Where Grammar and Interaction Meet: A Study of Co-Participant Completion in Japanese Conversation

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Abstract. This article examines the practice of “co-participant completion” in Japanese conversation, and explores what kinds of resources are mobilized to provide the opportunity to complete another participant’s utterance-in-progress. It suggests the following observations as potential characteristics of Japanese co-participant completion: (i) Syntactically-defined two-part formats (e.g. \[X\] + \[Y\]) may not play as prominent a role as in English; (ii) The majority of cases of co-participant completion take the form of ‘terminal item completion;’ (iii) Locally emergent structures like ‘contrast’ and ‘list’ as well as ‘unprojected’ features of turn construction often play an important role in enhancing the opportunity for completing another participant’s utterance-in-progress. The article then discusses the implications of these findings for the investigation of the mutual bearing of grammar and social interaction. In particular, the discussion focuses on what we can learn from the practice of co-participant completion about how projection of turn-shapes is accomplished in Japanese conversation.

Key words: conversation analysis, co-participant completion, Grammar and Interaction, Japanese conversation, projectability of turn-shapes

1. Introduction

The present article is an interim report from an ongoing research project investigating the practice of “co-participant completion” in Japanese conversation (cf. Hayashi and Mori, 1998; Lerner and Takagi, 1999). This study examines the practice by which Japanese conversational participants complete a turn-constructional unit (TCU)-in-progress initiated by another participant, and thereby accomplish a range of interactional work within a turn at talk. The goal of the study is to explore how the grammatical structuring of a turn-in-progress organizes, and is organized by, the framework for conjoined participation by multiple participants in ongoing social interaction. The present work situates itself in a larger body of research exploring the relationship between grammar and interaction (e.g. Ochs, Schegloff and Thompson, eds., 1996).

1.1. Background: Grammar and Interaction

In recent years, there has been a growing concern in a variety of disciplines with investigating language in its ‘natural habitat,’ i.e. everyday social interaction,
and an increasing number of researchers have attempted to explicate a rich and complex variety of linkages between language and social interaction. Among such researchers, some have started to take the possibility seriously that the grammatical organization of a language is intimately intertwined with various organizations of human conduct in social interaction, and therefore that a proper understanding of what we call ‘grammar’ cannot be obtained without regard to interactional matrices in which it figures. Such a view is expressed by Schegloff, Ochs, and Thompson (1996) in the introduction to the volume which presents a collection of works that explore the relationship between grammar and interaction:

[Grammar is part of a broader range of resources — organizations of practices, if you will — which underlie the organization of social life, and in particular the way in which language figures in everyday interaction and cognition. In this view, the involvement of grammar in such other organizations as those of culture, action and interaction has as a consequence that matters of great moment are missed if grammar’s order is explored as entirely contained within a single, self-enclosed organization. Grammar’s integrity and efficacy are bound up with its place in larger schemes of organization of human conduct, and with social interaction in particular. (pp. 2–3)]

In the tradition of conversation analysis (CA), the intricate relationship between the grammatical organization of emerging utterances and the interactional contingencies in which utterances are embedded has been investigated most notably by Charles and Marjorie Harness Goodwin (C. Goodwin, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1989, 1995, 1996; M. Goodwin, 1980; C. Goodwin & M. Goodwin, 1987, 1992; M. Goodwin & C. Goodwin, 1987). The Goodwins have shown that the grammatical structuring of an unfolding turn shapes, and is shaped by, the organization of co-participation by multiple participants within a turn-space of a current speaker. Their work provides penetrating accounts of how conversational participants co-construct activities by using resources made available moment-by-moment through the emerging structure of a single TCU.

1.2. Co-Participant Completion

Another line of research in CA that shows the prime relevance of grammatical structure to the organization of co-participation within a turn at talk is that on ‘co-participant completion’ (a term adopted from Lerner and Takagi, 1999). Co-participant completion, also known as ‘joint production,’ ‘collaborative completion,’ ‘anticipatory completion,’ etc., in English conversation was first noted by Harvey Sacks in his lectures on conversation (Sacks, 1992), and has subsequently been investigated in detail by Gene Lerner (1987, 1991, 1996a,
Lerner’s and others’ work on the participants’ practice of jointly producing single syntactic units has provided insights into how conversational participants can mobilize grammatical resources to organize social interaction among themselves within the boundaries of single turn-constructional units. In other words, their work has demonstrated that the practice of co-participant completion is a locus where utterances’ grammatical organization and participants’ situated social actions intersect in a variety of ways.

In the past several years, a number of researchers studying Japanese conversational interaction have also begun to examine co-participant completion in Japanese and explore its relevance to grammar and social interaction (e.g. Hayashi and Mori, 1998; Lerner and Takagi, 1999; Mizutani, 1993; Ono and Yoshida, 1996; Strauss and Kawanishi, 1996; Szatrowski, 1993, 1996). The present report aims to contribute to this line of research on co-participant completion in Japanese conversation, and to a larger research program for re-orienting our understanding of grammar to that of ‘interactionally situated grammar’ that is part of a wider range of practices that underlie the organization of human interaction.

