Differential Object Marking in Old Japanese:

A corpus based study

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The Oxford Corpus of Old Japanese

All poetic texts from the period

Kojiki kayō, Nihon shoki kayō, Fudoki kayō, Bussokuseki-ka, Shoku nihongi kayō, Manyōshū

4979 poems, 89,419 words.

The accusative in Old Japanese

Accusative case particle wo

Object marking

Marking of other arguments

Marking the causee in causative constructions

Adjunct marking

NPs paired with resultative clauses

Absolute constructions

Exclamation

The accusative in Old Japanese

(1)小松下乃草 乎苅 核kwomatu gasita nokaya wokara-sanesmall.pine GEN under GENgrass ACCcut-please

"Please cut the grass under the small pine." (MYS 1.11)

The accusative in Old Japanese

 (1)
 小松
 下乃
 草 乎
 苅 核

 kwomatu ga
 sita no
 kaya wo
 kara-sane

 small.pine GEN under GEN
 grass ACC
 cut-please

"Please cut the grass under the small pine" (MYS 1.11)

(2) 安可見夜麻 **久左祢** 可利曾気 Akami-yama **kusane** Ø kari-soke Akami-mountain **grass** cut-remove

"At Mount Akami, cutting and removing grasses" (MYS 14.3479)

- Previous research, basic concepts
- Supporting data
- Explanatory force of the hypothesis
 - Interpretation of Floating Quantifiers
 - Interpretation of WH-words
- Utility of the results
 - New interpretations/translations of Old Japanese materials
- Accusative case drop

Recent accounts of variable object marking in OJ include:

S.-Y. Kuroda 2008 Yanagida and Whitman 2009 Wrona and Frellesvig 2010 Kinsui 2011 Miyagawa 2012

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Recent accounts of variable object marking in OJ include:

S.-Y. Kuroda 2008

Yanagida and Whitman 2009 Specificity

Wrona and Frellesvig 2010

Kinsui 2011

Miyagawa 2012

- Variable object marking in Old Japanese is an instance of **Differential Object Marking** (DOM)

- ▶ DOM is mostly described in terms of either
 - semantic features
 - *information structure* (see Dalrymple and Nikolaeva 2011 for overview)
- ◆ DOM is found for example in Hungarian; Turkish; Hindi...

What is expressed by DOM in OJ is the property of **Specificity**.

Specificity

Definite noun phrases are specific:

- the boy in my class is tall: specific

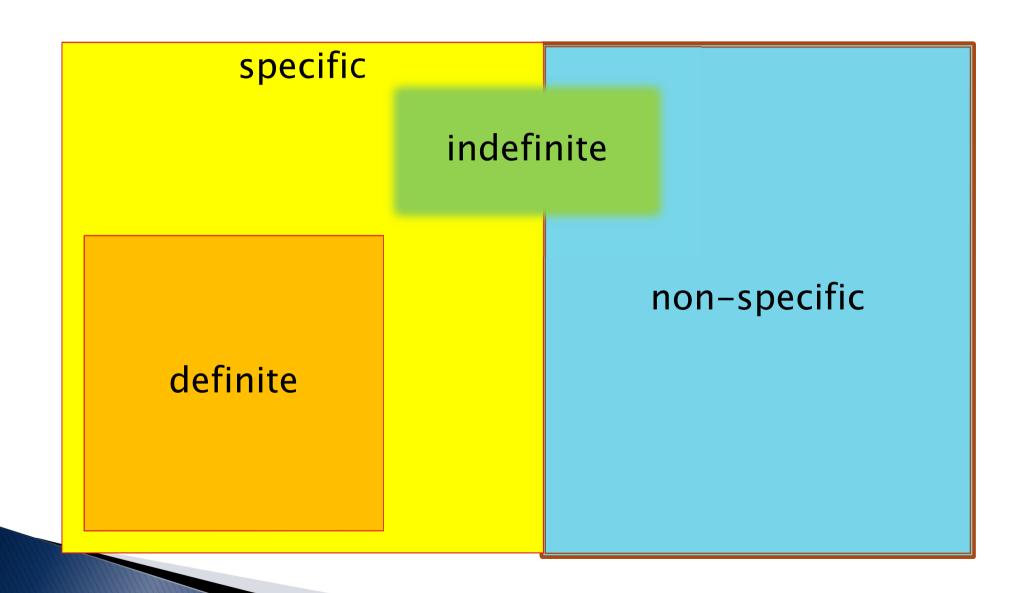
Indefinite noun phrases can be specific or non-specific

