

On (Non-)roothood of the Japanese Politeness Marker *-Mas-*

Keisuke Yoshimoto
Ryukoku University

Abstract

This paper argues that the Japanese politeness marker *-mas-* has a wider distribution than previously thought, and that its occurrence in a subset of complement clauses can be accounted for in terms of long-distance feature transmission. It is argued that long-distance feature transmission is prevented if the complement clause constitutes a phase, suggesting that the duplication of *-mas-* in the main and complement clause is not just a matter of style, but a phenomenon to be treated in narrow syntax.

1 Introduction

The primary purpose of this paper is to offer a syntactic account of the Japanese politeness marker *-mas-*, which is considered to be one of main clause phenomena (MCP), or root transformations. MCP first attracted attention in the generative literature in 1970s, with particular interest in their distribution. Although the name itself suggests as if they only occur in main, or root clauses, they are in fact allowed to occur in a subset of non-root clauses. As an illustration, let us observe that topicalization, typical MCP, occurs in a main clause (see 1a) as well as the complement clause of the verb *assure* (see 1b), but cannot occur in factive clauses like (1c).

- (1) a. This book, I don't like very much.
b. I can assure you that that film, I don't want to ever see again.
c.*John regretted that Gone with the Wind, we went to see.

((1a) is from Haegeman 2012: ix, (1b) from Haegeman and Ürögdi 2010: 113, (1c) from Authier 1992: 334)

Given this, an obvious question is why some non-root clauses resist MCP while others do not. Hooper and Thompson's (henceforth H&T) (1973) idea is that these non-root clauses tolerating MCP involve assertion. But, since assertion is semantic/pragmatic notion, it awaits to be seen how well their distribution can be accounted for in terms of syntactic structures.

The cartography of syntactic structures, a research project initiated in 1990s (see Cinque and Rizzi 2010 for its history), seems suitable for the analysis of MCP. Outlining the relative ordering of the constituents in the left periphery, Rizzi (1997) suggests that topicalized and focalized phrases are allocated specific positions within the split CP domain.

(2) Force Top Foc Top Fin T

According to this analysis, a CP – a domain for the complementizer – is split into Force, Topic, Focus, Topic, and Finite in this order, if a topicalized or focalized phrase is moved into the left periphery of a clause. Adopting this structure, various researchers have proposed that H&T’s concept of assertion corresponds to Force, and that those non-root clauses resisting MCP have an impoverished structure, lacking the projections which are supposed to accommodate preposed phrases (Haegeman 2006).

However, the assumption that there exist left-peripheral projections as a template has been called into question, partly because recent syntactic approaches in the Minimalist Program are attempting to eliminate labels for projections. Along these lines, some suggest that the relative ordering of left-peripheral constituents boils down to more general conditions on locality (see Abels 2012). One such analysis comes from Haegeman (2010, 2012) and Haegeman & Ürögdi (2010), who propose that operator movement gives rise to an intervention of MCP. In this light, let us observe (3).

- (3) a.*This is a student to whom, *your book*, I would recommend.
 b.*When *her regular column* she began to write last year, I thought she would be OK.
 (Haegeman 2012: 195-196)

The italicized topicalized phrases are in the movement path of the relative operator in (3a) and the temporal operator in (3b). The idea of locality in terms of feature-based relativized minimality is that a constituent with the feature α blocks the extraction of a constituent with the same feature (unless the moving element is discourse-linked and has more enriched features) (Starke 2001, Rizzi 2004, Endo 2007). Assuming that the topicalized phrase and the *wh*-operator have the same feature, the former blocks the movement of the latter over it. To put this in a different way, the intervention approach implies that there is no need to posit a structural distinction between root and non-root clauses, and that MCP can occur in a clause unless there is an intervening operator movement.

Against this backdrop, the Japanese politeness marker *-mas-* is an interesting case to investigate because, as Miyagawa (2012) argues, it appears to occur only in the root clause, with root originally defined in Emonds (1969). More specifically, Miyagawa (2012) proposes that *-mas-* can only appear in the main clause, the complement clause of Type A verbs (such as ‘say’) of H&T, and reason clauses. As shown below, *-mas-* can appear in the complement clause of the verb ‘say’, but cannot appear in the complement clause of Type B verbs (*believe*-type) (Pol in the glosses stands for politeness).

