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# CONTRASTIVE MARKED EXCLUSIVE FOCUS PARTICLES IN JAPANESE: A CASE OF *DAKE-WA*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the interpretations of Japanese *dake-wa* 'only-Contrastive Topic.' *Dake* brings about exhaustification in general, but the domain of exhaustification cannot be captured in a straightforward way. In particular, *dake* used with contrastive-marking *wa* makes it unclear about over which part the particle exhaustifies, because contrastive *wa* generates a conventional implicature itself. In other words, when *dake* interacts with contrastive *wa*, it is hard to determine how they semantically contribute to the sentence. Hara (2007) analyzes the meaning of *dake-wa* and claims that when *dake* is used in a contrastive-marked sentence, it exhaustifies over some meaning level that is higher than the propositional one, and that there is the implicature that no follow-up information is available about any other individual regarding the question under discussion. I argue that Hara (2007)'s analysis of the complex particle cannot be extended to the cases where it is used in modalized sentences. When *dake-wa* is used in modal sentences, it is possible for the following sentence to mention the speaker's knowledge of any other individual with respect to the question under discussion. In short, *dake-wa* in modal sentences behaves differently than in indicative sentences. The meaning of *dake-wa* is greatly affected by the presence of modals. Considering the particle's interaction with modal expressions, Hara (2007)'s semantics of *dake-wa* is not enough to fully capture its interpretation.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 introduces Hara (2007)'s analysis of *dake-wa*. In section 3, I apply Hara (2007)'s semantics of *dake-wa* to modal sentences and illustrate that it does not correctly give rise to the meaning of *dake-wa* in modal sentences. This section also presents some observations about *dake-wa* in modal sentences as well. In non-modal sentences, only when *dake* is absent, is the following sentence compatible when it mentions the alternatives about the question under discussion. This contrast cannot be observed in modal sentences (Section 3.2). It is also noteworthy that *dake-wa* interacts with the epistemicity flow. The following sentence exhibits lower epistemicity than the first one (Section 3.3). This leads me to opine that capturing the semantics of *dake* requires the consideration of not only the contrastive-markedness but also the modal of the sentence. Section 4 gives a

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conclusion to this paper.

## 2 HARA (2007)'S ANALYSIS OF *DAKE-WA*

Hara (2007) argues that *dake* in *dake-wa* sentences does not apply to a propositional level, but to a higher level than that. The motivation for this claim is that if we take *wa* in *dake-wa* sentences as a contrastive topic, which induces the conventional implicature, it cannot be compatible with the semantics of *dake* with an exclusive implicature at a propositional level.

In the literature, *wa* in Japanese has two uses: topic *wa* and contrastive *wa*. According to Kuno (1973), Japanese contrastive *wa* is distinguished from topic one in that it has a prosodic peak in its intonation.[1] Hara (2005) argues that the prosodic peak of contrastive-marking divides the asserted proposition into B (background) and F (Focus) under the structured meaning theory of focus. *Wa* then introduces CON operator, which takes the structured meaning as its argument and produces a conventional implicature. In a contrastive-marked sentence, the presence of a stronger alternative to the asserted proposition is presupposed, and it is conventionally implicated that the speaker considers the possibility that the stronger alternative is false, as in (1). Hara (2005, 2007) provides the semantics of Japanese contrastive-marker *wa*, indicated as follows:

(1) Let F be the focus-marked elements, B the background, R the restriction.
The interpretation of CON (B)(F):
a. asserts: (B)(F)
b. presupposes: $\exists F'[[F' \in R]\&[B(F') \Rightarrow B(F)]\&[B(F) =/\Rightarrow B(F')]]$
c. implicates: $\Diamond(\neg(B(F')))$

(Hara 2007: 219)

With this semantics applied, the contrastive-marked sentence is interpreted as follows:

(2) JOHN-wa kita.
JOHN-CON came.
'John came.'
a. B=λx. x came. F=John F'=John and Mary
b. assertion: John came.
c. implicates: the speaker considers the possibility that 'John and Mary came' is false.
d. assertion + implicature: the speaker considers the possibility that 'Mary came' is false.

(Hara 2007: 219, 220)

[1] This paper does not deal with a prosodic peak in intonation in detail. See Kuno (1973) for more details.

