Metaphorical Manipulation of Classifiers in Japanese

Tsutomu SAKAMOTO

0. Introduction

The study of classifiers has been less developed than other topics in linguistics. The reason for this underdevelopment might come from the fact that almost no Indo-European languages employ classifier systems, as is mentioned by Lyons (1977: 460). However, there seems to be another more important reason for this state of affairs. That is, classifier systems have been regarded as redundant, dispensable, and fixed devices used to refer to objects more clearly.

This paper aims to direct attention to how classifiers perform a vital function in a language system by focusing on their manipulated usage. The language discussed in this paper is Japanese, which is a so-called "numeral classifier language" according to Allan (1977: 286), because Japanese classifiers have to be accompanied with numerals. Thus, "three teachers" and "three dogs" in Japanese, would be said as follows (CL=classifier, GEN=genitive):

1. san-nin no sensei
   three-CL GEN teacher
   (three teachers)

2. san-biki no inu
   three-CL GEN dog
   (three dogs)

Here, san is a numeral which means "three". The classifiers nin and biki are usually associated with "a human being" and "an animal" respectively. Hereafter, a classifier is referred to as "CL" in examples. No is a genitive particle which combines the numeral plus classifier with a noun.

Since a specific type of classifier is supposed to be associated with a specific type of object, the collocation between a noun and a classifier is regarded as fixed. For example, in the following sentence (NOM=nominative):

3. San-nin ga kita.
   three-CL NOM came

we can infer that the subject of this sentence is at least a human being, even if there is no noun which explicitly indicates a person.

However, we can manipulate this static association and create a metaphorical expression. For example:
(4) San-biki no sensei ga kita.
three-CL GEN teacher NOM came

Here, the animal classifier biki is associated with a human noun sensei (teacher). Thus, the most likely interpretation of this sentence would be as follows:

(5) Three animal-like teachers came.

In order to account for this kind of usage, it will be argued that we need to take into consideration metaphorical transfer among categories associated with classifiers. The discussion will go on further to what, and how, information is conveyed by this metaphorical manipulation.

It is, of course, not clear whether this kind of deviance in use of classifiers really does require metaphorical interpretation or not. However, we do not know precisely what metaphor is either\(^4\). We hope here to shed light on some aspect of metaphor by considering the usage of classifiers\(^4\).

1. General Characteristics of Classifiers

Let us consider the similarities and differences in the counting systems of English and Japanese. In English (and most Indo-European languages), there are two ways of counting objects. One is simply to put a numeral in front of that object, e.g. "three teachers", "two dogs", "one pencil", and so on. The other is to use a specific word, which classifies an object into some category, together with a numeral, e.g. "three sheets of paper", "two flocks of sheep", "a bottle of whisky", and so on. Namely, countable and non-countable (mass or collective) nouns are counted differently in English. Japanese (and most Asian languages) employs counting devices similar to the latter one (the non-countable case) in English. Things are classified into some category basically according to their shape or genus. Therefore, a specific type of classifier is always associated with a specific type of noun when counting things. Let us examine some NP constructions in both languages:

(6) a. san-mai no kami
three-CL GEN paper
b. three sheets of paper
(7) a. san-nin no sensei
three-CL GEN teacher
b. *three persons of teacher
(8) a. *san sensei
three teacher
b. three teachers

Here, the classifier mai is usually associated with "a flat thing such as paper, boards, plates, etc.". When we look at (6a) and (6b), we notice that both Japanese and English employ almost the same device for counting non-countable objects. In order to count a non-countable object, we need some measuring method. This method is changeable according to how we measure that object. Thus, paper does not
have to be a *sheet,* e.g. there are “three *bundles* of paper”, “three *boxes* of paper”, and so on. It is very natural for languages to develop their own measuring systems for intrinsically unmeasurable objects. For example, distance can be measured in “meters”, “inches”, “feet”, “yards”, or “miles”. These measuring systems are not so language specific as culture bounded⁴¹.

The striking example is (7a), which shows a kind of redundancy. In the lexicon, *sensei* (teacher) would be listed as “human”, thus it would not be necessary to further specify “human” again with the classifier⁴². We might expect that one could simply attach a numeral to this noun as in (8a). However, this expectation is totally wrong in Japanese. In English, it is ungrammatical to attach a classifying noun to a countable noun as in (7b), whereas in Japanese it is ungrammatical not to use a classifier with a countable noun as in (8a).

Japanese classifiers might have originally been counting nouns such as *sheet, flock, bottle* in English. These counting nouns that were developed for non-countable nouns would have been extended to countable nouns, and then been established as classifiers. However, even the classifiers used for non-countable nouns in Japanese have different characteristics from counting nouns such as *sheet, flock, bottle,* etc. in English. Let us consider two evidences for supporting the claim that classifiers in Japanese and classifying words in English are different in their properties.

First, a classifier is a bound morpheme in a Bloomfieldian sense⁴³. It cannot be a constituent by itself, i.e. it has to be attached to some free morpheme. For instance, the following sentence is ungrammatical (ACC=accusative):

(9) *Kare ga sono akai mai o katta.
   He NOM that red sheet ACC bought

However, the literal translation of (9) in English is perfectly well-formed as follows:

(10) He bought that red *sheet.*

The difference between (9) and (10) is that *mai* in (9) is a bound morpheme classifier and *sheet* in (10) is a free morpheme⁴⁴.

Second, notice that a plural suffix is attached to *sheets,* and not to *paper* in (6b)⁴⁵. In Japanese, a plural morpheme is optional and is attached only to an animate noun. If we use a plural suffix in (7a), it would result in the following construction (PL=plural):

(11) san-nin no sensei-tati
   three-CL GEN teacher-PL
   (three teachers)

Now we can represent the difference between (6b) and (11) as follows (NP=noun phrase, PP=prepositional phrase, N=noun, P=preposition, NU=numeral; CP=classifier phrase, Part P=particle phrase, Part=particle):
(6b) [three sheet]-s of paper

```
NP
  NP-PL(s)
    NU    N    PP
      three    sheet    of
```


(11) [san-nin no sensei]-tati

```
NP-PL(tati)
  PP
    CP
      NU    CL
        san    nin
```

From the above considerations, we would conclude that classifiers in Japanese have different grammatical status from classifying words in English\(^{11}\). Different languages have different devices to express various things. NP constructions in Japanese require appropriate classifiers, on the other hand, those of English do not. Although one can use a specific word to classify a noun in English, this is not a core or basic device and fundamentally different from the system of classifiers in Japanese. This difference is not like that by which Eskimo differs from English in having a lot of words to distinguish various types of snow, which cannot be found in other languages, because this in Eskimo is not a matter of syntax but lexicon.

