

On the Semantics of Specificational Pseudoclefts and Comparative Correlatives*

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Abstract

The present article is concerned with the semantics of specificational pseudoclefts, particularly of the type discussed by den Dikken et al. (2000) with a full TP counterweight, which they dub “Type A” specificational pseudoclefts (hereafter type A SPCs, following den Dikken et al.). We review Nishiyama’s (2009) claims on the semantics of copula sentences and observe Nishiyama’s failure to capture the semantic nature of the Type A SPCs. Through a lack of appreciation of den Dikken et al.’s Type A SPCs, Nishiyama (2009) fails to provide a semantic account of a certain *wa*-copula construction in Japanese (such as *Obama wa daitooryoo da*) being a Type A SPC, only being cognizant of its predicational interpretation. We will see that this interpretative failure in *wa*-construction would result in the misconception of the semantic aspect of the *hodo*-construction in Japanese that can work as a Type A SPC. Once we accept that *wa*-constructions of the above type can be considered as Type A SPCs, it follows that *hodo*-constructions can, too, making it possible to interpret Japanese comparative correlative constructions as a type of Type A SPC. Moreover, we will see that Nishiyama’s (1997; 2008; 2009 among others) “NP involving a variable” with the variable being restricted only to an NP can be amended such that the variable can accommodate not only an NP but also an AP and a CP. This amended “NP involving a variable” renders a plausible semantic interpretation of Japanese comparative correlative constructions.

Key Words & Phrases

Specificational Pseudoclefts, Copula Sentences, Nishiyama’s “NP involving a Variable”, Japanese Comparative Correlatives

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1. Introduction

The present article is concerned with the semantic nature of specificational pseudoclefts exemplified below in (1) and how we can extend this into the analysis of the semantics of comparative correlatives exemplified in (2), under the assumption made by Iwasaki (2011) that the comparative correlative is a type of specificational pseudocleft¹:

(1) What I don't eat is food for the dog. (Declerck 1988: 69)

(2) The more that you eat, the fatter you will be.

Iwasaki (2010, 2011) argues that the first clause of comparative correlatives comprises an antecedent, *the more* in (2), and a restrictive relative clause, *that you eat* in (2) with *that* being a relative pronoun. (See also the cited literature in Iwasaki (2010, 2011).) Furthermore, Iwasaki (2011) argues that there is a covert *is* between the two clauses of the comparative correlative. These are schematized as follows:²

(3) [The more [RC that you eat]], *is* the fatter you will be. (RC=restrictive Relative Clause)

In the present paper, on the basis of the syntactic structure as in (3), we will make the characterization of the comparative correlative more precise, arguing that it is not only a copula structure holding a covert copula verb between the two clauses, but also it is semantically a type of specificational pseudocleft sentence.

The connectivity between two clauses of Specificational Pseudoclefts (hereafter SPCs) is mentioned in Massam (1999) and den Dikken et al. (2000). Massam argues that what she calls *thing is* construction (hereafter T-i construction, following her notation) exemplified in (4) below has some similarities to (as well as differences with) a type of specificational pseudocleft (hereafter SPC), whereas den Dikken et al. (2000) argues that there are two types of specificational pseudocleft, one of which has a TP in the complement of the copula.³

(4) (a) The problem is, is that we can't find the evidence. (Massam: 335)

(5) (a) What John did was [TP he bought some wine].

(b) ?What John didn't do was [TP he didn't buy any wine]. (den Dikken et al.: 2000: their (8a), (9a))

Den Dikken et al.'s examples of binding relations and bound-variable relations (among others) are,

1 As Iwasaki (2011) acknowledges, it is Marcel den Dikken (pers. comm.) who originally suggested a potential parallel between specificational pseudoclefts Type A of den Dikken et al. (2000) and comparative correlatives in Jamaican English. Iwasaki (2011) extends den Dikken's suggestion to the analysis of Standard English.

