TOPICS, CONTRAST AND CONTRASTIVE TOPICS IN JAPANESE[*]

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1. Introduction

The Japanese particle *wa* is widely considered a marker for topic. Concentrating on the behaviour of contrastive topics in Japanese, this paper presents arguments that challenge this view. I argue that *wa*-marking is necessary, but not sufficient in identifying contrastive topics in this language. Specifically, there are *wa*-marked items that are topics, but there are also *wa*-marked items that are not topics. Those that are to function as topics must also occupy clause-initial position.

The standard characterization of the particle *wa* is that it has two uses: thematic and contrastive (Kuno 1973). Phrases marked with thematic *wa* are unstressed, typically occupy clause-initial position and are interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about in the sense of Reinhart (1981). These properties are illustrated by the examples in (1). Items marked with contrastive *wa*, on the other hand, bear an emphatic stress, can optionally remain in-situ and implicate contrast (Saito 1985, Hoji 1985, Tomioka 2007a,b, Watanabe 2003), as shown by the examples in (2) (small capitals indicate emphatic stress, nuclear stress is not indicated and # indicates infelicity):

(1)   thematic *wa*:
      a. sono hon$_i$-wa   John-ga e_i katta.
         that book-wa   John-nom   bought
      b. #John-ga   sono hon-wa   katta.
          John-nom   that book-wa   bought
      'Speaking of that book, John bought it.'

(2)   contrastive *wa*:
      a. SONO HON$_i$-WA   John-ga   t$_i$ katta.
         that book-wa   John-nom   bought
      b. John-ga   SONO HON-WA   katta.
         John-nom   that book-wa   bought
      'John bought that book.' (Implicature: John didn't buy a different one)

The two types of *wa*-phrases are generally analyzed as two types of topics: non-contrastive topics and contrastive topics, respectively, and they are usually treated separately (See Heycock 2008 for an overview of the literature). Indeed, other than bearing the same particle, they appear not to share any properties either in terms of their interpretation or in their syntactic distribution.

In this paper, I argue that the two types of topics do in fact share an element in their interpretation and in their syntactic distribution. In particular, contrastive topics, just like non-contrastive topics, are interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about and must appear in clause-initial position. In other words, my claim is that contrastive *wa*-phrases in clause-initial position are contrastive 'topics', but those in-situ, such as *sono hon-wa* 'that book-wa' in (2b), are not. Those in-situ implicate the same kind of contrast as those in clause-initial position, but they are not interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about. I provide three arguments for this claim in the rest of the paper. First, I demonstrate in Section 2 that in certain discourse contexts that require a contrastive topic, the contrastive *wa*-phrase must appear in clause-initial position. In Section 3, I consider three contexts where a contrastive *wa*-phrase may appear in-situ. I show that in such contexts, the relevant *wa*-phrase cannot optionally move to clause-initial position, contrary to the standard characterisation. This illustrates that contrastive *wa*-phrases in clause-initial position and those in-situ are licensed under different discourse contexts. Finally, in Section 4, I discuss some constraints on the syntactic distribution of topics that derive from independent considerations at the syntax-information structure interface. I show that only those contrastive *wa*-phrases in clause-initial position are subject to the constraints and not those in-situ. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2.   Contrastive Topics in Context

There are certain discourse contexts that require a contrastive topic (Jackendoff 1972, Büring 1997, 2003). Typical functions of a contrastive topic include shifting the topic of discourse from one item to another, narrowing down the referent of a topic or simply implicating the existence of another salient item. An instance of a contrastive topic in Japanese is given by the exchange in (3)/(4). Being asked the question in (3), the speaker may not have the relevant information with respect to John. However, s/he may have similar information with respect to Bill and decide to offer that information. In doing so, s/he has shifted the topic of discourse from *John* to *Bill*,

making *Bill* in the answer a contrastive topic. As demonstrated by the utterances in (4a) and (4b), a contrastive topic in Japanese is marked indeed with *wa*, bears an emphatic stress, but it is restricted to clause-initial position.