1.3. The Scope of the Study

Taking previous work on co-participant completion in English as a point of departure, the present report focuses on the following aspects in co-participant completion in Japanese:

Opportunities for co-participant completion and their implications for projectability of turn-shapes
What types of resources (grammatical or other) furnish Japanese conversational participants with opportunities to provide a completion to another participant’s TCU-in-progress? For instance, do we find “compound turn-constructional units” (Lerner, 1987, 1991, 1996a) as oriented-to features in Japanese co-participant completion? And what can we learn from the practice of co-participant completion about the projectability of turn-shapes in Japanese conversation?

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 examines whether syntactically-defined “compound TCUs” like the ones proposed for English co-participant completion (e.g. \([\text{If } X] + [\text{then } Y]\)) operate in Japanese as well, and suggests that such syntactic formats appear to play a less prominent role in co-participant completion in Japanese. Section 3 explores “unprojected” opportunities for co-participant completion and their relevance to the practice for constructing multi-clause sentential TCUs. Section 4 discusses the implications of the findings for understanding how projection of turn-shapes is accomplished in Japanese conversation. The article closes with brief concluding remarks.
The database for the present study is a collection of naturally-occurring Japanese conversations among adult peers (4 telephone and 9 face-to-face). The number of participants in the face-to-face conversations ranges from two to four. Some of the conversations in the database are same-sex interaction and others cross-sex interaction. Some participants in the conversations are speakers of the Tokyo variety of the language, and others are speakers of the Kansai variety. The conversations in the database range from 1 minute to 45 minutes long, totaling approximately 4 hours. See Appendix p. 501 for notational conventions used in the transcripts in the present article and pp. 497–498 for abbreviations used for interlinear glosses.

2. Compound Turn-Constructional Units

Lerner (1987, 1991, 1996a) demonstrates that participants in English conversation have available utterance construction formats which he calls ‘compound turn-constructional units,’ and that participants regularly orient to such compound TCUs as resources that provide opportunities for them to complete the utterance-in-progress of another participant. Compound TCUs, Lerner argues, can be constituted by a wide range of interactionally relevant features of talk in interaction that project an emerging utterance as a multiple component turn-constructional unit. Among such features, however, syntactic structures of utterances appear to play a major role in co-participant completion. Thus, Lerner identifies such syntactically-defined two-part formats as $[If \ X] + [then \ Y]$, $[When \ X] + [then \ Y]$, $[X \ said] + [Y]$, $[instead \ of \ X] + [Y]$, etc. as resources that participants orient to when they achieve co-participant completion. Consider the following:

1. $[If \ X] + [then \ Y]$
   Rich: if you bring it intuh them
   Carol: ih don’t cost you nothing (Lerner, 1991: 445)

2. $[When \ X] + [then \ Y]$
   Dan: when the group reconvenes in two weeks=
   Roger: =they’ re gunna issue strait jackets (Lerner, 1991: 445)

3. $[X \ said] + [Y]$
   A: I just wish I were gonna eat a turkey dinner someplace ahh, he,
   I wish that he’d say, he said, I have to be back around four,
   because our family is having something and I wish he’d say
   B: why don’t you come over honey?
   A: yeah (Lerner, 1991: 446)

4. $[instead \ of \ X] + [Y]$ (and $[X \ said] + [Y]$)
In these examples, the second speaker produces the second component of a two-part compound TCU that is initiated by the first speaker. Now, there may certainly well be a range of contextual features that help predict what is to follow in an emerging utterance in each of the cases above, but Lerner argues that syntax plays a major role in projecting a place to initiate co-participant completion, and providing a projected form of the second component of another participant’s compound TCU-in-progress. Thus, the completion of the first component (or what Lerner calls ‘preliminary component’) is oriented to by co-participants as a place to launch a completion of the current speaker’s utterance, and the form that such a completion will take is also projected by the preliminary component.

In contrast to this claimed prevalence of syntactically-defined two-part formats that provide major resources for co-participant completion in English, a preliminary inspection of the database for the present study suggests that such strongly syntactic two-part formats appear to play a less prominent role in co-participant completion in Japanese. That is not to say that syntax plays no role in Japanese co-participant completion (as we will see below), but it does not appear that Japanese conversational participants have available as robust syntactic resources as compound TCUs in English which strongly project a place and a form for co-participant completion.2

Instead, the most recurrently observed pattern of co-participant completion in the present database is a second speaker’s producing the final word or two of a TCU-in-progress initiated by another speaker. Since Japanese is a so-called predicate-final language where a sentence typically ends with a predicate (e.g. a verb, an adjective, etc.), this type of co-participant completion often takes the form that a second speaker supplies a verb or an adjective that completes an emerging TCU.3 Consider the following examples. (Because of the word order difference between English and Japanese, the translation lines do not capture exactly how co-participant completion is done in Japanese. Therefore, the reader is strongly advised to examine the original utterances in Japanese in addition to their translations in all the examples cited in this article.)

(5) [KNZ 483-487] ((aru in line 5 is a verb meaning ‘to exist’) )

1 H: asoko o:: (0.2) teteteto orite[itta]ra shoomen ni::=
there O go.down:if front in
“If you go down there, in front of you,”

2 K: [u:n.]
“Uh huh.”

3 K: =u:n.
“Uh huh.”
4 H: *denwa ga*- *ano mi*[dori] no *denwa ga:* SB phone SB uhm green LK phone SB
   “Phones, uhm, green phones,”
5→K: *aru.* exist exist
   “are there.” “are there, are there.”

