

# Goal Marking in Japanese at the Event and Predicate Levels

## 1 Introduction

In this paper I investigate the lexical semantic properties of so-called “goal-marking” postpositions in Japanese, and the interrelationship between properties of events and predicates.

- Typical data:<sup>1</sup>
  - (1) (a) *John-wa eki-made/ni itta/modotta/mukatta.*  
John-TOP station-until/to went/returned/went.towards  
‘John went/returned/headed to the station.’  
(b) *John-wa kishi-made/\*ni oyoida/tadayotta/hatta.*  
John-TOP shore-until/to swam/drifted/crawled  
‘John swam/drifted/crawled to the shore.’
- The verbs in (1a) are “motion+path” verbs (conflating motion and path semantics) and the verbs in (1b) are “motion+manner” verbs (Talmy, 1985, *inter alia*).
- Previous approaches explain the distributional differences in (1) by claiming that *-ni* and *-made* are two goal-markers that interact with each verb class in different ways.
- I argue that these approaches are inadequate for two reasons:
  - Even with motion+path verbs *-ni* and *-made* show differing distributional properties.
  - Both *-ni* and *-made* have other relevant uses outside of motion constructions.
- I propose a very general lexical semantics for these postpositions:
  - (2) (a) *-made* delimits durative **events** (goals for motion events).  
(b) *-ni* realizes participants of **predicates** (goals for motion predicates).<sup>2</sup>

## 2 Background

Most previous work focused on data like (1), assuming *-ni* and *-made* are two different goal markers.

- **Inagaki (2001):** distribution follows from the incorporated lexical semantics (following Hale and Keyser (1993)): *-ni* is a place marker whereas *-made* marks place and path.

<sup>1</sup>Suggestive of my final analysis, I’ll uniformly gloss *-made* as ‘until’ and *-ni* as ‘to’.

<sup>2</sup>By ‘participant’ I mean an entity whose involvement in the event is entailed by the verbal predicate, e.g. predicate arguments. I use a generic term ‘participant’ (rather than, say, ‘argument’) simply to indicate that the entity marked by *-ni* is entailed by the predicate itself without making any claims about how that realization occurs syntactically.



In (4a), *hairu* ‘go in’ has a punctual reading (as an “achievement”, contra the verbs in (1a)).<sup>4</sup> However, the context in (4b) forces a durative reconstrual of entering (cf. Tsujimura (2002)).

∴ *-made* occurs with durative events; *-ni* occurs with durative and non-durative events (cf. (1a),(4))

- **Path:** When *-made* is used, there is an implication that the path of motion must somehow be complex, i.e. there are other possible goals before or after the realized goal:

(5) (a) (John is on the first floor of a two story building)

*John-ga ni-kai-ni/?#made nobotta*  
John-NOM 2nd-CL.floor-to/until went.up  
‘John went up to the second floor.’

(b) (John is on the first floor of a ten story building)

*John-ga ni-kai-ni/made nobotta*  
John-NOM 2nd-CL.floor-to/until went.up  
‘John went up to the second floor.’

This distinction can also be found in the English (well, for me at any rate):

- (6) – **In a two story building:** John went up to/?#until/?#as far as the second floor.  
– **In a ten story building:** John went up to/until/as far as the second floor.

∴ *-made* requires a complex path; *-ni* does not require any path complexity.

This shouldn’t be surprising given what we’ve already seen about aspect: the aspect of motion verbs can be analyzed in terms of a homomorphic mapping between the path of motion and the motion event (see Dowty (1991), Tenny (1994), Jackendoff (1996), Krifka (1998)).

- **Intended Goals:** *-ni* is not acceptable with all goals:

(7) (a) (John is at the bottom of a 20-story tower and intends to go to the 10th floor.)

*John-wa juk-kai-ni/made nobotta*  
John-TOP 10th-CL.floor-to/until went.up  
‘John went up to the 10th floor’

(b) (John is at the bottom of a 20-story tower and intends to go to the top.)

*John-wa juk-kai-made/?#ni nobotta*  
John-TOP 10th-CL.floor-until/to went.up  
‘John went up until the 10th floor’

∴ *-made* can mark any goal; *-ni* can only marked intended/contextual goals.

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<sup>4</sup>See Dowty (1979); see Kindaichi (1976), Tsujimura (1996) for a discussion of aspectual classes in Japanese.



(12) **Preliminary Generalization:**

- (a) *-made* marks goals of durative events (regardless of the predicate).
- (b) *-ni* marks goals of motion+path predicates.

- Their differences stem from radical differences in their basic functions:
  - licensed by predicates over events, *-ni* can be subject to constraints on both
  - licensed only by events, *-made* is never subject to predicate constraints.