- (4) a. Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga ki-mas-ita to] it-ta.
 Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pol-Past C say-Past
 ‘Taro said that Hanako came.’
 (Harada 1976: 544)

- b. Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga ku-ru/*ki-mas-u koto]-o sinzitei-ru.
 Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pres/come-Pol-Pres C-Acc believe-Pres
 ‘Taro believes that Hanako will come.’ (Miyagawa 2012: 94)

The finding by Miyagawa (2012) suggests the existence of the specific projection in root clauses (his Speech Act Phrase) that accommodates and licenses *-mas-*; therefore, a structural distinction between root and non-root clauses. However, there is evidence to the contrary. As Harada (1976) and Uchibori (2007, 2008) have noticed, *-mas-* can appear in non-root clauses if certain conditions are met. One such context is the subjunctive clause as shown by Uchibori (2008).

- (5) Hitobito-wa [ame-ga huri-mas-u yoo(ni)] negai-mas-ita.
 People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pol-Pres C hope-Pol-Past
 ‘People hoped that it would rain.’ (Uchibori 2008: 113)

Given these contradicting remarks on the distribution of *-mas-*, I try to elucidate the syntactic conditions under which a subset of complement clauses permit the occurrence of *-mas-*. The structure of this paper is as follows. In the next section, I investigate the distribution of *-mas-* in complement clauses. Section 3 argues how its distribution can be accounted for in terms of Agree. In section 4, I show that the distribution of embedded *-mas-* and the phasehood of clauses are correlated. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2 The distribution of the embedded *-mas-*

According to Harada (1976), the embedded clauses that permit the occurrence of *-mas-* are direct discourse complements, factive complements and nonrestrictive relative clauses. In addition, Uchibori (2007, 2008) suggests that subjunctive complements allow the embedded *-mas-*. Here, I add control complements to the list¹:

- (6) a. direct discourse complements
 b. factive complements
 c. nonrestrictive relative clauses
 d. subjunctive complements
 e. control complements

The important point to note is that the complement clauses in (6b-e), except (6a), do not permit the embedded *-mas-* occurring on its own. Rather, the occurrence of the embedded *-mas-* in (6b-e) depends on its counterpart in the matrix clause. I term this constraint found by Uchibori (2007, 2008) as the co-occurrence requirement, and modify it by adding the notion of phase.

(7) Co-occurrence requirement

The politeness marker *-mas-* is permitted in the non-phasal complement clause only if there is another occurrence of it in the main clause.

In order to see that the co-occurrence requirement obtains in (6b-e) but not in (6a), let us observe a set of data. In the following sets of three sentences, (a) (b) and (c) are minimally different in that (a) has *-mas-* only in the main clause, (b) only in the complement clause, and (c) both in the main and complement clauses.

(8) Complements of Type B verbs

- a. Taro_o-wa [Hanako-ga ku-ru to] sinzitei-mas-u.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pres C believe-Pol-Pres
'Taro believes that Hanako will come.'
- b.*Taro_o-wa [Hanako-ga ki-mas-u to] sinzitei-ru.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pol-Pres C believe-Pres
- c.*Taro_o-wa [Hanako-ga ki-mas-u to] sinzitei-mas-u.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pol-Pres C believe-Pol-Pres

(9) Direct discourse complements (= (6a))

- a. Taro_o-wa [Hanako-ga ki-ta to] it-ta.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Past C say-Past
'Taro said that Hanako came.'
- b. Taro_o-wa [Hanako-ga ki-mas-ita to] it-ta.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pol-Past C say-Past
- c. Taro_o-wa [Hanako-ga ki-mas-ita to] ii-mas-ita.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pol-Past C say-Pol-Past

(10) Factive complements (= (6b))

- a. Ken-wa [oozei-no hitobito-ga kesseki si-ta koto/no]-ni
Ken-Top many-Gen people-Nom absence do-Past C-Dat
odoroki-mas-ita.
be.surprised-Pol-Past
'Ken was surprised that many people were absent.'
- b.*Ken-wa [oozei-no hitobito-ga kesseki si-mas-ita koto/no]-ni
Ken-Top many-Nom people-Nom absence do-Pol-Past C-Dat
odoroi-ta.
be.absent-Past
- c. Ken-wa [oozei-no hitobito-ga kesseki si-mas-ita koto/?no]-ni
Ken-Top many-Gen people-Nom absence do-Pol-Past C-Dat

odoroki-mas-ita.

be.surprised-Pol-Past

(11) Subjunctive complements with the complementizer *yoo(ni)* (= (6d))

- a. Hitobito-wa [pro ame-ga hu-ru yoo(ni)] negai-mas-ita.
People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pres C hope-Pol-Past

‘People hoped that it would rain.’

