Argument linking in Japanese – some facts and suggestions

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1. Some previous results about argument linking in Japanese

Let me begin with some insights mainly based on Gamerschlag (1996), which seem to be uncontroversial.

- Besides nominative (*ga*) and accusative (*o*), Japanese exhibits a structural dative (*ni*), alongside with a nonstructural locative/goal marker (*ni*).

- There are three classes of canonical verbs: the subject of intransitive verbs is marked by *ga*, transitive verbs show the case pattern *<ga, o>*, and ditransitive verbs show the case pattern *<ga, ni, o>*.

- Nominative ga (unless replaced by the topic marker *wa*) must appear in each clause, so DEFAULT ranks high. Only under very specific contextual circumstances, the argument that usually appears in the nominative can bear semantic case, illustrated by the following examples

  (1)   a. Boku-kara   sono sake-o   nom-u.
            I-ABL   this   sake-ACC   drink-PRES
            'I am beginning now to drink the sake.'
        b. Ken-kara   sono sake-o   non-da.
            Ken-ABL   this   sake-ACC   drink-PAST
            'Ken was the first who started drinking sake.'
            (after some sake was brought to a group of people)
        c. Boku-ni soo   iw-are   temo.
            I-DAT   so   say-PASS even.if
            'Even if it is told me so.'
            (when I insist in disbelieving some statement)

- In the direct passive of ditransitive verbs both case patterns *<ga, ni>* and *<o, ga>* can appear, that is, either the *o*-argument or the *ni*-argument advances to nominative. It follows that MAX(+hr,+lr) is not crucial.

- The double-*o* constraint holds in general, which can be described by UNIQUE-NESS(ACC). A double-dative constraint seems to play a role for some speakers but not for all, so UNIQUENESS(DAT) may rank lower (speaker-dependent).

- The *ni*-phrase in the direct passive expressing the demoted agent is non-structural (which can be shown by the *zibun*-test, see Washio 1995:57). Thus, the direct passive is the usual passive, as found in many languages. It is represented by means of existential binding of the highest argument, given that it is the controller of the whole event. There is some preference that the directly affected argument becomes nominative.

- Lexically marked *ga-ni* verbs are mostly passivizable, and then the *ni*-marked argument becomes nominative. Therefore, DEFAULT must rank above MAX(lex).

(2) a. Takao-ga musume-ni tikayot-ta
Takao-NOM daughter-DAT approach-PAST
'Takao approached my/his daughter.'

b. Musume-ga Takao-ni tikayor-are-ta
daughter-NOM Takao-BY approach-PASS-PAST
'My daughter was approached by Takao.' (Washio 1995: 35)

- There are some verbs with double-nominative (such as *aru* 'possess', *iru* 'need', and the potential form with *rare-*). The generalization can be made that all these verbs are static. The fact that double-nominative appears in this case can be captured by the markedness constraint (or accusative filter) in (3a). Such a constraint might be motivated by the assumption that the feature [+hr] correlates with affectedness, but nothing can be affected in a static situation. This constraint can be derived by harmonic alignment of the two scales given in (3b).

(3) a. *(+hr)/static.
b. [+hr] > [+lr] (the feature [+hr] is morphologically more relevant
than the feature [+lr])

dynamic > static (dynamic expressions are semantically preferred)

In the following, I try to integrate some further observations made by Washio (1995) and Hasegawa (2001), thereby following the line offered by Gamerschlag (1996), and also using the section on possessor extension in Wunderlich (2000).

2. Indirect passive and double-NOM passive

Besides the direct passive, Japanese exhibits also an indirect passive as well as a double-NOM passive, illustrated by the following examples from Washio (1995).