(3) John-wa   kinoo-no   party-de   nani-o   tabeta   no?
     John-wa   yesterday-gen party-at   what-acc   ate   Q
     'What did John eat at the party yesterday?'

(4) Hmm,   John-wa   doo-ka   sira-nai-kedo,
     well, John-wa   how-whether   know-not-but,
     'Well, I don't know about John, but...'

    a. BILL-WA   8-zi-goro   MAME-O   tabeteita   (yo)
       Bill-wa   8 o'clock-around   beans-ACC   was.eating prt

    b. #MAME$_i$-O   BILL-WA   8-zi-goro   t$_i$ tabeteita (yo)
       beans-ACC   Bill-wa   8 o'clock-around   was.eating prt
       'as for Bill, he was eating beans around 8 o'clock.'

Exactly the same pattern is observed in cases where the object in the answer functions as the contrastive topic, as illustrated below. Here, *mame-wa* 'beans-wa' is a contrastive topic, as it shifts the topic of discourse from pasta.

(5) kinoo-no   party-de   dare-ga   pasta-o   tabeta   no?
     yesterday-gen party-at   who-nom   pasta-acc   ate   Q
     'Who ate the pasta at the party yesterday?'

(6) Hmm,   pasta-wa   doo-ka   sira-nai-kedo,
     well, pasta-wa   how-whether   know-not-but,
     'Well, I don't know about the pasta, but...'

    a. #BILL-GA   MAME-WA 8-zi-goro   tabeteita (yo)[1]
       Bill-nom   beans-wa 8 o'clock-around   eating.was particle

    b. MAME$_i$-WA BILL-GA 8-zi-goro   t$_i$ tabeteita (yo)
       beans-WA Bill-NOM 8 o'clock-around   eating.was particle
       'as for the beans, Bill was eating them around 8 o'clock.'

The above examples illustrate clearly that contrastive topics do not have the option of remaining in-situ. Thus, together with the standard characterisation of non-contrastive *wa*-phrases given in the introduction, we can draw a generalization regarding the syntactic distribution of topics in general in Japanese: topics, contrastive or not, must appear in clause-

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[1] For reasons not enirely clear to me, an object *wa*-phrase prefers not to surface adjacent to a verb. In order to circumvent this issue, adverbials are inserted between object and verb throughout. I assume following Neeleman & Reinhart (1998), that structures like (6a) can be base-generated, hence the absence of an empty position below the adverbial.

initial position. This can be formulated as in (7). I propose to take this generalisation as a constraint that acts as a trigger for the displacement of *wa*-phrases when functioning as a topic.[2]

    (7)   Topic in Japanese is licensed in clause-initial position.

3. Contrastive *Wa*-phrases In-situ

An immediate consequence of the constraint in (7) is that contrastive *wa*-phrases in-situ such as the one in (2b) cannot be topics. In this section, I provide three arguments that this is indeed the correct characterisation. In doing so, I will consider the interpretive and syntactic properties of non-subject contrastive *wa*-phrases in order that we can observe the effect of (7) most explicitly.

3.1 Interpretation of Contrastive *Wa*-phrases In-situ

There has recently been much work on the precise interpretation of contrastive *wa*-phrases (Kuroda 2005, Hara 2006, to app., Hara & van Rooij 2007, Tomioka 2007b, Oshima 2008). Adapting Büring's (1997) analysis of contrastive topics in German, Hara (2006), for instance, argues that sentences containing contrastive *wa* induces the presupposition that a scalar alternative stronger than the assertion exists and also the implicature that the stronger alternative could be false. Data considered in the literature, including those in Hara's works, involve predominantly cases where the subject bears contrastive *wa*. However, I believe that the analyses can be carried over to object *wa*-phrases. Thus, the implicature that arises from a sentence such as (8) can be explained as follows in accordance with Hara's analysis. A stronger scalar alternative to (8) is where the quantifier is a universal quantifier: John helped everyone. The implicature triggered by contrastive *wa* is that this stronger alternative could be false, namely it is possible that John did not help everyone.

    (8)   John-ga   NANNINKA-WA   tasuketa
           John-nom   some.people-wa helped
           'John helped some people.' (Implicature: 'John did not help everyone.')