When a classifier is juxtaposed with a numeral, there can be observed some phonological and morphological alternations, which are not to be discussed in this paper (cf. Alfonso 1966: 262–70). However, the syntactic relations between nouns, numerals, and classifiers need to be paid attention to some extent. After a brief discussion concerning syntactic problems, metaphorically manipulated usage of classifiers will be discussed.

2. Some Syntactic Aspects of Classifiers

We must be careful when we say that a classifier is an obligatory element in Japanese noun constructions. For one thing, every noun can occur without numerals. If there is no numeral, there appears no classifier at all. Furthermore, some nouns can be combined with a numeral without an accompanying classifier. Thus, only some sorts of nouns obligatorily require a classifier when a numeral is attached to them. In some cases, a noun accompanying a numeral can be used with or without a classifier. This
will be represented as follows:

(i) without NU

(ii) with NU

(iii) with CL

(iv) without CL

(v) with or without CL

Let us consider the following examples of these possible cases (DAT=dative):

(12) Tori ga tonde-iru. (i)
    bird NOM fly-ing
    (A bird is flying. or Birds are flying.)

(13) Iti-wa no tori ga tonde-iru. (iii)
    one-CL GEN bird NOM fly-ing
    (One bird is flying.)

(14) Kare ni hito me ai-tai. (iv)
    he DAT one eye meet-wish
    (I wish to have a chance of meeting him.)

(15) a. Hito-tu no sigoto ga owatta. (v)
    one-CL GEN task NOM finished
    (One task has been finished.)

b. Hito sigoto ga owatta. (v)
    one task NOM finished
    (A task has been finished.)

The main difference between (12) and (13) is the degree of specification. The subject of sentence (12) can be singular or plural, i.e. any number of birds. On the other hand, the number of birds in (13) is specified as one. Notice that the number specification itself is performed by the numeral. However, it is impossible to say *iti tori (one bird), *ni tori (two birds), . . . etc. Namely, the noun tori requires a classifier when it is enumerated. Examples such as (14) are mostly restricted to idiomatic expressions. The noun sigoto in (15a) is more clearly organized and divided than that in (15b). Although the difference is subtle, a native speaker will never confuse them.

We are, of course, interested in examples such as (13), which is the typical use of a classifier. Two other sentences, which have approximately the same meaning as (13), can be constructed as follows (TOP=topic marker):

(16) Tori no iti-wa ga tonde-iru.
    bird GEN one-CL NOM fly-ing
    (One of the birds is flying.)
(17) a. Tori ga iti-wa tonde-iru.
   bird NOM one-CL fly-ing
   (A bird is flying in being one (alone).)

   b. Tori wa iti-wa tonde-iru.
   bird TOP one-CL fly-ing
   (As for a bird, it is flying alone.)

The numeral-classifier combinatum (hereafter, this is abbreviated as “NU-CL”) can float to the position after the nominative marker as in (17a). It can also move to the position after the topic marker wa as in (17b). Kuno (1973: 26) argues that this combinatum is basically adverbal. To put it more precisely, we will claim that the combinatum functions as a quantifier. For example, a quantifier takusan (many) can replace iti-wa in (13), (16), and (17a, b). However, an adverb tanosiku (merrily) can only replace iti-wa in (17a, b), but not in (13) and (16). Thus, the floating of the “NU-CL” combinatum can be regarded an instance of “Quantifier Floating”.

Allan (1977: 288) claims that Japanese allows only the “Noun-Quantifier-Classifier” combination. The above observation reveals that his claim oversimplifies the issue. Moreover, so-called quantifiers (e.g. many, all, every, etc.) should be distinguished from numerals (e.g. one, two, three, etc.). Japanese has a numeral classifier system in that a classifier is necessarily combined with a numeral. This “NU-CL” combinatum functions like a quantifier. Thus, a classifier can take place in at least the following three constructions:

   (i) NU-CL (no) N
   (ii) N (no) NU-CL
   (iii) N ga/wa NU-CL

One more thing has to be mentioned here. That is, the “NU-CL” combinatum is sometimes used as an anaphor. Look at the following example (Q=question marker):

(18) Tureno otoko ga kanoz yo-no nan dearu ka, muron Shimamura no siru
    accompanying man NOM she-GEN what is Q of course NOM know
    hazu wa nak-kata. Futa-ri no sigusa wa fuufu zimite ita keredomo,
    reason TOP not-past Two-CL GEN gesture TOP couple like was although
    (Of course, there was no reason for Shimamura to know what relationship the accompanying
    man has with her. Although their gesture seemed to indicate that they were a couple,)
    —Kawabata (1947: 7)

Here, the combinatum futa-ri anaphorically refers to otoko (man) and kanoz yo (she), as can be seen in the English translation where this combinatum is translated as their.

We have seen some syntactic aspects of classifiers in this section. In the next section, we will consider some examples of the manipulated usage of classifiers.
3. Deviant Use of Classifiers

As we have seen in the previous sections, a specific type of classifier is usually supposed to be associated with a specific type of noun. Therefore, if a classifier is associated with a noun with which it is not supposed to be associated, it causes a deviant expression. Let us consider the following sentences:

(19) San-nin no sensei ga kita.
    three-CL GEN teacher NOM came
    (Three teachers came.)

(20) San-biki no inu ga kita.
    three-CL GEN dog NOM came
    (Three dogs came.)

(21) San-nin no inu ga kita.
    three-CL GEN dog NOM came
    (?Three human-like dogs came.)

(22) San-biki no sensei ga kita.
    three-CL GEN teacher NOM came
    (?Three animal-like teachers came.)

The association between a classifier and a noun in (19) and (20) are normal ones, i.e. they are unmarked expressions in a sense. In other words, each classifier (nin and biki) agrees with the associated noun (sensei and inu) at some level of representation. On the other hand, (21) and (22) are marked ones. The association in (21) is the one between a human classifier and an animal noun. The association in (22) is the one between an animal classifier and a human noun. A language that does not use a classifier system such as English would not suffer from this kind of deviance.

