ON INTERACTION AND GRAMMAR: EVIDENCE FROM ONE USE OF THE JAPANESE DEMONSTRATIVE ARE (‘THAT’)

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1. Introduction

In this paper, I will discuss one particular phenomenon observed in Japanese conversation. It is concerned with the distal demonstrative pronoun are (‘that’). This use of are is different from the normal uses of demonstratives, i.e., it is not anaphoric, and, although it may be related to deixis, it is not deictic in the prototypical sense; it may be called ‘interactional’ use. This type of are is used as a filler, to delay the production of an utterance to follow, or to avoid producing a certain utterance in interaction. In Japanese conversation, the interactional use of are is not uncommon, but there has been very little research regarding this specific use so far (e.g. Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson 1996; Uemura 1996). Through the examination of naturally occurring conversational Japanese data, I argue that the strategy using are reveals some interesting aspects of the relationship between interaction and grammar.

In conversation, there are what may be called interactional pressures; we are expected to convey our utterances smoothly. However, we sometimes experience cognitive difficulty in lexical choice or lexical retrieval. In such a situation, we may employ error-correcting strategies such as repair (Schegloff 1979; Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson 1996), sacrificing the smoothness of the interaction. The use of are is another means of overcoming this difficulty, without ‘starting over’ the entire or partial utterance to be repaired, although are and repair may co-occur. When the speaker has trouble with lexical choice or lexical retrieval, are may be used to fill in a syntactic slot ‘for lack of a better word’. To use are in such cases usually does not cause any serious interactional problem, if the hearer can infer what is meant with sufficient contextual factors. In other cases, utterances containing the interactional are do not carry identifiable or relevant propositional meanings, functioning like a filler (cf. Maynard 1989: 30), and thus the lexical and propositional contents can be ignored.

The occurrence of this are shows that, at the very beginning of an utterance, we do

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1 I am grateful to Toshiko Hamaguchi, Marianne Mithun, Tsuyoshi Ono, Sandy Thompson, Satoshi Uehara, and an anonymous referee for valuable comments on earlier drafts of the paper. Needless to say, any errors and shortcomings are my own.
not always have a complete view of the development of the utterance. However, even where *are* is employed, we almost always produce morphosyntactically well-formed utterances. This would suggest that, although we may not have a complete view of the lexical development of our utterance in advance, we are able to build morphosyntactic skeletal frames, which we can call constructional schemas (Couper-Kuhlen 1996; Goldberg 1995; Langacker 1987; Ono and Thompson 1996a, b). Constructional schemas do not represent particular expressions, but serve as templates for producing real expressions (i.e., ‘instantiations’). They are considered well-entrenched, grammaticized patterns due to their frequency of use. Strikingly, this use of *are* consistently occurs in the data in well-formed instantiations of familiar constructional schemas.

By examining how *are* in this particular use is employed, I demonstrate that the interactional nature of morphosyntax reveals itself in complex but interesting ways. This study thus shows one facet of the intimate relationship between grammar and interaction.

In the next section, we will note on the databases for this study. In section 3, we will look at the use of *are* as a distal demonstrative. Then in section 4, we will look at various aspects of its interactional uses. In section 5, we will examine more examples of the interactional use, through which we can see morphosyntactic skeletal frames, and discuss the implications drawn from our observation of the natural data in regard to the relationship between interaction and grammar.

2. Databases

For this study, I employ two databases of spoken conversational Japanese. One database, which was created by several students at the Linguistics Department of the University of California, Santa Barbara (hereafter “UCSB data”), consists of 18 transcripts, each of which is 2 to 12 minutes long, totaling approximately 90 minutes, with audio recordings accessible to me. The titles of the transcripts are: Appointment, Cancer, Comics, Company, Girlfriend, Looking young, Meal talk, Osaka boys, Party, Party topics, Medical school, Raamen, Siblings, Skiing trip, Super student, Surprise, Tall sister, and Telephone calls. I will refer to these transcripts by name. For the UCSB data, I follow the Du Bois et al. (1993) transcription system.

