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Nominal 'Tautologies' in Japanese: *X wa X*, *X ga X*, and *X mo X*

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1. Introduction¹

So-called nominal tautologies such as *Boys will be boys* and *Women are women* may be said to lack informative import since they are true by virtue of their logical forms alone. Yet, it is well recognized that these expressions do convey meanings which are not readily transparent from their literal meanings. The question is, what are the meanings of these tautological expressions? What is the best way to describe them?

There are three main approaches to these questions. The first is what Wierzbicka (1987) calls "radical pragmatics." It is proposed by Grice (1975), Levinson (1983), Ward and Hirschberg (1991), and others; it assumes that tautologies are uninformative by themselves, but meaningful in context; their meanings are conveyed as implicatures (via a blatant violation of the Gricean maxim of Quantity), which are inferable pragmatically. For example, according to Levinson (1983: 125), *Boys are boys* is meaningless in the abstract, but could be used to "implicate something like 'that's the kind of unruly behaviour you would expect from boys'." The second approach is "radical semantics" advanced by Wierzbicka (1987, 1988); it assumes that the meanings of tautologies, particularly attitudinal meanings, are conventional; that is, they are not inferable pragmatically and must be spelled out in rigorous semantic representations, such as follows:

- (i) The form 'Nabstract is Nabstract' (e.g. War is war) expresses a 'sober' attitude toward complex human activities.
- (ii) The form 'Npl-human are Npl-human' (e.g. Boys are boys) expresses tolerance for human nature.
- (iii) The form '(art) N is (art) N' (e.g. A rule is a rule) expresses obligation. (Wierzbicka 1987)

The third approach is less radical than both approaches above. It is proposed by Fraser (1988) and Escandell-Vidal (1990). It assumes that tautological expressions have one conventional meaning, and that they may have additional pragmatic meanings which are calculable in context. For example, Fraser describes the conventional meaning of nominal tautologies as follows:

An English nominal tautology signals that the speaker intends that the hearer recognize:

- (i) that the speaker holds some view towards all objects referenced by the NP;
- (ii) that the speaker believes that the hearer can recognize this particular view;
- (iii) that this view is relevant to the conversation. (Fraser 1988: 217-218)

Escandell-Vidal claims that a nominal tautology (in Spanish) has an abstract meaning which can be paraphrased as follows:

In the sentence NP1=NP1

- i) NP1 NP1 is a qualitative intensification of NP1 (to be read as 'NP1 with its prototypical features'); and
 ii) this is an unquestionable truth. (Escandell-Vidal 1990: 7)

In the present paper I will analyze the meanings of Japanese 'tautological' expressions, or more accurately, three nominal reduplicative constructions: *X wa X*, *X ga X*, and *X mo X*, where *X* is a noun phrase. I hope the analysis of Japanese data will supply some new perspective to the study of nominal 'tautologies' in general.

The three constructions analyzed here are fully productive, yet they are idiomatic in that their meanings are largely non-compositional. The particle *wa* is a so-called topic marker; *ga* is a subject-marker; and *mo* is usually treated as having the meaning 'also'. Thus, for example, both *oya wa oya* and *oya ga oya* literally mean 'parent is parent'; and *oya mo oya* literally means 'parent is also parent'. However, each construction as a whole conveys meanings that are more than its literal meaning. In other words, these constructions do have communicative significance and are not mere redundant expressions.

2. *X wa X (de)*

X wa X is an emphatic expression which indicates the absoluteness of the category in question. This basic function can be divided into two usages: (a) to reconfirm the ascribed category--i.e. to emphasize the immutability of the category/attribute and (b) to emphasize the discreteness or autonomy of the item. In both usages, the repetition of a noun phrase effects an emphatic function.

- (1) <from a TV drama>

Hanarete ite mo, oya wa oya da kara mendoo mi-nakutya.
 be away even though parent parent so look after must
 '(lit.) Even though (he) is away, (my) parent is (my) parent, so (I) must look after (him).'