(4) a. Direct passive
Tanaka-kyoozyu-ga/wa gakusei-tati-ni kiraw-are-te i-ru.
Tanaka-prof-NOM/TOP student-PL-BY hate-PASS-CONT be-PRES
'Prof. Tanaka is hated by the students.'

b. Indirect passive
Tanaka-kyoozyu-ga/wa gakusei-tati-ni tyosyo-o subete
Tanaka-prof-NOM/TOP student-pl-DAT book-ACC all
yom-are-te i-ru.
read-PASS-CONT be-PRES
'Prof. Tanaka is affected by the students having read all his books.'

c. Double nominative passive
Tanaka-kyoozyu-ga/wa gakusei-tati-ni tyosyo-ga yoku
Tanaka-prof-NOM/TOP student-pl-?? book-NOM well
yom-are-te i-ru
read-PASS-CONT be-PRES
'Prof. Tanaka is such that his books have been read well by the students.'

The *zibun*-test shows that the *ni*-phrase of the indirect passive is a structural subject (alongside with the nominative phrase), in contrast to the *ni*-phrase in the direct passive (Washio 1995: 57; his examples illustrate that the indirect passive allows two readings for *zibun*, while the direct passive only allows one reading). Therefore, the analysis proposed by Gamerschlag (1996), which introduces the affectee as an additional argument, is essentially correct. (Note that a similar affectedness extension has been observed for Basque in Joppen & Wunderlich 1995.) Thus, the morpheme *-are* is ambiguous, with the two readings given in (5).

(5)　a.　Direct passive
　　　　　　-are :　　　　λV λy　　∃x λs V(x,y)(s)
　　　　　　yom-are :　　　　λy　　∃x λs READ(x,y)(s)

　　　b.　Indirect passive
　　　　　　-are:　　　　λV　　λx λu λs [AFF(u) & V(x)](s)
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　+lr
　　　　　　yom-are:　　λy　　λx λu λs [AFF(u) & READ(x,y)](s)
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　+lr

The feature [+lr] is necessary to capture the fact that also intransitive verbs can be indirectly passivized, which results in a nominative-dative pattern. The affected person must somehow be a participant of the event, it can be the possessor of an argument, as in the example above. But this is not a necessary condition.

　　The indirect passive does not require negative affectedness, see (6a); however, if nothing else is implied, negative affectedness is the default, as shown by Washio. It is even possible to use this construction with an inanimate affectee involved in a highly important situation, as in (6b-d).

(6)　a.　Takao-ga　　sensei-ni　　musuko-o　　home-rare-ta
　　　　　Takao-NOM　teacher-DAT　son-ACC　　　admire-PASS-PAST
　　　　　'Takao was affected by the teacher admiring his son.'　(Washio 1995: 61)
　　　b.　Sono e-ga/wa　　　　ooku-no　　hito-ni　　　na-o
　　　　　that painting-NOM/TOP　plenty-GEN　person-DAT　name-ACC
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　sir-are-te　　　　i-ru
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　know-PASS-CONT　be-PRES
　　　　　'That painting is such that many people know its name.' (Ono 1988)
　　　c.　Sono tatemono-ga/wa …　　sono kentikuka-o　…
　　　　　that building-nom/top …　　that architect-ACC　…
　　　　　'That building is such that many people know its architect.'
　　　　　Sono hone-wa　　　…　　hakkensya-o　　…
　　　　　that bone-TOP　　　…　　discoverer-ACC　　…
　　　　　'That bone is such that many people know its discoverer.'
　　　d.　Sono tatemono-wa gakusei-ni　　sono kentikuka-o
　　　　　that building-TOP　student-DAT　that architect-ACC
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　tutae-rare-te　　　　i-ru.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　inform-PASS-CONT　be-PRES
　　　　　'That building is such that the students are informed about the architect.'

In (6d), the underlying verb *tutaeru* 'inform' is ditransitive, so gakusei 'student' receives dative already in the basic clause; nevertheless, this is an example of indirect passive by which an inanimate affectee is added. What is special about (6d) is the fact that the informing person is unexpressed; it seems that the suffix *-are* conveys both passive and indirect passive.

A nice minimal pair of examples with causative vs. indirect passive has been presented by Washio (1995:6).