The other database, made publicly available by Gendai Nihongo Kenkyuuukai (Research Group on Modern Japanese), is about 552 minutes long (49 transcripts), but no recordings are available. This database is called *Josei no Kotoba: Shokubahen* (“Women’s Speech in the Workplace”; hereafter “Women’s Speech data”). It was originally made for research on women’s speech, therefore approximately 80% of the utterances are made by female speakers. Note that the transcripts in this database are only broadly transcribed; the

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2 The UCSB data were recorded and transcribed by Kumiko Ichihashi-Nakayama, Pat Mayes, Toshihide Nakayama, Tsuyoshi Ono, Ryoko Suzuki, and myself. I would like to thank these people for the use of their transcripts.
Du Bois et al. transcription system is not applicable to the Women’s Speech data.

3. Distal demonstrative

Japanese has a three-way distinction in the demonstrative system. Below is only part of the system relevant to our discussion.

Table: Japanese demonstrative system (partial and idealized)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRONOMINAL FORMS</th>
<th>PROXIMAL</th>
<th>MEDIAL</th>
<th>DISTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kore</td>
<td>sore</td>
<td>are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kono</td>
<td>sono</td>
<td>ano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When used deictically, the proximal refers to what is near the speaker, the medial refers to what is near the hearer, and the distal refers to what is away from both.

As for the anaphoric use, Masuoka and Takubo state:

“The medial refers to items that the hearer has mentioned, or items that appear in the speaker’s story so far. The distal, on the other hand, refers to items in the speaker’s memory, or items in the experiences shared by both the speaker and the hearer” (1992: 167, my translation)

(Another useful account of the anaphoric use of demonstratives is Kuno 1973: 282-90.)

Let me show some typical anaphoric examples from my data. In the following example, the medial sore, uttered by speaker M (line 4), refers to poriipu (‘polyp’) in speaker R’s previous speech (line 1).

(1) [CANCER]
1 R: .. Porii [polyp] pu ga dekityatta no. [have.emerged PRT]
2 M: ... U=n. [um]
3 R: [sorede], [and.then]
‘And then,’
4 M: [sore] sinkeesee na no? [that nervous COP PRT]
‘Is that a nervous one?’

In (2) below, having told about her encounter with boys from Osaka, the speaker wraps up her story. The distal are refers to the speaker’s memory that she had fun with the boys, which she has just finished relating.
(2) [OSAKA BOYS]

...are wa ii omoide da.

That TOP good memory COP

‘That was a good experience.’

Both (1) and (2) nicely exemplify Masuoka and Takubo’s description of the anaphoric use of the demonstratives.

The phenomenon we will be looking at in this paper is different from the common use of demonstratives above; first, it is not anaphoric, although it may be deictic in a non-prototypical sense, and second, it is only observed in natural spoken discourse.

4. Interactional uses

The general interactional motivation for the Japanese speaker to use are is to ‘delay the production of a next item due’ (Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson 1996: 204), and to hold his/her turn for further elaboration of his/her utterance. In the following, we will look at three aspects of the interactional uses of are in natural interaction. Note, however, that the three aspects I will point out are not mutually exclusive nor independent. Rather, an instance of are may show more than one aspect.

In the databases for this study, there are 125 instances of the interactional uses of are, 16 in the UCSB data and at least 109 in the Women’s Speech data, so I assume it is not rare, although the frequency of its use certainly depends on the speaker.

4.1. Word search

The use of are may be associated with a strategy for a word search in order to buy time. Let us observe the following example.

(3) [CANCER]

1 M: Sorede ne=e,

and.then PRT

‘And,’

2 R: Un.

um

‘Um.’

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3 Since the audio recordings are not available, there are a number of indeterminable instances in the Women’s Speech data, which are excluded from the count.
Line 3 shows the use of the demonstrative pronoun *are* we are concerned with in this paper. Speaker M seems to have something in mind to talk about, but does not verbalize it at the point of line 3, and instead produces *are da yo*, which may not make sense if translated into English ‘It’s that’, or ‘That is’. A possible equivalent of *are* in English may be ‘whatchamacallit’, as in ‘Bring me that whatchamacallit over there’. Then in line 4, she comes up with her topic, with successful verbalization.

It is clear that this use is not anaphoric, although it may be deictic in the sense that speaker M is trying to refer to an item in her memory by using *are*. This utterance would probably give native speakers of Japanese the sense that the speaker is trying to look for appropriate wording, or to retrieve an appropriate word or phrase from the lexicon/memory (cf. Goodwin 1987; Goodwin and Goodwin 1986). This may be in accordance with, or at least does not contradict, Masuoka and Takubo’s description on the deictic use of the distal referring to items in the speaker’s memory. Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson, noting the type of repair involving the use of *are*, state that the demonstrative pronoun serves as a place holder while the speaker looks for some lexically specific noun (Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson 1996: 206).