- (1a) *Hanarete ite mo, oya da kara*

be away even though parent so
 'Even though (he) is away, (he) is (my) parent, so'

Sentence (1) illustrates the first usage--reconfirmation of the ascribed category. In (1), the speaker is saying something like the following: Even though the person may not fit the ideal model of a parent, he is, as you know, still my parent, and that this fact cannot be changed. Compare (1), a reconfirmation, with (1a), which is a simple assertion: In (1) the category in question is already given, while it is not the case in (1a).

- (2) (A woman writes about how much she cried when her husband passed away.) <from *Asahi* Newspaper>

Watasi-tati wa kessite naka no yoi fuufu de wa arimasen desita.
 we TM by no means amicable couple Neg Pst
Sore demo, fuufu wa fuufu datia no da to tuukan-sase-rare-ta
 yet couple couple Pst Comp feel strongly-Cs-Pas-Pst

koto desu.

Comp

'We were by no means an amicable couple, yet (a married) couple was (a married) couple, (I) was made to feel (that) very strongly.'

- (3) *Henna katati site-te mo tukue wa tukue yo. Monku iwanai de*
strange shape have-even though desk desk complain without
tukainasai.

use Imp

'Even though (it) has a strange shape, (a) desk is (a) desk. (So) use (it) without complaining.'

Examples (2) and (3) also illustrate the first usage. In (1)-(3), each item in question is not a prototypical, or ideal example of the category denoted by the noun phrase. This is one of the typical situations in which *X wa X* is used: By this expression, the speaker underscores that the identity of the item cannot be changed despite the existence of some doubt about it.

Another situation in which *X wa X* is often used for reconfirmation is when there is/could be an attempt to change the category of the item.

- (4) (A man is talking to his ex-mistress, who, contrary to his desire, wants to resume the relationship.) <from a TV drama>

Soo yuu kankee ga iya de, moo osimai tte itta n desyo. Osimai wa
such relation SM dislike now end said TQ end

osimai na n zya nai no.

end Neg

'(You) didn't like such a relationship, so (you) said (it)'s over, didn't (you)?(The) end is (the) end, isn't (it)?'

- (5) (A mother and her daughter are talking about the mother's love affair.) <from a TV drama>

Daughter: *Kawaii wa ne, okaasan. Moo honto ni kekkon sitara.*
cute mother now really marry how about

'(You are) cute, Mother. Why don't (you) get married for real?'

Mother: *Ii no yo. Mamagoto wa mamagoto da kara, kawaii no yo.*

all right playing house playing house so cute

'(It's) all right. Playing house is playing house, so (it's) cute.'

- (6) (A driver caught by the police for speeding tries to be pardoned saying he had reasons for speeding. The police officer then says:) <from a TV drama>

Donna zizyoo ga atte mo kisoku wa kisoku desu kara.
what kind of reasons SM exist even if rule rule so

'No matter what the reasons were, a rule is a rule, so'

- (7) <from a novel *Fushin no Toki* by Ariyoshi Sawako.>

Matiko ga donna ni ki ga tuku onna da to itte mo kanozyo

SM how much attentive woman say even though she

o tuma to suru kangae wa mootoo mo ukab-anakatta.

OM wife make thought TM not at all come up-Neg Pst

Nanto itte mo baa no onna wa baa no onna da.

No matter what (one) says bar Gen woman bar Gen woman
 'No matter how attentive Michiko is, the thought of marrying her did not occur to (him) at all. No matter what (one) says, a bar hostess is a bar hostess.'

For example, in (4) there is an attempt by the addressee to change the status of the relationship between herself and the speaker. But the speaker insists on the immutability of the category by using the *X wa X* construction. The same kind of situation is seen in (5)-(7).

Still another situation in which *X wa X* is often used for reconfirmation is when some typical property of the item is mentioned, as shown in (8) and (9): *X wa X* here functions like a summary of the given description.