The above examples are theoretically possible combinations between classifiers and nouns. Here, I would like to present some actual examples relevant to our discussion. These examples are cited from modern Japanese novels whose styles are mainly Fairy Tale, Science Fiction, Folklore, and so on. Namely, they describe an unusual world in a sense. First, consider the following passage from a novel (LOC=locative):

(23) Ore wa Heikiti ni nuigurumi no katate o patto hirogeru yoo-ni itta.
    I TOP DAT dummy GEN one hand ACC nimbly open so that said
    "Su, suruto sono naka ni go-nin mo?"
    Seikakuni wa "go-nin" de-wa-naku,
    th, then that inside LOC five-CL as many as correctly TOP five-CL is-TOP-not
    "go-hiki" dearu.
    five-CL is

Ga sikasi, sigusa ya miburi dake-de "nin" to "hiki" o kubetsusite miseru no wa
but however, action and gesture only-by CL and CL ACC distinguish show to TOP
The extraction of this passage from the context does not help us to understand what is going on here. We need background knowledge. The hero of this story is a dog who understands the speech of human beings. The narrator of this story is also the hero (=the dog) who describes himself as ore (I=first person singular). He and his four friends together wear a bear costume. When he was asked to tell how many people were in the costume, he tried to answer the question by opening one hand, i.e. five fingers.

The two classifiers, i.e. nin and hiki, have been translated here into people and dog respectively. This translation, of course, does not convey the exact meaning of the original Japanese. If we translate “go-nin” and “go-hiki” literally, we get: “five entities classified as human being” and “five entities classified as animal”.

What is interesting in this example is that the author makes the distinction between “human being” and “animal” by using classifiers, although the hero understands the speech of human beings and also narrates the story using the language of human beings.

The next examples show that the same object can be classified differently according to some condition:

(24) Oni-domo futa-ri ga hasitte-iku.
    devil-PL two-CL NOM run-go
    (Two devils are running away.)
    —Nishimoto (1980: 37)

(25) Ip-piki no ookina oni ga nete-ite, . . .
    one-CL GEN huge devil NOM sleep-ing
    (One huge devil is sleeping, . . . )
    —Tsubota (1976: 280)

In these examples, the same object oni (devil) is classified as “human” in (24) and “animal” in (25). It is sometimes observed in a classifier language that the same object is, or can be, classified differently. In that case, the difference in classifier reflects the attitudes of the user of that classifier toward the object. The example (24) is cited from a story in which the devil is the hero, whereas in (25) the devil is not the hero of the story. The authors of these two stories apparently have different attitude towards the same object oni (devil).

The third example shows deviance between a classifier and a classified object as follows (COMP= complementizer, HO= honorific):
Mukasi, mukasi no, oo-mukasi, kitutuki to suzume wa, kyooodai datta old times, old times GEN, far-old times woodpecker and sparrow TOP brother was to-yuu koto desu.
COMP fact is
Sosite, futa-ri wa, zyooka-mati e go-hookoo ni itte imasita.
and two-CL TOP castle-town LOC HO-apprentice to go was
(Once upon a time, it was said that a woodpecker and a sparrow were brothers. And, they were apprenticed in a castle-town.)
—Tsubota (1976: 228)

In this example, the object kitutuki (woodpecker) and suzume (sparrow) are anaphorically referred to by futa-ri (two entities classified as human being). That is, a noun which is inherently a bird is associated with a classifier that is essentially a human classifier. This is basically the same as the example (21), because in both cases a human classifier (nin or ri) is associated with a non-human object (dog or bird).

So far we have seen some possible combinations of classifiers and nouns, and three types of usage of classifiers. That is, the first one shows the adherence to the proper or standard usage of classifiers. The second one reveals that there is a discrepancy or ambiguity in the usage of some classifiers. The last one exhibits clear deviance between a classifier and a classified object.

4. The Semantics of Classifiers

In a non-classifier language, deviance sometimes may result from incompatibility between a noun and a predicate. For instance:

(27) Three pencils are laughing.

Ricoeur (1978: 138–143) mentions that “deviance” may be a deviance from “degree zero”, one candidate of which is scientific language. However, this concept of “degree zero” is vague and has to be clarified. Furthermore, we need to explain why and how an expression becomes deviant. Ricoeur (ibid., pp. 157–172) suggests, then, decomposition of meaning to account for deviance. He says that a word can be decomposed into “semes”, which are something like “distinctive features” in phonological theory.

In a theoretical framework developed in the generative grammar, the same idea as “seme” has been adopted with the name of “semantic feature”. The first theoretical foundation was established by Katz and Fodor (1963) and Katz and Postal (1964). This idea of the decomposition of meaning has been adopted and further developed to account for metaphor. The fully developed theory of this idea for the problem of metaphor will be found in Levin (1977).

The idea of “semantic feature” will be useful, effective, and necessary when we try to explain certain phenomena concerning meaning. For example, the anomaly of the sentence (27) may be accounted for as follows: although the predicate are laughing has a selectional feature that requires a (+Human) subject, the subject noun pencil has an inherent feature (—Human). This incompatibility be-
tween features results in deviance. We can see this kind of argument already in Chomsky (1965).

Levin (1977) claims that the transfer of features is bidirectional, and has three types: disjunction, conjunction, and displacement. Thus, there are six ($2 \times 3 = 6$) construal modes. Levin gives us the six possible interpretations of the sentence “The stone died” as follows (ibid., p. 48):

(28) a. N ← V; disjunction: The natural physical object died.
   b. N ← V; conjunction: The stone (as if human) died.
   c. N → V; disjunction: The stone ceased to exist.
   d. N → V; conjunction: The stone died (as though die were predicable of objects jointly human and mineral).
   e. N ← V; displacement: The dolt died.
   f. N → V; displacement: The stone disintegrated.

Let us try to explain the oddity of (21) and (22) by adopting this “feature analysis” method. The examples are repeated below:

(21) San-nin no inu ga kita.
(22) San-biki no sensei ga kita.

Levin’s analysis deals with the feature transfer between a noun and a verb (predicate). In our case, we have to account for the feature transfer between a noun and a classifier. Therefore, suppose that *inu* (dog) and *sensei* (teacher) have the inherent features (+Animal) and (+Human) respectively. Furthermore, *biki* and *nin* will be supposed to have classifier features such as /+Animal/ and /+Human/ respectively. Hereafter, inherent features will be indicated with a parenthesis and classifier features with a slash.

Now, in (21), if the classifier feature /+Human/ is transferred to the noun *inu* which has the inherent feature (+Animal), i.e. “N ← CL”, the three possible construals will be as follows: (i) in disjunctive mode, the least general feature between *nin* and *inu* comes out, or the distinction between them is neutralized. According to Levin (ibid., p. 40), the least general feature shared by (+Human) and (+Animal) is (+Living)\(^4\); (ii) in conjunctive mode, *inu* is a real dog but has some characteristics of a human being, i.e. this mode results in a kind of personification; (iii) in displacement mode, the classifier feature /+Human/ displaces the inherent feature (+Animal). The noun *inu* displaces with other words that have the (+Human) feature, e.g. a detective\(^3\).