2 We put aside the internal structure of the second clause here.

3 Den Dikken et al. use the notation of IP, but we ignore the notational difference between the IP and the TP. Massam (1999) seems to focus on only the specificational pseudocleft with the copula complement being non-TP, given that she (p. 346) claims that "it is possible to reverse a PC [pseudocleft] construction". However, as we will see later in the text, the reversibility is true only about the non-TP-complement SPCs but not about the TP-complement counterparts.

as they argue, indicative of the connectivity of the clauses. (Regarding the debate on “connectivity,” see the literature cited in den Dikken et al. (2000).) The bottom line of the connectivity effect is that, despite the *prima facie* lack of c-command relations, binding relations and bound-variable relations and alike are eligible to occur, which are otherwise unable to originate without the licensing condition of c-command relation. This connectivity effect can occur in comparative correlatives, which indicates that they are a part of SPCs (in support of Iwasaki (2011)). Consider the following instances.

(6) (a) The more money (that) you_i save now, the better (that) it will be for you_i/yourself_i in the future.

(b) The harder (that) everyone_i works, the higher (that) [his or her]_i salary will be.

The data in (6a) means that the connectivity effect makes it possible for the reflexive anaphor *yourself* to be bound by the antecedent *you*, in spite of the lack of the c-command relation.⁴ The data in (6b) shows that bound-variable relation is possible between the first clause and the second in comparative correlative, albeit *you* does not c-command *yourself*. These data are in support of Iwasaki’s (2011) hypothesis that the comparative correlative construction is a type of specificational pseudocleft.

The possible question that arises about the structural postulation in (3) is that the antecedent has no external theta role, since the copula has usually no theta role to assign.⁵ In the present paper, we argue that the comparative correlative is a type of specificational pseudocleft with the first clause functioning semantically as a proposition function (adopting Nishiyama’s (1997; 2008; 2009 among others)) hypothesis of “NP involving a variable”) and therefore that the first clause has no theta-role to receive.⁶

The principal aim of the present article is to elucidate the semantic nature of the first clause of the comparative correlative as such a proposition function with a variable to be satisfied. Massam (1999: 340) also observes (on T-i constructions and SPCs) that in both of them “the counterweight specifies the focused property left empty in the setup clause”, assuming that the counterweight is a constituent in the complement of the copula and that the setup is a constituent in the specifier of the same copula. Moreover, Massam (1999) observes, drawing from Akmajian (1970), that “the Wh-clause of the clefted sentences contains a semantic valuable (bound by the Wh-word) and this variable is specified by the focused postcopular item” (Massam 1999: 340) and relying upon Bošković (1997) that “the counterweight moves covertly (i.e. at the levels of Logical Form, or LF) into the set up clause, replacing the Wh-word” (Massam 1999: 347). Massam further assumes

4 Chris Cummins (pers. comm.) suggests that *yourself* seems to appear in unbound locations in some registers. Lucas Sinclair (pers. comm.) suggests a similar possibility in that *yourself* may be grammatical perhaps only if the reflexive pronoun is functioning as an emphatic.

5 I am grateful to Andrew Radford (pers. comm.) for originally suggesting this.

6 Paul (2010: 227) observes that “the headless relative in a specificational clause is a predicate and therefore does not receive a theta-role.” The question of whether the first clauses of Type A specificational pseudoclefts (cf. Den Dikken et al. (2000)) and comparative correlative constructions are predicates or not is a question put aside for future research.

that “it [=the counterweight] then reconstructs back to the position of the variable”. She argues that this series of movements (cited as above) is the source of connectivity/connectedness effects. Thus, Nishiyama’s notion of the “NP involving a variable” is not particularly novel, nor is it isolated to the works of semantics of the relevant sentences.

The organization of the present manuscript is as follows. In section 2, we classify the relevant structures on the basis of the preceding literature. In section 3, we examine Nishiyama’s (2009) semantic and pragmatic interpretation of copula sentences from the perspective of den Dikken et al.’s (2000) Type A SPCs and attempt to offer an alternative interpretation accounting for the data that Nishiyama (2009) fails to capture. In section 4, we discuss Japanese copula sentences from the viewpoint of Type A SPCs of den Dikken et al. (2000) and further extend this analysis to *hodo*-clauses, assuming that these are a type of “非標準の指定文”(non-standard specificational sentence) in the sense of Nishiyama (2009). In section 5, some remarks on the syntactic analysis of specificational pseudoclefts are presented. In section 6, we summarize our arguments.

2. Classification of relevant structures

Nishiyama (2009: 84) argues that the sentence (1) (repeated here as (7) below) has three interpretations.