- (8) (The speaker after having criticized the conditions of the house she looked at for a possible purchase concludes:) <attested in conversation>

Yappari yasui uti wa yasui uti ne.
 as expected cheap house cheap house
 'As expected, (a) cheap house is (a) cheap house.'

- (9) (The speaker is talking about the instant coffee she had.)

Yappari insutanto wa insutanto, nani ka mono-tarinai.
 as expected instant instant somewhat dissatisfying
 'As expected, instant (coffee) is instant (coffee). (It) is somewhat dissatisfying.'

The examples of *X wa X* given in (1)-(9) contain regular nouns. However, pronouns may also occur, as shown in (10). The expression *Watasi wa watasi* 'I am I' in (10) is used as a reconfirmation of the identity of the speaker.

- (10) (A high-school girl is complaining about the boys who change their attitudes toward her depending on her weight.) <from *Asahi* Newspaper>

Gaiken wa doo de are, watasi wa watasi na no desu.
 appearance TM how I I
 'No matter how (I) look, I am I.'

All these examples demonstrate that *X wa X* is used to emphasize the permanency of the attribute.

In the second usage of *X wa X*, on the other hand, the speaker is not so concerned with the attribute itself. Rather, *X wa X* is used to emphasize the discreteness or autonomy of the referent.

- (11) <from a TV drama>

Daughter-in-law: *Konya uti de ikaga desu ka, okaasan no*
 tonight home at how about Q mother Gen
taiin-iwai.

return from the hospital-celebration

'How about tonight at our house, celebrating your return from the hospital?'

Mother-in-law: *Sonna ii wa yo. Tui kono aida tanzyoo-iwai*
 that no need just the other day birthday-celebration

site moratta bakkari zya nai no.

do receive just Neg

'That's not necessary. (You) just gave me a birthday party the other day, didn't you?'

Daughter-in-law: *lie, are wa are, kondo wa kondo desu.*
no that that this time this time
'No, that is that, this time is this time.'

(12) <from *Asahi* Newspaper>

Kimi wa kimi, ware wa ware nari, saredo nakayosi.
you you I I yet good friends
'You are you, I am I; yet (we) are good friends.'

(13) (The author writes about the difference between upper class people and ordinary people like herself) <from a story by Hayashi Mariko>

Betu ni rettoo-kan o motu koto mo nai. "Ano hito-tati
particularly inferior-feeling OM have no need those people
wa ano hito-tati to yuu keturon ga de-reba, sore igo
those people Comp conclusion SM come out-when that after
tukiai wa zuuto raku ni natta.
getting along TM much easy became

'There is no need to particularly feel inferior. "Those people are those people," when (this) conclusion was drawn, after that, (it) has become much easier (for me) to get along with (them).'

For example, in (11) the speaker insists that the two occasions are distinct from each other, and that they cannot be mixed. Similar examples are shown in (12) and (13).

(14) (A career woman expresses her feelings about reaching 40 years old)
<from *Croissant*, a women's magazine>

Iiwake de naku, watasi wa watasi to ieru yoo ni natta.
excuse not I I Comp say can become
'(I) have become to be able to say 'I am I' not as an excuse.'

The difference between the two usages of *X wa X* may not always be clear. For example, in (14), *watasi wa watasi* 'I am I' may be interpreted as a reconfirmation of the identity as well as an emphasis of the autonomy of the referent. Similarly, examples (5) and (7) can be interpreted in both ways.²

(15) *Yasai wa yasai de koko ni oite kudasai.*
vegetable vegetable here put please
'Please put the vegetables here by themselves.'

(15a) *Yasai wa koko ni oite kudasai.*
vegetable here put please
'Please put the vegetables here.'

- (16) (The speaker is talking about her wishes.) <attested in conversation>
Kore wa yume na no. Demo yume wa yume de tottok-anakutya ne.
 this dream but dream dream keep must
 'This is (my) dream. But (I) must keep (my) dream separately.'