When the inherent feature (+Animal) is transferred from the noun *inu* to the classifier *nin*, i.e. “N → CL”, the three possible modes of construal would be as follows: (i) in disjunctive mode, the classifier *nin* may have some broad feature that can be used to enumerate some general entity; (ii) in conjunctive mode, the classifier *nin* can be used for both human and dog, i.e. this mode results in a sort of de-personification of the classifier; (iii) in displacement mode, the inherent feature (+Animal) displaces with the classifier feature /+Human/. Thus, the referent of *inu* is enumerated as a dog despite the human classifier *nin*. Here, all the possible six interpretations of the sentence (21) may be stated as follows:
(29) a. N $\leftarrow$ C; disjunction: Three living things came.
   b. N $\leftarrow$ C; conjunction: Three dogs (as if human) came.
   c. N $\rightarrow$ C; disjunction: Three dogs being classified as general entities came.
   d. N $\rightarrow$ C; conjunction: Three animals came (as though *nin* were used jointly with humans and dogs).
   e. N $\leftarrow$ C; displacement: Three detectives came.
   f. N $\rightarrow$ C; displacement: Three dogs (despite the human classifier) came.

Similarly, in (22), the classifier feature */+Animal/* in *biki* and the inherent feature */+Human/* in *sensei* will interact each other as is discussed above. When the classifier feature is transferred to the noun, or the inherent feature is transferred to the classifier, the disjunctive readings will be the same as the above cases, because disjunction gives the broadest reading that can be drawn from the interaction of the two features: */+Human/* and */+Animal/*, or */+Animal/* and */+Human/*. On the other hand, the conjunctive readings will be contrary to the above cases, that is, personification and depersonification will work in the opposite direction. Displacement readings will also go in the opposite direction to the above cases.

How about the example (26) in which birds are associated with a human classifier? For the sake of argument, let us extract the essential construction in (26). That is, if we construct a sentence in accordance with the pattern of the examples (19)–(22), this example would show the following construction:

(30) Futa-ri no tori ga kita.
    two-CL GEN bird NOM came
    (Two birds came.)

If we replace *inu* with *tori*, we can get almost the same interpretations as in example (21). When the classifier feature */+Human/* is transferred from the classifier *ri* to the noun *tori*, i.e. "N $\rightarrow$ CL", the three possible modes of construal would be as follows: (i) in disjunctive mode, *ri* and *tori* may have some broad feature such as */+Living/* in common; (ii) in conjunctive mode, the referent is really a bird, but has some human characteristics, i.e. this is a kind of personification; (iii) in displacement mode, the classifier feature */+Human/* displaces the inherent feature */+Bird/*. Thus, a certain human noun such as an airplane pilot will come out.

If the inherent feature */+Bird/* is transferred from the noun *tori* to the classifier, i.e. "N $\rightarrow$ CL", the three possible modes of construal would be as follows: (i) in disjunctive mode, the classifier *ri* may have some broad feature that can be used to enumerate some general entity; (ii) in conjunctive mode, the classifier *ri* can be used for both human and bird, i.e. this mode results in a sort of depersonification of the classifier; (iii) in displacement mode, the inherent feature */+Bird/* displaces with the classifier feature */+Human/*. Thus, the referent of *tori* is enumerated as a bird despite the human classifier *ri*.

Thus, the possible six interpretations will be as follows:
(31)  a. N ← C; disjunction: Two living things came.
    b. N ← C; conjunction: Two birds (as if human) came.
    c. N → C; disjunction: Two birds being classified as general entities came.
    d. N → C; conjunction: Two animals came (as though ri were used jointly with humans and birds).
    e. N ← C; displacement: Two airplane pilots came.
    f. N → C; displacement: Two birds (despite the human classifier) came.

As we have seen above, a semantic feature analysis gives us one way of accounting for deviant expressions using classifiers. In spite of its usefulness, however, this analysis has some problems. First of all, what are semantic features? Do they exist at all? Is it legitimate to postulate semantic features? One way to answer these questions would be to discover a grammatically encoded difference between features. For example:

(32) I love the girl whom he mentioned yesterday.

(33) I love the book which he mentioned yesterday.

In English, the correct relative pronoun has to be selected in accordance with the nature of its antecedent. That is, this selection is performed according to the "humaness" of the antecedent. This grammatical phenomenon allows us to say that the difference between who(m) and which is the difference between (+Human) and (−Human). Furthermore, let us consider the following sentences:

(34) Who did you love?

(35) What did you love?

Although both sentences ask the object being loved, that object has to be (+Human) in (34) and (−Human) in (35). The interrogative pronoun who is not only interrogative but also requires that the interrogated object be (+Human). Similarly, what requires that the interrogated object be (−Human).

From the above observation, we can conclude that the semantic feature (+/−Human) plays a role in the grammar of English. Namely, nouns in English are inherently marked as either (+Human) or (−Human). They cannot be both nor neither. These features, (+/−Human), are not only inherent in each noun but also act selectionally, because they require the proper relative or interrogative pronoun according to their features. Therefore, if we give (33) as an answer for (34), it will result in a sort of deviance.

The second problem of semantic feature analysis is that semantic features cannot be exhausted unlike distinctive features in phonology. Although some major features such as (+/−Human), (+/−Animate), (+/−Concrete), etc. may be universally detectable in natural languages, some minor features such as (+/−Liquid), (+/−Flat), (+/−Long), etc. will be very language specific. Metaphoric transfer, in some cases, has something to do with these minor features.

For this problem, we could answer that we can make use of any feature if we need it. For example, we do not necessarily know the complicated mechanism of an automobile, but we can use it as a useful
tool. In other words, we do not care how it works, as long as we can use it.

These two answers to the above problems may be intuitively correct, although they are not empirically proved. The third problem is directly concerned with the empirical validity of the idea of "selectional restrictions". This idea can be seen as a device for discovering an empirical basis for the distinction between "argument" and "non-argument". Namely, a verb has selectional power over its arguments and not over non-arguments. For example, consider the following sentences:

(36) The snow seems to melt.
(37) The girl seems to go.

A sentence including a verb like seem as its main verb does not change its acceptability no matter what the subject noun is. In other words, the surface subject is not an argument of the verb, because this verb does not have selectional restrictions on its surface subject. The selectional relation holds between the surface subject and the embedded verb. Although this seems to be intuitively correct, this intuition is simply re-stated as the acceptability of the sentence. Furthermore, this idea involves an unclear concept of semantic features as discussed above.