(7) a. John-ga   Mary-ni   tokei-o   nusum-ase-ta.
        John-NOM   Mary-DAT   watch-ACC   steal-CAUS-PAST
        'John had Mary steal a watch.'
        λy λx λu λs [ACT(u) & STEAL(x,y)](s)
     b. John-ga   Mary-ni   tokei-o   nusum-are-ta.
        John-NOM   Mary-DAT   watch-ACC   steal-PASS-PAST
        'John had a watch stolen by Mary.'
        λy λx λu λs [AFF(u) & STEAL(x,y)](s)
            +lr

Washio also notes that the English sentence (8a) is ambiguous; it can either mean that John made Mary steal his watch or that he was affected by the circumstance that Mary stole his watch. Thus, the two instances differently expressed in (7) can be captured by just one English construction. This fact is accounted for by the assumption that *have* when it is applied to a passive verb is ambiguous between causative and affectedness reading.

(8) a. John had his watch stolen by Mary.
     b. λy λu λs [ACT(u)/AFF(u) & ∃x STEAL(x,y)](s)

There is obviously again some connection between passive and affectedness. If an affected object rather than the agent is made prominent, it is possible to introduce another person that is affected by the event.

Turning to the double-NOM passive construction, we see that the first nominative element must be a possessor of one of the arguments of the verb that follows. Washio (1995) deliberates on the question of whether this is a focus construction based on the direct passive, similar to the examples in (9). (If this is correct, the *ni*-phrase in the double-NOM passive should not be able to bind *zibun*.) Note that only the first NP can be understood as focused, not the second one.

(9) a. Hanako-ga/wa   asi-ga   naga-i.
        Hanako-NOM/TOP   leg-NOM   long-PRES
        'Hanako, her legs are long.' (Hasegawa 2001: (36a))
     b. Takao-ga   musuko-ga   syussesi-ta.
        Takao-NOM   son-NOM   succeed (in life)-PAST
        'Takao, his son succeeded in life.' (Washio)

However, insofar as the double-NOM construction also allows the topic marker *wa*, the focus reading is out of place. Since this type of construction always requires that the

first nominative NP is integrated as a possessor into the verb, one might account for it by a representation in which the predicate POSS is added to the verb in highest position, just like AFF in (5b) above. Such a representation has been proposed by Wunderlich (2000) to capture a similar construction of German, illustrated in (10a,b), which is restricted to intransitive verbs with an affected theme. (10c) shows the analysis given by Wunderlich (2000: 262) (which, rephrased in syntactic terms, is a kind of possessor raising): the possessor must be marked by [+hr] to be realized as dative, while the possessum must be identified with the argument of the verb.

(10) Topmost possessor in German
    a. Mir   schmerzt der Fuß.
       I.DAT hurts   the foot
       'My foot hurts'
    b. Ihm   zerbrach die Brille.
       he.DAT   broke   the glasses
       'His glasses broke.'
    c. $\lambda x \ \lambda u \ \lambda s$ [POSS(u,z) & HURT(x)](s) with z=x
       +hr

A similar solution can be found for the double-NOM construction in Japanese. The POSS relation in topmost position captures the intuition that the possessor is somewhat foregrounded, without being focused in the literal sense. Differently from German, the possessor is unmarked, and the construction is possible with either nonagentive intransitives or direct passives.

(11) Topmost possessor in Japanese
    a. Possessor extension: $\lambda V \ \lambda u \ \lambda s$ [POSS(u,z) & V](s)
                         where z must be identified with an argument of V
    b. Example (9b): $\lambda x \ \lambda u \ \lambda s$ [POSS(u,z) & SUCCEED(x)](s) with z=x
    b. Double-NOM passive (see example (4c)):
                         $\lambda y \ \lambda u \ \lambda s$ [POSS(u,z) & $\exists x$ READ(x,y)](s) with z=y

If the possessor is introduced by the highest predicate of a complex event, such an event is always a static one, hence, double-nominative results from the markedness constraint *(+hr)/static. This is in its essence also the conclusion drawn by Washio (1995:238ff).