    Hara argues that the analysis can be extended to non-quantified DPs. Uttered in a context where Mary and Bill are the only salient candidates for individuals being helped, the sentence in (9) has the implicature that John did not help Bill.

    (9)   John-ga   MARY-WA   tasuketa
           John-nom Mary-wa   helped
           'John helped Mary' (Implicature: 'John did not help Bill.')

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[2] See Vermeulen (to app) for discusssion on the syntactic distribution of non-contrastive topics in Japanese in relation to the constraint in (7). In particular, there are instances in which a non-contrastive *wa*-phrase appears in a non-clause-initial position. I argue that such a *wa*-phrase is also not a topic.

Here, the stronger scalar alternative is that John helped both Mary and Bill. However, the speaker has just asserted that John helped Mary. The hearer can thus infer that the intended implicature is that John did not help Bill.

There are clearly differences amongst the analyses put forward in the literature listed above, but they all assume that contrastive *wa* generates some alternatives and it has a particular implicature with respect to the alternatives that are not selected. I believe that this kind of analysis does indeed capture the contrastive interpretation associated with contrastive *wa* and is therefore on the right track. However, crucially, there is nothing inherent in this kind of interpretation that makes contrastive *wa*-phrases contrastive 'topics'. In fact, some authors suggest that contrastive *wa* should not be treated as a marker for contrastive 'topic' (Hara 2006, Kuroda 2005, Oshima 2008, Yamato 2007). Nevertheless these authors make no distinction between contrastive *wa*-phrases in-situ and those in clause-initial position, which, as we saw in the previous section, does exist.

I claim that contrastive *wa*-phrases in clause-initial position receive the kind of contrastive interpretation proposed in the literature, but are interpreted in addition as a topic, i.e., as what the rest of the sentence is about. In other words, the topic interpretation and the particular contrastive interpretation are separate elements of the interpretation of 'contrastive topic'.[3] Contrastive topics are not usually described in terms of what the rest of the sentence is about. Nevertheless, the relevance of the notion 'aboutness' can be made explicit, as in the English translations of the leading utterances in (4) and (6), *I don't know about John, but...* and *I don't know about the pasta....* They indicate that the following utterances are going to be about an alternative subject and object, respectively. On the other hand, contrastive *wa*-phrases in-situ do not share the 'aboutness' reading. For instance, the example in (8) is not about *nanninka* 'some people'. Topics can usually be paraphrased as 'as for X...' (Reinhart 1982, Lambrecht 1994). However, such a paraphrase of (8) as 'as for some people, John helped them' does not make sense.

3.2   Contrastive *Wa*-phrases In-situ Can't Move

A second argument concerns the standard characterization that contrastive topics optionally move to clause-initial position. The constraint in (7) predicts that this movement is not optional. This is so because if a contrastive *wa*-phrase appears in-situ, it is not a topic, and there is therefore no trigger for its movement. The prediction is borne out and the point is illustrated here in three different contexts.

First, in answering a question like (10), the object can be a *wa*-phrase and may remain in-situ as in (11a). However, as (11b) shows, it is not possible to front it.[4] From the point of view of the discussion in the previous sub-section too, it does not make sense to say that *3-nin-wa* '3-people-

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[3] The idea that the interpretation of contrastive topic may be a composite of two elements of interpretation is not new. See, for instance, Vallduví & Vilkuna (1998), Molonár (2002) and Tomioka (2007b) for the idea that contrastiveness is independent of topicality. Wagner (2008) offers a slightly different decompositional approach to contrastive topics. He proposes that contrastive topics are a kind of focus with an additional meaning contributed by a particular prosody in languages such as English and German.

[4] Miyagawa (2006) notes that scrambling of an accusative object in a similar context is ruled out. Thus, one may wonder whether the example in (11b) is ruled out for an independent reason. However, if contrastive *wa* generally marks contrastive topics, and they optionally move to clause-initial position, and if the context set up by the question in (10) permits a *wa*-marked object in the answer, as in (11a), it should be possible to front it.