- (17) (A nurse is talking to a patient about the patient's mistress.) <from
Fushin no Toki>
Kanzya-san no yooni okusan ni wa sir-ase-nai de uti wa uti de
 patient Gen like wife TM know-Cs-Neg home home
daizi ni sitoku no ga hontoo desu nee.
 carefully keep SM true/correct
 'Like you--the patient, (one) should not let (his) wife know about (his)
 affair, and carefully keep (his) home intact--that's the correct (way).'

The second usage of *X wa X* often appears in the form of *X wa X de*. In (15), (16), and (17), for example, this form is used to emphasize the separation of the item in question from other items. Compare (15) with (15a) in which no such emphasis exists.

- (18) <from a short story by Hayashi Mariko>
Sikasi, are wa are de tanosi-katta.
 but that that fun Pst
 'But that-*wa* that-*de* was fun. (That was fun for what it was).'
- (19) (A nurse is talking to a patient.) <from *Fushin no Toki*>
Otoko no ko wa nan tettatte sue ga tanosimi desu yo. Tanomosii
 boy TM surely future SM look forward reliable
mono desu yo. Demo, musume wa musume de kawaii mono
 but girl girl cute
desu nee. Ryooohoo aru no ga itiban desu yo.
 both have SM best
 '(In the case of) boys, (you) can surely look forward to (their) future
 and rely (on them). But, girls-*wa* girls-*de*, (they) are also cute (the girls
 are also cute for other reasons). To have both is the best.'
- (20) <from a short story by Hayashi Mariko>
Watasi ga are hodo akogare, neratte iru itiryuu-gaisya no
 I SM that extent adore aiming first-class-company Gen
itiryuu-otoko. Hiru-ma wa hiru-ma de syanai no onna-domo no
 first-class-men daytime daytime office in Gen women Gen
monosugoi soodatu-sen ga ari, yoru wa yoru de hosutesu
 formidable catch-fight SM exist evening evening bar hostesses
ga u no me taka no me.
 SM on the close watch
 'The first-class men in the first-class companies whom I adore so much
 and whom I aim at. Daytime-*wa* daytime-*de*, there are formidable
 fights among the office girls for catching (them); Evening-*wa* evening-*de*
 bar hostesses are on the lookout (for them).'

- (20a) *Hiru-ma wa syanai no onna-domo no monosugoi soodatu-sen ga*
 daytime TM office in Gen women Gen formidable catch-fight SM
ari, yoru wa hosutesu ga u no me taka no me.
 exist evening TM bar hostesses SM on the close watch
 'During the daytime, there are formidable fights among office girls
 for catching (them); in the evening, bar hostesses are on the lookout
 (for them).'

Examples (18)-(20) illustrate another common use of *X wa X de*. In these examples, the construction marks the autonomy of the item. In (18), for example, the writer underscores the fact that the event in question was fun independently of any other events. This *X wa X de* often functions as a contrastive framework for a predication: For example, in (19) *musume wa musume de* sets up a framework which is contrastive to the framework of boys mentioned in the preceding clause. A similar example is given in (20). As can be seen in (19) and (20), *X wa X de* is often used to mark two autonomous frameworks, which nevertheless result in the same kind of predications. Compare (20) with (20a); the latter simply lists two frameworks without indicating their autonomous nature.

3. *X ga X*

The *X ga X* construction is used to indicate that the referent in question has some negative or abnormal quality as X.