    Summarizing so far, the indirect passive is regarded as a construction in which a homonym of the passive morpheme contributes an affected entity to the active verb in highest position, while the double-NOM passive is analyzed as a direct passive with the addition of a possessor in highest position. The double-NOM follows from a general restriction on accusatives in Japanese.

    In addition, there might be further restrictions. As Washio (1995) shows in the appendix of his book, double-NOM passives in Japanese are possible under the following conditions:

- with relational type nouns such as *osiego* 'one's student', *imooto* 'sister', *syuto* 'capital city' in both the *-te iru* form and in simple tense,

- with body part nouns such as *sippo* 'tail', *te* 'hand', *kao* 'face' only in the *-te iru* form, provided that the resulting state expressed by the verb continues.

Consider the following pair of examples where the resulting state continues only in (12a).

(12) a. John ga   asi-ga   koteis-are-te   i-ta.
          John-NOM   foot-NOM   fix-PASS-CONT be-PAST
          'John had his foot tied (to something).'
      b. ?? John ga   asi-ga   hum-are-te   i-ta.
          John-NOM   foot-NOM   stomp-PASS-CONT   be-PAST
          'John had his foot stomped on.'

By contrast, Korean allows double-NOM passives for all body part terms, irrespective of the verb form and the resulting state. Here, the counterpart to (12b) above is grammatical.

(13) Ai-ka   pal-i   palp-hi-ess-ta.
      child-NOM   foot-NOM   stomp-PASS-PAST-DECL
      'The child was stomped on the foot.'

Thus, the conditions under which the markedness constraint *(+hr)/static works slightly differ in the two languages.

3. Causatives with an additional reading

A problem for our analysis arises in the non-agentive causative construction illustrated by the following examples. In (14a,b) a psychological state is caused, and the causing entity can be expressed by either the dative (*ni*) or the instrumental (*de*) – this construction is not very productive –, whereas in (14c) a physical state is caused; here, only the instrumental is possible.

(14) a. Kyoko-ga/wa   sono hitokoto-ni   kimoti-o   nagom-ase-ta.
          Kyoko-NOM   that one=word-DAT   feeling-ACC calm-CAUSE-PAST
          'Kyoko got her feelings calmed by that word.'   (Hasegawa (18a))
      b. Kyoko-ga/wa   sono hanasi-ni   kokoro-o   kumor-ase-ta.
          K.-NOM/TOP   that story-DAT   heart-ACC   dark-CAUS-PAST
                                                            (??hare-sase-ta)
                                                            ??clear-CAUS-PAST
          'Kyoko got her heart spoiled by that story.' (??cleared)
      c. Kyoko-ga   ziko-de   kodomo-o   sin-ase-ta
          K.-NOM   accident-INSTR child-ACC   die-CAUS-PAST
          'Kyoko got her child killed in/by an accident'

The problem with this construction is this: The nominative argument is not the causer but rather a possessor of the affected entity, however, different from the double-NOM passive, accusative is not blocked here. In the contrary, (14a,b) exhibit the canonical ditransitive case pattern (the *zibun* test is difficult to apply here). One might assume that the causative morphology always excludes a static reading, so that the restriction *(+hr)/static does not apply here. Alternatively, one could suggest that this construc-

tion is at variance with the indirect passive, in that the causative triggers the affectedness extension. Thus, there are two analyses possible here.

(15) a. λy λx λu λs [POSS(u,z) & [CAUSE(x) & CALM(y)]] (s)
      b. λy λx λu λs [AFF(u) & [CAUSE(x) & CALM(y)]] (s)

Both representations in (15) predict the canonical ditransitive pattern <ga, ni, o>. The occurrence of the instrumental rather than dative is semantically triggered in order to make the deviation from a normal causative visible. In the examples (14a,b), the canonical pattern is possible because the reading that Kyoko herself made a word to calm her, or made a story to spoil her, is rather improbable, whereas in (14c) the canonical pattern could suggest that Kyoko herself caused the accident to kill the child.

