The syntax of mood constructions in Old Japanese:
A corpus based study

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Outline

- Introduction
  - The Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese (OCOJ)
  - The present study
- An overview of mood constructions in OJ
  - Imperatives
  - Prohibitives
  - Optatives
- Observations from the data
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Introduction: The OCOJ

- The Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese (OCOJ) is an annotated digital corpus of all extant texts from the Old Japanese (OJ) period (7th and 8th century CE).
- It consists of about 90,000 words.
- Funding bodies:
Introduction: The OCOJ

- People:
Introduction: The OCOJ

- A poem (MYS.8.1606)

君待跡
吾戀居者
我屋戶乃
簾令動
秋之風吹
Introduction: The OCOJ

- A romanized version of poem (MYS.8.1606)

君待跡  
kimi matu to

吾戀居者  
wa ga kwopwi-woreba

我屋戸乃  
wa ga yadwo no

簾令動  
sudare ugokasi

秋之風吹  
aki no kaze puku
Introduction: The OCOJ
Introduction: The OCOJ
Introduction: The OCOJ

Plain text view generated from the markup:

MYS.8.1606 Gloss tree

君待跡
吾慣居者
我屋戸乃
簾令動
秋之風吹

kimi matu to
wa ga kwopwi-woreba
wa ga yadwo no
sudare ugokasi
aki no kaze puku
Introduction: The OCOJ

- Glossed view showing constituency, generated from the markup:
Introduction: The OCOJ

- Tree view generated from the markup:
Introduction: The OCOJ

- More information can be found on the OCOJ webpage: [http://vsarpj.orinst.ox.ac.uk/corpus/](http://vsarpj.orinst.ox.ac.uk/corpus/)
  - A fully romanized version of all OJ texts
  - Markup and display conventions
Introduction: The present study

- This paper investigates logical subjects in several mood-related constructions in central Old Japanese (OJ), the language of 8th century Japan. We focus on imperative, prohibitive and optative constructions, expressing the desire of the speaker for either the speaker or another entity to perform (or not) an event (or situation) (cf. Aikhenvald 2010, Bybee et al. 1994).

- These forms have not been discussed in any detail for OJ. Previous literature (e.g., Frellesvig 2010, Vovin 2009) briefly describes them, but does not investigate the grammatical properties.
Introduction: The present study

- OJ has several forms expressing these categories:
  - *yuk*- ‘go’:

| Imperative:    | yukye               | ‘Go!’          |
|                | yuku na             | ‘Don’t go!’    |
|                | na-yuki             | ‘Don’t go!’    |
|                | na-yuki-so          | ‘Don’t go!’    |
|                | na-yuki-sone        | ‘I don’t want you to go.’ |
| Optative:      | yukana              | ‘I want to go./Let’s go.’ |
|                | yukane              | ‘I want you to go.’ |
|                | yukanamu/yukanamo   | ‘I want him/her/it to go.’ |
The three mood forms

- Imperative
- Prohibitive
- Optative
Imperatives

- Imperatives in OJ can have overt subjects, as well as appearing in a canonical structure without a subject.
- OJ is an SOV language, but with somewhat free constituent order.
- Imperatives in OJ can also be embedded.
Example of imperative with an overt subject, ‘drizzle’:

For one day, [drizzle\textsubscript{LS}] fall incessantly 1000 times at the house of my beloved whom I love. ’ (MYS.10.2234)

We come back to these overt subjects shortly.
Imperatives may be embedded with complementizer *to*, in two different types. One type retains a command interpretation, i.e., “(I said) do X!”:

```
wa  ga  kinu  wo  kimi  ni   kiseyo  to
I    GEN clothes ACC lord DAT dress.IMP COMP
pototogisu ware wo unagasu swode ni ki-witutu
cuckoo    I    ACC urge sleeve DAT wear-sit
‘The cuckoo urges me to "dress my lord in my robes!" – while sitting on my sleeve.’ (MYS.10.1961)
```

- There are 31 tokens of the command type embedded construction. (232 main clause tokens)
The second type is a more infinitive-like interpretation and is used to mean “in order to do”:

```
ywo  narabete  kimi  wo  ki-mase  to  tipayaburu
night  line.up  lord  ACC  come-RESP  COMP  brutal
kamwi  no  yasiro  wo  noma-nu  pi  pa
gods  GEN  shrine  ACC  pray-NEG  day  TOP
na-si
not.exist-ACOP

‘There is not a day where I don’t pray at the brutal gods’ shrine night after night in order for my lord to come.’ (MYS.11.2660)
```

There are 30 examples of this type, 4 with overt subjects, but all marked with accusative wo. As this is not strictly a mood construction, we do not discuss it further here.
Imperatives in OJ are also notable in showing a considerable proportion of overtly expressed subjects (and not just 2\textsuperscript{nd} person subjects).