- <u>a boy in my class</u> is tall: **specific**
- <u>a boy</u> got sick: **specific** or **non-specific**
- there might be <u>monsters</u> in the closet: **non-specific**

Definite, indefinite specific, non-specific

- Specificity is the association of an NP with some retrievable (either definite or presupposed) entity in the domain of discourse. Another word for this type of specificity is "discourse-linking" (D-linking) or "anchoring": *a man on the bus*.
- Accordingly, definiteness is just a special case of specificity: all definite NPs are specific: *the man on the bus*
- Indefinite NPs can be either specific or non-specific. *He has developed a habit.*
- Non-specific NPs can be associated with indefinite sets: *I ate some kind of mushroom*; *She found a child's lunchbox*, etc.

Definite, indefinite specific, non-specific



Observations

- 1. Accusative marked objects are specific
- 2. Non-specific objects are not accusative marked
- 3. Some specific objects are not accusative marked

Definite reference

(3) 吾君尔 戯奴者戀良思 給有

wa ga kimi ni wake pa kwopu rasi **tabari-taru**

I GEN lord DAT I TOP yearn seem **bestow-STAT.ADN**

茅花乎雖喫 弥瘦尓夜須

tubana wo pamedo yase ni yasu

bloodgrass ACC eat, though waste.away

"It seems I am in love with my lord. Though I eat **the bloodgrass flowers you sent me**, I only grow thinner." (MYS.8.1462)

Non-specific reference

(4) 宇利波米婆 胡藤母意母保由

uri pameba kwo-domo omopoyu

melon eat children come.to.mind

久利波米婆 麻斯提斯能波由

kuri pameba masite sinwopa-yu

chestnuts eat surpass admire-PASS.

"When I eat **melon**, my children come to mind. When I eat **chestnuts**, they are even more dear." (MYS.5.802)

Interpretation

Non-specific objects are not accusative marked

Specific objects are accusative marked;

however, in some contexts the accusative particle can be dropped, and in some contexts it must be dropped.

Methodological problems

- ▶ 1) There are no unambiguous ways of marking nonspecificity on NPs in Old Japanese.
 - Accordingly we can't demonstrate complementary distribution between accusative case marking and markers of nonspecificity.
- ▶ 2) Unmarked object NPs in the OCOJ are not marked for grammatical role.
 - Accordingly a comprehensive survey of object marking in OJ is presently out of reach.

Strategy

- 1) Identify a subset of the corpus where
 - a) other things being equal, an object NP is likely to have a non-specific interpretation, and
 - b) DOM is attested.
- 2) Investigate the semantic contribution of accusative case marking.
- 3) We predict a semantic contrast corresponding with case marking for these NPs: Accusative case marked object NPs will be specific, and unmarked object NPs will be non-specific.

The semantic contribution of DOM

- ▶ Some NPs are inherently definite, e.g.:
 - Pronouns
 - Proper nouns
 - Relational nouns
 - Unique entities
- Most NPs have definiteness determined by context (independent of DOM), e.g.:
 - NPs denoting previously mentioned entities
 - NPs denoting entities present in the speech situation
- Some NPs are normally non-specific, e.g.:
 - NPs associated with Floating Quantifiers
 - NPs headed by or modified by WH-words (excluding 'which')

The semantic contribution of DOM

- Using the OCOJ we examined:
 - NPs associated with FQs
 - NPs headed by or modified by WH-words
 - 1. In some instances we find textual matter (or contextual clues, etc.) that indicates a specific interpretation for such NPs.
 - 2. We find a correspondence between accusative marking and specific interpretation for such NPs.
 - 3. We find NPs with unambiguously non-specific interpretations to be bare.