(6) [RKK 1106–1108]
1 H: *demo:::* *onna no hito de irezumi no hito tte::* but woman LK person CP:and tattoo LK person QT
   “But women with tattoos on their body...”
2 (1.2)
3→S: *mita koto nai* saw event not.exist
   “You have never seen”

(7) [FMJ 869–873]
1 H: *okurahoma tte::* *eego* de hatsuon shitara: *zenzen nihongo no* Oklahoma QT English in pronounce:if totally Japanese LK
   “If you pronounce ‘Oklahoma’ in English, it’s totally...’
2 *okurahoma to [(chi-)]* Oklahoma from
   “...from the Japanese ‘okurahoma’, ...”
3→M: *chau* nen na different FP FP
   “different, isn’t it?”

(8) [KMI 281–286]
((H and K are talking about buying a computer in the United States.))
1 H: ... *sora:* *keshite sonna< kantan ni kaeru* uhm that:TP by.any.means such easily can.buy
2 *mon de wa nai kedo::* thing CP TP not but
   “…uhm, of course, it’s not something you can buy easily, but”
3 K: *u:*[n] “Uh huh”
4 H: *[ni]hon:::* *yori:* Japan than
   “(They are), than Japan, ...”
5 (0.2)
6→K: *yasui yo ne:* cheap FP FP
   “cheaper, aren’t they?”

In the arrowed turns in the examples above, the second speaker produces a
verb or an adjective that grammatically completes an emerging utterance initiated
by another participant. Obviously, the grammatical trajectory of the emerging utterance does provide resources for the second speaker to produce an utterance-completing predicate, but it does not appear in these and other examples in the database that participants orient to syntactically-defined, two-part formats whose preliminary components project a place and a form for co-participant completion. Rather, it appears more likely that grammatical structures of emerging utterances and other relevant features of talk in interaction concomitantly provide opportunities for co-participant completion. To illustrate this claim, let us look at the following example.

(9) [KOB 102-108]

((A has recently remodeled her house and she invited her friends to her house. A and her friends, including B, are looking at the remodeled kitchen, and A is explaining what she changed and what she did not change.))

1 A:  

kaeta  no  wa  yuka: to  tenjoo to  ye?:  

changed LK TP floor and ceiling and FP  

“What we changed are the floor and the ceiling, and, ...”

2 B:  

u:::  [::n.]  

“Uh huh.”

3 A:  

[ano:]:::  kurosu TO:, [are] dake de:,  

uhm cloth and that only CP:and  

“Uh:::m, the wall papers and that one only, and...”

4 B:  

[un.]  

“Uh huh.”

5 B:  

u:::n.  

“Uh huh.”

6 A:  

ano::  ue  no  guriin no [hukuro] todana wa mukashi no [mama:]  

uhm above LK green LK cabinet TP old.time LK same  

“Uhm, the green cabinets above are the same as before.”

7→B:  

[u:::n.]  [man]ma.  

same  

“Uh huh”  “same”

In (9), A’s talk develops in such a way that she contrasts what she changed in the kitchen and what she did not. In other words, the ‘contrast’ structure of [what has been changed] vs. [what has remained unchanged] emerges locally as A’s talk in lines 1, 3, and 6 unfolds. This contrast structure is also partially constituted grammatically. The stressed wa in line 6 is a so-called ‘contrastive wa’, which indicates that what it marks (i.e. the preceding noun phrase; ue no guriin no hukurotodana ‘the green cabinets above’) is in a contrastive relationship with something mentioned in the prior discourse. Thus, the recipients can expect that ‘the green cabinets above’ are in some contrastive
relationship with ‘the floor,’ ‘the ceiling,’ ‘the wall papers,’ etc., i.e. those that have been changed. Finally, the formulaic nature of the phrase mukashi no ma(n)ma (‘the same as before’) helps the recipients predict the exact word that comes at the end of the TCU-in-progress. Thus, the locally emergent contrast structure and the grammatical and lexical features of the unfolding utterance concomitantly enhance the predictability of what is to come at the end of the turn-in-progress, and thereby provide a heightened locus for co-participant completion.

Another example in which grammatical and other features of talk in interaction concomitantly provide for co-participant completion can be found in excerpt (10).

(10)[KOB 460-465]

((D has mentioned that her married daughter uses D’s house as if it were a storage room; the daughter brings bulky stuff from home and leaves it in D’s house. Ohina san refers to dolls that Japanese people display for Girls’ Day.))

1 D: nikai [no moo:::] : rokujoo no heya haittara, hhh second.floor LK 6.tatami LK room enter:when “When you enter the six-tatami room on the second floor,”

2 A: [hehh hehh]

3 D: boooon tto kurisumasu tsurii no okkii no oitearu wa NE::, Christmas tree LK big NR be.left FP FP

4 .hhh honna koo ohinasan NE::, and like hina-doll FP “you see a big Christmas tree left there, .hhh and like, hina-dolls...”

5→B: oitearu [(wa)] be.left FP “left there.”