Unfortunately, Hara (2007) argues that this semantics of the contrastive-marked sentence cannot successfully interpret the sentence that includes exhaustive particle *dake*. Consider (3) and two possible computations for the sentence:

(3) JOHN-dake-wa kita.
JOHN-only-CON came.
'Only John came.'
(Hara 2007: 220)

(4) First option: F= John F'= John and Mary
a. B=λx. Only x came.
b. asserts: 'Only John came.'
c. implicature: the speaker considers the possibility that it is not the case that only John and Mary came.
(Hara 2007: 220)

(5) Second option: F= only John
a. B=λx. x came. F= only John
b. No implicature possible (presupposition failure)
(Hara 2007: 220)

The first option yields an unavailable implicature, as shown in (4). The second option does not help, either. If 'John' is replaced by 'only John' as the focused element, it results in the presupposition failure, because *John-dake-ga kita* 'Only John came' entails 'no one other than John came.'

In order to solve this puzzle, Hara (2007) adopts the analysis of *dake* by Yoshimura (2005) in that *dake* is an expressive item that creates a conventional implicature, and it asserts the prejacent proposition and entails the exceptive meaning.[2] In other words, the exhaustive meaning of *dake* contributes to a meaning level that is different from the prejacent proposition:

(6) JOHN-dake-ga kita.
JOHN-only-NOM came.
a. assertion: John came.
b. conventional implicature: No one else came.
(Hara 2007: 223)

What the exhaustification in the conventional implicature is applied to is dependent on whether the sentence is contrastive-marked or not. When the sentence is not contrastive-marked, as in (6), *dake* takes the prejacent proposition as its argument and produces the exceptive meaning as a conventional implicature by negating all the alternative propositions. In other words, *dake* exhaustifies over the proposition. When the sentence is contrastive-marked, on the other hand, *dake* exhaustifies over potential literal acts of assertion in the sense of Siegel (2006). Siegel (2006:170) defines it as in

[2] This is based on Horn (2002)'s idea that only the assertional content can be a complement of the higher functor.

(7).

(7) [Potential literal acts] are abstract objects consisting only of propositional content and whatever illocutionary force potential can be read directly from their morphosyntactic form, not necessarily the actual illocutionary act that might be performed.

(Siegel 2006: 170)

Siegel (2006) explains that potential literal acts are not the actually performed acts. They do not specify the contextual variables of the actual speech acts such as speaker and addressee, among others. The variables of the potential literal acts like assertions, questions, and commands, among others, are introduced by a context-sensitive meaning-shift rule.[3]

Hara (2007) defines the semantics of *dake* in the contrastive-marked sentence as an exhaustification over potential literal acts of assertion. *Dake-wa* sentences implicate that the asserted proposition is the only assertion that the speaker produces with respect to the question under discussion. Since both contrastive-marker *wa* and *dake* induce conventional implicatures, the two implicatures are generated independently. After a context-sensitive meaning-shift rule mentioned in note 3 is applied, the conventional implicature denoted by *dake* negates the produced alternatives as in (8). 'Assertion(B(F))' means 'a is an assertion of p ^ p = B(F).'

(8) $\forall$ a' [[a' $\in$ Alt (assertion (B (F))) & a' $\neq$ assertion (B (F)) ] $\rightarrow$ $\neg$ a']

(Hara 2007: 229)

The interpretation of *dake* in a contrastive-marked sentence is summarized in (9).

(9) The interpretation of dake(B)(F) in a contrastive-marked sentence:
Let F be the focus-marked elements, B the background
a. assertion: B(F)
b. implication: There is no assertion of individuals other than F with respect to the question B.

(Hara 2007: 229)

The example in (3), repeated here as (10), is now analyzed as follows:

(10) JOHN-dake-wa kita.
JOHN-only-CON came

[3] [a context-sensitive meaning-shift rule] If B is a sentence of English with the morphosyntactic shape of an assertion and ^β is its translation, then a **is an assertion of** p $\wedge$ p = ^β, is also a possible translation of B, where a varies over assertions, p varies over propositions, and **is an assertion of** is the relation between assertions and propositions such that if x is an assertion of y, then y is the propositional component of x.
Siegel (2006:191)

'Only John came.'