Floating Quantifiers

- The interpretation of FQs depends on the reference of the host noun from which they are floated.
- If the host noun is specific, the FQ takes either a partitive or a cardinal-universal interpretation:

rei.no panda ga ni-too mesu da.

the panda NOM 2-animal female COP

"Two of the aforementioned pandas are female."

If the host noun is non-specific the FQ takes a cardinality interpretation:

tikurin kara panda ga ni-too detekita

bamboo.grove from panda NOM **2-animal** came.out

"Two pandas came out of the bamboo grove."

Specific NP hosts FQ

Here the FQ is interpreted as cardinal-universal.

(5)	…梓弓	弓腹振起	志乃岐羽矣
	adusayumi	yubara puri-okosi	sinokipa wo
	catalpa.bow	bow.belly swing-raise	arrow ACC

二手狭	離兼	人斯悔
puta-tu ta-basami	panati-kye-mu	pito si kuti-wosi
two-thing hand-pinch	loose-PST-CNJ	person RES mouth-

"Deplorable, the person who (...) raised a bow, pinched **both those arrows,** and shot them away!" (MYS.13.3302)

Non-specific NP hosts FQ

Here the FQ is interpreted as just cardinal.

那莵務始能 (6) natumusi no summer.insect GEN

譬務始能虚呂望 pimusi no koromo silkworm GEN robe

赴多幣枳低 puta-pye kite two-layer wear

介区瀰夜襄利破 kakumi-yadari pa hide-shelter TOP

阿珥予区望阿羅儒 ani yo-ku mo ara-zu at.all good ETOP be-not

"A summer moth's coccooning wearing two silk-worms' robes is not at all acceptable." (NSK.49)

Specific NP hosts FQ

(7) 上瀬尓

鵜矣八頭漬

kami <u>tu</u> se ni

u wo ya-<u>tu</u> kaduke

upper GEN stream DAT

cormorant ACC eight-thing make.dive

下瀬尓

鵜矣八 頭漬

simo <u>tu</u> se ni

u wo ya-tu kaduke

lower GEN stream DAT

cormorant ACC eight-thing make.dive

"...making all eight of my cormorants dive in the upper reaches, making all eight of my cormorants dive in the lower reaches..." (MYS.13.3330)

Non-specific NP hosts FQ

(8) 每年尔 鮎之走婆 左伎多河 tosi no pa ni ayu si pasiraba sakitakapa every year sweetfish RES run Sakita River

闖人頭可頭氣氐河瀬多頭袮牟u ya-tukaduketekapase tadune-mucormorant eight-thingmake.diveriver.stream search

"Each year when the sweetfish run, making many cormorants dive, we shall scour rivers and streams." (MYS.19.4158)

DOM with WH-NPs

When a normally non-specific WH-word appears as a NP head or a NP modifier, the resulting NP is interpreted as non-specific unless it accusative marked:

tare no tuma
who GEN spouse
"whose spouse" →

who GEN spouse ACC

"the spouse of which person"

When a normally specific WH-word (*idure* 'which') appears as a NP head or a NP modifier, that NP must be interpreted as specific.

DOM and WH-words

We looked exhaustively at NPs involving the three following WH- words:

nani 'what' (indefinite, normally non-specific)

ta, tare 'who' (indefinite, normally non-specific)

idure 'which' (indefinite, always specific)

- ▶ 95 examples with *ta* or *tare* as either an NP head or an NP complement.
- ▶ 10 as objects
 - 6 are specific and have accusative marking
 - 4 are non-specific and have no accusative marking

Here *ta* 'who' appears as an NP complement, but the reference is specific ('who among those in the capital') and the object NP is marked with *wo*.