In the Government and Binding (GB) theory, therefore, Chomsky (1981) has adopted Theta-Theory instead of "selectional restrictions". Roughly speaking, Theta-Theory claims that a verb assigns theta-roles (agent, patient, goal, and so on) to its internal arguments and the entire predicate assigns a theta-role to its external argument. These assignments are performed at the level of D-structure, and every NP must be assigned one and only one theta-role. For example, consider the following example:

(38) *Time elapsed John.

In this sentence, the verb "elapse" is a so-called "one place" predicate which is supposed to take only an external argument. Therefore, the noun John cannot be assigned any theta-role. Thus, no matter what the theta-role is, this sentence is ruled out as ungrammatical by Theta-Theory.

Basically, Theta-Theory is a device for explaining the grammaticality of a sentence. Thus, it is difficult in the framework of Theta-Theory to account for the difference between the following two sentences:

(39) The man died.
(40) The stone died.

In both sentences, the verb died assigns a theta-role to its external argument (=subject NP, i.e. [NP, S]). There is only one NP, and the verb is a one place predicate which assigns only one theta-role. Therefore, these two sentences are both grammatical. If we say that this verb assigns the theta-role "patient" (or theme), and stone cannot be a patient, we have the same problems as the idea of selectional restrictions has. How can we verify the existence of a theta-role? How many theta-roles are there?

There are two moves that can be drawn from the above discussion. One is to admit the usefulness of semantic feature analysis, and make use of semantic features whenever we need them. The other
is to explore a pragmatic account of deviant expressions. In the following section, we will consider the latter move.

5. The Pragmatics of Classifiers

It is, of course, difficult to distinguish semantic aspects of language from pragmatic ones clearly. In this section, however, we will try to explore some pragmatic account of metaphor by considering three works on pragmatics, i.e. Austin (1962), Searle (1979), and Grice (1975). Austin distinguishes three types of speech act. A locutionary act is an act of saying something. An illocutionary act is an act in saying something, e.g. promising, demanding, warning, etc. A perlocutionary act is an act by saying something, e.g. persuading, annoying, astonishing, etc. Searle developed illocutionary speech act theory, and Grice constructs his theory based on perlocutionary speech act theory.

Searle (1979) distinguishes "speaker (or utterance) meaning" from "sentence (or word) meaning", and claims that the problem of metaphor should be explained in relation to this distinction. He says "... the general form of metaphorical utterance is that a speaker utters a sentence of the form S is P and means metaphorically that S is R." (ibid., p. 98)

Then, he criticizes two existing theories of metaphor, i.e. Comparison Theory and Interaction Theory. According to him, Comparison Theory is supposed to claim that metaphorical utterances involve comparison or similarity between two or more objects. He argues that this theory fails to "distinguish between the claim that the statement of the comparison is part of the meaning, and hence the truth conditions, of the metaphorical statement, and the claim that the statement of the similarity is the principle of inference, or a step in the process of comprehending, on the basis of which speakers produce and hearers understand metaphor." (ibid., pp. 99–100)

His point is that similarity has something to do with comprehension (the production and understanding) of metaphor, but it has nothing to do with truth conditions (meaning). His first argument to show the inadequacy of Comparison Theory is to notice that the two objects to be compared do not necessarily exist. To illustrate this, he proposes to consider the case in which metaphor has a null extension, i.e. no referent. For example, if we say:

(41) Sally is a dragon. (Searle's (11))

that does not entail literally

(42) (∃x)(x is a dragon). (Searle's (12))

If Comparison Theory really involves comparison of two objects as Searle claims, his argument might be true. However, Comparison Theory does not have to compare objects themselves. Levin (1979: 125) correctly points out that "the comparison may very well—and, in the event, probably will—involve properties." That is, we do not care whether "dragons" really exist or not. We understand the utterance "Sally is a dragon" because we understand some properties in common associated with dragons.

When we recall the discussion on "sense" and "reference" by Frege (1952), we can see that Levin's
claim has more validity than Searle's. When we speak a language, we are not talking about reference (object) but about sense (meaning). It does not matter whether or not the object referred to by a speaker really exists in our world.

The next point against Comparison Theory as argued by Searle concerns truth conditions. He says "...often the metaphorical assertion can remain true even though it turns out that the statement of similarity on which the inference to the metaphorical meaning is based is false." (ibid., p. 102) Thus, Searle argues, when we say:

(43) Richard is a gorilla. (Searle's (6) (MET))

to convey the following meaning:

(44) Richard is fierce, nasty, prone to violence, and so forth. (Searle's (6) (PAR))

we rely on the inference based on the following false (ethologically speaking) statement:

(45) Gorillas are fierce, nasty, prone to violence, and so forth. (Searle's (14))

Thus, Searle argues that Comparison Theory cannot be a theory of metaphorical meaning. His argument is correct in that the process of inference is not restricted to meaning. However, it is also true that meaning is not restricted only to truth conditions. As Fodor (1977: 33) writes, if there are only two truth values, i.e. True or False, there are only two meanings. The point is that we need various extra-linguistic information when we construe metaphor. It is, of course, difficult to make a sharp distinction between linguistic and extra-linguistic matters. However, some faculty other than linguistic faculty seems to be necessary to get full understanding of metaphor.

Searle (1979: 99) says that Interaction Theory claims that "metaphor involves a verbal opposition or interaction between two semantic contents, that of the expression used metaphorically, and that of the surrounding literal context." He argues that it is not a necessary condition of being metaphorical to be surrounded by literal context. He gives us an example of "mixed metaphor" as follows:

(46) The bad news congealed into a block of ice. (Searle's (19))

Searle claims that there is no literal context in this case. However, he himself converted the following non-mixed metaphor into the above mixed metaphor:

(47) Sally is a block of ice. (Searle's (4) (MET))

The mixed metaphor (46) can be metaphor only if we are given some contextual information that indicates that "Sally" is referred to by "the bad news". Otherwise, (46) is just a nonsense utterance.

After criticizing Comparison Theory and Interaction Theory, Searle goes back to Comparison Theory again and argues against the "metaphor as a reduced simile" theory. He claims that there are four shortcomings to be pointed out, if metaphor is regarded as simile which merely lacks a word such as "like", "as", etc.