(7) What I don’t eat is food for the dog. (Declerck 1988: 69)

He classifies these interpretations into two groups; one in which the sentence is a pseudocleft sentence⁷ and the other in which *what I don’t eat* is a free relative clause containing an antecedent. Nishiyama argues that the latter free relative clause interpretation admits two distinct readings, treating (1) either as a predicational or a specificational sentence. In the former case, he suggests, *what I don’t eat* is paraphrased as *that which I don’t eat*, and this pragmatically means *something left after I eat*. In the latter case, according to him, *what I don’t eat* is “an NP involving a variable”⁸ representing the proposition function of the following:

(8) [x is what I don’t eat] (Nishiyama 2009: 84)

Nishiyama (ibid) claims that the referent of *food for the dog* specifies the value of the variable.⁹ The

7 Nishiyama (2009) uses the terminology “specificational sentence” which is distinct from pseudoclefts.

Regarding the first interpretation, as Nishiyama argues, a pseudocleft sentence means the outcome of splitting the sentence as below: i.e. separating the verb from its complement.

(i) I don’t eat food for the dog.

8 See Nishiyama (2008) for this terminology in English. See also Nishiyama (1997).

9 Thus, Nishiyama (2009) presumably presupposes that *food for the dog* is referential. Notice, however, that the natural interpretation for (1), as Chris Cummins (pers. comm.) suggests, is *The food I don’t eat is used to feed the dog*, which makes it attributive rather than referential, although (1) could still have a referential interpretation, inasmuch as it could be uttered in a context such as “Well, normally I would eat anything, but...” Notice also that (1)’s complement of the copula verb is not *the food for the dog* but *food for the dog* [without an article], and thus it appears debatable whether *food for the dog* is referential. Moreover, from a theoretical perspective, there is no *a priori* reason to suppose that what satisfies the function (regarding the NP with a variable) has to be referential.

gist of the above classification can be summarized as below (from Nishiyama (2009: 85)):

(9) (a) Pseudocleft Sentence

(b) (i) free relative clause + predicational sentence

(ii) free relative clause + specificational sentence

Nishiyama (2009: 85) notes that, whereas the interpretation of (9a) means that *food for the dog* is the “object” (i.e. complement in syntactic terminology) of the verb *eat*, what the reading (9b) leads to is that the “object” (i.e. complement) of the verb *eat* is not *food for the dog* but an antecedent included internally in the free relative. He further claims that only upon the reading of (9bii), (1) can be paraphrased as:

(10) Food for the dog is what I don't eat.

Moreover, Nishiyama (2009) critiques Declerck (1988) and Yasui (1995: 61-62) on the ground that they do not distinguish the reading of (9a) and that of (9bii).

Den Dikken et al. (2000) adopt the commonly-accepted dichotomy between predicational pseudoclefts and specificational pseudoclefts (hereafter SPCs, following their abbreviation) from Higgins (1979). Den Dikken et al. (2000) further classifies SPCs into “Type A” and “Type B” according to the criteria that Type A has a full TP as post-copula complement whereas Type B has a non-TP complement (such as a DP), that the reversed syntactic order comprising [counterweight < copula < *wh*-clause] is possible in Type B but not in Type A and that the licensing of Negative Polarity Item is permitted in Type A but not in Type B (den Dikken et al. (2000)).

Regarding the syntactic order, they exemplify the following data.

(11) (a) A unicorn is what John seeks.

(b) *He bought some wine was what John did

The syntactic structure of (11a) is almost analogous to (10). (11b) is a reversed structure of the following (11a), which is slightly different from the contrasted (12b) below in terms of the distribution of pronouns ((12a): their (16a), (12b): their (15b)).

(12) (a) What John did was he bought some wine.

Cf. (b) ??What John bought was he bought some wine. [den Dikken et al. (2000); their judgments]

Den Dikken et al. (2000) suggest that the judgments of (12b) “vary in acceptability from case to case and speaker to speaker” but the present author considers this to be grammatical.¹⁰ Regarding the discussion on the NPI in these structures, see den Dikken et al. (2000).