- (21) (A man and his wife are talking about their son's bad academic records.) <from a TV drama>
 Wife: *Anata seeseki doo datta.*
 you grade how Pst
 'How were your grades?'
 Husband: *Un, maa maa. Kimi wa.*
 well so-so you TM
 'Well, they were so-so. (How about) you?'
 Wife: *Maa maa. Oya ga oya da kara nee.*
 so-so parent parent so
 'So-so. (The) parents are (not so good/smart) parents, so'
- (21a) Wife: *Maa maa. Demo, Oya wa oya da kara nee.*
 so-so but parent parent so
 'So-so. But, parents are parents, so'
- (22) (A man is talking about how badly he is treated by his wife because of his affairs.) <from *Fushin no Toki*>
Iya, watasi nado wa motto hidoi mono desu. Uti ni kaer-eba
 no I like TM by far bad/terrible home return-when
gesyuku-nin desu yo. Nanisiro zisseki ga zisseki de.
 boarder anyhow records records and/so
 'No, in my case, it's much worse. When (I) go home, (I)'m treated like
 a boarder. Anyhow, (my) records (of affairs) are (bad) records, so . . .'

- (23) (A and B are police officers; B is A's boss. B is talking about a murder case.) <from a TV drama>

A: *Nani ka.*

what Q

'What (did you want to say)?'

B: *Un, ree no ken, sono-go doo natta ka to omotte. Nanisiro*

yes that case that-after how became Q wonder at any rate

ziken ga ziken dake ni, syakai no kansin mo atumete iru koto da si.

case case because society Gen attention draw Comp

'Yes, (I) was wondering what has become of that case since then. At any rate, because (the) case is (an unusually bad) case, (it) is drawing (the) attention of the public, so'

For example, in (21) a couple is discussing the son's bad academic records. They then talk about their own grades, which were not so good. Then, the wife says *Oya ga oya da kara nee*, which means that the parents are not so desirable or smart. This could imply that it is understandable that the son is not smart, either. If, instead, the wife said *Oya wa oya da kara nee*, as shown in (21a), it would mean that the problem of the parents should be considered separately from the son's problem, which could imply that it is not impossible for the son to do well. Similar examples are in (22) and (23).

- (24) A: *Nee, kyoo pikunikku iku?*

Hey today picnic go

'Hey, shall (we) go on a picnic, today?'

B: *Soo nee, Otenki ga otenki da kara pikunikku wa yameyoo yo.*

well weather weather so picnic TM cancel let's

'Well, (the) weather is (not good) weather, so let's cancel the picnic.'

- (24a) **Otenki ga otenki da kara, pikunikku ni ikoo yo.*

weather weather so picnic go let's

'(The) weather is (not good) weather, so let's go out on a picnic.'

- (24b) *Otenki ga otenki da kedo, pikunikku ni ikoo yo.*

weather weather but picnic go let's

'The weather is (not good) weather, but let's go on a picnic.'

- (24c) **Otenki wa otenki da kara, pikunikku wa yameyoo.*

weather weather so picnic TM cancel let's

'(lit.) Weather is weather, so let's cancel the picnic.'

(24) is another example. The expression *Otenki ga otenki* means that the weather is not good. Thus, it can be followed by an expression which suggests a cancellation of the picnic. Example (24a), on the other hand, is contradictory, as shown in the English translation. (24b) is appropriate because the conjunction *kedo* 'but' rather than *kara* 'so/therefore' is used. (24c), in which *X wa X* is used, does not make sense. Example (25) is similar to (24).

(25) (The speaker is talking about a place which is considered dangerous.)

Basyo ga basyo da kara, ki o tukenasai.

place place so be careful

'(The) place is (not a good/safe) place, so be careful.'

In examples (21)-(25), *X ga X* is used to suggest some negative quality of the referent. However, this is not always the case. *X ga X* may suggest some exceptional or unusual quality as *X*, which can be considered very, or perhaps too good.

(26) (The speaker is talking about the very formal wedding to which she is invited)

Basyo ga basyo da kara, tyan to site ik-anakutya.

place place so proper do go must

'(The) place is (not an ordinary) place, so (I) must go in (a) proper (dress).'

(27) *Iegara ga iegara da kara, hanayome-kooho mo sugoi wa yo.*

family family so bride candidates also extraordinary

'(His) family is (not an ordinary) family, so (the) candidates for (his) brides are also extraordinary.'