6 D: [uhuh] oitearu wa de. uh.huh be.left FP CP:and “Uh huh. Left there.”

One relevant feature that enhances the opportunity for co-participant completion in (10) is a ‘list’ structure. D’s talk in lines 1, 3, and 4 is built to provide a list of things that her daughter brings from home and leaves in D’s house. In line 3, D refers to the first item, i.e. a ‘big Christmas tree’. Note that she presents this first item by using the following grammatical format.

kurisumasu tsurii no ookii no oitearu wa
‘a big Christmas tree’ ‘is left there’
This grammatical format is oriented to by co-participants as a resource for constructing a list. That is, a list can be established by keeping the second part constant (and thereby making it a ‘list frame’) and substituting other items for the first part. This operation is exactly what is achieved by B’s co-participant completion in line 5. When D mentions the second item of the things that are left in her house by her daughter, B understands that it is the second item of the list, and displays that understanding through providing the list frame — repeating the same predicate as the one used when the first item was presented. Thus, in this example, an emerging list structure and the grammatical structure used in it mutually shape each other, and provide another participant with resources to complete the current TCU-in-progress.

Examples (9) and (10) represent many cases observed in the present database. That is, rather than finding dominant syntactic two-part formats operating in co-participant completion, we see in the present database of Japanese co-participant completion more cases in which locally emergent structures, grammatical structure, and other features of talk in interaction concomitantly enhance the opportunity for a co-participant to provide a completion to another participant’s utterance-in-progress.

In this section, we observed that the major class of co-participant completion in Japanese takes the form of “terminal item completion,” and that locally emergent, contingent structures like ‘contrast’ and ‘list’ often collaborate with grammatical features of utterances in providing heightened opportunities for co-participant completion. In the next section, we explore other aspects of turn-constructional features that provide “unprojected” opportunities for co-participant completion.

3. Unprojected Opportunities for Co-Participant Completion

Lerner (1996a) discusses a variety of productional features of talk in interaction, such as laugh tokens, intra-turn silence, and word repetition, that furnish what he calls ‘unprojected’ opportunities for co-participant completion. Unlike compound TCUs which provide projectable or foreseeable opportunities for co-participant completion, such features of TCU production are ordinarily not available to recipients until their occurrence, but once they occur, they are recurrently oriented to by recipients as loci for co-participant completion (and other forms of conjoined participation).

In the present database, we find that the same kinds of productional features of talk provide co-participants in Japanese conversation with opportunities to complete another participant’s TCU-in-progress. The following are several such examples.
Intra-turn Silence

(11) [RKK 831-838]
((The participants are discussing the possibility of using statistical analysis for A’s research project.))

1 A: s: soko de::: (0.7) kyuujuu shiraberu hitsuyoo nai yo na: there at 90 examine necessity not.exist FP FP “There, you don’t have to examine 90 cases, do you?”

2 (2.5)

3 A: sa-

4 (0.7)

5 S: u: telescope.n hh demo wakannai yo= well but don’t.know FP “We::: telescope, but you never know”

6→ = [daka]ra:: i- (2.0) dooyuu (0.7) so what.kind.of “So, what kind of...”

7 A: [bi- ]

8→A: kentee a:: kekka ga deru ka. test uhm result SB come.out Q “... (statistical) test, uhm, results will come out.”

Note the two-second and 0.7-second intra-turn silences in line 4. See also line 2 in (6) and line 5 in (8) above.

Sound Stretches

(12) [TYC 55-59]
((The participants are talking about a plate they received as a wedding gift.))

1→K: ano kekkon iwai ni:, uhm marriage gift as “Uhm, as a wedding gift,”

2→Y: kure[ta n desu yo. gave NR be FP “(he) gave (it to us).”

3 K: [kureta n gave NR “(he) gave (it to us).”

Note the sound stretch on the particle ni in line 1. See also line 4 in (8) and the stretched ne in line 4 in (10) above.
Laugh Tokens

(13) [IMD 569-576]
((The participants are talking about the striking resemblance of their mutual female friend and her younger brother.))

1 M: homma sono KUse made sokkuri tte yuu no really uhm habit even exactly same QT say NR

2 [wa yappari ne: nakanaka ano:::.hhh]
TP you know FP rather uhm “Really. Uhm, the fact that even his little habits are exactly the same (as his sister’s) is, you know, like, uhm...”

3 T: [he:………………………………….]
wow “Wo:………………w.”

4 M: mitete ne::,
see:and FP “while seeing (him),”

5 T: u:::n hh=
“Uh huh. hh”

6→M: =m(h)oo: chotto:=
ow a little “li(h)ke,”

7→T: =waratteshim(h)a(h)u hh hh .hh
laugh:AUX “You can’t help lau(h)gh(h)ing hh hh .hh”

Note the laugh tokens in lines 6 and 7 (and the meaning of the predicate provided in line 7).

Word Searches

(14) [KOB 159-164] (simplified transcript)
((The participants are talking about the location of a company. Tookyuu Amenikkusu is the name of the company, and Hagiwarada is the name of the town it is located in.))

1→D: tookyuu [ame]nikkusu yuu [no wa]::(.) ano::: (asoko ya)
Tookyuu Amenikkusu say NR TP uhm there CP “Tookyuu Amenikkusu i:::s, (. ) uh:::m, (there)”

2 C: [ un. ] [u:::n.]
“Uh huh” “Uh huh”

3→A: hagi[waradai.]
Hagiwarada
“Hagiwarada.”
Note that D’s utterance in line 1 is full of features that are typical of word searches, such as sound stretches, an intra-turn micro-pause, a hesitation marker (ano::: ‘uh::m’), and a dummy demonstrative term like asoko (‘there’), which is regularly produced in word searches in Japanese.