Den Dikken et al. (2000) develop their semantic argument in depth, showing that a Type A structure has a Question-Answer pair structure semantically, as exemplified by the following Question-Answer pair:

¹⁰ Native speakers consulted by the present author judged the (12b) type grammatical.

(13) What did John buy? — [(he bought) some wine]

(den Dikken et al 2000 et al., their (12)) [brackets as in the original]

Building on this semantic basis, they further argue that *what John did* in (12b) is a question in nature, and that “the *wh*-clause in Type A SPCs is an interrogative, not a free relative” [italics in the original]. Thus, den Dikken et al.’s (2000) classification is summarized in table 1 below, while that of Nishiyama (2009) is summarized in table 2.

(14) (a) Table 1 Den Dikken et al’s (2000) classification of pseudocleft sentences

	Pseudocleft Sentences		
Type	Predicational Pseudocleft Sentences	Specificational Pseudocleft Sentences	
Sub-Type		<Type A>	<Type B>
Spec of Copula		Interrogatives	Free Relative
Compl of Copula		Full TP (reduced)	Non-full TP

(b) Table 2 Nishiyama’s (2009) classification of copula sentences

	Copula Sentences		
Type	Pseudocleft Sentence	Predicational Sentence	Specificational Sentence
Sub-Type			
Spec of Copula	?	Free Relative Clause	Free Relative Clause
Compl of Copula	NP	NP	NP <with a variable>

Notice that whereas den Dikken et al. (2000) follow the traditional assumption (indicated the common term “specificational pseudoclefts”) that specificational sentences can cover the same sentence structure that pseudocleft sentences do, Nishiyama (2009) separates specificational sentences from pseudocleft sentences. Moreover, den Dikken et al. (2000) argue that *wh*-clauses in specifier positions of the copula verb in specificational pseudocleft sentences are interrogatives, not free relatives, whereas Nishiyama considers that the counterparts in specificational sentences are free relatives.

Iwasaki (2011) contrasts Type A SPCs in English such as (15a) below and Comparative Correlatives in Japanese such as (15b) below.

(15) (a) [_{TOPP} [_{CP} what John bought] [_{TOP'} [_{TOP} was] [_{TP} ~~he bought~~ some wine]]]

(den Dikken et al. 2000: their (13)) [fonts and others modified; strikethrough added]

(b) [_{FP} [_{CP1} gakkoo-de watashi-ga benkyo-sure [_{C1} ba] [_{F'} [_{TP} ~~gakkoo-de watashi-ga benkyo-suru~~ [_F **hodo**]]]]]

(Iwasaki 2011: 49) [original typo amended; strikethrough added]

Iwasaki (2011) adopts the traditional assumption that under the Head parametric variation, Japanese has a Spec-Head-Complement linear order. This means that the full-TP counterweight in the “Type A” SPC in English (15a), which is in the Complement of the copula, syntactically corresponds to the Complement TP in (15b). Notice that the crucial parallel between (15a) and (15b) is that, in both of them, the Complement of the matrix projection has the reduplicated sentences with optional partial ellipsis, and that both of them without the ellipses are quite unacceptable (for most native speakers of each language) but still reasonably grammatical.¹¹

3. What is missing in Nishiyama (2009): Type A SPCs in the sense of den Dikken et al. (2000)

What Nishiyama (2009) fails to capture is the property of the often-reduced full-TP in the complement positions of the copula, which den Dikken et al. (2000) argue to be Type A SPCs. Recall (12b), whose TP can be reduced as in the following.

(16) What John bought was ~~he bought~~ some wine.

The strikethrough indicates covert constituents that underwent ellipsis. If we adopt the position of den Dikken et al. (2000), we can assume that there are covert constituents in the complement of the matrix copula, and hence a semantic interpretation corresponding to it. In contrast, if we adopt the position of Nishiyama (2009), we would assume that there is only one theoretical possibility of an NP in the complement of the copula, and there is such a semantic (as well as pragmatic) interpretation corresponding to it. Bearing in mind this distinction, we can interpret the sentence in (1) in the same ways. For den Dikken et al. (2000), (1) has an interpretation as a specificational pseudocleft with the full TP in the complement of the matrix copula.