For example, in the context of (26), *basyo ga basyo* indicates that the place of the wedding is not an ordinary place, but rather a very formal good place. A similar example is in (27). The reference to the 'good' quality of the item in these examples is not a straightforward praise, but seems to suggest some distance or uncomfortableness on the part of the speaker.

4. *X mo X*

The construction *X mo X* has two usages. One of them is similar to *X ga X*. That is, it indicates that the item in question has some undesirable or abnormal quality as *X*. The difference between *X mo X* and *X ga X* is that the former, but not the latter presupposes the existence of another item which is equally undesirable or abnormal.

(28) *Oya ga oya da kara kodomo mo kodomo da.*

parent parent so child child

'(The) parents are (bad) parents, so (the) child is also (a bad) child.'

(29) *Anata mo anata yo.*

you you

'(lit.) You are also you.' (You, too, are bad/undesirable.)

For example, in (28), the expression *kodomo mo kodomo* indicates that the child is not good like the parents. Example (29) is often used to criticize the addressee. It presupposes that besides the addressee, there is someone else to be criticized.

The second usage of *X mo X* is for intensification of the quality of *X*. For example, in (30) *X mo X* is used to indicate that the person in question is extremely beautiful. (31) is a similar example.

- (30) A: *Kanojo bizin na n datte ne.*
 she beauty I hear/they say
 'She is a beauty, I hear.'
- B: *Un, bizin mo bizin, at-tara bikkuri-suru yo.*
 yes beauty beauty meet-if be surprised
 'Yes, (she) is a real beauty, if (you) meet (her), (you) will be surprised.'
- (31) A: *Sono ko mada kodomo na n desyo.*
 that child still child isn't (he)
 'That child is still a (small) child, isn't (he)?'
- B: *Un, kodomo mo kodomo, mada yooti-en mo itte nai n da.*
 yes child child yet kindergarten even go Neg
 'Yes, (he) is a real (small) child, (he) doesn't even go to kindergarten, yet.'

5. Conclusion

The foregoing analysis of the basic meanings of the three nominal reduplicative constructions in Japanese suggests that these basic meanings are mostly conventional: their meanings are non-compositional, that is, each morphosyntactic pattern formed by a repetition of a noun phrase and a particular particle *as a whole*³ carries certain meanings, and these meanings cannot be regarded as entirely dependent on the discourse context. It is, however, to be noted that although the meanings of each construction are non-compositional, they are not totally arbitrary, but rather related to the general function of each particle: i.e. *wa* as a marker for categorial judgment, *ga* as a marker forthetic judgment,⁴ and *mo* as bearing the meaning 'also'.

In addition to these basic meanings, each construction may convey pragmatic or attitudinal meanings, such as obligation, resignation, tolerance, defiance, and criticism.

- (32) *Hanarete ite mo, oya wa oya da kara*
 be away even though parent parent so
 '(lit.) Even though (s/he) is away, (my) parent is (my) parent, so'
- (33) *Henna katati site-te mo tukue wa tukue yo.*
 strange shape have-even though desk desk
 'Even though (it) has a strange shape, (a) desk is (a) desk.'
- (34) A: *Nee, kyoo pikunikku iku?*
 Hey today picnic go
 'Hey, shall (we) go on a picnic, today?'
- B: *Soo nee, Otenki ga otenki da kara.*
 well weather weather so
 'Well, (the) weather is (not good) weather, so'

For example, (32) may imply certain social obligation as a child; (33) may suggest defiance; and (34) may imply unwillingness. I contend that these additional

meanings are not part of the basic meanings of these constructions. Rather, they are inferable based on the basic meanings of each construction and the discourse context including socio-cultural expectations. This is because these meanings can be explicitly stated separately, as shown in examples (1), (3), and (24), and also because they vary considerably depending on the context. For example, the expression *oya wa oya* could imply obligation, resignation, criticism, appreciation, or many other attitudes. (See also Fraser (1988), Gibbs and McCarrell (1990), Ward and Hirschberg (1991), which discuss this point with regard to the interpretation of English nominal tautologies.)