(9) 應還 時者成来 京師尓而 kapyeru be-ku toki pa nari-kyeri miyakwo nite return ought time TOP becomecapital COP

誰手本乎可吾将枕ta ga tamoto wo kawa ga makuraka-muwho GEN sleeve ACC QI GEN lie.upon-shall

"The time has come for us to return. In the capital, **the sleeve of** which person shall I use as my pillow?" (MYS.3.439)

Here *ta* 'who' appears as an NP head, but again the reference is specific ('who out of those who love me') so the object NP is *ACC-marked*.

(10) 眉根掻 誰乎香將見跡

maywone kaki **tare wo ka** mi-mu to

eyebrow scratch who ACC Q see-shall that

思乍

omopitutu

think

氣長戀之

ke-naga-ku kwopwi-si

days-long yearn-SPAST,AND

妹尔相鴨

imo ni ap-yeru kamo

beloved DAT meet-STAT SFP

"Scratching my eyebrow, thinking, 'Which person am I about to see?,' here I am meeting my beloved whom I have longed for day in and day out!" (MYS.11.2614b)

Here *ta* 'who' appears as an NP complement, the reference is non-specific ('who in the world'), and the object NP is bare.

都久波尼爾阿波牟等伊比志古波tukupane niapa-mu toipi-si kwo paTsukuba Peak at meet-would that said girl TOP

多賀己等岐気波加弥尼阿波巢気牟也ta ga koto kikeba kami-ne apa-zu-kye-muwho GEN word heard Qsleep meet-not-must.have

"The girl who said we would meet on Tsukuba Peak, because she heard **whose words** must it have been that she won't come to sleep with me?" (FK.2)

DOM with WH-NPs: nani 'what'

- ▶ 99 examples with *nani* as either an NP head or an NP complement.
- ▶ 11 appear in object NPs
 - 8 are specific and have accusative marking
 - 3 are non-specific and have no accusative marking

DOM with WH-NPs: nani 'what'

Here *nani* 'what' appears as an NP head, but the reference is specific ('which of the usual beach souvenirs') so the object NP is accusative marked.

(12)	塩干去者	玉藻苅蔵	家妹之
	sipo pwi-naba	tamamo kari-tumye	ipye no imo ga
	tide ebb-if	jewelweed cut-pile	home's beloved

濱褁乞者	何矣	示
pamadutwo kopaba	nani wo	simyesa-mu
beach.souvenir beg.if	what ACC	proffer-shall

"When the tide goes out, cut and pile up some jewel-seaweed. If my darling at home asks for a beach souvenir, **which** (of those) shall we proffer?" (**MYS.3.360**)

DOM with WH-NPs: nani 'what'

Here *nani* 'what' appears as an NP complement, and the reference is non-specific ('what kind of inanity'), so the object NP is bare.

(13)小豆奈九何狂言今更adukina-kunani no tapakotoimasara-nipointlesswhat GEN inanitybelated-COP

小童言為流 老人二四手
warapagoto suru oipito nisite
babbling do old.person being

"Pointlessly, what sort of inanity, at this late date, are (you) babbling, in spite of (your) being old?" (MYS.11.2582)

DOM with WH-NPs: idure 'which'

- ▶ 14 examples in the OCOJ
- ▶ 5 are used in object NPs:
 - 4 are specific ('which') and has accusative marking
 - 1 is non-specific and has no accusative marking.

DOM with WH-NPs: idure 'which'

Here *idure* 'which' modifies an NP head, and the resulting NP is specific and accusative marked.