Let us examine another example. In the example in (4), speaker M tries to bring up a new topic, but at first it seems that she is wondering how to start her story. There is one instance of *are* in line 6 as well as two instances of the interjectional *ano* (in lines 1 and 5; see footnote 6). In line 7, the speaker finally says *gooruden wiiku* (‘golden week’, the week from April 29 to May 5, which includes three national holidays), which was when the event about which the speaker is going to talk happened, and then in the subsequent portion, she begins to relate it.

(4) [OSAKA BOYS]

1 M: ... *Ano=*,
       um,
       ‘um,

2 *hanasita* *kamo* *sirenai* *kedo*,
told if maybe though
though maybe I told this story to you,

3 ... *Atsushi-kun ni wa hanastenai wa.*
A. DAT TOP have.not.told PRT
but to you Atsushi I haven’t told it,

4 H: ((CLEARS THROAT))
Notice that in the above two examples, there are fairly long pauses before and around the production of *are*, which also suggest the speaker’s word search.

In the transcript from which the next excerpt is cited, the participants are talking about novels they read recently. Speaker N uses *are* in line 1, followed by two fillers, *nanka* and *ano* in line 2. These utterances suggest that, at this point, N can not remember the the title of the novel he found interesting. But in line 5, he successfully verbalizes it. (Note that *are* in line 1 also serves to keep the speaker’s turn, see section 4.2.)

(5) [WOMEN’S SPEECH 3145-9]4
1 N: *Soo ieba, are omosiroin zya nai no?* that.reminds.me that interesting I.guess PRT ‘That reminds me, isn’t *that* interesting?
2 *Nanka, ano=.* like um Like, um.’
3 A: *Tokuzawa keizi syotyoo.* T. detective police.department.chief ‘‘PD Chief Tokuzawa’’? (= probably the title of a novel)
4 N: *Tyau tyau tyau.* no no no ‘No no no.
5 *Ano, Hotta Tutomu ga kaita, “hinin” te yuu no.* um H.T. NOM wrote denial QT NML Um, the one (novel) called “Denial” that Hotta Tutomu wrote.’

In the examples of this subsection, the motivation for the interactional use of *are* seems to be the speaker’s trouble with lexical choice or lexical retrieval. However, this is

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4 In the examples from the Women’s Speech data, each line contains one ‘sentence’ in the normative sense, whether complete or incomplete (Gendai Nihongo Kenkyuukai 1997: 20). Pause length, special qualities of utterances, and other kinds of information are not represented.
not the only motivation for the speaker to use *are*. The next subsection will look at another aspect of the interactional use.

### 4.2. Holding the turn for further elaboration

Japanese speakers may use *are* to keep their turn for further elaboration. In the “Girlfriend” transcript, the topic centers around the relationship between C and his girlfriend. C has said that when he has not met his girlfriend for some time, he feels like seeing her. Then K responds as shown in the next excerpt. K’s line 1 is basically a paraphrase of what C has said. The medial *sore* in line 3 refers to part of C’s story so far. The whole utterance in line 3, where she produces *are*, seems to be given just to keep her turn, since, at the time of this utterance, she does not have a clear idea as to how to verbalize her interpretation of what C has said. That she has difficulty in lexical choice and verbalization is also evident in lines 4-5, where she utters *akogare* (‘adoration’) followed by the nominative case particle (line 4), but soon finds it difficult to continue this utterance, which is suggested by her repair utterance (line 5).

(6) [GIRLFRIEND]

1 K: *(Hx) %attenai [to aitai] ka to omou tte no wasa, don’t.see if want.see Q QT think QT NML TOP sa,*

   ‘So you say ‘When I don’t see her I want see her’,

2 C: *[{(Hx)}]*

3 K: *sore wa are zyanai no?*

   it TOP that I.guess PRT Isn’t it that?

4 *%akogare ga,*

   adoration NOM Adoration,

5 *(Hx) %akogare tteyuu ka nanka,*

   adoration QT or like or what should I say,

6 *(Hx) %ko%,*

   well well.’