(17) What I don’t eat is *I don’t eat* food for the dog.¹²

The italicized parts are covert constituents in (1) but syntactically (and semantically) can be posited. Since Nishiyama (2009) focuses only on the surface NP, i.e., *food for the dog*, he would not be able to assume such an interpretation as (17).

The failure of Nishiyama (2009) to capture the interpretation of Type A in the sense of den

11 In addition, Ishii (2008: 249) suggests that the following is ungrammatical.

(i) *Tabe-ta-ra	tabe-ta	hodo	futo-tta
eat-PAST-CONDITIONAL	eat-PAST	DEGREE	fat-PAST

‘The more I ate, the fatter I became.’

(ibid) [The English glosses and translation added]

This can be arguably predicted by the hypothesis in (15b), in which the constituent in the complement position is a TP, not a CP, given that “Agree and Tense features are inherited from C, the phase head...” (Chomsky 2008: 143-4). That is, a TP alone cannot accommodate a tense, so the sentence in (i) in which the constituent in the complement position has a tense, is ungrammatical.

12 In general, in “What I don’t eat is I don’t eat X”, X seems to be disambiguated in favour of the referential interpretation (Chris Cummins, pers. comm.).

Dikken et al. (2000) leads to his assertion that specificational sentences with free relatives can be paraphrased as (10), repeated as (18):

(18) Food for the dog is what I don't eat.

However, this reversibility is retained only with Type B SPCs in the sense of den Dikken et al. (2000). As we have seen, Type A SPCs cannot be reversed as in (18). Nishiyama's (2009) claim that *only* specificational sentences in his definition (as we confirmed in Table 2) are able to have this reversibility seems to show that Nishiyama (2009) does not distinguish the two readings of Type A and B SPCs.

Nishiyama (2009) critiques Declerck (1988: 69) and Yasui (1995: 61-62) for their arguments that pseudocleft sentences can undergo the inversion such as (18). Nishiyama claims that Declerck (1988: 69) and Yasui (1995: 61-62) confuse pseudocleft sentences with specificational sentences, and that only on the reading of a specificational sentence, such reversibility as (18) is made possible.¹³ Even this being so, it is necessary to further narrow the scope of this type of reversibility, adding the condition that not every specificational sentence but only Type B SPCs can be reversible. The implication drawn from this is, thus, that the reversibility is not a criterion for whether a sentence is a specificational sentence in the sense of Nishiyama (2009), given that the definition of specificational sentences in general should include both Type A and B SPCs in the sense of den Dikken et al (2000).¹⁴

4. Japanese copula sentences

4.1. *Ga* and *Wa* Copula Structures

Nishiyama (2009: 85-86) sketches the semantics of the following Japanese and English sentences.

- (19) (a) Daitooryoo wa Obama de-aru
 President TOP (IC) Obama COP (ULA)
 'The President is Obama.'
- (b) Obama ga daitooryoo de-aru
 Obama NOM(INATIVE) President COP (ULA)
 'Obama is (the) President.'¹⁵ [Specificational Sentence]

(Nishiyama 2009: 85-86) [the English glosses added, EI]

Nishiyama's (2009) semantic interpretations of these sentences are as follows. First, in regard to

13 However, to be fair to Declerck (1988) and Yasui (1995), it should be noted that regarding specificational sentences as being pseudoclefts at the same time is common, as seen in den Dikken et al. (2000). Furthermore, if these two structures need to be classified explicitly, the merits of such a classification must be clearly stated. I see no *a priori* reason for assuming such a dichotomy, hence finding Declerck (1988) and Yasui (1995) still tenable.

14 This would be the case with specificational sentences not only in English but also in Japanese.

15 I add the curve brackets to the original, since *President* in copula complements usually appear without entailing any article.

(19a), this has two readings as predicative and specificational sentences. On the reading of a predicational sentence, *President* refers to a specific person whose name is *Obama*. On the reading of a specificational sentence, as Nishiyama (2009: 86) suggests, it has the semantic interpretation such as *who is the president? —The president is Obama*.¹⁶ On the latter reading, Nishiyama (ibid.) suggests, (19a) can be paraphrased as (19b). Nishiyama (ibid.) further contends that (19b)'s English reading also has the reading as a predicational sentence, as below in Japanese.

