

Notes on Free Choice Items in Japanese¹

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1. Introduction

A free choice item (henceforth FCI) is an indefinite element which expresses freedom of choice, such as English *any* in (1).

(1) Pick any card.

Japanese does not have a single element which corresponds to English *any*. Instead, so-called indeterminate pronouns (Kuroda (1965)) and a specific particle compositionally express the same interpretation. Table 1 below shows that the interpretations of indeterminate pronouns depend on the particles in general.

Table 1 (Shimoyama (2008) with a slight modification)²

<i>wh</i> -part	Existential	Universal	NCI	FCI
da're 'who'	da're-ka	da're-mo	dare-mo	dare-demo
na'ni 'what'	na'ni-ka	na'ni-mo	nani-mo	nani-demo
do're 'which'	do're-ka	do're-mo	dore-mo	dore-demo
do'ko 'where'	do'ko-ka	do'ko-mo	doko-mo	doko-demo
i'tsu 'when'	i'tsu-ka	i'tsu-mo	itsu-mo	itsu-demo
do'o 'how'	do'o-ka	(do'o-mo)	(doo-mo)	doo-demo
na'ze 'why'	na'ze-ka	-	-	-

As is clear from this table, FCIs in Japanese have been traditionally considered to consist of a *wh*-element and *demo* 'even'.

(2) Dare-**demo** sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 who-**even** that problem-Nom solve-can
 'Anyone can solve the problem.'

Demo has been treated as one fixed element which is semantically crucial for the FCIs (cf. Kratzer and Shimoyama (2002)); Hiraiwa (2013)). However, there is an observation which suggests that there is more than one *demo* for FCIs. FCIs have two accent patterns, as shown in (3) and (4).

(3) Da're-demo sono mondai-ga tok-eru. (fall)
 who-Demo that problem-Nom solve-can
 'Anyone can solve the problem.'

(4) Dare-demo sono mondai-ga tok-eru. (flat)
 who-Demo that problem-Nom solve-can
 'Anyone can solve the problem.'

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² An apostrophe inside a *wh*-part means that there is a fall accent (or pitch).

In (3), an accent falls on the first syllable/mora of the *wh*-part in the FCI, whereas in (4) there is no accent in the FCI and hence this FCI is pronounced flatly. One might suppose that these are merely phonological options and that they are the same FCI in terms of syntax. In this paper, however, I argue that they have two different structures, which are realized as two different intonations.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents relevant data which show different properties of the two FCIs. Section 3 offers a structural analysis of them. Section 4 provides a consequence of the analysis. Section 5 concludes the discussion.

2. Clausal Nature of the “Fall” FCI

2.1. An Extra NP with an FCI

In addition to the accent patterns which I mentioned in the previous section, there is a crucial syntactic difference between the two FCIs. (5) and (6) show that an FCI with the fall accent allows another occurrence of an NP with it, whereas one with the flat intonation does not.

- (5) Sore-ga da're-demo taitei sono mondai-ga tok-eru. (fall)
 that-Nom who-Demo usually that problem-Nom solve-can
 'lit. Whoever it is can solve the problem.'
- (6) *Sore-ga dare-demo taitei sono mondai-ga tok-eru. (flat)
 that-Nom who-Demo usually that problem-Nom solve-can
 'lit. Whoever it is can solve the problem.'

Note that (5) becomes ungrammatical without the FCI, as shown in (7).

- (7) *Sore-ga taitei sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 that-Nom usually that problem-Nom solve-can
 'lit. That can usually solve the problem.'

The ungrammaticality of (7) can be attributed to the fact that *sore* 'that' is a demonstrative typically used to refer to an inanimate element and that the predicate *tok-eru* 'can solve' requires an animate subject. These data therefore indicate that *sore-ga* 'that-NOM' in (6) is associated not with the matrix predicate (*tokeru* 'can solve'), but with the FCI.