- b. ?*Hitobito-wa [pro ame-ga huri-mas-u yoo(ni)] negat-ta.
People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pol-Pres C hope-Past

- c. Hitobito-wa [pro ame-ga huri-mas-u yoo(ni)] negai-mas-ita.
People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pol-Pres C hope-Pol-Past

((11b) (11c) are from Uchibori 2008: 113-114)

(12) Subjunctive complements with the complementizer *koto* (= (6d))

- a. Hitobito-wa [pro ame-ga hu-ru koto]-o negai-mas-ita.
People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pres C-Acc hope-Pol-Past

‘People hoped that it would rain.’

- b. ?*Hitobito-wa [pro ame-ga huri-mas-u koto]-o negat-ta.
People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pol-Pres C-Acc hope-Past

- c. Hitobito-wa [pro ame-ga huri-mas-u koto]-o negai-mas-ita.
People-Top rain-Nom fall-Pol-Pes C-Acc hope-Pol-Past

((12b)(12c) are from Uchibori 2008: 113-114)

(13) Control complements (= (6e))

- a. Susan-wa Paul_i-ni [PRO_i sookitaisyoku su-ru yoo(ni)]
Susan-Top Paul-Dat early.retirement do-Pres C

motome-mas-ita.

ask-Pol-Past

‘Susan asked Paul to retire early.’

- b. ?*Susan-wa Paul_i-ni [PRO_i sookiitaisyoku si-mas-u yoo(ni)]
Susan-Top Paul-Dat early.retirement do-Pol-Pres C

motome-ta.

ask-Past

- c. Susan-wa Paul_i-ni [PRO_i sookitaisyoku si-mas-u yoo(ni)]
Susan-Top Paul-Dat early.retirement do-Pol-Pres C

motome-mas-ita.

ask-Pol-Past

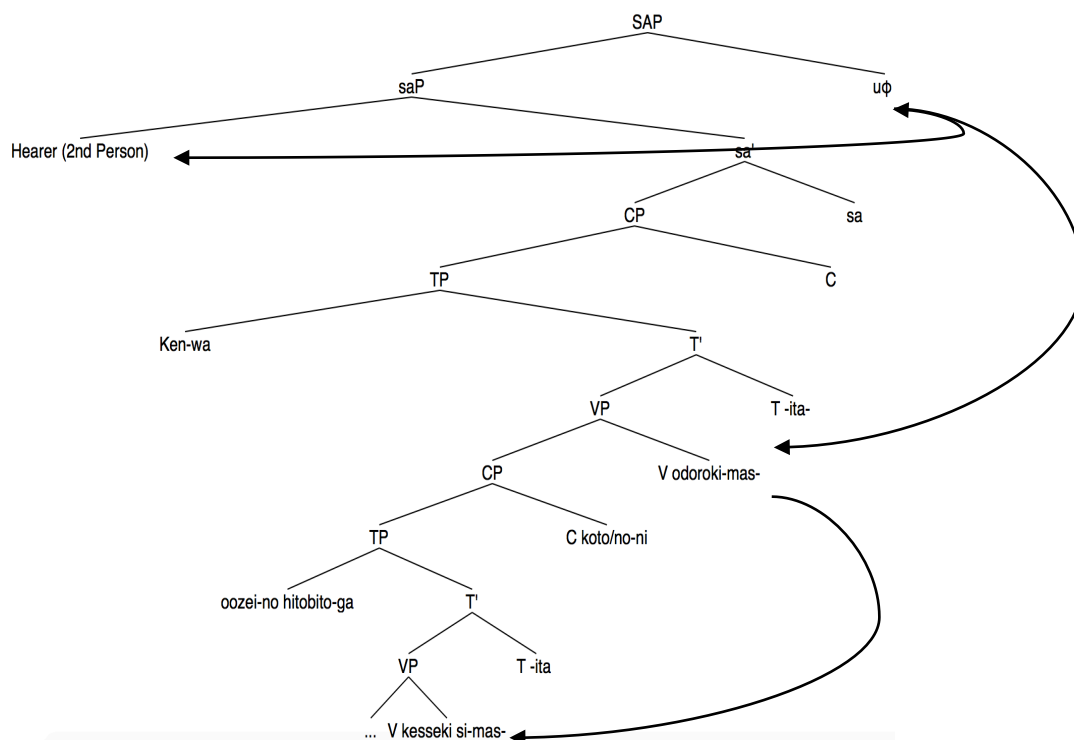
Although there is a slight difference in judgment between the subjunctive complementizers in (11b) and (12b), the above data tells us that the matrix politeness marker *-mas-* saves otherwise unacceptable

embedded *-mas-* in factive, subjunctive and control complements. Furthermore, as shown in (9), the embedded *-mas-* is allowed to occur in direct discourse complements irrespective of the matrix counterpart of the politeness marker. On the other hand, in the complement clause of Type B verbs like (8), the embedded *-mas-* is not permitted even with the matrix counterpart. Accordingly, it follows that some complement clauses are susceptible to the co-occurrence requirement, but others are not.