Similar examples can be found in the Women’s Speech data. In (7) below, the speaker A, a professor, is explaining some statistic details to an academic affairs assistant. She first uses *are*, but she self-repairs immediately, by mentioning what was first meant by *are*, that is, *setumei hensuu* and *hisetumei hensuu* (‘explanatory variable’ and ‘dependent variable’).

(7) [WOMEN’S SPEECH 1918]

A: *Yappari, anata mada, are wakatteinain da as.expected you still that don’t.understand COP*
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wa, setumei hensuu to, hisetumei hensuu ga.

PRT explanatory.variable and dependent.variable NOM
‘You still don’t understand that, explanatory variable and dependent variable.’

Note that are is among other similar devices which serve to delay the production of a next item due. The use of such fillers as ano, sono, and eeto (cf. Maynard 1989; Cook 1993; Sadanobu and Takubo 1995) is also very common in spoken discourse.

4.3. Avoiding verbalization

Japanese speakers may use are when they want to avoid giving a certain utterance for some reason. Let us consider the next example, taken from the very beginning of the “Appointment” transcript. In this transcript, a linguistic researcher, O, is arranging a next meeting with T, who is helping O record her speech. In the excerpt below, T is about to leave the room, O’s office on campus, where the recording session has taken place. Before she leaves, she asks O if they need to meet again to do more recording. Note that throughout the transcript, T basically uses the polite speech style, while O uses the plain speech style, which means that O is superior to T (probably in terms of both age and studentship). T’s question to O about a next recording session can be a face-threatening act, since T’s questioning may be taken as her reluctance to help O out. One can observe pauses in each line uttered by T, which may show T’s attempt to choose words carefully in this delicate situation. Here, the use of are may be considered as a strategy to avoid the verbalization of the full details.

(8) [APPOINTMENT]

1 O: ... itte [itte],
go go
‘You may go,’

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5 The verb wakaru ‘understand’ takes the nominative case particle ga to mark the object of comprehension.

6 Although I am not prepared to consider such fillers and compare them with are, some comments on ano are in order. Ano may be characterized as ‘a hesitation marker’, or ‘a word search marker’ (cf. English um or er), and is much more frequent than are in spoken discourse (Cook 1993; Sadanobu and Takubo 1995). It is related to the adnominal form of the distal demonstrative, but it functions as an interjection. (It is interesting to note that Mandarin Chinese has neige and Korean has ce, both being adnominal distal demonstratives, used interjectionally as well; see Tao 1995 for Mandarin neige. Rubino (1996: 650) notes that the distal demonstratives as well as the recent past demonstrative in Ilocano, a Philippine language, are often used by a speaker trying to access a lexical root.)

Are and ano are syntactically distinct, thus appearing in different distribution, but they are similar semantically and pragmatically. Semantically, they are considered as part of the demonstrative system, or at least related to the system, and pragmatically, their usages are not typical of demonstratives. This seemingly close connection between are and ano is remarkable.
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2 T: \[\text{raisuyuu=}\],
next.week
‘Next week.’
3 O: .. \text{un=} \text{itte},
yes go
‘yeah please go,
4 .. \text{warui} \text{kara},
bad because
‘because it’s no good (to keep you here).’
5 T: .. \text{hai}.
yes
‘OK.
6 .. \text{raisuyuu=},
next.week
next week,
7 .. \text{mata} \text{are} \ [\text{simasu}]?
again that do
will we do \text{that} again?’
8 O: \[\text{un}].
yes
‘Yeah,
9 \text{un=}.
yes
yeah.’
10 T: .. \text{sonna} .. \text{irun} \text{desu} \text{ka}?
that.much need \text{COP} \text{ Q}
‘Do you need that much (recording)?’

The next excerpt below is close to the end of the same transcript, where speaker T is wondering whether this series of recording is urgent or not. Note that T produces \text{are} once and \text{ano} twice, and that there are pauses and truncated utterances. These utterances may suggest that the speaker is careful in choosing appropriate words, although we do not know whether the speaker is hesitating to verbalize her direct question, or experiencing cognitive difficulty in lexical choice, or both.

(9) [APPOINTMENT]
1 T: \text{kore},
this
‘this,
2 .. \text{ano},
um
um,
3 .. \text{hayaku} i%
quickly
quickly,
4 .. (%)
5. Morphosyntactic skeletal frames

As we have seen in the previous section, although the general motivation for the interactional use of *are* is to delay the production of an appropriate lexical item, there are various aspects of its interactional use. In this section, we will examine another interesting aspect, that is, the occurrence of *are* may show how morphosyntactic skeletal frames emerge in a complicated interaction of grammatical and conversational requirements. First, we will look at some examples of *are* which is used for a nominal slot.