Now, when I was examining the collection of co-participant completion in Japanese in the database to see if there are formats equivalent to Lerner’s compound TCUs for English, I came across a potential regularity observed in the cases of co-participant completion that are achieved through the grammatical constructions like If X - then Y, When X - then Y, Because X - Y, Although X - Y, etc. in Japanese. That is, at least in the present database, when participants in Japanese conversation complete another participant’s utterance that involves the grammatical format of If X - then Y, When X - then Y, Because X - Y, or Although X - Y, they produce such a completion only after one or more of the productional features listed above (sound stretches and intra-turn silences, especially) occur in the course of the original speaker’s turn construction. In other words, our database does not contain cases like (1) - (2) in English, where the ‘final’ component of the [If X] + [then Y] or [When X] + [then Y] format is produced immediately following the completion of the ‘preliminary’ component. The number of instances of co-participant completion of this type in our database is too small to make any definitive statement about this potential regularity. It might, however, have some interesting implications for turn construction and turn-taking in Japanese conversation in general, and therefore I will spend some moment discussing it below.

Let us first look at some examples. In (15), H’s utterance in lines 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 reaches a slightly stretched kara (‘because’) at the end of line 6,5 which is followed by the recipient’s minimal response (line 7). After a 0.4-second silence (line 8) elapses following the minimal response, the recipient starts up and produces what is interpretable as the ‘main clause’ for H’s ‘subordinate clause’ marked by kara (line 9).

(15) [KMI 273-278]
(((H is talking about what happened after he took a how-to-use-a-Macintosh class. Leave aside the co-participant completion in line 3 for now.))

1 H: ayuu no wa yappari koo soren:: de naratte::
   like.that LK TP you.know like that learn:and

2 .hh sono ato ne: [jibun de koo:::]
   that after FP self by like
   “When you do things like that (=taking how-to-use-computers classes), after you learn it, by yourself...”)
WHERE GRAMMAR AND INTERACTION MEET

3 K: [jibun de sawara]na na: =
self by touch:NEG FP
“You’ve got to use computers by yourself.”

4 H: = hh iroiro: tsukau:; kikai ga aREba:; koo iroiro: hattenshite
various use chance SB exist:if like various develop

5 ikun daroo ked(h)om(h)o:: hhh nanse koo:: hhh temotoni::nakatta
AUX will but like at.hand not.exist

6→ mon da kara:
thing CP because
“... if you have various opportunities to use computers (by
yourself), your skills will probably develop, but because I didn’t
have a computer at hand, ...”

7→K: u:n.
“Uh huh.”

8→ (0.4)

9→K: aisu ru waapuro ni: oborete shimatteta wake (ne)
loved word.processor in drown AUX reason FP
“You doted on your (lap-top) word processor.”

In (16), A’s utterance in lines 1, 3, 5, and 6 reaches a slightly stretched kedo
(‘although’), which is followed by B’s minimal response (line 8). After some
perturbation produced by A (line 9), which suggests that she might have some
trouble continuing her prior utterance, D starts up and produces what is
interpretable as the ‘main clause’ for A’s ‘subordinate clause’ marked by kedo
(lines 10, 11, and 13).

(16)[OBS 283-296]
((A is talking about the type of dress that a department-store clerk
recommended to her, which she thinks would never fit a middle-aged
woman like herself.))

1 A: are wa ne:, hosokutte NE:, (0.3) ano uwazee ga at te:: =
that TP FP thin:and FP uhm height SB exist:and
“That sort of dress, if you are thin and tall, and,”

2 D: = so[oda yo ne:],
so CP FP FP
“That’s right.”

3 A: [zentai ga::=
whole SB
“your whole body...”

4 D: = soo soo.
so so
“Right, right.”

487
Now, one plausible account of the possible regularity that Japanese participants do not produce the final component immediately on the completion of the preliminary component of the \[Because X] + [Y] or \[Although X] + [Y] format can be provided as follows: In English, the subordinate clause marker comes at the beginning of the clause, and thereby projects roughly what it will take to bring the subordinate clause to a possible completion early in the turn. This feature of English syntax might help English-speaking conversational participants predict early in the turn a possible form for the final component (i.e. the ‘main clause’) and a place where it should be launched. On the other hand, Japanese subordinate clause marker comes at the end of the clause, and therefore, does not project, until quite late in a possible ‘preliminary’ component, a place and a form for the final component. This syntactic feature of Japanese subordinate clause marking might contribute to the ‘delay’ of the initiation of co-participant completion observed in (15), (16), and other examples in the database.
Another account may be provided by considering the ways in which ‘subordinate clauses’ are deployed in Japanese conversation.6 Examine the following examples.

In (17) and (18), the ‘subordinate clause’ marked with kara (‘because’) or kedo (‘although’) is directly followed by a ‘main clause’ produced by the same speaker.

(17) [KMI 226-228]

1 H: ... maa ano: mukoo: (.) ga sooyuu no- dooyuu
   well uhm over.there SB such NR what.kind.of
2→ jookyoo ka wakan nakatta kara boku waapuro motteitta
   situation Q know NEG because I word.processor took
3 n desu [yo ne]
   NR CP FP FP
   “Well, uhm, because I didn’t know what the situation over there was like, I took my word processor with me.”
4 K: [ u::n. ]
   “Uh huh.”