'wa' is a contrastive topic, as the sentence does not mean 'as for at least 3 people, John somehow rescued them.'

(10) dare-ga   ziken-genba-de   tasuke-no tetudai-o   sita   no
        who-nom   accident-scene-to   rescue-gen help-acc   did   Q
        'Who was helping with the rescue operation at the accident scene?'

(11) a. JOHN-GA   3-NIN-WA   nantoka   tasuketa
              John-nom   3-cl.-wa   somehow   rescuing.was
        b. #3-NINᵢ-WA   John-ga   nantoka   tᵢ tasuketa
              3-cl.-wa   John-nom   somehow   rescue
              'John somehow rescued at least three people.'

It is interesting to note that the example in (11b) is not ungrammatical, but the only interpretation available is one in which the fronted quantified object *3-nin* '3 people' receives a specific interpretation. Thus, it means something like 'as for those three specific people, John somehow rescued them.' This 'specific' reading is available for the contrastive *wa*-phrase in-situ. However, a non-specific reading, as indicated by the translation in (11), is not available if it is displaced to clause-initial position. Topics must usually be specific, as it is difficult to make a statement about something that is non-specific (Reinhart 1981). The fact that the fronted *3-nin* requires a specific interpretation is indicative of its topical status.

A second context is exemplified by (12). Here, the verb is marked with contrastive *wa* and is explicitly contrasted with a verb in another clause. As shown in (12b), it is not possible to move the verbs to clause-initial position. ((12a) is modified from Kuroda 1965: 60-61)

(12) a. [John-ga   sono hon-o   kai-wa   sita]-ga,
              John-nom   that book-acc   buy-wa   did-but
              [sonoba-de   sore-o   yomi-wa   sinakatta].
              there-at   it-acc   read-wa   did-not

        b. *[KAIᵢ-WA John-ga   sono hon-o   tᵢ sita]-ga,
                buy-wa   John-nom   that book-acc   did-but
              [YOMIⱼ-WA sonoba-de   sore-o   tⱼ sinakatta
                read-wa   there-at   it-acc   did-not
              'John bought that book, but he didn't read it there.'

I argue that the example in (12b) is ungrammatical because verbs cannot be interpreted as a topic. It makes little sense to say that the clauses are about '(to) buy' and '(to) read'. Nevertheless, one may wonder whether the example in (12b) is independently ruled out, because the verb, arguably a head, has been moved into a phrasal position, SpecTopP à la Rizzi (1997, 2004), for instance, rather than because verbs cannot be interpreted as contrastive topics. To circumvent this issue, one could nominalise the verb with the nominaliser *no*. A *no*-marked verb is a phrase: it can be case-marked and can appear in a phrasal position, as illustrated below, where it bears the accusative case marker *o*.

(13) John-wa   oyogu-no-o   tanosinde   sita.
        John-wa   swim-no-acc   with.enjoyment   did
        Lit.: 'John did swimming with enjoyment.' ('John enjoyed swimming.')

Such nominalised verbs can appear in-situ and be marked with *wa*, giving rise to the familiar contrastive interpretation, as illustrated by the example in (14a). However, as (14b) shows, it cannot be fronted. Thus, it seems that a verb alone, even nominalised, cannot be interpreted as a topic.[5]

(14) a. Bill-ga   sono hon-o   KAU-NO-WA   mati-de sita.
        Bill-nom   that book-acc   buy-nmz-wa   town-in did
        'Bill did buying of that book in town yesterday.'

    b. *KAU-NO-WA   Bill-ga   sono hon-o   kinoo   mati-de   sita.
        buy-nmz-wa   Bill-nom   that book -acc yesterday town-in   did
        Lit.: 'As for buying, Bill did that book yesterday in town.'

The final context illustrates a further peculiarity of contrastive *wa*, namely that the contrast it induces can be projected to a larger constituent (Kuno 1973). In (15a), *ame* 'rain' in the first clause and *kasa* in the second clause are marked by contrastive *wa*. However, what are contrasted are not the two nominals, but the events described by the two separate clauses. As demonstrated in (15b), the object *wa*-phrase in the second clause, *kasa-wa* 'umbrella-wa', cannot move to clause-initial position. ((15a) is modified from Kuno (1973: 46), attributed to Minoru Nakau (p.c.))

