer, which captures the observation that (1b) and (4a) are not information-seeking questions, which require Hearer, but they are conjectural questions, where Hearer is not required. The failure of Case-markers to be attached to these questions, shown in (2b) and (5), can also be accounted for by assuming that Case-markers can be attached only to certain categories such as CP and DP, but not Speech Act Phrase.

It is important to note that the two types of conjectural questions differ when they involve a politeness marker. It is suggested in Miyagawa (2012) that politeness markers induce allocutive (Hearer-related) agreement. In other words, the politeness marker in (1a) requires the presence of Hearer, which makes it possible to interpret (1a) as an information-seeking

question. However, the conjectural question reading also seems to be possible in (1a). The polite version of (4a) can also be interpreted either as an information-seeking question or as a conjectural question, but curiously enough, *yara*-questions remain conjectural questions even with a politeness marker.

(7) a. Dare-ga   kuru desyoo   ka?   b.   Dare-ga   ki-masu   yara.
      who-NOM   come MOD.POLITE   Q   Who-NOM   come-POLITE   yara
      'Who will come? What do you think?'   'I am not certain who will come.'
      'I wonder who will come.'

(7a) can be interpreted either as asking Hearer his/her view concerning who will come or as expressing the speaker's own wondering in the presence of Hearer(s), as in the speech of an anchorperson or an emcee of a TV show. In (7b), however, Speaker necessarily expresses his/her own ignorance to Hearer.

     I would like to derive this interpretive asymmetry from the two kinds of configurational positioning of discourse roles and the properties of modal elements in (7) by proposing (8), which is a modification of (6).

(8) a. In information-seeking questions, Hearer is higher than Utterance Content, while in conjectural questions, Utterance Content is higher than Hearer, on a par with declaratives.
    b. The Point-of-View operator in ModP headed by *daroo* has an uninterpretable [*u*discourse participant] feature, whereas the relevant uninterpretable features in *yara* questions are the [*u*discourse participant, *u*Speaker].

Speas and Tenny (2003) seem to assume that this "flip" of the two discourse roles is obligatory in all the interrogative contexts, but I depart from them and assume that it is applied only in information-seeking questions. Given (8a), the interpretive ambiguity of (1a) can be accounted for as well. The point of (8b) is to guarantee that *yara*-questions reflect Speaker's viewpoint.

     Given (8), (7a) and (7b) will have structures like the following.

(9) a. *Desyoo ka* information seeking question
$[_{\text{SAP}}$ Speaker$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{SA'}}$ $[_{\text{saP}}$ Hearer$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{sa'}}$ $[_{\text{CP}}$ $[_{\text{ModP}}$ POV$_{[u\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{MOD'}}$ TP MOD^0]] C^0] sa^0]] SA^0]]
    b. *Desyoo ka* conjectural question
$[_{\text{SAP}}$ Speaker$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{SA'}}$ $[_{\text{saP}}$ $[_{\text{CP}}$ $[_{\text{Mod}}$ POV$_{[u\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{MOD'}}$ MOD^0 TP]] C^0] $[_{\text{sa'}}$ Hearer$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ sa^0]] SA^0]]

(10) a. * *Yara*-information seeking question
$[_{\text{SAP}}$ Speaker$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{SA'}}$ $[_{\text{saP}}$ Hearer$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{sa'}}$ $[_{\text{CP}}$ $[_{\text{Mod}}$ POV$_{[u\text{disc.prt}, u\text{Speaker}]}$ $[_{\text{MOD'}}$ TP MOD^0]] C^0] sa^0]] SA^0]]
    b. *Yara*-conjectural question
$[_{\text{SAP}}$ Speaker$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ $[_{\text{SA'}}$ $[_{\text{saP}}$ $[_{\text{CP}}$ $[_{\text{Mod}}$ POV$_{[u\text{disc.prt}, u\text{Speaker}]}$ $[_{\text{MOD'}}$ TP MOD^0]] C^0] $[_{\text{sa'}}$ Hearer$_{[\text{disc.prt}]}$ sa^0]] SA^0]]

In (9a), the Point-of-View operator has the perspective of Hearer because it is the closest c-commanding discourse participant, which makes the sentence ask the addressee's view. In (9b), the operator reflects the viewpoint of Speaker, which is the only c-commanding discourse participant, yielding the conjectural question interpretation. In (10a), just like (9a), the closest discourse participant is Hearer, which must the POV holder, but the operator demands Speaker as its holder to have its [*u*Speaker] feature checked off, leading to deviance. In (10b), which is fine, the property of the Point-of-View operator is satisfied.

References

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