Consider the following excerpt.

(10) [MEDICAL SCHOOL]

1 T: *are* *wa=,*
   that *TOP*
   ‘That is sugoku ii sisutemu *da na=* [to *omotta* <X n da X>.
   very good system COP PRT QT thought COP
   a very good system, I thought,
   *u=n*].
   um yeah.

4 R: *[a= soo yo ne=].*
   oh so PRT PRT
   ‘I agree.

5 ... *Yappari,*
   indeed

6 *gan sentaa* *ga,*
   Cancer.Center NOM

7 *toppu reberu no,*
   top level GEN

8 ... *are* *o* *tamotteru,*
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Speaker T, who is a medical scientist working for the National Cancer Center, an institution for medical research on cancer, has told speaker R that the research system in the Cancer Center is excellent. R’s utterance in lines 4-9 includes a clause, indicated by square brackets below, modifying a head noun:

(11) [gan sentaa ga toppu reberu no Cancer.Center NOM top level GEN are o tamotteru] himitu that ACC keep secret
‘the secret that [the Cancer Center keeps that on the top (highest) level]’

The source of R’s trouble may be that she uses the phrase toppu reberu no in line 7. R has to produce some nominal after the genitive case particle no, since it must be followed by some nominal. She might have continued and said, for example, (12a), (12b) or (12c). Then, it would be necessary to choose some verb other than tamotteru, the progressive form of the verb tamotu ‘keep’, in line 8. If, on the other hand, the speaker wants to use the verb tamotteru, an appropriate wording would be (12d), using the accusative case particle o, not the genitive no.

(12) a. toppu reberu no kenkyuu top level GEN research ‘research on the top (highest) level’
   b. toppu reberu no hyooban top level GEN reputation ‘reputation on the top (highest) level’
   c. toppu reberu no iti top level GEN position/status ‘the top (highest) position/status’
   d. toppu reberu o tamotteru top level ACC keep ‘keep the top (highest) level’

However, she does not produce any appropriate nominal and fills in are instead. Note that there is a pause before are in line 8, where the word search seems to be happening. Then probably because the speaker has giving up the word search, she uses are as a filler, and continues the utterance.

There are some complex but interesting things going on in example (10). The use of are seems to indicate that the speaker has trouble in lexical choice in line 8. When the speaker ends with no but has trouble coming up with an appropriate nominal, she has at least two possible strategies for overcoming this difficulty. One would be to repair the whole construction in line 7. However, for the purposes of smooth interaction, it might be
useful to avoid repair. The other strategy, which she actually chooses, is to use the nominal *are*. By using *are*, she tries to achieve smoothness, without causing any interactional problem such as interruption, although R’s pauses in lines 8 and 9 show that her utterance is not completely smooth.

It would make sense to think that the speaker has no idea what verb she should use, at the point of producing this utterance. In other words, at the very beginning of this utterance, she does not have a complete view of the development of her utterance. However, she can still produce a morphosyntactically well-formed utterance. This would suggest that, although speakers may not have a complete view of the lexical development of their utterance in advance, they seem to have some kind of morphosyntactic skeletal frames, to produce well-formed utterances.

As I have suggested, such skeletal frames may be called constructional schemas (cf. Couper-Kuhlen 1996; Goldberg 1995; Langacker 1987; Ono and Thompson 1996a, b). Ono and Thompson show ample evidence for constructional schemas in English conversational discourse. Constructional schemas do not represent particular expressions, but serve as templates for producing real expressions. They are considered well-entrenched, grammaticized patterns due to their frequency in use. For example (10), we could assume the following constructional schemas in Japanese, which employs postpositional case particles.

(13) a. NP-*no* N (noun phrase + genitive case particle + noun)
    b. NP-case particle NP-case particle ... V

Let us look at another example.

(14) [SUPER STUDENT]
    1 T:  *dakedo,*
        but
        *But,*
    2  *nanka=,*
        like
        *like*
    3  .* *hoka ni*   **ii,**
        other LOC  good
    4  *motto*   **ii,**
        more  good
    5  *are*  *ga*  **attan**  *zya nai*  **ka*  **na.**
        that  NOM  existed  I.guess  Q  PRT
        I guess there was a better *that,*
    6  *o*  **aaa**  *ga*  **attan**  *zya nai*  <X ka  na X>.
        offer  NOM  existed  I.guess  Q  PRT
        I guess there was a better offer (from some other place).’