(15) a. [AME-WA hutteita]-ga   [John-ga KASA-WA   motte-ika-nakatta] (hanasi)
         rain-wa falling-but   John-NOM umbrella-wa bring-go-not.past   (story)

    b. #[AME-WA hutteita]-ga   [KASA$_i$-WA John-ga   t$_i$ motte-ika-nakatta] (hanasi)
         rain-wa falling-but   umbrella-wa John-NOM   bring-go-not.past   (story)
        '(The story that) It was raining, but John did not bring an umbrella.'

Thus, contrastive *wa*-phrases do not optionally undergo movement to clause-initial position. They obligatorily move if they are contrastive 'topics', and they must remain in-situ if they are not contrastive topics.

3.3   Contrastive Topics at the Syntax-Information Structure Interface

The final argument concerns a constraint on the syntactic distribution of contrastive topics that derives from considerations at the interface between syntax and information structure. It is well-known that at the level of information structure, a focus-background structure can be contained

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[5] What seems minimally required for a constituent headed by a verb to function as a contrastive topic is a VP, though that still must be nominalised. Thus, a verb marked with *no* together with the object can be fronted:
    (i)   [sono hon-o   KAU-NO]$_i$-WA   Bill-ga   mati-de   t$_i$ sita.
           that book-acc   buy-nmz-wa   Bill-nom   town-at   did
           Lit.: 'as for buying that book, Bill did it in town.'
It is not the case that *no* nominalises VPs rather than Vs alone, which may provide an alternative explanation for the unacceptability of (14b). It is possible for at least some speakers to have a sentential adverbial such as *kinoo* 'yesterday' between the object and the nominalised verb in (14a), indicating that the VP has not been nominalised.

in the comment of a topic, but a topic-comment structure cannot be part of the background of a focus, as schematised below.

(16) *Information Structure*

    a. topic   [$_{comment}$ FOCUS   [$_{background}$... ...]]
    b. *FOCUS [$_{background}$ topic   [$_{comment}$ ... ...]]

In relation to how such constraints may be represented in the syntax, Rizzi (1997) and Neeleman & van de Koot (2008) have argued that the sister constituent of a fronted topic is interpreted as the comment, while the sister constituent of a fronted focus is interpreted as the background:

(17) *Syntax – Information structure Mapping*

    a. XP_i [$_{YP}$ t_i]   b. XP_i [$_{YP}$ t_i]
         |
      Topic   comment   Focus   background

The two considerations in (16) and (17) together make predictions regarding the syntactic distribution of topics and foci with respect to each other, namely that a focus can follow a fronted topic, as it can be placed inside a comment, but a topic cannot follow a fronted focus, as the topic would be inside a background, as illustrated in (18). Neeleman & van de Koot (2008) show in detail that these predictions are borne out for Dutch. Moreover, the general cross-linguistic observation that topics tend to precede foci also partially confirm the predictions (Hajičová, et. al. 1998).[6]

(18) *Syntax*

    a. $topic_i$ [$_{YP}$ FOCUS t_i]
    b.   * $FOCUS_i$ [$_{YP}$ topic t_i]

At first sight, the predictions, particularly the one in (18b), appear superfluous in Japanese, because topics must independently occupy clause-initial position, according to the constraint in (7). However, examples involving contrastive topics in embedded clauses demonstrate that the prediction in (18b) is correct. More importantly, only those contrastive *wa*-phrases in clause-initial position display the predicted distribution of 'topic'.

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[6] There are significant differences between Rizzi's and Neeleman & van de Koot's accounts. For Rizzi, movement of topics and foci is triggered by the syntactic topic- and focus-features, respectively, and the schema in (17) applies to both overt and covert movement. By contrast, Neeleman & van de Koot propose that the transparent mapping illustrated in (17) motivates movement of topics and foci in overt syntax and thy do not move covertly, at least not in order to feed into the mapping to information structure. Thus, the predictions in (18) follow only on Neeleman & van de Koot's account. For comprehensive discussion on this point, see Neeleman & van de Koot's (2008).