   Note that there is a paraphrase of (14a) with neither a morphological causative nor possessor raising; here, the *ni*-phrase is a semantic adjunct.

(16) Kyoko-no   kimoti-ga   sono hitokoto-ni   nagon-da.
      Kyoko-GEN feeling-NOM   that one=word-BY calm-PAST
      'Kyoko's feelings calm with that word.'   (Hasegawa 2001: (26a))

4. Double-dative

Washio (1995:36) states that indirect passive is also possible with *ga-ni* verbs, resulting in double-dative:

(17) Taroo-ga   Takao-ni   musume-ni   tikayor-are-ta.
      Taro-NOM   Takao-DAT daughter-DAT   approach-PASS-PAST
      'Taro was affected by Takao's approaching his daughter.'

When building up more complex constructions, iteration of lexical marking (permissive *ni*-causative, *ga-ni* verbs, indirect passive) must be expected, so that double-dative should appear. It is judged as grammatical by at least some speakers.

(18) a. Indirect passive of the *ni*-causative variant
          Mariko ga   syuutome-ni   kodomo-ni/o   osoku made
          Mariko-NOM   mother.in.law-DAT child-DAT/ACC late   until
                                                            asob-ase-rare-ta
                                                            play-CAUS-PASS-PAST
          'Mariko was affected by her mother-in-law letting her child play late.'
      b. λy λz λu λs [AFF(u) & [ACT(z) & PLAY(y)]] (s)
          +lr +lr

In (18a), *o* is much better than *ni*, maybe because the *ni*-alternation is not necessarily inherited to the indirect passive. However, with a transitive base verb, no problem arises with the double-dative.

(19) Indirect passive of a causativized transitive verb
  a. Mariko ga   syuutome-ni   kodomo-ni   hon-o
     Mariko-NOM   mother.in.law-DAT child-DAT   book-ACC
                                           osoku made yom-ase-rare-ta
                                           late   until read-CAUS-PASS-PAST
     'Mariko was affected by her mother-in-law letting her child read the book
     late.'
  b. λy   λx   λz λu λs [aff(u) & [act(z) & read(x,y)]] (s)
         (+lr)   +lr

Here, *kodomo-ni* 'child-DAT' realizes structural dative. Obviously, double-dative is preferred to double-accusative, which would be an alternative. There are more combinations showing that double-dative is acceptable.

(20) Permissive causative of a *ga-ni* verb (*aweru* 'meet'):
  a. Obasan-ga   Noriko-o/ni Yoshiki-ni   aw-as(as)e-ta
     aunt-NOM   N.-ACC/DAT Y.-DAT   meet-CAUS-PAST
     'The aunt let Noriko meet Yoshiki.'
  b. λy   λx   λz λs [act(z) & meet(x,y)] (s)
     +lr   (+lr)

(21) Indirect passive of a causativized *ga-ni* verb:
  a. Noriko-wa   ozisan-ni   kodomo-o   obasan-ni   aw-as(as)e-rare-ta
     N.TOP   uncle-DAT   child-ACC   aunt-DAT   meet-CAUS-PASS-PAST
     'Noriko was affected by the uncle having let her child meet the aunt.'
  b. λy   λx   λz   λu λs [aff(u) & [act(z) & meet(x,y)]] (s)
     +lr   +lr
                     +lr   +lr
     +hr   +hr   +hr   -hr

Here, *kodomo* 'child' receives the accusative, though it is also a medial argument. This can be explained along the following lines: (i) A third dative is blocked, which is captured by the ranking UNIQUENESS(DAT) » MAX(+hr,+lr); (ii) It is more important to link the lexical features than the default features, which is captured by the ranking MAX(lex) » MAX(+hr,+lr). The double causative morphology *-asase-* with simple causative meaning is a rather new development in colloquial speech. Example (21a) has another reading in which the double causative is transparently used: 'Noriko was affected by the uncle having Noriko herself let her child meet the aunt.'