2.2. A Copula in FCIs

Haspelmath (1997) shows that there is a cross-linguistic tendency that FCIs include a copula in an infinitive or subjunctive form. He suggests that Japanese FCIs also contain a copula (Haspelmath (1997: 311)). In fact, there is supportive evidence for this view: Japanese has another option that expresses the FC interpretation, as shown in (8).

- (8) Da're-**de-at-te-mo** sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 who-de-Cop-Inf-also that problem-Nom solve-can
 'Anyone can solve the problem.'

As indicated by the gloss in (8), an FCI may include a copula with the infinitival ending.³ Furthermore, as shown in (9), the FCI can include the modal *-oo* 'will/would' without changing the meaning.

- (9) Da're-**de-ar-oo-to-mo** sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 who-de-Cop-would-C-also that problem-Nom solve-can
 'Anyone can solve the problem.'

These data suggest that Japanese FCIs include a more complex structure than has been assumed.

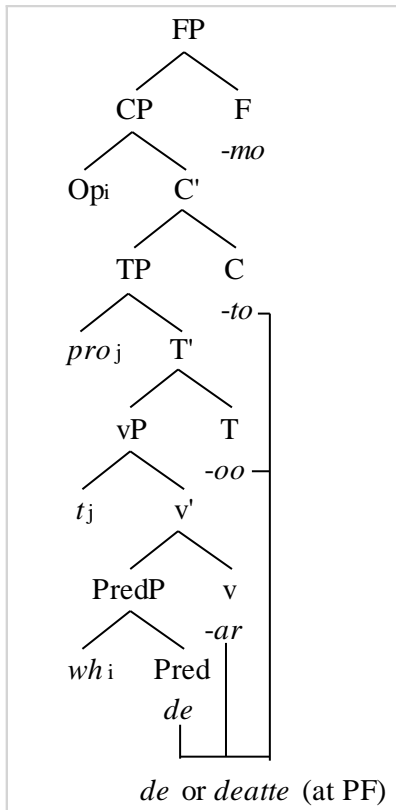
³ This form has been called *renyokei* by traditional Japanese grammarians, but here I assume that it is an infinitival form, following Hayashi (2012).

3. Structures of Japanese FCIs

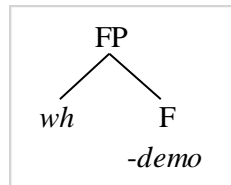
3.1. Proposal

In this section, I offer structural analyses for FCIs. To be more precise, I propose that the *wh-demo* form with the fall intonation is a morphologically contracted version of the concessive clause with the *wh-de-ar-oo-to-mo* form, whose structure is given in (10a).⁴ (10b) is a structure of an FCI with the flat intonation.

(10) a.



b.



Following Nishiyama (1999) and Watanabe (2013), in the framework of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz (1993)), Miyama (2011) proposes that the Japanese copula in the present form *dearu*, which consists of the Pred^0 *de*, the v^0 *-ar*, and the T^0 *-u*, is contracted into *da* and the past form *de-at-ta* into *datta* in the morphology.⁵ Following this spirit, I propose that a similar morphological process applies to *de-ar-oo-to*, which results in the contracted infinitival form *de or deatte* as represented in (10a).⁶ In this structure, the *wh*-part is base-generated in the complement of Pred , and a null operator moves from there to Spec,CP (Watanabe (1992)), where the operator receives a quantificational force by *-mo*, which determines a domain of quantification (i.e., an island) (Nishigauchi (1990)).⁷

I further assume that *-oo* ‘would’ under T^0 has the subjunctive mood, on a par with copulas in FC expressions in other languages like Spanish and Italian (Haspelmath (1997)).⁸ Relevant data in Spanish and Italian are given below.

- (11) a. Quali che **siano** le sue protezioni, dovrà scontare la pena.
 which that **be.3PL.Subj** the his protections must.Fut serve the sentence
 “Whatever his protections are, he will have to serve his sentence.” (Italian: Haspelmath (1997: 137))

⁴ This structure is similar to that of what Izvorski (2000) calls ‘Free Adjunct Free Relatives’, rather than what Caponigro (2003) calls ‘*-ever* Free Relatives’. The former refers to a free relative clause which appears as a sentential adjunct whose whole category is CP, whereas the latter means a free relative that occurs as an argument or an adjunct whose category is DP or PP, respectively.