(Hara 2007: 220)

(11) a. potential literal act:
α is an assertion of p ∧ p＝came(John)
b. focus-marking on John generates an alternative potential literal act:
α' is an assertion of p' ∧ p'＝came(Mary)

(Hara 2007: 228)

(12) a. B=λx.x came. F=John
b. assertion: John came.
c.conventional implicature 1, CON(B)(F): The speaker considers the possibility that 'Mary came' is false.
d.conventional implicature 2, *dake*(B)(F): There is no assertion of Mary with respect to the question λx. x came.

(Hara 2007: 229)

Since *dake-wa* brings about the implicature "There is no assertion about Mary with respect to the question "λx. x came," any continuation that asserts the speaker's knowledge concerning any other individual about the question being discussed is incompatible.

(13) a. Did John and Mary come?
b. #JOHN-dake-wa kita. Mary-mo kita-kamoshirenai.
John-dake-CON came. Mary-too came-might.
'At least John came. Mary might have come, too.'

(Hara 2007: 229)

This section showed that Hara (2007)'s analysis solves the paradox produced by the combination of *dake* and contrastive *wa*. In the next section, I apply this proposed semantics of *dake-wa* to modal contexts, and show that the analysis gives a wrong prediction for these types of sentences.

## 3 *DAKE-WA* USED WITH MODALS

### *3.1 'Dake-wa' in Modal Sentences*

In this subsection, I will apply Hara (2007)'s proposal of the semantics of *dake-wa* to modal sentences and argue that the interpretation derived from the application of Hara (2007)'s semantics fails to capture the meaning of *dake-wa* in these sentences.

Japanese has epistemic modal elements such as *darou* 'will,' *hazuda* 'should,'

*kamoshirenai* ‘might,’ and *nitigainai* ‘must.’ Consider (14), for example.

(14) JOHN-dake-wa kuru-darou.
John-only-CON come-will.
‘At least John will come.’

When Hara (2007)’s semantics of *dake-wa* is applied, we would get (15) as its assertion and implicature.

(15) JOHN-dake-wa kuru-darou.
a. B=λx.x will come. F=John
b. assertion: John will come.
c. conventional implicature 1, CON(B)(F):
the speaker considers the possibility that 'Mary will come' is false.
d. conventional implicature 2, *dake*(B)(F):
there is no assertion of Mary with respect to the question λx. x will come.

In (15), *dake* generates the conventional implicature “there is no assertion about Mary with respect to the question “λx. x will come.” As a result, it is predicted that any continuation is infelicitous that asserts the speaker’s knowledge about any other individual with respect to the question under discussion “λx. x will come.” The following sentence is acceptable, contrary to this prediction.

(16) [Context]There will be a lecture held at the university tomorrow. Unfortunately, the title sounds boring and it even costs a lot to join. Professors are worried about no student showing up.
a. Will students come tomorrow?
b. JOHN-dake-wa kuru-darou. Mary-mo kuru-kamoshirenai.
John-only-CON come-will. Mary-too come-might.
‘At least John will come. Mary might come, too.’

What should be noticed in this sentence is that there comes a continuous information about Mary following the *dake-wa* sentence. The sentence provides information about an individual other than John with respect to the question under discussion: that is, “λx. x will come.” In other words, Hara (2007)’s semantics of *dake-wa* cannot give rise to the right prediction regarding *dake-wa* in modal sentences. The acceptability of the following sentences (17) and (18) points to the same effect. The context is assumed to be the same as that in (16).

(17) JOHN-dake-wa kuru-hazuda. Mary-mo kuru-kamoshirenai-ga.
John-only-CON come-should. Mary-too come-might.
‘At least John should come. Mary might come, too.’

(18) JOHN-dake-wa kuru-nitigainai. Mary-mo kuru-kamoshirenai-ga.
John-only-CON come-must. Mary-too come-might.
'At least John must come. Mary might come, too.'

In this subsection, I applied Hara (2007)'s semantics of *dake-wa* to modal sentences and found that Hara (2007)'s proposal is not directly applicable to modal sentences. If Hara (2007)'s analysis is correct, then *dake-wa* exhaustifies over a potential literal act even in modal sentences, which is inconsistent with the result. In fact, when *dake-wa* is used in modal sentences, there can be a continuous information about any other individual regarding the question under discussion, which is contrary to the prediction derived from Hara (2007)'s application.

### *3.2 'Wa' vs 'Dake-Wa' in Modal Contexts*

Hara (2007) argues that there is a contrast about acceptability depending on the presence or absence of *dake,* as shown in (19), where (13) is repeated as (19). When *dake* is present, any continuation that mentions the speaker's knowledge about any other individual about the question under discussion is impossible, whereas it is possible when *dake* is absent. Consider (19).