## 5 Additional Uses of *-ni* and *-made*

- *-ni* as an argument marker:<sup>6</sup>

- (13) (a) *Mary-ga boku-ni kono hon-o kureta*  
Mary-NOM I-DAT this book-ACC gave  
‘Mary gave me this book’ (Dative/Recipient)
- (b) *John-wa Mary-ni hon-o yom-ase-ru*  
John-TOP Mary-DAT book-ACC read-CAUSE-NON.PAST  
‘John will make Mary read a book’ (Causee)
- (c) *Teeburu-no-ue-ni koppu-ga aru*  
table-GEN-top-at cup-NOM exists  
‘There are cups on the table.’ (Location in Existential)
- (d) *E-ga doroboo-ni nusum-are-ta.*  
painting-NOM thief-by steal-PASS-PAST  
‘The painting was stolen by the thief’ ((Logical) Subject of Passive)  
(Kuno (1973, (3a),(7),pp.127-139,(5a), p.352), Tsujimura (1996, (169), p.233))
- (e) *John-ga kabe-o massiro-ni nutta*  
John-NOM wall-ACC pure-white-to painted  
‘John painted the wall white’ (Entailed Resultative, Takezawa (1993, (1a),p.45))

- *-made* as a delimiter:<sup>7</sup>

- (14) (a) *Ohiru-made kore-o shite-kudasai*  
noon-until this-ACC do-please  
‘Please do this until noon.’ (Temporal)
- (b) *Yuka-kara yane-made nan-meetoru arimasu ka?*  
floor-from roof-until how-many-meters are QUES  
‘How many meters from the floor to the roof?’ (Spatial)
- (c) *Kono hooru-wa nisen-nin-made haireru.*  
this hall-TOP 2,000-CL.people-until hold  
‘This hall can hold up to 2,000 people.’ (Numeral)

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<sup>6</sup>Here *-ni* is marking a non-nominative, non-accusative participant in the predicate’s argument structure. This is consistent with the more typical analysis of (non-motion) *-ni* as simply a dative case marker.

<sup>7</sup>Kuno (1973) defines *-made* as ‘continuously until/to X’, claiming it requires a durative verb. Variant forms (*-made de* and *-made ni*) likewise serve delimiting functions.

- (d) *Hikooki-ga deru-made robii-de tomodachi-to hanashite ita.*  
plane-NOM leave-until lobby-at friend-with talking was  
'Until the plane left I was talking with my friend in the lobby.' (Propositional)  
(cf. Kuno (1973, (1a),(6),p.109-110), Makino and Tsutsui (1986, p.226-228))

- ∴ – *-ni* is always marking some kind of predicate-entailed participant.  
– *-made* is always delimiting an event by some bound.

**Q: Can we generalize (12) to avoid polysemy (i.e. specific participant/bound semantics)?**

- ***-made***: Simply delimits entities. How the bound is interpreted is a matter of inference.
  - (15) (a) Temporal bound+any event → event ends at that time (see (14a)).
  - (b) Proposition bound+any event → event ends at time proposition obtains (see (14d)).
  - (c) Spatial bound+directed motion → bound of motion=spatial bound (see (1a)).
  - (d) Spatial bound+non-directed motion → event ends when figure reaches spatial bound (see (1b)).

- ***-ni***: The predicate determines specific participants (goal, logical subject, recipient, etc.) via some linking theory (e.g. as a dative case marker, i.e. the non-highest, non-lowest structural case (cf. Gamerschlag (2000), Kiparsky (1989), Wunderlich (1997)), or via a semantic-based linking theory (e.g. Wechsler (1995))).

• **A New Generalization:**

- (16) (a) *-made* marks arbitrary boundaries of durative events (the interaction with predicate participants determined pragmatically).
- (b) *-ni* marks participants of predicates (predicate determines specific participants).

**6 Exceptions and Variation**

- Stringer (2003) notes that *-ni* occurs with some motion+manner verbs in some colloquial uses:

- (17) (a) *?(?)Eki-ni hashitta.*  
station-to ran  
'(He) ran to the station.'
- (b) *?(?)Akira-wa umi-no-naka-ni hashitta/jampu-shita*  
Akira-TOP sea-GEN-inside-to ran/jump-did  
'Akira ran/jumped into the sea.'
- (c) *Eki-no-naka-ni hashitte-itta/?(?)hashitta*  
station-GEN-inside-to running-went/ran  
'(He) went running into the station.'
- (d) *?(?)Ishi-ni jampu-shita*  
rock-to jump-did  
'(He) jumped on the rock.'



- In verb-framed languages like Japanese satellites prototypically do not express path semantics (i.e. do not define the “framing event”).
- However, this is exactly the analysis proposed by Inagaki (2001) (and to a certain degree by Tsujimura (1994)), making *-made* exceptional both for Japanese and for this typology.
- On the account proposed in (16), however, this is no longer a problem:
  - (16) just says that *-made* realizes a general limit on an event (not a framing event).
  - In this sense it is not covered in Talmy’s typology.
- Therefore (16) is consistent with Talmy’s typology despite the apparent contradiction, something otherwise unexplainable by previous analyses.
- Likewise *hasta* in Spanish and *jusque* in French behave much like *-made*, wherein both apparently add some sort of path/goal semantics to motion+manner verbs (although *hasta/jusque* don’t necessarily entail arrival but merely movement up to a goal, cf. Aske (1989)).
- However, each of these prepositions also has more general delimiting uses similar to *-made* and thus might be covered by a similar analysis (see Bonami (1999) on French).

## 8 Conclusion

- *-ni* and *-made* do not need to be analyzed specifically as a goal-markers at all.
- They fulfill two entirely different functions: *-ni* marks participants; *-made* marks limits.
- This points to a broader area of the interaction of properties of events vs. predicates:
  - Events have a vast number of properties (participants, results, times, places, manners); predicates only encode a subset of these (e.g. figure, path, and goal for motion+path verbs, figure and manner for motion+manner verbs).
  - Markers like *-ni* realize predicate participants, showing properties of these predicates plus the underlying events.
  - Markers like *-made* realize event participants regardless of predicates and thus don’t show predicate based restrictions.
- Similar to argument/adjunct distinction but semantically grounded only.

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