Of 263 imperative clauses (main and subordinate), 104 have an overt subject. This ratio of approximately 40\% overt subjects appears to be consistent with other clause-types in OJ. As a comparison, we consider exclamative clauses.
Exclamatives – a comparison

- Example of an exclamative:

  sasu take no yo gomorite are 
grow bamboo GEN section be.secluded exist.IMP  
wa ga sekwo ga wa-gari si ko-zupa  
I GEN beloved GEN I-SFX RES come.NegCond  
[ware_{SUB}] kwopwi-me ya mo  
[I_{SUB}] love-CONJ.EXCL FOC TOP  
‘Be secluded like a section of growing bamboo! If my beloved does not come to me, how [I_{SUB}] would yearn!’ (MYS.11.2773)

- The OCOJ shows 611 main (600) and subordinate (11) clause exclamatives, of which 247 have overt subjects. So this is a ratio of just about 40% overt.
Prohibitives

- Prohibitives are a type of “negative imperative”.
- A canonical prohibitive, with null subject:

\[
\text{inoti~araba~apu~koto~mo~ara-mu~wa~ga} \\
\text{life~exist~meet~thing~ETOP~exist-CONJ~I~GEN} \\
yuwe~ni~pada~na-omopi-so~inoti \\
reason~COP~frequently~PROH-think-PROH~life \\
dani~peba \\
\text{RES~elapse} \\
\text{‘If we have life, we will meet. For me, don’t think (of me) often - even if life passes (by).’ (MYS.15.3745)}
\]
Example of prohibitive with overt subject:

```
asa mo     yo-si     kwi     pye     yuku     kimi     ga
morning.cloth good-ACOP Ki ALL go lord GEN
matutiyama kwoyu ramu kyepu zo [ame_{LS}]
Mt. Matuti cross CONJ today FOC [rain_{LS}]
na-puri-sone
PROH-rain-PROH
```

‘It is today that my lord, going to Ki, where the morning cloth is good, will probably cross Mt. Matuti. [Rain_{LS}] don’t fall! (MYS.9.1680)

For prohibitives, the ratio of overt subjects is higher, 99/194 (51%).
Optatives

- All languages have an imperative and a prohibitive (Sadock and Zwicky 1985), but not many have a dedicated optative; thus OJ is very interesting.
- The optative is used to indicate the wish of a speaker for an event to occur, but there is no expectation on the part of the speaker that the logical subject will perform the event or situation; the optative expresses a desire while the imperative expresses a command.
- Cross-linguistically, optatives can be expressed by means of an inflectional optative or by non-inflectional means. OJ has inflectional optatives.
There are three types of optatives in OJ, depending on whether the logical subject is 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, or 3\textsuperscript{rd} person:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optative</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ana</td>
<td>‘I want to go./Let’s go.’</td>
<td>yukana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ane</td>
<td>‘I want you to go.’</td>
<td>yukane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-anamu/o</td>
<td>‘I want him/her/it to go.’</td>
<td>yukananmu/yukanamo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 132
Optatives

- An example of an optative:

ware nomwi si kikeba sabusi mo [pototogisu_{LS}] nipu
I RES RES hear sad ETOP [cuckoo_{LS}] Nipu
no yamapye ni i-yuki nakanamo
COP mountain.side DAT PFX-go sing.OPT

‘When I hear it alone, I am saddened. I want [the cuckoo_{LS}] to sing
going to Nipu mountain side.’ (MYS.19.4178)
Optatives

- The ratio of overt subjects in each type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optative Type</th>
<th>Overt</th>
<th>% Overt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optative -<em>ana</em></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I want to go./Let’s go.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative -<em>ane</em></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I want you to go.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative -<em>anamu/o</em></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I want him/her/it to go.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implications of these observations

- There are many interesting aspects of OJ mood constructions; we focus on just two here:
  - the marking on overt subjects
  - overt subjects (of imperatives) as vocatives?
Observations from the data

- Case marking
  - A surprising aspect of the syntax of all the mood clauses is that there are no examples of overt subjects which are case marked.
  - Overt subjects in mood clauses may appear as bare NPs, or be marked by various kinds of discourse or emphasis markers, but none have the grammatical case that one would expect to find on subjects, which is actually Genitive in OJ.
  - Case marking on subjects in OJ developed from embedded structures, the source of the Genitive case marking.
Observations from the data