Then, Searle (1979: 113) tries to explain metaphor from the viewpoint of a hearer, that is, "how is it possible for the hearer who hears the utterance S is P to know that the speaker means S is R?" Ac-
According to him, the hearer must go through the following three steps. First, the hearer needs some strategy for determining whether or not he has to seek a metaphorical interpretation of the utterance in the first place. Secondly, when he has decided to look for a metaphorical interpretation, he must have some set of strategies, or principles, for computing the possible values of R, and third, he must have a set of strategies, or principles, for restricting the range of R’s—for deciding which R’s are likely to be the ones the speaker is asserting of S. Finally, Searle proposes eight principles of metaphorical interpretation which will be summarized as follows:

Principle 1:

Things which are P are by definition R. Usually, if the metaphor works, R will be one of the salient defining characteristics of P. (e.g. “Sam is a giant.” = “Sam is big.”)

Principle 2:

Things which are P are contingently R. Again, if the metaphor works, the property R should be a salient or well known property of P things. (e.g. “Sam is a pig.” = “Sam is filthy, gluttonous, sloppy, and so on.”)

Principle 3:

Things which are P are often said or believed to be R, even though both speaker and hearer may know that R is false of P. (e.g. “Richard is a gorilla.” = “Richard is mean, nasty, prone to violence, and so on.”)

Principle 4:

Things which are P are not R, nor are they like R things, nor are they believed to be R, nonetheless it is a fact about our sensibility, whether culturally or naturally determined, that we just do perceive a connection, so that utterances of P are associated in our minds with R properties. (e.g. “Sally is a block of ice.” = “Sally is unemotional.”)

Principle 5:

P things are not like R things, and are not believed to be like R things, nonetheless the condition of being P is like the condition of being R. (e.g. “You have become an aristocrat.”)

Principle 6:

There are cases where P and R are the same or similar in meaning, but where one, usually P, is restricted in its application, and does not literally apply to S. (e.g. “His brain is addled.”)

Principle 7:

The same principles from 1 to 6, but they are applying other syntactic forms than “S is P”, e.g. verb plus predicate adjective. (e.g. “Sam devours books.”)

Principle 8:

Metonymy and synecdoche as special cases of metaphor, i.e. the same principles 1 to 6, apply to them as well. (e.g. “the British monarch” as “the Crown”)
We notice that Principles 1 and 2 are basically the same, that is, both define R as salient characteristics of P. Principles 3 and 4 define R as belief or association. Both Principles 5 and 6 define R as similarity. Principles 7 and 8 are supplemental ones. We would say that these principles are not different from existing theories of metaphor he has criticized.

The examples of the manipulated use of classifiers such as (21), (22), and (26) seem to fall under the category of Principle 1, because the salient characteristics of a classifier are supposed to be R. For example, in “san-biki no sensei”, the salient characteristic of biki is “animalness”. Thus, the speaker means “sensei (teacher) has animalness” (S is R) by “associating sensei with the animal classifier” (S is P). We have not clarified anything about the actual process of the interpretation of this example. We do need some strategy such as the semantic feature transfer discussed in the previous section.

Furthermore, we need to clarify the strategy which leads us to seek a metaphorical interpretation. Searle (1979: 114) mentioned this strategy as the first step toward metaphorical interpretation, but he did not explain it. He suggests that this step may involve some defectiveness such as “obvious falsehood, semantic nonsense, violations of the rules of speech acts, or violations of conversational principles of communication”. As a more elaborated treatment of such defectiveness, we may look at Austin’s notion of the “Violation of Felicity Conditions”. Levinson (1983: 229) summarizes Austin’s felicity conditions as follows:

(48) Felicity Conditions (Levinson’s (4)):

A.  
(i) There must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect.
(ii) The circumstances and persons must be appropriate, as specified in the procedure.

B. The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely.

C. Often, (i) the persons must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intentions, as specified in the procedure, and (ii) if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must so do.

Violations of conditions A and B lead to “misfires”, i.e. the intended actions simply fail to take place. Violations of condition C causes “abuse”, which may not be detected at the time of conversation but will be revealed to be infelicitous or insincere when an action related to that utterance takes place.

Felicity Conditions can be either observed or violated. There is one other possibility, i.e. exploiting or flouting these conditions. Thus, let us turn our attention to Grice’s theory of metaphor for examining that possibility.

Grice (1975) notices that a speaker sometimes suggests something more than the strict meaning of a sentence. He claims that such a suggestion can be explained only when we assume that conversation is governed by a general principle and that both speaker and hearer observe some maxims related to the principle. Grice’s proposal could be summarized as follows:

(49) Co-operative Principle:

Make your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted
purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

(50) Maxim of Quantity:
    (a) Be as informative as necessary.
    (b) Don't be more informative than necessary.

(51) Maxim of Quality:
    (a) Say only what you believe to be true.
    (b) Don't say what you lack evidence for.

(52) Maxim of Relevance:
    Be relevant.

(53) Maxim of Manner:
    (a) Avoid obscurity and ambiguity.
    (b) Be brief and orderly.

A speaker does not have to be cooperative at the superficial level. He can be cooperative at some deeper level. Levinson (1983: 102) gives us the following example:

(54) A: Where's Bill?
    B: There's a yellow VW outside Sue's house. (Levinson's (18))

In this case, Levinson argues, in spite of the superficial failure of cooperation, the speaker effectively conveys that “if Bill has a yellow VW, he may be in Sue's house.” A kind of “inference” has to take place in order to preserve the Co-operative principle. This inference is what is called “Conversational Implicature” by Grice.

Conversational Implicature takes place when a speaker observes the maxims as we have seen above. However, a speaker can deliberately flout or exploit the maxims. Levinson (1983: 147-162) proposes to regard metaphor as a case of maxim exploitation. He points out three problems concerning Grice's suggestion on metaphor. First, the suggestion that metaphors are exploitations of floutings of the maxim of Quality cannot be supported, because there is an example that could be both literally true and metaphorical as follows:

(55) Freud lived here. (Levinson's (206))

Here, if one intends to mention the place where Freud actually lived, it is literally true. On the other hand, if one refers to the place where his theories were kept alive there after his death, it will be metaphorical. Secondly, Grice's suggestion can not discriminate other kinds of implicature due to maxim exploitation such as rhetorical questions, understatement, irony, etc. Finally, although Grice's theory of implicature could explain how we recognise metaphor, it cannot account for how we interpret metaphor. Then, Levinson (1983: 157) gives us the following reformulation of Grice's suggestion (where speaker S says p to addressee H and thereby implicates q):
Stage 1: locating a trigger

i.e. identifying the need for inference. There are two kinds of triggers:

(a) In saying that $p$, S has generally observed the maxims, but $p$ is nevertheless conversationally inadequate in some degree, requiring that $p$ be 'amplified' or 'repaired' with the additional assumption $q$.