This discussion leads to the conclusion that neither Gricean "radical pragmatics" nor Wierzbicka's "radical semantics" provides an adequate account of the meanings of the three nominal reduplicative constructions in Japanese. Rather, these constructions are best described in terms of both conventionality and pragmatic calculability. (With regard to the *X wa X* construction, some may still argue that its basic meanings can be inferred pragmatically: *X wa X* gives a redundant identification, which must imply that the speaker is emphasizing the immutability or discreteness of the category.⁵ I am not certain if this emphatic function is inferable pragmatically. Furthermore, this emphatic function seems always associated with the *X wa X* construction, hence can be regarded as the basic meaning (i.e. semantic invariant) of *X wa X*.)

Lastly, note that the construction *X wa X* seems to correspond to English 'tautologies' such as *Women are women* and *A promise is a promise*, although a closer examination is required to decide whether the usages of the Japanese and English constructions are identical. As described in the beginning of this paper, previous studies on nominal tautologies are mostly concerned with implicatures, attitudinal meanings, and properties of the noun in question. (This applies not only to the two "radical" approaches, but also to the definitions of nominal tautologies given by Fraser and Escandell-Vidal cited in section 1.)⁶ Little attention has been paid to the function of repetition as creating an emphatic effect.⁷ However, my analysis of *X wa X* as a device for emphasizing the immutability of the category⁸ or the discreteness of the item seems relevant also to such expressions as *Women are women* in English and other languages. In sum, my study calls for a reexamination of the basic function of nominal tautologies in general.

Footnotes

¹I would like to thank Yo Matsumoto, Yoshiko Matsumoto, and Graham Thurgood for their valuable comments.

²It is not clear to me how distinct the two usages are, but the second usage seems to become relevant when there is a clear contrast of categories.

³It may be argued that *X ga X*, for example, is analyzable in that the second *X* has a negative meaning. However, such an account is inappropriate because the negative meaning cannot be effected without the first *X* followed by *ga*.

⁴See Kuroda (1972) for discussion of thethetic and the categorial judgment.

⁵A similar pragmatic approach is taken in Ward and Hirschberg (1991), although their study does not refer to the emphatic function of repetition. Based on their analysis of English data, Ward and Hirschberg claim that tautological utterances of the form 'a is a' (e.g. *Terrorism is terrorism*) are used to convey the implicature

that alternative utterances of the form 'a is b' (e.g. *Terrorism is sometimes justifiable*) are not relevant. I maintain, however, that what is rejected through a tautological utterance of the form 'a is a' is not the relevancy of alternative forms/propositions, but rather the possibility of assigning an alternative category to the item in question.

⁶ Fraser's description of nominal tautologies (cited in section 1) also concerns attitudinal meanings, although his use of the term "view" is very vague. Furthermore, his definition is so broad that it can be applied not only to nominal tautologies, but also to many other expressions. (See also Ward and Hirschberg 1991) Escandell-Vidal's definition (cited in section 1), I think, is inadequate in that the reduplication in expressions like *War is war* does not intensify the quality of the NP, and that prototypes are not always relevant in the use of nominal tautologies, as shown in the many examples in this study (e.g. (1), (4)).

⁷ Although I do not share Escandell-Vidal's view (footnote 6), her work is the only one that discusses the function of repetition directly.

⁸ Wierzbicka (1987: 109) points out that nominal tautologies may have a semantic invariant of their own, which she paraphrases as follows: "An X is not different from other X's (all X's are the same). This cannot change." However, as noted by Wierzbicka herself, there are many uses of nominal tautologies to which this definition cannot be applied (e.g. East is East; you are you).

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