(20) Obama wa daitooryoo de-arū [Predicational Sentence (in Nishiyama)]

Obama TOP(IC) President COP

'Obama is (the) President'

Moreover, it seems worth mentioning Nishiyama's (2009) remark that Japanese language seems to have an advantage (over other languages) of being able to express essentially distinct copula sentences (i.e. specificational sentences and predicational sentences) in/by different forms such as (19b) with *ga* and (19a) with *wa*, given that English copula sentences such as *Obama is (the) President* sentences potentially could mean either specificational sentences or predicational sentences.¹⁷ Nishiyama's assumption here seems to me to be that Japanese *wa*-copula sentences with presumably referential subjects are predicational sentences, thus producing no ambiguity. This would only hold if the sentences like (20) had no interpretation of specificational sentence.

However, (20) does have an interpretation as a specificational sentence as below.

(21) What/who Obama is, is ~~he is~~ the President.^{18/19}

16 As is obvious from this, Nishiyama (2009) recognizes the background meaning of specificational sentence, i.e. question of a question-answer pair. (See also Nishiyama (2008: 15) for his relevant claim.) However, he considers wh-clauses in specifier positions of matrix copula verbs as free relative clauses, rather than interrogatives. It seems to me that it would be more appropriate, following den Dikken et al. (2000), treat these wh-clauses as interrogatives.

17 Lucas Sinclair (pers. comm.) suggests the following data with boldface marking sentence stress, i.e. Focus.

Speaker A: Who is the President?

Speaker B: (i) **Obama** is the President.

(ii) *Obama is the **President**.

(iii) **Obama** (is).

(iv) *The President.

He also suggests that the given information in question and answer pairs cannot receive sentential stress (as stress marks the focused/new element), and that if the context question is changed to *Who is Obama?*, then all of the judgments will be reversed. He further suggests that in either case, stress on the right would mark a predicational sentence. Thus, in English it is possible to mark the different copulas.

18 Needless to say, *what/who Obama is* is non-referential (although *Obama* is referential) and thus there is no incompatibility with Nishiyama's (2009) observation that NPs with variables are non-referential even if one assumes *what/who Obama is* is such an NP. With regard to *the President*, this can be both referential and non-referential. Consider the following (i).

(i) The problem is what we have to identify.

This has two interpretations, at least.

(iia) What the problem is, is what we have to identify.

[<http://languageglog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=3361>] (as of 2011/09/07)

(iib) We have to identify the problem.

Upon the reading of (iia), we can say that (i) is a specificational sentence in an implicit way (in the sense that the subject is *prima facie* not a wh-clause), with the complement being non-referential. Thus, it is legitimate that the complement of the copula verb in the specificational sentence can be non-referential.

19 Massam (1999: 338-9) calls the sentence in (i) below "the embedded question type":

(i) Who Poirot is, is none of your business.

Her sentence above is, however, different from (21) in the text as the complement of the copula verb is a TP with the optional ellipsis in (21) but is a nominal phrase of some sort in (i).

The interpretation that this schema designates is: *who is Obama—he is in fact the President*. The interpretation of (21) is possible, however, about (20)’s Japanese sentence, and it follows that (20) is eligible to have the reading as a specificational sentence. Pragmatically, the specificational reading of (21) is exemplified by the following situation: if someone should not know the name *Obama* somewhere in the world, then we could say the utterance of (21) as a specificational sentence. To sum up the argument thus far, it is possible for *wa*-construction (when with a *prima facie* referential but *de facto* non-referential subject²⁰) to have the reading of specificational sentence.

4.2 *Hodo*-clause as a “non-standard specificational sentence” in the sense of Nishiyama (2009)

Heretofore, we have discussed Japanese copula constructions with *wa* and *ga*. In this section, we further argue that *hodo*-sentences exemplified by (22) below are copula constructions, in particular, specificational sentences or Type A SPCs. (See Iwasaki (2011) for the argument that English comparative correlatives are a type of Type A SPC.)

- (22) Kanemochi **hodo** Kechi da
 The-rich **DEGREE** thrifty COP
 ‘The richer one is, the more thrifty’

(Iwasaki 2011: 47) [with some modifications]

We hypothesize that *hodo* in this type of construction is akin to *wa* in Type A SPCs.