(14) 阿米都之乃

ametusi no

heaven.earth GEN

以都例乃可美乎
idure no kami wo
which GEN god ACC

以乃良波加 inoraba ka pray.if Q

有都久之波波爾
utukusi papa ni
adorable mother DAT

麻多己等刀波牟 mata koto-twopa-mu again word-exchange-shall

"If (I) beseech which god of heaven and earth is it that (I) may speak to my dear mother again?" (MYS.20.4392)

WH-word NP complements and non-specific reference: *idure* 'which'

Here *idure* 'which' appears modifying an NP complement, so the reference is non-specific ('a shelter in which village') and the object NP is bare.

(15)	十月	雨間毛不置	零尓西者
	kamunadukwi	amama mo oka-zu	puri-ni-seba
	tenth.month	rain.gap put-not	fall-PERF-PAST.if

誰里之	宿可	借益
idure no satwo no	yadwo ka	kara-masi
which is village GEN	shelter Q	borrow-SUBJNC

"In the tenth month if it had rained without a break, (I) would have borrowed a shelter in which village?" (MYS.12.3214)

DOM and normally indefinite NPs

- ▶ For normally indefinite NPs, DOM can make a crucial difference in the interpretation of the NP
- ▶ For the two types of NPs we examined, the correspondence between accusative marking and specificity was complete.

Applying the hypothesis to underdetermined cases

- We have shown that the hypothesis that accusative marked NPs are specific accounts for a variety of data.
- Now we will show how adding this to our knowledge of the grammar of OJ can enrich our interpretation of texts.

DOM as an aid to interpretation

The verb *motome-* (seek) frequently takes NPs with non-specific reference, but there is nothing else in the context to suggest the object isn't specific except the absence of accusative marking.

(16)	緑兒之	為社乳母者	求云
	midorikwo no	tame koso omo pa	motomu <u>to</u> ipe
	baby GEN	sake FOC wet-nurse	seek that say

乳飲哉君之	於毛	求覧
ti nome ya kimi ga	omo	motomu ramu
milk drink Q lord GEN	wet-nurse	seek must.be

"Though (we) say it's for a child that one seeks a wet-nurse, could it be that my lord seeks a wet-nurse because he drinks milk?" (MYS.12.2925)

DOM as an aid to interpretation

Assuming specific reference for accusative marked NPs, the interpretation for (17) below changes:

(17)	春之在者	妻乎	求等	鴬之
	paru sareba	tuma wo	motomu to	ugupisu no
	Spring come	spouse ACC	seek to	warbler GEN

木末乎傳	鳴乍	本名
konure wo tutapi	nakitutu	motona
branch ACC transit	cry	in.vain

"When Spring comes, the warbler hops between the branches to find **its mate**, but alas, in vain." (MYS.10.1826)

DOM as an aid to interpretation

Accusative marked objects are specific.

(18) 験無 物乎不念者 一坏乃
sirusi na-ki mono wo omopa-zu pa pito-tuki no

impact none thing ACC think-not TOP one-cup GEN

濁酒乎 可飲有良師

nigor-eru sake wo nomu be-ku aru rasi

cloudy wine ACC drink should seem

"Rather than worrying about **this thing which has no impact**, it seems better to drink **this cup of cloudy wine**." (MYS.3.338)

Differential Object Marking in OJ

Conclusion

Non-specific objects are not accusative marked

Specific objects are accusative marked;

however, in some contexts the accusative particle can be dropped, and in some contexts it must be dropped.

Accusative case drop

We found 46 object NPs containing demonstrative *ko* at some structural level. All are specific, and many of them are definite.