(b) In saying that $p$, S has flouted the maxims, and whatever he means he cannot mean $p$; to preserve the Co-operative Principle, S must substitute some proposition $q$ for $p$.

Stage 2: inferring $q$

In the case of (a), H can use the reckoning involved in standard implicatures, as, e.g., in (57) below. In the case of (b), H must (i) determine what kind of trope $p$ is, (ii) apply the reasoning characteristic to that trope, (iii) select among competing values for $q$ on the basis of their conversational adequacy vis-à-vis the maxims. (Levinson’s (207))

(57)

(i) S has said $p$.

(ii) There is an expression $q$, more informative than $p$ (and thus $q$ entails $p$), which might be desirable as a contribution to the current purpose of the exchange (and here there is perhaps an implicit reference to the maxim of Relevance).

(iii) $q$ is of roughly equal brevity to $p$; so S did not say $p$ rather than $q$ simply in order to be brief (i.e. to conform to the maxim of Manner).

(iv) Since if S knew that $q$ holds but nevertheless uttered $p$ he would be in breach of the injunction to make his contribution as informative as is required, S must mean me, the addressee, to infer that S knows that $q$ is not the case ($\sim q$), or at least that he does not know that $q$ is the case ($\sim K q$). (Levinson’s (125))

Levinson argues that Grice’s account of metaphor is concerned with only stage 1, that is, identifying or recognizing metaphor. Stage 2 deals with how to interpret metaphor, and Levinson introduces Searle (1979) as a possible treatment of this problem. As we have seen above, however, Searle’s account of metaphor is still inadequate in the sense that it does not supply us with an appropriate strategy for construing metaphor.

Here, we would say that a pragmatic theory of metaphor is useful in recognizing metaphor by using the Felicity Conditions or the Co-operative Principle. However, the actual strategic procedure could be something like the “Semantic Feature Transfer” that has been discussed in Section 4. Let us briefly consider how semantic and pragmatic theories of metaphor can explain our example (26). The example is repeated below:

(26) Mukasi, mukasi no, oo-mukasi, kitutuki to suzume wa, kyoodai datta to-yuu old times, old times GEN, far-old times woodpecker and sparrow TOP brother was COMP koto desu. fact is
Sosite, futarī wa, zyōoka-mati e go-hookō ni itte imasita.
and two-CL TOP castle-town LOC HO-apprentice to go was

(Once upon a time, it is said that a woodpecker and a sparrow were brothers. And, they were apprenticed in a castle-town.)

In this case, we have a seemingly incompatible combination between a /+Human/ classifier and a (+Animal) noun. That is, we have an apparent case of deviance here. If a hearer (reader) assumes that the speaker (writer) is maintaining the Co-operative Principle, the hearer will try to seek a possible interpretation of this utterance despite the apparent failure to observe the maxim of Quality. At this stage, the hearer has several possible interpretations (probably six, according to Levin). Some contextual information, e.g. that this is folklore with an intimate attitude toward non-human animals, etc., will help us to choose the most plausible interpretation. Among the possible interpretations, the first and most suitable one would be personification. That is, the woodpecker and the sparrow are described as if they were human beings.

The proposed account of metaphor involves three stages. First, identify or recognize metaphor by perceiving deviance (incompatibility), secondly; consider possible modes of construal, i.e. the possible direction of feature transfer; finally, select the most plausible mode of construal by supplying contextual information. The final step of interpretation will involve a variety of extralinguistic knowledge. We need other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, etc. Here, we cannot discuss all the possible related topics.

6. Final Remarks

We have discussed some aspects of classifiers in Japanese in relation to metaphor. Deviance can be caused by combining a classifier with a non-compatible noun. For example, we can combine a human classifier (nin, ri) with a non-human noun (dog, bird). The most natural interpretation of this deviance would be a sort of personification. That is, we will consider that characteristics of human beings are transferred to the non-human noun as is argued in Section 4. Here, metaphorical interpretation is regarded as a device to neutralize the deviance.

As the trigger leading to this metaphorical interpretation, we have considered some pragmatic theories of metaphor, which give us two clues, i.e. the Violation of Felicity Conditions and the Exploitation of Maxims.

The proposed procedure for metaphorical interpretation in this paper is as follows. First, our pragmatic knowledge triggers a metaphorical interpretation by our noticing deviance in an expression. Secondly, the semantics of the language calculates possible modes of interpretation. Finally, some extralinguistic knowledge determines the most suitable mode of interpretation by consulting the context. That is, we need both semantic and pragmatic theory of metaphor to some extent. Although the final step toward the full understanding of metaphor will involve various extralinguistic knowledge, our
purpose is to investigate our linguistic knowledge of metaphor as far as possible. We believe that the
discussion on the manipulated usage of classifiers in Japanese has widened our view of metaphor.

Finally, I would like to mention one thing. In this paper, we have seen how to interpret metaphor
by concentrating on the manipulated usage of language. However, there is another possible account
of metaphor which is radically different from most theories of metaphor. This is what is called the
"Phenomenological Theory of Metaphor" by Levin (1976, 1979). Most theories of metaphor try to ex-
plain metaphor by changing language to fit our world, but Levin proposes changing the world to fit
language. Namely, we will leave language as it is, and alter our view of the world. Levin does not claim
that this account of metaphor applies to every kind of metaphor, but to some special cases such as the
lyric poem. If we apply this suggestion to our example (26), we can just say that the hearer must imagine
a world in which woodpeckers and sparrows are really human beings. That is, they are brothers, and
speak language, etc.

Levin's suggestion could drastically change our discussion of metaphor. However, this is not so much
a theory of language as it is of philosophy. Although this might be a correct philosophical theory of
metaphor, it could not be a possible linguistic theory of metaphor. In spite of Levin's superb suggestion,
we still have various linguistic problems of metaphor unsolved.

Notes

* My gracious thanks to Prof. E. H. Bendix, Prof. J. Dore, Prof. J. D. Fodor, Prof. J. J. Katz and Prof.
  S. R. Levin for their valuable suggestions. I am especially grateful to Michael Huntington for a number
  of comments on an earlier form of this paper. Of course, I am responsible for any error or mistake in
  this paper.