Nishiyama (2009: 86, fn. 3) notes that the notion of “非標準の指定文”(a non-standard specificational sentence)²¹ can be applicable to non-nominal predicative sentences such as below.²²

- (23) (a) Hanako-ga Kawaii
 Hanako-NOM. cute
 ‘Hanako is cute.’
 (b) Taroo-ga Shizukada
 Taroo-NOM quiet
 ‘Taroo is quiet.’

(Nishiyama, *ibid.*) [the English glosses and translation added to the original]

Notice that what follows the copula above are not an NP but an Adjective (or an AP: Adjectival

20 This means that *wa*-copula construction can either have a referential or a non-referential subject.

21 Nishiyama’s (2009: 81) “非標準の指定文” (non-standard specificational sentence) only exemplifies the case in which the complement of the copula is an adjective. In the text, we argue the case with the complements which are not only Adjectives but also CPs. After all, Nishiyama’s definition of the “NP involving a variable” derives from Higgins’s (1979) analysis of specificational sentences and, therefore, it is Higgins’s (1979) spirit in the analysis of specificational sentences (i.e. *what fills a certain condition* [in Nishiyama (2009) in reference to Higgins (1979)]), not Nishiyama’s (2009) formalization itself that we should be concerned with.

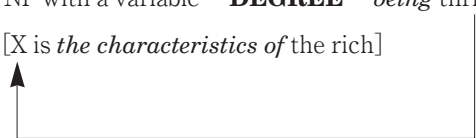
22 The use of *ga* in (23a, b) sounds, contra Nishiyama (2009), awkward to the author, in particular, in main clauses.

Phrase). With Nishiyama's (2009) explanations in mind, the reversed counterparts of (23a, b) are the following.

- (24) (a) *Kawaii no wa Hanako da.*
 cute COMP TOP Hanako COP
 'Who/what is cute is Hanako.'
- (b) *Shizuka na no wa Taroo da.*
 quite COP COMP TOP Taroo COP
 'Who/what is quite is Taro.'

The Adjectives *Kawaii* and *Shizuka* are of Type A SPCs and also have APs with variables, which satisfies the proposition function of the [X is what/who is cute] and [X is what/who is quiet] respectively and in (22a) X is *Kawaii*, and in (22b), *Shizuka*. Thus, variables can be not only Nominals but also Adjectives.

In precisely the same way, we can place Adjectives in *hodo* clauses which we consider to be Type A SPCs. For example, consider the *hodo* construction like the following with a variable X, adopting Nishiyama's (2009) framework/schematization of NP with a variable (by replacing a NP variable with an Adj variable).²³

- (25) *Kanemochi hodo Kechi da*
 NP with a variable **DEGREE** *being* thrifty COP
 [X is *the characteristics of the rich*]


Here, x is a variable of the proposition function of the [X is the state_i which_i you become t_i the richer you become]. Consequently, X is assumed to be *more thrifty*. At a semantic representation, it would be legitimate to say, quite loosely saying, that this is a self Question-Answer <*How will you become if/as you become richer?*>. Notice also since the part between the two square brackets is the proposition function, which is a semantic representation, neither syntactic nor phonological. Thus, it is sometimes necessary (and even legitimate) to add some supportive elements such as the italicized one above.

At this point, one might claim that (22)=(25) cannot be reversed with *ga*, which is possible in other specificational sentences;


- (26) **Kechi ga Kanemochi da*

However, as we saw, the reversibility is only a hallmark of Type B SPCs, and not Type A. This would


²³ Notice that I owe the original idea of the schematization of this type and of the proposition function to Nishiyama (2009 among others) and that this holds for other parts in the present text.

be plausible not only in English but also in Japanese. Thus, this type of criticism does not hold.

Thus far, we have argued that *hodo* constructions have variables whose values are not only nominals but also adjectives, which can be schematized as below, revising Nishiyama’s NP-with-a-variable schematization.

- (27) Syntax: [NP ...] hodo [NP/ADJP ...]
 Semantics: [... X ...] [NP/ADJ]


Given this, it may be conceivably possible to extend this analysis to the case with what follows *hodo* being a sentence (i.e., full CP). If so, (27) can be extended as follows.