5. Interaction with topic and focus

The interaction with topic must be part of the argument linking system. Consider the object topicalizations in (22).

(22) a. Mary-ni-wa   John-ga   sono hon-o   age-ta.
        Mary-DAT-TOP John-NOM   that book-ACC   give-PAST
        'As for Mary, John gave her the book.'

     b. Sono hon-wa   John-ga   Mary-ni   age-ta.
         that   book-TOP   John-NOM   Mary-DAT   give-PAST
         'As for the book, John gave it to Mary.'
     c. John-wa Mary-ga   nagut-ta.
         John-TOP Mary-NOM   hit-PAST
         'As for John, Mary hit him.'

With the topic marker *wa*, the combinations *ga-wa and *o-wa are excluded (though Old Japanese allowed *o-wa*), while *ni-wa*, *kara-wa* etc. are possible, and the only way to topicalize dative or ablative arguments. Thus, *wa* only bears the information [+top]. That the accusative particle, but not the dative particle, is dropped can be explained by two assumptions: (i) There is the ranking MAX(+top) » MAX(+hr) (which, apparently, has been introduced between old and modern Japanese); (ii) There is no mutual ranking between MAX(+top) and MAX(+hr,+lr).

    Some generative linguists of Japanese, including Saito, claim that, alongside with the topic construction in (22c), also (23a) with double-NOM is possible.

(23) a. ? John-ga   Mary-ga   nagut-ta.
         John-NOM   Mary-NOM   hit-PAST
         'John, Mary hit.'
     b. Tokyo-ga   jinko-ga   oi
         Tokyo-NOM population-NOM   be.much
         'Tokyo, the population is much.'

However, (23a) would need a very specific context. If it is possible at all, the first NP must be identified with the patient, and the second NP with the agent. At first sight, this construction looks similar to the construction in (23b), however, with an important difference: it is not the possessor of a relational complement ('population') that is raised to the first nominative position but rather an argument of the verb itself. Moreover, (23a) would not be an instance that can be captured by the constraint *(+hr)/static. Further examples such as (24a,b) with a ditransitive verb are highly questionable, while (24c) is simply incomprehensible.

(24) a. ??John-ga Taro-ga   Mary-ni   syookai-si-ta.
         John-NOM Taro-NOM   Mary-DAT   introduction-do-PAST
         'John, Taro introduced him to Mary.'
     b. ??Mary-ga Taro-ga   John-o   syookai-si-ta.
         Mary-NOM Taro-NOM   John-ACC   introduction-do-PAST
         'Mary, Taro introduced John to her.'
     c. *John-ga Mary-ni Taro-ga syookai-si-ta.

It is unclear what the questionable sentences really could mean. The first nominative is neither a topic (which is to be marked by *wa*) nor licensed by a foregrounded POSS-relation. Could it be a focus? This is improbable, too, because there is a focus construction by which the focused element is dislocated to the right rather than to the left, see (25). Therefore, I conclude that the alleged acceptability of (23a) is merely a theoretical artefact.

(25) a. Taro-ga   John-o   syookai-si-ta   no-wa
        Taro-NOM   John-ACC   introduction-do-PAST   COMP-TOP

                                            Mary-(ni)-da.
                                            Mary-(DAT)-COP

        'It is Mary to whom John introduced Taro.'

    b. Taro-ga   Mary-ni   syookai-si-ta   no-wa
        Taro-NOM   Mary-DAT   introduction-do-PAST   COMP-TOP

                                            John-(*o)-da
                                            John-(*ACC)-COP

        'It is John whom Taro introduced to Mary.'

As shown in (25), every argument can be focused, however, accusative marking is dropped here. This is thus another instance where MAX(+hr) can be violated, while MAX(+hr,+lr) cannot.

6. The constraint ranking for argument linking in Japanese

All the constraints necessary to account for the possible case patterns of Japanese have been established in other studies (Wunderlich 2001a,b). Only the two global constraints, namely DEFAULT and UNIQUENESS, have to be adapted to the language-specific situation.