3 Agree and feature transmission

In this section, we discuss how the co-occurrence requirement can be accounted for in terms of Agree. The politeness marker *-mas-* is attached to a verb when the speaker is talking or writing to someone socially superior to him/her. So there is a presence of a hearer although s/he is not visible in a sentence. Miyagawa (2012) argues that *-mas-* obtains as a result of Agree with a hearer, which resides in a superstructure called Speech Act Phrase (SAP) above CP. Adopting his idea, I suggest that the uninterpretable Φ features agree with a hearer which has the second person value. The valued uninterpretable Φ features are then realized as *-mas-* and is passed on to the verb. Subsequently, *-mas-* is copied and transmitted into the complement clause, and attached to the next lower verb. As a result, there are two *-mas-* attached both to the matrix verb and embedded verb. The diagram below represents this long-distance feature transmission in factive complements like (10c) (repeated as (14)) (vP is omitted due to space limitation).

- (14) Ken-wa [oozei-no hitobito-ga kesseki si-mas-ita koto/?no]-ni odoroki-mas-ita.
 Ken-Top many-Gen people-Nom absence do-Pol-Past C-Dat be.surprised-Pol-Past
 ‘Ken was surprised that many people were absent.’



(15) a. Taro-wa [Hanako-ga ki-mas-ita to] ii-mas-ita.
Taro-Top Hanako-Nom come-Pol-Past C say-Pol-Past
'Taro said that Hanako came.'

- Accordingly, there is no long-distance feature transmission in this structure, and the embedded *-mas*-alone can be licensed through the agreement with a hearer in the complement clause.

In the previous section, we discussed direct discourse complements, one of the complements that are not susceptible to the co-occurrence requirement. A question still remains as to the complement clauses of Type B verbs (such as ‘believe’), which are also exempt from the co-occurrence requirement. But remember that unlike direct discourse complements, the complement clauses of Type B verbs resist the embedded occurrence of *-mas-* even if there is *-mas-* in the main clause. Thus we should ask: why factive, subjunctive and control complements allow the embedded *-mas-* occurring with the matrix *-mas-*, while complements of Type B verbs do not.

(16) Phase Impenetrability Condition (Chomsky 2000: 108)

In phase α with head H , the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside of α , only H and its edge are accessible to such operations.

As far as CPs are concerned, the complement of the phase head is TP. If the complement clause is a phase, the long-distance transmission of *-mas-* from the matrix V is prevented because the embedded verb contained in the embedded TP has already been transferred to the interfaces and hence invisible.

One of the diagnostics for phasehood is whether or not phrasal extraction is A-movement. If the complement clause is a phase, phrasal extraction must transmit through the edge of the phase, i.e. Spec CP, which is an A-bar position. After landing in the A-bar position, it must continue A-bar movement, because otherwise the movement would end up in an improper movement (Chomsky 1973). The following structure illustrates this point. Firstly, *Paul* moves to the A-bar position to circumvent the PIC (shaded part has already been spelled-out), and then lands in an A-position, leading to the ungrammaticality.

- (17) a. *Paul seems (that) is intelligent.
 b. [_{TP} Paul seems [_{CP} <Paul> (that) [_{TP} <Paul> is intelligent]]].
-
- A-movement A-bar movement

On the other hand, if the complement clause is not a phase, movement out of it does not transmit through the Spec CP position, and thus long-distance A-movement is possible.

Long-distance scrambling out of factive, subjunctive and control complements is A-movement because the scrambled phrase can A-bind the pronoun *soko* ‘it’ ((a) in each sentence represents the structure before scrambling has taken place, and (b) the structure after the scrambling).

(18) *Factive complements*

- a. *Soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o
 It-Gen employee-Top Ken-Nom three-or.more-Gen company-Acc
 tyoosasi-ta koto/no]-ni odoroi-ta.
 investigate-Past C-Dat be.surprised-Past
 ‘Their_i employees were surprised that Ken investigated three or more companies_i.’
- b. ?Mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga *t*
 tyoosasi-ta koto/no]-ni odoroi-ta.