(18) [KNZ 130-132]

1 H: > kekkoo tetsugaku no michi zoini ne; < ii otera ga an nen
   pretty philosophy LK path along FP good temple SB exist FP
2→ kedo daitai sono: (0.4) koo (0.4) hikookai de tte yuu
   although generally uhm like closed CP:and QT say
3 ka koo TAMAni shika akenai tte otera toka de
   Q like occasionally only open:NEG QT temple like CP:and
4 sa[::]
   FP
   “Well, although there are good temples along the Philosopher’s Path, they are generally, uhm (0.4) like (0.4) not open to the public or they open only occasionally…”
5 K: [ a:::]:: sokka sokka:.
   oh so:Q so:Q
   “Oh:::::, is that right.”

Along with cases like (17) and (18) where the speaker proceeds directly to produce the ‘main clause’ after the ‘subordinate clause,’ it is also frequently observed that the speaker leaves a beat of silence after producing a subordinate clause marker, at which point a recipient or recipients produce a minimal acknowledgment token such as u::n (‘uh huh’), and the speaker goes on to produce a ‘main clause’ following such an acknowledgment token. (19) and (20) are examples of such a procedure.
From a prescriptive point of view, Examples (17) - (20) present a ‘canonical’ multi-clause sentence pattern, in which a ‘subordinate clause’ is followed by a ‘main clause’ with or without recipients’ interpolation of an acknowledgment token between them. In everyday conversation in Japanese, however, it is not infrequent that the speaker produces a ‘subordinate clause’ only, and leaves a ‘main clause’ unsaid. The following excerpt contains two instances of such ‘subordinate clauses not followed by main clauses’ (one with kedo, the other with kara). Notice that the recipient appears to understand what the unexpressed ‘main clauses’ would be, and that the interaction proceeds without the ‘main clauses’ ever explicitly mentioned.

(21) [RKK 1095-1106]
((The participants are talking about Japanese public baths. H lives by herself in an apartment away from her parents’ home.))

1 S: Haruoka san wa ikanai su ka. Haruoka Ms. TP go:NEG CP Q “Ms. Haruoka, don’t you go (to a public bath)?”

2 (0.5)

3→H: ie no chikaku da to tokidoki iku kedo. home LK vicinity CP if sometimes go although “Although I sometimes go to the ones close to my home...”
WHERE GRAMMAR AND INTERACTION MEET

In response to S’s question in line 1, H produces a clause marked with kedo (line 3), but does not produce the ‘main clause’ for it subsequently. (Note a one-second silence in line 4.) Later on, H produces a clause marked with kara (line 11) which is interpretable as another attempt to answer S’s question in line 1, but again, she does not explicitly mention the ‘main clause’ for the kara clause. Apparently, S understands the unexpressed ‘main clause,’ and interprets H’s answer to his question to be a negative one, as in the following.

*Although I sometimes go to public baths near my (parents’) home,*
*(I don’t go to public baths here.)*

*Because I have a bath in my apartment,* *(I don’t go to public baths here.)*

This sort of ‘trail-off’ with a subordinate clause marker is recurrently observed in naturally-occurring conversation in Japanese.

Now, if clauses marked with kara, kedo, etc. are sometimes followed by main clauses, and sometimes not, it is possible that recipients of such clauses face...
the problem of ambiguity at the clause juncture regarding whether the speaker moves on to produce the main clause or not. And this problem of ambiguity posed to recipients of ‘subordinate clauses’ might account for the potential regularity observed in the collection of co-participant completion involving these subordinate-clause formats discussed above. That is, at least in the present database, recipients appear to ‘wait’ to see whether the speaker goes on to produce the ‘main clause,’ especially when subordinate-clause markers like kara and kedo are produced with a continuing intonation, and only when they see the speaker not immediately continuing do they start up and produce a ‘main clause’ that fits another speaker’s ‘subordinate clause.’ Let us take a look again at the examples of co-participant completion involving the [Because X] + [Y] and [Although X] + [Y] formats.

(15') [in part]
5 H: ... hhh nanse koo:: hhh temotoni:: nakatta
like at.hand not.exist
6→ mon da kara:
thing CP because
“... because I didn’t have a computer at hand, ...”
7→K: u:n.
“Uh huh.”
8→ (0.4)
9→K: aisuru waapuro ni:: oborete shimatteta wake (ne)
loved word.processor in drown AUX reason FP
“You doted on your (lap-top) word processor.”

In the excerpt above, H’s production of a clause marked with kara is followed by K’s minimal response (line 7). As seen in (19) and (20), such an interpolation of a minimal acknowledgment token by the recipient after a ‘subordinate clause’ is commonly observed. However, what appears crucial is the 0.4-second silence in line 8, which might suggest that H does not immediately continue to produce a ‘main clause’ following the minimal response. It is this ‘unprojected’ turn-constructional feature, along with the [Because X] + [Y] format, that appears to furnish the opportunity for K to produce a ‘main clause’ that fits the preceding ‘subordinate clause’ produced by H.

Consider the following partial reproduction of (16) as well.

(16') [in part]
3 A: ... zentai ga::=
whole SB
“(If) your whole body...”
4 D: =soo soo.
so so
“Right, right.”
WHERE GRAMMAR AND INTERACTION MEET

5 A: u- ano: hosoi ka ra, .hh beruto shitemo  
uhm thin   because   belt  do:even.though

6→ su[teki na n da kedo:=  
      “is thin, you look nice in it even if you wear a belt, but...”