- DEFAULT requires that either *ga* or *wa* appears in each clause. This constraint is never violated, except in quite idiosyncratic constructions restricted to very specific contexts (see (1) in the beginning).
- UNIQUENESS(ACC) restricts the number of accusatives in a clause to one; it is never violated.
- UNIQUENESS(DAT) restricts the number of datives in a clause to one; it is out-ranked by MAX(lex).
- MAX(lex) requires lexical features to be realized; it is outranked by DEFAULT.
- MAX(+hr,+lr) requires an argument role specified by the feature combination [+hr,+lr] to be realized by dative; it is outranked by MAX(lex), as well as by UNIQUENESS(DAT).
- *(+hr)/static forbids accusative with stative verbs. It does not forbid dative, and therefore must be ranked between MAX(+hr,+lr) and MAX(+hr).
- MAX(+hr) requires an argument role specified by [+hr] to be realized by accusative.
- MAX(+top) requires topic to be realized; it is never violated but outranks MAX(+hr).

This leads us to the following constraint ranking for Japanese.

(26)   DEFAULT   UNIQUENESS(ACC)   MAX(+top)
              |
          MAX(lex)
              |
          UNIQUENESS(DAT)
              |
          MAX(+hr,+lr)
              |
          *(+hr)/static
              |
            MAX(+hr)
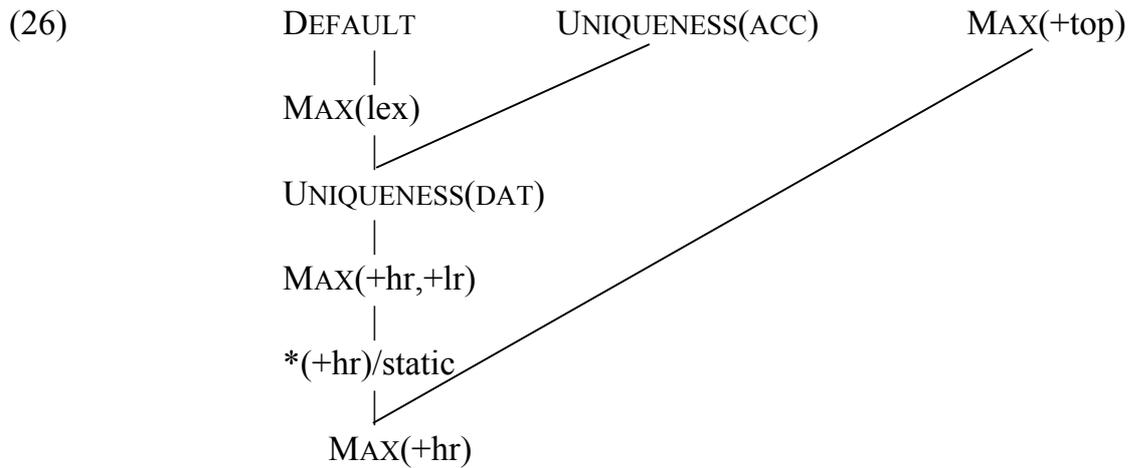
7. Conclusions

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Consider again the German construction with a possessor on top.

(27)   Ihr   starb   das Kind.
       she.DAT died   the child
       'Her child died.'

This construction could be captured by the affectedness extension, which in this case could imply the possessor reading as a default for integrating the participant. However, the possessor raising account is more specific, and it allows the inference that the possessor is affected. Therefore, only a more detailed consideration of the possible instances of the construction can decide whether the extension with AFF or POSS has to be assumed. The fact that Japanese makes a crucial formal distinction between the two possibilities, with the indirect passive on one hand and the double-NOM passive on the other, indicates that both extensions are relevant.

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Düsseldorf-wa rokugatsu-ga   ichiban   ame-ga   horu.
D.-TOP   June-NOM   most   rain-NOM   fall.PRES
'As for Düsseldorf, it rains most in June.'