

## Politeness marking and agreement in the Speech Act Phrase

**Goal and Background:** In this work we discuss how politeness marking works in different languages with respect to the presence of assertion or non-assertion (in the sense of Emonds 1969) in different types of root and non-root sentences. On the one hand, we focus on politeness marking in a number of languages, namely Turkish, Spanish, English (agreement languages) and Japanese (traditionally an agreementless language). Allocutive agreement and courtesy pronouns are taken up in order to ultimately show that the Strong Uniformity Principle (Miyagawa 2010) holds with respect to the kind of features (discourse features and agreement features) attested in language, implementing ideas by Miyagawa (2012, 2017), and supporting the syntactization of discourse (Speas & Tenny 2003, Haegeman & Hill 2013, a.o.).

On the other hand, we address the non-trivial issue of whether this politeness marking is circumscribed to root or root like contexts (as originally proposed by Emonds 1969 for Root Transformations, or elaborated in Hooper & Thompson 1973, Haegeman 2012, Heycock 2010, Bianchi & Frascarelli 2010, De Cat 2013, Jiménez-Fernández & Miyagawa 2014, a.o.). In this respect, we discuss the compatibility of politeness and the embedded sentences that different verbs select, and suggest that assertion vs. non-assertion is reflected in the syntax, where a non-assertion head (in line with Haegeman 2012 and Jiménez-Fernández & Miyagawa 2014) may block the relation between a politeness [PLT] feature and the dedicated speech act head.

**Data:** The two phenomena we address are politeness marking by the suffix *-mas* in Japanese, as illustrated in (1), and the addressee-oriented politeness pronominal forms in Spanish, Middle English and Turkish, as illustrated in (2-4):

- (1) a. Watasi-wa piza-o tabe-mas-u. (FORMAL)  
 I-TOP pizza-ACC eat-mas-PRESENT 'I will eat pizza.'
- b. Watasi-wa piza-o tabe-ru. (COLLOQUIAL)  
 I-TOP pizza-ACC eat-PRESENT 'I will eat pizza.' (Miyagawa 2017: 19)
- (2) a. ¿Ha recibido usted un nuevo mensaje? (FORMAL)  
 have-PRES.2SG.PLT received you.SG.PLT a new message  
 'Have you received a new message?'
- b. ¿Has recibido tú un nuevo mensaje? (COLLOQUIAL)  
 have-PRES.2SG received you.SG a new message  
 'Have you received a new message?'
- (3) a. Will you *not* dance? (King, *Love's Labour's Lost*, V.ii) (FORMAL)
- b. Didst thou *not* hear somebody? (Borachio, *Much Ado About Nothing*, III.iii)  
 (COLLOQUIAL)
- (4) a. (Siz) burada bekle-yin (lütfen). (FORMAL)  
 (you) here wait-IMP.2SG.PLT please 'Wait here (please).'
- b. (Sen) burada bekle-Ø. (COLLOQUIAL)  
 (you) here wait.2SG 'Wait here.'

As is clear, Japanese has specific morphology to mark politeness in the verb, whereas Spanish, Middle English and Turkish employ a special form of courtesy pronoun to refer to an addressee (*usted* vs. *tú*, *you* vs. *thou* and *siz* vs. *sen*, respectively), which activates a specific agreement relation with V.

**Proposal:** The two phenomena have theoretical implications connected with the possible occurrence of a Speech Act Phrase (SAP) on top of a sentence. Concerning allocutive agreement, Miyagawa (2012) argues that this is available only in syntactic

contexts provided with assertion, which project a SAP. This seems to be confirmed for Japanese when observing the contrast between (1) and an embedded sentence not expressing assertion such as (5), where allocutive agreement is blocked due to the absence of assertion (see Miyagawa 2012: 94):

- (5) Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga kuru/\*ki-mas-u to] sinzitei-ru.  
 Taro-TOP [Hanako-NOM come/come-PRES C<sub>NONFACT</sub> believe-PRES  
 ‘Taro believes that Hanako will come.’

We hold that politeness marking is reflected in syntax in the form of agreement comprising both morphological information and discourse information; more precisely allocutive agreement, being part of the general agreement system of a language. The formal analysis that we put forth is in (6):

- (6) [<sub>DiscP</sub> Discourse operator [<sub>SAP</sub> Speaker [SA] [<sub>saP</sub> Addressee [sa] [<sub>CP</sub> C [<sub>TP</sub> T...

In asserted clauses the Discourse operator activates a politeness feature [PLT] in C, which values the same feature in V. Conversely, in non-asserted clauses [PLT] cannot be valued simply because a non-assertion head intervenes between SAP and CP, blocking the politeness affix. This is the case of Japanese *-mas*.

With respect the courtesy pronouns, they can freely occur in asserted and non-asserted clauses. Contrary to allocutive agreement, this is not a true RT, and the distinction between assertion and non-assertion seems to be blurred as illustrated for Turkish in (9):

- (9) Ben [müdür bey-in gel-ecek-ler-i]-ne inan-ıyor-um.  
 I manager mister-GEN come-FUT-3PL-POSS-DAT believe-PROG-1SG  
 ‘I believe that the manager will come.’

In our analysis, all sentences project a SAP, which explains why politeness agreement is possible in languages of the Spanish and Turkish type. Turkish and Spanish are both discourse-prominent and agreement-prominent languages, meaning that discourse and agreement features may be inherited by T. After the Discourse operator activates a [u-PLT] feature in C and this is inherited by T, it is valued by the courtesy pronoun’s interpretable [PLT]. This accounts for the subject-verb agreement. The question that this arises is why Japanese is so strict in the distribution of politeness suffix *-mas*? Recall that this agreement feature is retained in C in Japanese, and contra Miyagawa (2012) we argue that all sentences must project a SAP. A plausible explanation lies in the existence of a non-assertion head in non-asserted clauses in between the head *sa* and CP. The [PLT] feature must raise to the *sa* head (Miyagawa 2017), but the non-assertion head intervenes blocking any connection between C and *sa*. On the other hand, in Turkish and Spanish, the [PLT] under C is lowered onto T, and accordingly can enter an AGREE relation with the courtesy pronoun. Our proposal hence supports the original view of RTs in Emonds (1969) and the challenge posed by the non-restrictive distribution of courtesy pronouns in assertion and non-assertion contexts is just illusory since politeness marking in Turkish and Spanish is not an RT, thereby preserving the Strong Uniformity Principle intact.

**Selected References:** Miyagawa S. 2012. Agreements that occur mainly in the main clause. In L. Aelbrecht, L. Haegeman & R. Nye (eds.), *Main Clause Phenomena*, 79-112. John Benjamins. Miyagawa, S. 2017. *Agreement beyond Phi*. MIT Press. Haegeman, L. & V. Hill. 2013. The syntactization of discourse. In R. Folli et al. *Syntax and its Limits*. OUP. Speas, M. 2000. Evidentiality, logophoricity and the syntactic representation of pragmatic features. *Lingua* 14, 255-276.