7 D: [u:n u:n.  
      “Uh huh, uh huh.”

8 B: =u:n.  
      “Uh huh.”

9→ A: Tch! hn.

10→D: obasan no ne,  
      middle.aged.woman LK FP

11→ [bokon bo [kon ga ne, mata yokee=  
      fat fat  SB FP again even.more  
      “(Such a style of dress with a belt) would just emphasize...”

12 A: [obasan no [bokon bokon shita no ga sa:,  
      middle.aged.woman LK fat fat do NR SB FP  
      “Middle-aged women’s fat would be...”

13→D: =bokon b(h)ok(h)on te [hitotsu huechau dake da mon ne(hh).  
      fat fat QT one increase only CP thing FP  
      “...middle-aged women’s fat even more.”

14 A:  
      [so.  
      so  
      “Right.”

Here again, the production of the kedo-marked clause is followed by a minimal token from a recipient (line 8). Unlike cases like (19) and (20), however, the speaker does not immediately continue to provide a ‘main clause,’ but rather displays some kind of pertubation in speech production (line 9). This unprojected productional feature of turn construction that disrupts the progressivity of a turn’s talk appears to collaborate with the [Although X] + [Y] format in furnishing D with the opportunity to start up and produce a ‘main clause’ that fits A’s ‘subordinate clause.’ (As it happens, in this case, the original speaker, A, subsequently attempts to produce a ‘main clause’ of her own (line 12), only to cut it off in the middle and show agreement with D’s rendition of the main clause (line 14).)

To sum up, in Japanese, such formats as [Because X] + [Y] and [Although X] + [Y] by themselves may not provide as powerful resources for co-participant completion as they appear to do in English, where the completion of the preliminary component of such formats can lead to an immediate initiation of the final component by another speaker (see (1) – (4)). Rather, instances in the present database suggest that co-participant completion involving such
formats in Japanese is more likely to occur when ‘unprojected’ productional features of talk lead the recipient to the interpretation that the speaker is not continuing to produce the ‘main clause.’ In other words, the combination of the multi-clause sentence formats with unprojected features of turn construction concomitantly furnishes the opportunity to produce the ‘final component’ of a multi-clause sentential unit in Japanese conversation. Here again, grammatical structure alone does not determine the practice of co-participant completion. A range of relevant features of talk in interaction, grammatical or other, contribute to provide the enhanced opportunity for co-participant completion.

In the next section, we discuss the implications of the findings presented in the last two sections for further understanding how projection of turn-shapes is achieved in Japanese conversation.

4. Discussion: Implications of the Practice of Co-Participant Completion for Projectability of Turn-Shapes in Japanese Conversation

In the previous sections, we examined the opportunities for co-participant completion in Japanese found in our database, and observed several possible characteristics in the ways in which Japanese conversational participants practice co-participant completion. In this section, I will discuss implications of those observations for projectability of turn-shapes in Japanese conversation, and for the investigation of the mutual bearing of grammar and social interaction in general.

One key issue in the study of conversational interaction in any language is how projection of the shapes of ongoing utterances and actions in interaction is accomplished so that conversational co-participants can coordinate their participation in interaction. For example, in order to investigate turn-taking organization (which is one form of coordination between the speaking party and the non-speaking party to interaction), it is crucial to understand how the projection of possible turn completion is achieved in advance of its actual arrival (cf. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Ford & Thompson, 1996). And it appears that one central contribution to projection and projectability in verbal interaction is the grammatical structure of the language in which interaction is conducted and out of which turns are constructed. If grammatical structure has significant effects on how projection is achieved, it is possible that social interactions conducted in different languages with different grammatical resources and structures are organized in different ways.

One attempt to explore this possibility of the mutual bearing of grammatical structure and organizations of social interaction is found in Fox, Hayashi & Jasperson (1996), who examine the relationship between syntactic differences in English and Japanese and the differences in the organization of self-repair in conversation conducted in those languages. They propose that differences
Where grammar and interaction meet

in self-repair organization are closely tied to the difference in the ways in which projection is achieved between English and Japanese. According to Fox, Hayashi & Jasperson (1996), English clauses appear to have more ‘tightly-knit’ syntactic organization than Japanese, and the beginnings of English clauses tend to project what it will take to bring those clauses to possible completion. In Japanese, on the other hand, clauses tend to be built bit-by-bit (with recipients’ minimal tokens often interspersed), and accordingly, projection appears to be done in a much more bit-by-bit fashion than English. Fox, Hayashi & Jasperson (1996) argue that this claim is supported by the observed differences in the organization of clause-internal self-repair in English and Japanese.

In analyzing the practice of co-participant completion, the issue of projection and projectability is also critical. That is, how is projection achieved for co-participants to anticipate what is to follow within a single TCU and where a completion for that TCU should be launched? This question leads naturally to the question of what we can learn about how projection is accomplished in different languages from the differences in the ways in which co-participant completion is practiced in those languages.

In the present report, the following have been suggested as characteristics of Japanese co-participant completion:

(i) Syntactically-defined two-part formats may not play as prominent a role as in English.
(ii) The majority of cases of co-participant completion take the form of ‘terminal item completion.’
(iii) Locally emergent structures like ‘contrast’ and ‘list’ as well as ‘unprojected’ features of turn construction often collaborate with grammatical features of utterances in enhancing the opportunity to execute co-participant completion.