(19) a. Did John and Mary come?
#JOHN-dake-wa kita. Mary-mo kita-kamoshirenai.
John-dake-CON came. Mary-too came-might.
'At least John came. Mary might have come, too.'
b. Did John and Mary come?
JOHN-wa kita. Mary-mo kita-kamoshirenai.
John-CON came. Mary-Add came-might.
'At least John came. Mary might have come, too.'
(Hara 2007: 229)

Hara (2007) argues that Futagi (2004) originally notes this contrast, as illustrated in (20).

(20) a. #Taro-wa EEGO-dake-wa hanas-e-ru ga FURANSUGO-wa
Taro-Top English-dake-Con speak-can-Pres but French-Con
hanas-e-nai
speak-can-Neg
'English is the only language Taro can speak, but he cannot speak French.'
b. Taro-wa EEGO-wa hanas-e-ru ga FURANSUGO-wa
Taro-Top English-Con speak-can-Pres but French-Con
hanas-e-nai.

speak-can-Neg
'Taro can speak English, but he cannot speak French.'
(Futagi 2004: 158)

Regarding modal sentences, however, this contrast cannot be observed. Take (21) for instance.

(21) a. Taro-wa EEGO-dake-wa hanas-e-ru-darou ga FURANSUGO-wa
Taro-Top English-dake-Con speak-can-will but French-Con
hanas-e-nai-darou.
speak-can-Neg-will.
'Taro will be able to speak at least English, but he will not be able to speak French.'
b. Taro-wa EEGO-wa hanas-e-ru-darou ga FURANSUGO-wa
Taro-Top English-Con speak-can-will but French-Con
hanas-e-nai-darou.
speak-can-Neg-will.
'Taro will be able to speak English, but he will not be able to speak French.'

Both sentences can be followed by the continuous information about the alternatives with respect to the question under discussion. The following pairs also include modals; however, they do not show the contrast either.

(22) a. John-wa biiru-dake-wa nomu-darou ga wain-wa noma-nai-darou.
John-Top beer-dake-Con drink-will but wine-Con drink-Neg-will.
'John will drink at least beer, but he will not drink wine.'
b. John-wa biiru-wa nomu-darou ga wain-wa noma-nai-darou.
John-Top beer-Con drink-will but wine-Con drink-Neg-will.
'John will drink beer, but he will not drink wine.'
(23) a. John-wa gakkai-ni-dake-wa kuru-darou ga konsinkai-niwa
John-Top meeting-Dat-dake-Con come-will but after-party-Dat
ko-nai-darou.
come-Neg-will.
'John will at least come to the meeting, but he will not come to the after-party.'
b. John-wa gakkai-ni-wa kuru-darou ga konsinkai-niwa
John-Top meeting-Dat-Con come-will but after-party-Dat
ko-nai-darou
come-Neg-will
'John will come to the meeting, but he will not come to the after-party.'

The sentences (19) - (20) versus (21) - (23) provide the difference between non-modal sentences and modal sentences. In non-modal sentences, there is a contrast about the

acceptability between the presence and absence of *dake*. When *dake* is absent, the following sentence that mentions the alternatives about the question under discussion is compatible. When *dake* is present, it is incompatible. In modal sentences, there is no such contrast observable. This observation suggests that the implication of *dake-wa* and *wa* in modal sentences might be similar. If the premise is true, it might lead to two possibilities. First, *dake-wa*'s semantic contributions to modal sentences are assumed to be different from those of indicative sentences. For example, *dake-wa* in the interaction with modals may cancel the implicature that there is no assertion about any other alternatives regarding question under discussion. Second, it might be that *dake-wa* has two meanings, and the one in modal sentences is different from the one in indicative sentences. In either perspective, the interpretation derived from the application of Hara (2007)'s semantics does not capture the meaning of *dake-wa* used in modal sentences.