In this excerpt, we can see both the *are* strategy in line 5 and repair in line 6. Speaker T, responding to another participant’s question: ‘Why did the applicant to our school (who is being talked about) refuse to accept the offer?’, answers: ‘Probably because he (the applicant) has got a better offer from another school.’ It seems that T first can not think of
an appropriate word; first, he repeats *ii* (‘good’) twice, in lines 3 and 4, indicating that he may not have had a complete wording of the utterance. Secondly, he produces line 5 employing the *are* strategy: *are ga attan zya nai ka na*, which literally translates to ‘I guess there was a (better) that.’ And then, he repairs this utterance in line 6: *ofaa ga attan zya nai ka na* (‘I guess there was a (better) offer.’). *Are* is apparently used to fill in a nominal slot, where the speaker fails to find any appropriate word. Even if *are* is employed here for lack of an appropriate word, the utterance in line 5 is morphosyntactically well-formed, and the same construction is reproduced in line 6, with the slot successfully filled.

The examples so far contain *are* for nominal slots. The next example is that of *are* used as part of the verb phrase, realized as *are suru* (literally, ‘do that’; note that *are* is the object of the verb *suru*, although it is not overtly case-marked; cf. Fujii and Ono 1998).

In the next excerpt, speaker J, a retired high school teacher, is telling that he and his wife went to an art exhibition held in Kamakura, but it had already been over the previous day.

(15) [WOMEN’S SPEECH 4855-8]  
1 J: Dakara, mite, kore dake wa mini ikoo  
so see this only TOP go.to.see  
*nante itte, ano=, are siteru to ne, kekkyoku,*  
QT say um that doing if PRT after.all  
de, [i-, iku,ikuto owattyatteru],  
and go go.if is.over  
‘So, um, saying “I will never miss this (exhibition)”, doing that,  
and then, if I go there, it’s already over.’

2 I: [Soo nandesu yo ne].  
so COP PRT PRT  
‘That’s right.’

3 J: Kamakura made yo=.  
K. as.far.as PRT  
‘(I went) as far as Kamakura, you know.’

4 A: Sensei ne, toode nasatta noni nee=.  
teacherPRT outing did(honorific) though PRT  
‘Though you went for an outing (it was a waste of time), Teacher  
(= speaker J).’

In this example, the existence of *ano* before *are siteru to* in J’s first utterance is indicative of his difficulty in lexical choice. Moreover, it seems that the speaker does not mean anything by *are siteru to* (‘if doing that’). It might be interpreted as meaning ‘looking forward to going to the exhibition’, ‘planning to go to the exhibition’, or ‘preparing to go to the exhibition’. But it is more plausible that the speaker does not seem to have a complete view of the development of this utterance, and this whole construction is functioning as a filler. Here, we could assume the following constructional schemas

(16)  
a. N-*suru* (verbal noun + verb ‘do’)  
b. V-*teru to* (progressive form of a verb + ‘if’)

Finally, let us consider the next example, in which two female speakers, M and K,
are talking about the party of which M was the organizer. M has just come home from the party, and K asks if M had a lot of food, but M says no.

(17) [PARTY]

1 M: *atasi tabere <% nakatta %>*.
   I couldn’t eat
   ‘I couldn’t eat,’

2 K: *(0) nande?*
   why
   ‘Why not?’

3 M: %.%
   huh
   ‘Huh?’

4 %.%
   because
   ‘Because,’

5 ne= %>,
   PRT
   ‘Y’know,’

6 K: soo da ne.
   right COP PRT
   ‘Oh, right,

7 hito o are [site] tara.
   people ACC that  doing if
   ‘if you were doing *that* for people,’

8 M: [un].
   um
   ‘Mm,’

9 K: taberarenai ne.
   can’t.eat PRT
   ‘you can’t eat.’

In line 6, after hearing M’s negative answer and hesitation, K realizes that M was the organizer of the party, and that she had to deal with guests. In line 7, she said, *hito o are site tara* (‘if you were doing *that* for people’). In K’s utterances, there is no pause, or no sign of word search; K seems to be simply avoiding the verbalization of a certain verb, since she starts with *hito o* (‘people’ + accusative case particle), which must be followed by some verb. *Are* in line 7 is used to fill in a slot, but there are several possible alternative ways she could choose in this context, as in the following.