Case marked: 23

Case dropped: 13

10 adjacent to the verb

10 in main clauses

0 denoting sentient entities

0 preceding the subject NP

Accusative case drop

Proximal demonstrative ko 'this' in object NPs:

() 此山乎 牛掃神之 従夾

ko no yama wo usipaku kamwi no mukasi ywori

不禁行事叙

isame-nu waza zo

"This is a dance that from old times the god who owns **this mountain** doesn't forbid." (MYS.9.1759)

() 大殿之 此廻之 雪 莫踏祢

opo-tono no ko no motopori no yuki na-pumi-sone

"Don't step on **the snow in this area around the great lord**" (MYS.19.4227)

Accusative case drop

Some factors which contribute to allowing or disallowing drop of the accusative case particle on specific objects:

- Clause type: main clause types tend to allow accusative drop, while others do not.
- Lexical properties:
 - NPs with WH-words, NPs associated with FQs
 - Sentience
 - *mat* 'await' idiosyncratically allows accusative drop, overriding other factors

Accusative case drop: Clause type

- In clauses where the predicate is in the Adnominal form (and to a large extent in Conditional, Provisional, and Nominal clauses) in OJ, specific objects are frequently accusative case marked.
- In some types of main clause (Conclusive, Imperative, Optative, Exclamatory, Negative Conjectural) accusative case on specific objects are frequently dropped.

Accusative case drop: Lexical properties

For WH-words and NPs associated with FQs with specific reference, case drop does not occur.

Sentience: When a 1st or 2nd person pronoun comprises an object NP, that NP is regularly accusative marked:

- wa, ware 'I'
- na, nare 'you

mat- 'wait'

Idiosyncratically, and overriding other rules, the verb *mat-* 'await' can take unmarked definite objects:

(19)	久堅之	天河津尓	舟泛而
	pisakata no	ama <u>no</u> kapatu ni	pune ukete
	distant COP	heaven GEN ford DAT	boat float

君	待夜等者	不明毛有寐鹿
kimi	matu ywo-ra pa	ake-zu mo ara-nu ka
lord	await night TOP	dawn ETOP be-not Q

"This night when I await **my lord** floating a boat in the shallow of the river of far-off heaven, will it never dawn?" (MYS.10.2070)

mat- 'wait'

(20) 奴婆多麻能 欲和多流都奇乎 伊久欲布等 nubatama no ywo wataru tukwi wo ikuywo pu to

jewel COP night traverse moon ACC how.many transpire that

余美都追伊毛波和礼麻都良牟曾yomitutu imo pawarematu ramu socounting beloved TOPmeawait must.be FOC

"Measuring the moon that crosses the jewel-black night by how many nights pass, my beloved, no doubt (she) awaits **me**." (MYS.18.4072)

Diachronic perspective

At some point post-OJ, DOM is discontinued, and specificity is no longer a factor on whether objects get accusative case marked.

Follow-up in EMJ

▶ We examined object NPs associated with FQs in Early Middle Japanese using 国立国語研究所「日本語歴史コーパス」 and the 中納言 search application.

We found 80 object NPs associated with adverbial FQs in the Heian corpus.

Of these, 81 object NPs, 8 were accusative case marked.

Accusative case marked object with a discourse link to a definite NP

…と思ひやり深く心しらひて、むすめの弁といふを呼び出でて、「これ忍びて参らせたまへ」とて、香壺の箱を一つさし入れたり。「たしかに御枕上に参らすべき祝ひの物にはべる。あなかしこ、あだにな」と言へば、あやしと …

(源氏物語,葵)

Accusative case marked object with a discourse link to a definite NP

...、のこり見出でたる。さて、心おとりするやうもありかし。 人の破り捨てたる文を継ぎて見るに、同じつづきをあ またくだり見つづけたる。 いかならむと思ふ夢を見 て、おそろしと胸つぶるるに、ことにもあらず合はせな したる、...

(枕草子,うれしきもの)

Accusative case marked object with apparently non-specific reference

…からうじて起きあがりたまへるを見れば、風いと重き 人にて、腹いとふくれ、こなたかなたの目には、李を二 っ つけたるやうなり。これを見たてまつりてぞ、国の 司も、ほほゑみたる。

(竹取物語)

Non-specific?

三河の国八橋といふ所にいたりぬ。そこを八橋といひけるは、水ゆく河のくもでなれば、橋を八 つ わたせるによりてなむ、八橋といひける。

(伊勢物語)

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