### *3.3 The Interaction of 'Dake-Wa' with The Epistemicity Flow*

In this subsection, I would like to think about the constraint on the epistemicity flow. Hara (2007) argues that *dake* in the contrastive-marked sentence exhaustifies over a potential literal act, but when *dake-wa* interacts with modals, it seems unclear whether *dake* makes exhaustification at all. Therefore, I need to think about whether the contribution of *dake-wa* in modal sentences is truly exhaustification or not. In fact, I would like to say *dake-wa* in epistemic modal sentences is involved more with the certainty of the speaker about the feasibility of the proposition than with exhaustification. In order to see if this intuition is correct, I will look at a sequence of epistemic modal sentences. As a matter of fact, I will observe that there is an interaction between *dake-wa* and the flow of epistemicity. This means *dake-wa* is highly involved in the speaker's certainty about the feasibility rather than exhaustification. Consider the epistemicity scale. Japanese epistemic modal expressions exhibit the following feasibility scale: *kamoshirenai* 'might' < *darou* 'will' < *hazuda* 'should' < *nitigainai* 'must.' Take (24) and (25) for instance, which is the repetition of (17) and (18), respectively.

(24) John-dake-wa kuru-hazuda. Mary-mo kuru-kamoshirenai-ga.
John-only-Con come-should. Mary-too come-might.
'At least John should come. Mary might come too.'

(25) John-dake-wa kuru-nitigainai. Mary-mo kuru-kamoshirenai-ga.
John-only-Con come-must. Mary-too come-might.
'At least John must come. Mary might come too.'

What is interesting about these sentences is that the additional sentences hold lower epistemicity than the first ones. These sentences become unacceptable when the order of the modals is in the other way around, which is shown in the sentences in (26).

(26) John-dake-wa kuru-kamoshirenai.
John-only-Con come-might.
'At least John might come.'
a. ?Mary-mo kuru-hazuda-ga.
Mary-too come-should.
'Mary should come too.
b. ?Mary-mo kuru-nitigainai-ga.
Mary-too come-must.
'Mary must come too.'

To sum up, when *dake-wa* is used in modal sentences, the additional sentences have to exhibit lower epistemicity than the first *dake-wa* sentences. It can be assumed from this observation that *dake-wa* in the first sentence makes it unacceptable for the additional sentence to mention the higher certainty of the speaker than the first one. In other words, when there are two pieces of information, which vary in the extent of certainty, *dake-wa* has to be included in the more certain one for the speaker. This leads me to consider that *dake-wa* in these sentences does not seem to make exhaustification over potential literal act.

In this section, I indicated that the interpretation of *dake-wa* interacts with modals. Hara (2007) maintains that the semantics of *dake* in the contrastive-marked sentence contributes to the exhaustification over the potential literal act of assertion, which is higher than the propositional level. This analysis of *dake-wa* does not correctly predict the interaction of *dake-wa* with modals. In order to capture the semantics of *dake,* it is not enough to consider whether the sentence is contrastive-marked or not; rather, it is also requisite to think about whether it is the modal sentence or indicative sentence. When considering the interpretation of *dake-wa* in modal sentences, we have to take into account the contribution of both modal expressions and *dake.* I will leave this for future research.

## 4 Conclusion

In this paper, I tested the interpretation and the behavior of *dake-wa* in modal sentences, based on Hara (2007), which analyzes *dake-wa* in non-modal sentences. Hara (2007) maintains that *dake* used in a contrastive-marked sentence does not exhaustify over proposition but over the potential literal act of assertion, in the sense of Siegel (2006). *Dake* in a contrastive-marked sentence generates an implicature that there is no assertion about any other individuals with respect to the question under discussion. In other words, contrastive-markedness is essential for her analysis. Her semantics of *dake-wa*, however, cannot be extended to modal sentences. It is obvious that when *dake-wa* is used in modal sentences, there can be continuous information about any other individual regarding the question under discussion. There is also a constraint on the epistemicity flow in that the additional sentences following *dake-wa* sentences have to hold lower epistemicity than the first ones. This means that *dake-wa*

in modal sentences might be involved more with the speaker's certainty about the feasibility of the proposition than with exhaustification. In conclusion, it is explicit that *dake-wa* functions differently in modal sentences than in indicative sentences. If *dake* semantically contributes to the propositional level, then there would be no explanation available about the interaction with modals. This supports Hara (2007)'s assumption that *dake* takes scope over higher levels than the propositional levels. However, considering contrastive-markedness is not enough to capture the semantic contribution of *dake,* and modal-marking should not be dismissed. This paper did not reach to the proposal of the amended semantics of *dake-wa.* Therefore, I will leave this for future research.

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