⁵ But see Tatsumi (2014) for a slightly different analysis, under which each projection is semantically motivated.

⁶ *-Mo* is considered to be P or C by Nishigauchi (1990), D by Takahashi (2002) and Watanabe (2006), and Q by Hiraiwa (2013). Any of them can be adopted for my F head in (10b). I leave the precise nature of *-mo* for future work.

⁷ It is possible that a relevant feature raises to that position instead of a null operator. See Watanabe (2001) for a discussion.

⁸ Thanks to Gabriel Martínez Vera and Pietro C. Cerrone for informing me of relevant data in Spanish and Italian, respectively.

- b. No abras la puerta, quien-quiera que sea.
 Not open.Impr the door who-want that be.3Sg.Subj
 “Don’t open the door, whoever it may be.”

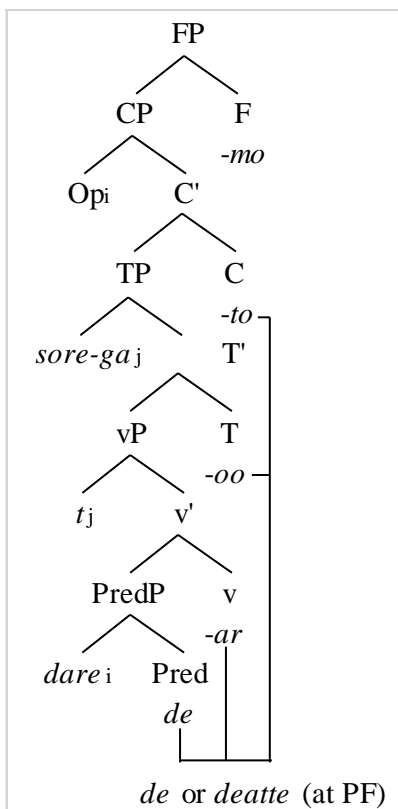
(Spanish: Haspelmath (1997: 137))

Here I speculate, following Haspelmath and König (1998), that the subjunctive mood combined with the particle *-mo* contributes to the concessive interpretation of the FCI.

As for the FCI with the flat intonation in (10b), I suggest that *demo* as a single unit is a head of some functional projection, whose precise nature I leave open. The crucial difference between (10a) and (10b) is that the former includes a clausal structure, whereas the latter does not.

My proposal straightforwardly captures the contrast between the “fall” and “flat” FCIs shown in section 2.1. Since there is a subject position in (10a) (i.e., Spec,TP), another NP in addition to the *wh*-phrase can appear with the FCI with a fall accent, as in (5). The structure is illustrated in (12).

(12)



In contrast, in (10b), there is no such site where an extra NP can occur, resulting in the ungrammaticality of (6).

3.2. Extension to an Ordinary Verb in FCIs

My proposal can be easily extended to a case where a copula is replaced with an ordinary verb. The relevant example is given in (13).

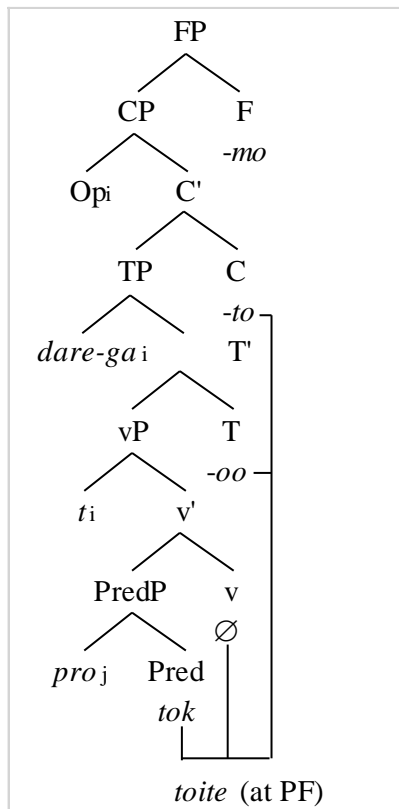
- (13) Da're-ga toi-te-mo sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 who-Nom solve-Inf-also that problem-Nom solve-can
 ‘lit. Whoever solves *pro*_i can solve the problem_i.’