First, it is possible for embedded clauses in Japanese to contain a contrastive topic, as shown in (20). An appropriate context is provided in (19), which forces *kono CD* 'this CD' to be interpreted as a contrastive topic: it shifts the topic of discourse from a book.[7]

(19) John finds a book on Sue's desk and he asks Bill to tell him something about the book, perhaps with the intention of finding out where Sue obtained the book. Bill does not know anything about the book, but he knew how Sue obtained a CD that was also on the desk. So, he decides to tell John about the CD. In describing this situation, you utter (20).

(20) Bill$_j$-wa [$_{CP}$ KONO CD$_i$-WA Mary-ga   kare$_j$-no mise-de Sue-ni   t$_i$ ageta to]   itta.
     Bill-wa   this CD-wa   Mary-nom he-gen shop-at Sue-to   gave that   said
     'Bill$_j$ said that as for this CD, Mary gave it to Sue in his$_j$ shop.'

Independently, a focus can move out of an embedded clause to sentence-initial position. Such long-distance movement of focus is most natural when it corrects some previously uttered information. Thus, following the statement in (21), it is possible to utter (22), correcting that the recipient of the CD was Sue and not Jane.

(21) Bill$_j$-wa   [$_{CP}$ Mary-ga   Jane-ni kono CD-o   kare$_j$-no mise-de ageta to]   itta
     Bill-wa   Mary-nom Jane-to this CD-acc   he-gen   shop-at gave that   said
     'Bill$_j$ said Mary gave this CD to Jane in his$_j$ shop'

(22) Tigau-yo,   SUE$_i$-NI Bill$_j$-wa
     incorrect-prt, Sue-to   Bill-wa
     [$_{CP}$ Mary-ga   t$_i$ kono CD-o   kare$_j$-no mise-de ageta to]   itta   (ndayo)
        Mary-nom   this CD-acc   he-gen shop-at gave that   said (prt)
     'No, it's to Sue that Bill$_j$ said that Mary gave this CD in his$_j$ shop.'

The precise prediction that follows from (18b) is that it should be impossible to combine the two operations that we have just seen, namely having a contrastive topic inside an embedded clause and to move a focus from within the embedded clause to sentence-initial position. This is so, because this would result in a structure like the following, where the contrastive topic would be contained inside the background of the moved focus.

(23) *Foc$_i$ [... [$_{CP}$ Top$_j$ ... t$_i$ t$_j$ ...]]
                $\underbrace{\qquad\qquad\qquad}$
                    Background

The prediction is borne out. In correcting the statement in (24), it is not possible to utter (25), where *kono CD-wa* 'this CD-wa' is the contrastive topic inside the embedded clause and the

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[7] What is crucial in allowing a contrastive topic inside an embedded clause is that the implicature of contrastive *wa*, discussed in Section 3.1, is attributed to the matrix subject. Hara (2006: Ch.3) observes that the implicature of an embedded contrastive *wa*-phrase can be attributed either to the matrix subject or the speaker when the embedding verb is an attitude predicate: the speaker or the matrix subject can believe that a stronger alternative could be false. In the context in (24)/(25), the uncertainty about the alternative item *book* is attributed to the matrix subject *Bill*, not to the speaker.

focus *Sue-ni* 'to Sue' has moved out of the embedded clause to the initial position of the embedding clause. (26)schematically illustrates the point.

(24) Bill$_k$-wa [$_{CP}$ Mary-ga   Jane-ni kono hon-o   kare$_k$-no mise-de   ageta to]   itta
Bill-wa   Mary-nom Jane-to this book-acc he-gen shop-at   gave that   said
'Bill$_k$ said that Mary gave this book to Jane in his$_k$ shop.'