(18) a. *hito to taioo/ootai-suru*
   people with reception-do
   ‘receive/deal with people’

b. *hito no taioo/ootai o suru*
   people GEN reception ACC do
   ‘receive/deal with people’
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c. uketukeru
   receive/welcome
   ‘receive/accept’
d. uketuke o suru
   reception ACC do
   ‘give reception’

If one starts with hito o, however, one must select an appropriate transitive verb. K does not choose a verb with a lexical content, and produces are sitetara, a progressive + conditional form of are suru. In this case, the interlocutor M has absolutely no trouble figuring out what the speaker K means to say. Notice that M says un, a backchannel which displays her understanding, in line 8 (cf. Clancy et al. 1996; Maynard 1986, 1989). For this example, we can see at least such constructional schemas as the following.

(19) a. N-suru (verbal noun + verb ‘do’)
   b. V-tetara (conditional form of a verb)
   c. NP-o V (direct object + accusative case particle + verb)

In this section, we have seen some examples of are, and observed how morphosyntactic skeletal frames, which we call constructional schemas, emerge in a complicated interaction of grammatical and conversational requirements.

6. Conclusion

In section 4, we have surveyed various interacational uses of are in naturally occurring Japanese conversation. Then in section 5, we have seen that the are strategy reveals several interesting aspects of interaction and grammar. I hypothesize that different kinds of factors are at work in conversation.

(i) Interactional:
   Conversationalists can be said to be motivated to convey their utterances smoothly, which we may call interactional pressures. But they sometimes have difficulties in lexical choice or lexical retrieval. In such situations, they may employ error-correcting strategies such as repair, sacrificing the smoothness of their interaction. The are strategy in Japanese is another means of overcoming this difficulty, without starting over the entire or partial utterance to be repaired. The use of the interactional are usually does not cause any serious interactional problem. In many cases, what might be unclear out of context is generally clear in the environment in which the utterance occurs.

(ii) Morphosyntactic:
   As I suggested, the occurrence of this are shows that, at the very beginning of an utterance, conversationalists do not always have a complete view of the development of the utterance and its implications. Even where are is employed, however, they almost always produce morphosyntactically well-formed utterances. This would suggest that, although they may not have a complete view of the lexical development of their utterance in advance, they seem to have something like morphosyntactic skeletal frames, which may be
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called constructional schemas.

In this paper, by examining how are is employed in this particular use, we observed
the complex interaction of these interactional and morphosyntactic factors.

It is expected that any language has some sort of repair strategies, since speakers of
any language would experience failures to verbalize what they mean to say during their
speech production. Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson (1996), examining repair phenomena in
English and Japanese, demonstrate that typological characteristics of a language may affect
the organization of the repair strategies. Thus, languages with different morphosyntactic
characteristics may have different types of repair strategies available. For instance, Rubino
(1996) reports that Ilocano, a Philippine language with a complex, highly prefixing
morphology, has the empty root kua, which is employed by speakers who have uttered the
syntactic frame of the word with appropriate affixes but cannot access an appropriate
lexical root. The motivation for the use of the empty root kua in Ilocano seems to be very
similar to that of the empty word are in Japanese.

Indeed, variations in the operation of repair in different languages are yet to be
explored. Moreover, such strategies as the use of are in Japanese or of kua in Ilocano are
worth paying attention to, since, as I have argued in this paper, they could reveal interesting
aspects of interaction and grammar.

Appendix: Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NML</td>
<td>nominalizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRT</td>
<td>(pragmatic) particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>question marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QT</td>
<td>quotative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transcription conventions for the UCSB data (cf. Du Bois et al. 1993)

 [...]  speech overlap
 =     lengthening
 ...(n)  long pause
 ...    medium pause
  ..     short pause
   -     truncated word
    --    truncated intonation unit
      (o)  latching
     (TSK)  click
      %    glottal stop
     (H)   inhalation
     (Hx)  exhalation
    <P ... P>  piano: soft
    <@ ... @>  laugh quality
     @     pulse of laughter
<Q ... Q> quotation quality
<X ... X> uncertain hearing
X indecipherable syllable

References


