Unmarked Case and Tense   – *Nominative-Genitive Conversion* –

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It is well know that Japanese allows Nominative-Genitive Conversion (NGC), as shown in (1).

(1)   John -{***ga/no***}   {kuru/kita}   riyuu
        John-NOM/GEN   come.Prs/come.Pst reason   'The reason why John comes/came.'

While previous approaches have tried to capture the distribution of NGC by assuming various types of licensing conditions of GEN, this study proposes anti-licensing conditions of unmarked cases (**-***ga* and –*no*), as shown in (2), and argues that NGC is observed when the position in question is free from both of the conditions.

(2)   a. A case feature cannot be realized as –***ga*** in a [-Tense] domain.
          b. A case feature cannot be realized as –***no*** in a [+Tense] domain

[-Tense] is carried by *n*, and [+Tense] is carried by T.   In this talk, I first point out that NGC is allowed in selected-tensed clauses and argue that none of the previous approaches give an account of the observations.   Then, I demonstrate that the proposed analysis not only captures the properties of NGC straightforwardly, but also simplifies the conditions on a realization of GEN in Japanese.

    Three major approaches for NGC have been proposed in the previous literature: (i) the nominal approach (Bedell 1972, Miyagawa 1993, and many others), (ii) the wh-agreement approach (Watanabe 1996), and (iii) the adnominal form agreement approach (Hiraiwa 2001).   However, none of them can account for the occurrence of GEN in (3).

(3)   Raigetu   siken-{***ga/no***}   ***owat-te   kara***,   syokuzi-ni   ikoo.
          next.month   exam-NOM/GEN   finish-Part   after   meal-Part   go
          'Let's go out for a meal, after the exam is over next month.'

In (3), NGC is allowed in an adverbial clause involving a continuative form of a predicate (*owari-*) and headed by a conjunction *-kara 'after'*.   This position is (i) not dominated by an external nominal element, (ii) not within a context of wh-agreement, and (iii) not within a context of adnominal-form (*owaru-*) agreement.   Further investigation reveals that NGC is allowed in a selected-tense clause, as shown in (4), where 'a selected-tense clause' means a clause which does not exhibit the full Present-Past contrast.

(4)   a.   John-{***ga/no***}   {hasit-***ta***/*hasi-***ru***} ***kiri***, dare-mo hasira-nai.
          John-NOM/GEN run-Pst/*run-Prs   since no.one-Q run-Neg 'No one has run, since John ran.'
      b.   Watasi-{***ga/no***} {omo*u*/*omo*t-ta}* ***ni***,   kono hon-wa   muzukasii.
          1sg.-NOM/GEN think.Prs/*think-Pst DAT this.book-TOP   difficult   'I think this book is difficult.'
      c.   Hannin-{***ga/no***}   {***tukamari/*tukamat-ta***} ***sidai***,   renraku-o   kure.
          criminal-NOM/GEN capture.Prs/*capture-Pst   as.soon.as call-ACC   give.
          'Give me a call, as soon as the criminal is captured.'

    On the basis of these observations, I propose (2) within a phase-based model (Chomsky 2008), and explains the phenomena straightforwardly.   Assuming that a [+Tense] feature on T is shared with a phase head C in a simple tensed clause, I argue that Spec-T in the clause becomes in a C[+Tense] domain.   As a result, only NOM can appear in that position.   In contrast, following the previous study which claim that a selected-tense clause is not selected by C (Nakatani 2004), I argue that Spec-T of a selected-tense clause is outside of a [+Tense] domain.   Thus, either NOM or GEN can appear in that position, as in (4), because it is free from both (2a) and (2b).
    Similarly, I maintain that the C in a (gapless) relative clause is a defective phase head (cf. Murasugi 1991), that is, a phase head which does not induce a C-T feature sharing.   As a result, an embedded Spec-T is free from the conditions in (2), and either NOM or GEN can appear freely in that

position.   If this is on the right track, the proposed analysis can also capture the fact that a nominative SUB may precede a genitive SUB in a gapless relative clause with a possessor raising, as shown in (5), which is problematic for the nominal approach because of the intervention effect.

(5)   [John-*ga*   koe-*no*   ookii] riyuu.
         John-NOM   voice-GEN loud   reason   'The reason that John's voice is loud.'

Lastly, I argue that the analysis is conceptually desirable in that it postulates only one condition for each case particle.   While the wh/adnominal form agreement approaches require two separate licensing mechanisms for GEN, i.e. by a wh/adnominal-form agreement in NGC, the other by D in a nominal clause, the proposed analysis provides a uniform condition which covers both of the constructions.