1) Although it would be interesting to ask how many classifiers are used in a language and to search
   for universality of classifiers among languages, these are not the topics of this paper. However, I
   will supply a list of most commonly used classifiers below (hiki and hon have phonological variants
   as follows; biki, piki and hon, pon):
   
   da: for vehicles and mounted machines
   hiki: for small animals (cats, dogs, monkeys, etc.)
   hon: for long, slender objects (pencils, tubes, etc.)
   ko: for boxes, parcels, small pieces with no special counter
   mai: for flat objects (paper, boards, plates, etc.)
   nin: for people (also ri)
   satu: for books
   too: for big animals (horses, cows, elephants, etc.)
   wa: for birds (woodpeckers, sparrows, swans, etc.)

2) There are two kinds of human classifiers; nin comes from Chinese and ri is indigenous to Japanese.
The ri form is usually combined with the numerals one, two, and rarely with four, i.e. hito-ri, futa-ri,
and yotta-ri. The nin form is combined with the numerals over two.

   There are also two classifiers for animals; biki (=hiki, piki) and too. They are discriminated by
the size of the animal in question. Animals smaller than humans such as cats, dogs, monkeys, etc. tend to be counted using *biki*, and those bigger than humans such as horses, cows, elephants, etc. are likely to be counted using *too*. Although a clear-cut distinction is difficult, usually, it is impossible to use big animal classifier with a small animal, e.g. *san-too no ari* (three-CL of ant).

3) Kuno (1973: 25) suggests that this *no* is not the genitive particle *no* but the attributive form of the copula *da*. For instance; “Taroo wa gakusei (student) *da*” → “gakusei no Taroo.” According to this transformational account, we may say that *san-nin no sensei* is derived from *sensei wa san-nin da* (As for teacher, they are three).

In an informal conversation, *no* is sometimes omitted, but it plays an important role in some cases:

(i) Hito-ri no musuko ga sin-da.

one-CL of son NOM dead-was

(One son (of several) died.)

(ii) Hito-ri musuko ga sin-da.

one-CL son NOM dead-was

(The only son died.)

4) For a discussion on various expressions related to metaphor, see Sakamoto (1983a).

5) Friedrich (1979: 391–401) points out that suffixes in Tarascan play a role in creating metaphor-like relations between referential subsets.

6) See Sakamoto (1982) for a consideration of metaphor in relation to idioms, which show cultural peculiarity. See also Sakamoto (1983b) for a discussion on cultural differences and similarities concerning synaesthetic metaphor.

7) There is another way of looking at this phenomenon. That is, this redundancy can be seen as a result of “agreement”. In the following sentence, “He loves Mary”, the third person singular “-s” can be considered as an example of either “redundancy” or “agreement”. It may also be possible to regard the Japanese honorific system as the system of agreement in the sense that an honorific must agree with a person to be honored.

8) Bloomfield (1933: 160): “A linguistic form which is never spoken alone is a bound form; all others (as, for instance, *John ran* or *John or run or running*) are free forms”.

9) It is true that *sheet* in (6b) and *sheet* in (10) have different characteristics, but the point is that *sheet* is an independent word. If we wish, we can call them homonyms or polysemy.

10) Interestingly, *head* in “three head of cattle” may not be pluralized. This word may have acquired more characteristic as a classifier than other classifying words.

11) Lyons (1977: 463) distinguishes two kinds of classifier. One is a “sortal classifier” which individuates the referent in terms of entity, like “san-bon no enpito (three-CL of pencil)”. The other is a “mensural classifier” which specifies the referent in terms of quantity. He mentions as follows, “The function of mensural classifier is comparable with that of such words as ‘pound’ or ‘pint’ in English (cf. ‘two pounds of butter’, ‘three pints of milk’)”.

Notice that he does not claim that classifying words such as ‘pound’ or ‘pint’ are really classifiers. He is just saying that these words are comparable with classifiers.

12) For a discussion of syntactic behavior of classifiers in the framework of Government and Binding Theory, see Saito (1985) and Miyagawa (1988).
13) When a referent is ambiguous concerning the use of classifiers, sometimes a semantically neutral classifier, which has a very broad application, is used, e.g. *tu*. For example, one can say "hito-tu no buttai" (one-CL of object).

14) Lvein (1977: 40) gives the following diagram for major semantic features:

```
  Object
    /\    /
   Physical Abstract
  /\      /\          /
Natural Artifactual Perceptual Conceptual

Living       Nonliving

Human    Animal    Plant
Canine   Equine    Feline

Mineral    Liquid
Concreted  Granular  Crystalline
```

15) In Japanese culture, *inu* is often compared to a detective, because they both follow people and sniff around.

16) The four shortcomings pointed out by Searle are as follows (pp. 112–113):

(i) There are many metaphors in which there is no underlying literal similarity adequate to explain the metaphorical utterance meaning.

(ii) Even where there is a correlated literal statement of similarity, the truth conditions, and hence the meaning of the metaphorical statement and the similarity statement, are not, in general, the same.

(iii) What we should salvage from the simile theory is a set of strategies for producing and understanding metaphorical utterances, using similarity.

(iv) Even so construed, that is, construed as a theory of interpretation rather than of meaning, the simile theory does not tell us how to compute the respects of similarity or which similarities are metaphorically intended by the speaker.

References

Alfonso, A. (1966), *Japanese Language Patterns* (Sophia University, Tokyo).


日本語における分類詞の比喻的使用

坂 本 勉

比喻について論ずる時、「逸脱」の問題を避けて通ることは不可能である。逸脱そのものが比喻であるための必要十分条件であるかどうかは明白ではないが、逸脱した文が、「比喻的解釈」を引き起こす原因となることはよくある。例えば、「空が怒っている」という文において、我々はある種の「奇妙さ」を感じる。この「奇妙さ」という直感的概念が本稿で「逸脱」と呼ばれるものである。さらに、我々は、こうした逸脱文をなんらかの方法で解釈しようとするであろう。この解釈のための方法をここでは「比喻的解釈」と定義することにする。

上述のことに関し、本稿では2つの点を問題にしたい。第1に、我々はいかにして逸脱という概念を説明できるであろうか。第2にそうした逸脱によって引き起こされた比喻的解釈とはいかなるものであろうか。本稿では、日本語の分類詞（または、「助数詞」とも呼ばれる）を考察することによって、こうした問題に対して、新たな知見を得ることを目的とする。

分類詞は、言語体系の言語にはほとんど見られないが、アジアの諸言語に広く見られる文法的現象である。本稿では、まず、日本語における分類詞の一般的文法的性格を、英語との比較において検討した後、分類詞の逸脱的用法の例を提示し、さらに、比喻的意味論的・語用論的説明を、分類詞との関連において試みる。