- Case marking
  - While OJ has Accusative case, which works somewhat similarly to its modern counterpart in NJ, canonical Nominative marking on subjects only developed comparatively late, in late Middle Japanese.
  - Case marking and oblique marking in OJ mood clauses is as one would expect, except that subjects of these clauses never show Genitive case.
Observations from the data

- Case marking: lots of potential hosts for case
  - ratios of null and overt subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Marking</th>
<th>Null</th>
<th>Overt</th>
<th>% Overt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive <em>na-V-so</em></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive <em>na-V-sone</em></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive particle <em>na</em></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive prefix <em>na-</em></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibitive Total</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative <em>-ana</em></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative <em>-ane</em></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative <em>-anamu/o</em></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optative Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observations from the data

- Case marking:
  - In our three mood types, the ratios of case marked overt subjects are as follows:
    - Imperative: 0/104
    - Prohibitive: 0/99
    - Optative: 0/42
  - Again using exclamatives as a comparison, 59 out of 247 overt subjects are case marked (24%) – roughly 1 in 4.
  - So there is something to explain about why mood clauses do not show case-marked subjects.
Observations from the data

- Are overt subjects vocatives?
- In a recent study of imperative subjects, Zanuttini (2008) argues that in (say) English, overt subjects in examples like this are not vocatives:

  - [getting ready for a photo] Tall people stand in the back, shorter people stand in the front!

- Due to many grammatical differences, Zanuttini’s arguments do not carry over to OJ. However, we can argue that OJ mood clause subjects are not vocatives.
Observations from the data

- The evidence is very direct – there is a vocative marker in OJ, and it appears exactly once in all the mood constructions:

  tukur-eru    ipye    ni    ti-yo    madeni
  make-STAT    house  DAT  1000-generations  RES
  ki-mase      [opo-kimi yo_{LS}]  ware  mo  kaywopa-mu
  come-RESP    [PFX-lord VOC_{LS}]  I  TOP
  return-CONJ

  ‘Come to the home that was built for 1000 generations, my lord! I will also return.’ (MYS.1.79)

- The logical subject of the imperative form ki-mase is opo-kimi yo (‘my lord VOC’), which is right-dislocated with respect to its clause, and therefore follows the predicate; the English translation shows this structure. This phrase ‘my lord’ is clearly not grammatically part of the rest of the example.
Observations from the data

- What is significant is that this is the only instance of vocative marking on any of the overt subjects in our examples. We would surely expect to find many more examples of overt subjects marked with the overt vocative marker *yo* if they were indeed vocative phrases.

- There are also quite a few examples of imperatives with right-dislocated subjects, 46 out of 263 imperatives, but only this one example has the vocative marking.
Mood constructions in OJ are notable:

- Imperatives allow overt subjects.
- Imperatives may be embedded.
- Prohibitives allow overt subjects.
- These overt subjects are not vocatives.
- OJ has a set of dedicated optative forms.
- All mood forms allow overt subjects, but these subjects are never case-marked as regular clausal subjects (in contrast to subjects of every other form of the predicate).
Conclusions II

- What changed from OJ to NJ
  - The optative forms were replaced by other optative forms in EMJ, and then disappeared. NJ has a (grammatically) unrelated ‘desiderative’ form.
  - The imperative and the prohibitive with post-verbal *na* remain in NJ. The other prohibitive forms are lost.
  - The imperative is not embedded in NJ.
Conclusions II

- What changed from OJ to NJ
  - Overt subjects of imperatives and prohibitives in NJ can be case marked:

  - omee  ga     ike
    you   NOM   go.IMP
    You go!
    (Nitta, 1991: 241, from Narrog, 2009)
    Omae ga ike = 93,700 google hits

  - Taroo-san   ga     iki-nasai
    Taroo-SFX    NOM   go-do.HON.IMP
    Taroo-san, (you) go.
    (Martin, 1975: 959)
Conclusions II

- What changed from OJ to NJ
  - Overt subjects of imperatives and prohibitives in NJ can be case marked:

  omae ga iku na
  you NOM go PROH
  You don’t go!
  Omae ga iku na = 2,230,000 google hits
Further work

- A better understanding of the syntax and semantics of OJ mood forms, as to why subjects cannot be case-marked.
- A better understanding of why imperatives in OJ can be embedded (the OCOJ only shows 2 examples of embedded prohibitives, and 1 optative).
- Investigation of other grammatical properties of mood clauses: constituent order, cooccurrence with other clausal marking (e.g., perfective, passive).
References

- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2010. Imperatives and Commands. OUP.
References

Questions and Comments Welcome

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