(25) Tigau-yo,   Bill-wa   sono hon-nituite-wa sira-nakat-ta-ga...
incorrect-prt   Bill-wa   that book-about-wa know-not-past-but
'No, Bill didn't know anything about the book, but...'
*SUE$_i$-NI Bill$_k$-wa [$_{CP}$ KONO CD$_j$-WA Mary-ga   kare$_k$-no mise-de t$_i$ t$_j$ ageta to]   itta.
Sue-to Bill-wa   this CD-wa   Mary-nom he-gen shop-at   gave that   said
Lit.: 'it's to Sue that Bill$_k$ said that as for this CD, Mary gave it in his$_k$ shop.'

(26) * Foc$_i$ ...[$_{CP}$ XP-WA$_j$ ...   t$_i$ t$_j$ ...] (XP-WA = contrastive topic)

Crucially, the sentence is acceptable if the focus *Sue-ni* 'to Sue' remains in-situ, as shown by the example in (27) and schematised in (28), which is an available option in this type of correcting context:

(27) Bill$_k$-wa [$_{CP}$ KONO CD$_j$-WA   Mary-ga   kare$_k$-no mise-de SUE$_i$-NI t$_j$ ageta to]   itta.
Bill-wa   this CD-wa   Mary-nom he-gen shop-at Sue-to   gave that   said
'Bill$_k$ said that as for this CD, Mary gave it to Sue in his$_k$ shop.'

(28) ✓ ... [$_{CP}$ XP-WA$_j$ ... Foc t$_j$ ...]   (XP-WA = contrastive topic)

On the other hand, it is predicted that if the contrastive *wa*-phrase remains in-situ in the embedded clause, a focus can be fronted from within the embedded clause to sentence-initial position. This prediction is also correct. The sentence in (30) can be uttered in correcting the statement in (29), which contains a contrastive *wa*-phrase in-situ. The contrast between the examples in (25) and (30) is unexpected if all contrastive *wa*-phrases were contrastive topics.

(29) Bill$_j$-wa [$_{CP}$ Mary-ga   Jane-ni   sukunakutomo   3-NIN-WA
Bill-wa   Mary-nom   Jane-to   at.lesat   3-cl.-wa
kare$_j$-no mise-de syookai-sita   to]   itta
he-gen shop-at introduced   that said
'Bill said that Mary introduced at least three people to Jane in his shop.'

(30) $^?$Tigau-yo,   SUE$_i$-NI Bill$_j$-wa [$_{CP}$ Mary-ga t$_i$ sukunakutomo   3-NIN-WA
Incorrect-prt, Sue-to Bill-wa   Mary-nom at.least   3-cl.-wa
kare$_j$-no mise-de syookai-sita to]   itta-ndayo
he-gen shop-at introduced that   said-prt
'No, it is to Sue that Bill said that Mary introduced at least three people in his shop.'

(31) ✓ Foc$_i$ ...   [$_{CP}$ ... t$_i$ XP-WA ...] (XP-WA ≠ topic)

In sum, contrastive *wa*-phrases in-situ have a different set of properties from those in clause-initial position. They are not interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about and need not receive a 'specific' reading when containing a numeral quantifier. They cannot optionally move to clause-initial position and they are not subject to the syntactic distribution of topics predicted by independent interface considerations.

4. Conclusion

In the preceding sections, I have provided arguments that contrastive topics in Japanese, like non-contrastive topics, must appear in clause-initial position. This is contrary to the standard characterisation, where phrases marked with contrastive *wa* are generally considered contrastive topics and they are described as only optionally moving to clause-initial position. Specifically, in certain discourse contexts requiring a contrastive topic, the relevant contrastive *wa*-phrase must appear in clause-initial position. On the other hand, in contexts that allow a contrastive *wa*-phrase to remain in-situ, such a phrase cannot in fact undergo movement to clause-initial position. Thus, there is no optionality in the positioning of contrastive *wa*-phrases. Moreover, contrastive *wa*-phrases in clause-initial position and those in-situ show several differences in their interpretation and syntactic properties. Such differences are difficult to capture if contrastive *wa*-phrases are uniformly considered contrastive topics. In addition, the observations provided in this paper allow for a uniform account of contrastive and non-contrastive topics in Japanese: topics, contrastive or non-contrastive, are interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about, and must appear in clause-initial position.

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