The sentence in (13) has the FC interpretation much like (2). As is the case with FCIs with a copula, the verbal part of the FC expression in (13) can also be replaced with a morphologically more complex one, without change of the meaning, as shown in (14).

- (14) Da're-ga tok-oo-to-mo sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 who-Nom solve-would-C-also that problem-Nom solve-can
 'lit. Whoever solves pro_i can solve the problem $_i$.'

Crucially, the nominative case marker *-ga* is attached to the *wh*-part *dare* 'who' both in (13) and (14). Given the structure in (10a), we can analogously analyze the FC expression in (13) and (14) as having the structure in (15).

(15)



In (15), the *wh*-part is located in Spec,TP, and receives the nominative Case. Moreover, V^0 together with v^0 assigns accusative Case to its complement, as $Pred^0$ with v^0 assigns oblique Case. This is exemplified by (16).

- (16) Da're-ga sore_i-o toi-te-mo sono mondai-ga tok-eru.
 who-Nom that-Acc solve-Inf-also that problem-Nom solve-can
 'lit. Whoever solves it_i can solve the problem_i.'

To sum up so far, Japanese FCIs in the *wh-demo* form with a fall accent can be considered to contain a clausal structure.

4. A Consequence of the Proposal

This section discusses the consequence which my proposal carries. Recall that in (10a) the FP constitutes an island since *-mo* restricts the domain of quantification of the *wh*-phrase (Nishigauchi (1990)). It is then predicted that an island effect should be observable with an FCI with a fall accent when a *wh*-phrase is to be interpreted in the matrix interrogative sentence. This prediction is borne out in (17).

- (17) *Do'ko-de toita hito-ga da're-demo sono mondai-ga tok-eta no?
 where-at solved person-Nom who-Demo that problem-Nom solve-could Q
 'intended: Where_i could whoever [the person who solved pro_k t_i] is] solve the problem_k?'

One may immediately argue that the ungrammaticality should be attributed to the Complex NP Island effect and/or the Subject Island. However, no island effects are observed when the *wh*-phrase originates from a subject relative clause, as exemplified in

(18).

- (18) **Do'ko**-de toita hito-ga sono mondai-ga tok-eta no?
where-at solved person-Nom that problem-Nom solve-could Q
'lit: Where_i could [the person who solved *pro*_k t_i] solve the problem_k?'

Thus, one cannot attribute the ungrammaticality of (17) to those two island constraints.⁹ Rather, (17) can be straightforwardly accounted for by my proposal. Since the *wh*-phrase *do'ko-de toita hito-ga* 'the person who solved *pro* where' is contained in the concessive clause which *-mo* makes an island, this phrase cannot be interpreted in the matrix clause.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I have argued that there are two types of FCIs in Japanese. I have also shown that one of the two types, namely, the one with a fall accent includes a clausal structure. Then I have provided a structural analysis of the two types, one of which involves a concessive clause, and a consequence of the analysis. This analysis raises the possibility that FCIs in Japanese and other languages such as Spanish and Italian will receive a unified account in terms of subjunctive and copular clauses.

There remain two things to be explained, though. The first one is the semantic composition of those two items. Izvorski (2000) proposes that *either* a *wh*-question word *or* a subjunctive mood is responsible for the free choice interpretation. Recall, however, that my proposal includes *both* of them. It must be investigated whether the presence of these two elements is redundant, and if it is, whether the functional redundancy of those two elements is problematic or not. The second one is related to the first one: the exact syntactic and semantic nature of the focus particle *-mo* 'also'. As I mentioned in footnote 5, not a few linguists have attempted to reveal the nature of the particle. This should also be investigated in another occasion.

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⁹ See Nishigauchi (1990) for an analysis of the apparent absence of the Complex NP island effect.