(19) *Subjunctive complements (with the complementizer yoo(ni))*

- a. *Soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o
 It-Gen employee-Top Ken-Nom three-or.more-Gen company-Acc
 tyoosasu-ru yoo(ni)] negat-ta.
 investigate-Pres C hope-Past
 ‘Their_i employees hoped that Ken would investigate three or more companies_i.’

- b. Mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga *t*
tyoosasu-ru yoo(ni)] negat-ta.
- (20) *Subjunctive complements (with the complementizer koto)*
- a.*Soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o
It-Gen employee-Top Ken-Nom three-or.more-Gen company-Acc
tyoosasu-ru koto]-o negat-ta.
investigate-Pres C-Acc hope-Past
'Their_i employees hoped that Ken would investigate three or more companies_i.'
- b. Mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga *t*
tyoosasu-ru koto]-o negat-ta.
- (21) *Control complements*
- a.*Soko_i-no syain-wa Ken_j-ni [PRO_j mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o
It-Gen employee-Top Ken-Dat three-or.more-Gen company-Acc
tyoosasu-ru yoo(ni)] meizi-ta.
investigate-Pres C order-Past
'Their_i employees ordered Ken to investigate three or more companies_i.'
- b. Mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o soko_i-no syain-wa Ken_j-ni [PRO_j *t*
tyoosasu-ru yoo(ni)] meizi-ta.

On the other hand, the phrase scrambled out of the complement clause of Type B verbs cannot A-bind the pronoun *soko* 'it'.

(22) Complements of Type B verbs

- a.*Soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o
It-Gen employee-Top Ken-Nom three-or.more-Gen company-Acc
tyoosasi-ta to] sinzitei-ru.
investigate-Past C believe-Pres
'Their_i employees believe that Ken investigated three or more companies_i.'
- b.*Mittu-izyoo-no kaisya_i-o soko_i-no syain-wa [Ken-ga *t*
tyoosasi-ta to] sinzitei-ru.

Accordingly, the above contrast suggests that the limited occurrence of the embedded *-mas-* can be accounted for in terms of the phasehood of the clauses. If the complement clause is a phase, *-mas-* cannot appear even with the matrix *-mas-*. On the other hand, if the complement clause is non-phasal, the embedded *-mas-* can appear with the matrix *-mas-* thanks to long-distance feature transmission.

5 Conclusion

In sum, the Japanese politeness marker *-mas-* is ambivalent as MCP. It seems like a root phenomenon in that it requires the Speech Act Phrase above CP inside of which the agreement with a hearer licenses *-mas-*. And Speech Act Phrase is only available in genuine root clauses such as main clauses, direct discourse complements and reason clauses, whose proposition can be addressed to a hearer. At the same time, *-mas-* does not seem like a root phenomenon in that it can appear in apparently non-root complement clauses such as factive, subjunctive and control complements, whose proposition is not addressed to a hearer different from the hearer in the main clause. The occurrence of *-mas-* in such complement clauses is made possible thanks to the copying and transmission of *-mas-* from the main clause, and the long-distance transmission is permitted only if the complement clause is non-phasal. In other words, *-mas-* in factive, subjunctive and control complements is an MCP in disguise, dependent on a genuine MCP in root clauses.

Notes

¹ How to treat nonrestrictive relative clauses is a question which I would like to keep beyond the scope of this present discussion.

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日本語の丁寧形「ます」の（非）主文性について

吉本圭佑

龍谷大学

要旨

本稿は、日本語の丁寧形「ます」の補文における分布について論じる。「ます」は Miyagawa (2012) などで主文現象として扱われ、Emonds (1969) のいう主文、つまり主文と引用節、理由節にしか現れないと考えられてきた。しかし、主文にも「ます」が現れる場合にのみ、一部の補文においても「ます」が出現可能であるということが知られている (Harada 1976, Uchibori 2007, 2008)。主文の「ます」は聞き手との人称一致の結果得られると Miyagawa (2012) は述べているが、これらの補文における「ます」は聞き手との人称一致の結果ではなく、主文の「ます」が複製され、長距離伝達された結果生じると本稿は論じる。長距離伝達は補文がフェイズを形成しない場合にのみ可能であり、補文がフェイズを形成する場合は阻止される。よって、主文と補文の両方に「ます」が同時に生起する現象は、単に文体上の問題ではなく、統語部門で取り扱われるべきものである。