These characteristics, if they are correct, may provide some support to Fox, Hayashi & Jasperson’s (1996) claim that projection in Japanese is done more bit-by-bit than English. Characteristic (i) might reflect the fact that clauses in Japanese conversation have much looser syntactic organization. It is possible that, since clauses do not have “tightly-knit” syntactic organization, syntax by itself is not as much of a resource for projection and therefore for co-participant completion. Characteristic (ii) appears to be in accord with the claim that clauses in Japanese conversation are built bit-by-bit, and therefore that projection is done bit-by-bit as well. Since projection of what it will take to bring a turn to possible completion is not achieved early in the TCU, it may be natural for co-participants to ‘wait and see’ how utterances proceed until quite late in the TCU before they launch a completion for the current speaker’s utterance. Characteristic (iii), which is also true for English co-participant completion, underscores the fact that projection is not accomplished solely
by syntactic resources. Other relevant interactional features constantly emerge in the course of talk in interaction and enhance projectability.

These characteristics of Japanese co-participant completion and their differences from English co-participant completion thus may point to the larger differences in how grammar works in conversation in the two languages, and how projection is accomplished in the course of talk in interaction. These observations are admittedly preliminary, and their discussions are as yet speculative. Obviously, substantial analytic work remains to be done regarding the issue of projectability, and more generally, into the mutual bearing of grammatical structure and organizations of interaction. It is hoped, however, that the present report has suggested that the practice of co-participant completion is a fruitful locus to explore the rich and complex linkages between grammar and interaction.

5. Conclusion

In this report, I presented several preliminary observations regarding opportunities for co-participant completion in Japanese conversation. We observed that the grammatical structure of an utterance-in-progress by itself may not provide a dominant resource for co-participant completion in Japanese. Rather, opportunities for co-participant completion are furnished by an emergent combination of a range of grammatical and other features of turn construction. It was proposed that these possible characteristics of Japanese co-participant completion may reflect the way in which projection is done in the course of a TCU-in-progress in Japanese conversation. The present report on co-participant completion in Japanese has hopefully shed light on one aspect of the intricate ways in which grammatical structure and organizations of interaction shape each other. Further research on this topic will contribute to explicate ‘interactionally situated grammar,’ i.e. grammar that is in the hands of the participants with situated interests in their conduct in social interaction.

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Notes

2. Here I do not wish to suggest that syntax always plays a dominant role in providing opportunities for co-participant completion in English. Lerner (1987, 1991, 1996a) discusses other interactional features that provide resources for achieving co-participant completion in English.

3. Co-participant completion achieved by producing the final word or two of a TCU-in-progress is observed in English as well, and Lerner (1996a) terms it ‘terminal item completion.’ Due to the word order difference between English and Japanese, however, terminal item completion in English does not usually take the form of supplying a predicate to an emerging utterance. The following are two examples of terminal item completion presented in Lerner (1996a, P. 256):

(i) T: Greg can be Santa Claus.
M: Yeah, he’s got the [beard!]
C: [beard!]
(ii) Tiny: Chief Jerruso and Vic are on their way to Haynes Boulevard now, and they say you better have yer transperr:tion=
Charlie:=ready,=
Tiny: =a lerted ‘hh

4. Note that, although the translation of line 6 ends with the word ‘before’, the original Japanese utterance ends with mama (‘same’), and that is what B co-produces in line 7.

5. Unlike English, Japanese clausal markers come at the end of the clause they mark. Compare the following constructed examples. (The clauses in the square brackets are ‘subordinate’ clauses, and the ones without brackets are ‘main’ clauses.)

(i) [ame ga futta [kara], yakyuu o shinakatta.
  rain SB fell because baseball O didn’t do
  ‘[Because it rained], we didn’t play baseball.’
(ii) [ame ga futta [kedo], yakyuu o shita.
  rain SB fell although baseball O did
  ‘[Although it rained], we played baseball.’

6. For interactional accounts of the deployment of subordinate clauses or clauses marked with ‘connective particles’ in Japanese conversation, see Mori (1996).

7. One major resource that participants might attend to to ‘disambiguate’ the subsequent trajectory of talk in such a juncture is prosody with which the clause-final connectives are produced. Thus, producing kara or kedo with a falling intonation may indicate that the speaker is not going to continue with a ‘main clause’ after kara or kedo, and the recipients may attend to it as such, while producing such connectives with a continuing intonation may leave the possibility of continuation open, and thereby leave the recipients with the problem of ambiguity discussed in the text. Indeed, the ‘trail-off’ instances of kara and kedo in (21) are produced with a falling intonation (indicated by the period in the transcript), while these connectives in other instances are produced with a continuing intonation. I am indebted to Hiroko Tanaka for these observations.

8. In her systematic analysis of turn-taking in Japanese conversation, Tanaka (1996, forthcoming a and b) discusses a similar observation, which she terms “delayed projectability” due to the “incremental transformability” of turn-shapes in Japanese.

Appendix

| AUX | auxiliary verb | CP | various forms of copula verb be |
| FP  | final particle  | LK | linking nominal                |
| NEG | negative morpheme | NR | nominalizer                    |
References