- (28) Syntax: [NP ...] hodo [NP/ADJP/.../CP ...]
 Semantics: [... X ...] [NP/ADJ/.../CP]


Japanese comparative correlatives typically have not only *hodo* but also *ba*, and also a sentential complement of *hodo*, exemplified by the following.

- (29) (a) Benkyo-sure-**ba** Benkyo-suru-**hodo** motto [CP seeseki-ga agaru]
 study-do-**COND (ITIONAL)** study-do-**DEGREE** more marks-NOM(INACTIVE) increase
 “The more you study, the better grades you will get”

(Iwasaki 2011: 47) [emphasis in the original; the label of CP, brackets added]

Semantically, we can analyze the sentence in (29) with the NP with a variable which is satisfied by not only a NP but also a CP. Thus, the semantic implication of (29) is that *as you study more, what will you do?* or [X is the consequent state *as you study more*] and X is *you will get better grades*. This is compatible with Higgins’s notion of “*what fills a certain condition*” (in Nishiyama (2009) in reference to Higgins (1979) with the italics being in Nishiyama). This is also compatible with Iwasaki’s (2011) analysis (amending Iwasaki (2010)) that *...hodo* as a whole constitutes a DP, since the relevant notion here is a NP, which could be considered to be a DP.

5. Some remarks on the syntax of specificational pseudoclefts²⁴

Specificational pseudoclefts, according to Den Dikken et al. (2000: f.n.6), do not allow pied-piping of any sort.

“SPC [Specificational Pseudoclefts] forbid pied-piping of all types found in *wh*-questions

²⁴ See Borsley (2010) and cited literature there for the relevant issue.

—prepositions (*with whom*), lexical nouns and possessive's (*which* + NP, *what* + NP, *whose* + NP), adjectives (*how many*, *how likely* etc.)”

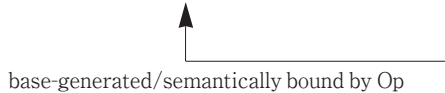
(den Dikken et al. 2000: fn. 6) [italics in the original]

It seems from this that *wh*-words which do not entail any covert complement (thus excluding *which*, *whose*, and so forth) can head the *wh*-clause in the specificational pseudocleft. Thus, it may be possible for such *wh*-words to be placed in a head position. Assuming *wh*-interrogatives are determiners which base-generate in D^0 and are semantically bound by the Operator, we have the following structure of specificational pseudoclefts in contrast with predicational pseudoclefts.

(30)

(I) Specificational Pseudoclefts

(a) [_{DP} [_D what_i] [_{CP} Op_i [_{TP} I don't want to eat t_i]]] is food for the dog.²⁵



(b) I don't want to eat X. [where X is not specific]

(II) Predicational Pseudoclefts

(a) [_{CP} what_i [_{TP} I don't want to eat t_i]] is food for the dog.

(b) I don't want to eat X. [where X is specific]

Notice that it is this Operator that serves as a variable which is to be specified/satisfied by a value in the counterweight. Notice also that it is this Operator that undergoes A' movement to Spec-CP. It should be noted that the free relative clause including an antecedent (such as (31a)) and the ordinary relative clause headed by its antecedent outside of it (such as (31b)) are to be structurally distinct, given that the former has the antecedent within it and the latter does not.

(31)

(I) The free relative (including an antecedent)

(a) [What John ate in Wivenhoe] was important to him.

(II) Ordinary relative clause headed by its antecedent

(b) [The thing {that / which} John ate in Wivenhoe] was a pizza.

If the analyses in (32a) and (32b) below were correct, it would mean that “free relative clause (=antecedent + restrictive clause)” is syntactically equivalent to “restrictive relative clause without the antecedent”, which is unreasonable.

(32) (a) [_{CP} What C^0 [_{TP} John T^0 ate in Wivenhoe]] was important to him.

(b) The thing [_{CP} which C^0 [_{TP} John T^0 ate in Wivenhoe]] was a pizza.

Alternatively, if we have the same analysis as (30a) for specificational pseudoclefts, then it would

25 The sentence is from Declerck (1988: 69), not the analysis.

mean that the clause except *what* in (33a) is equivalent to the restrictive clause in (33b).

(33) (a) [_{DP} [_D what_i] [_{CP} Op_i [_{TP} John T⁰ ate in Wivenhoe _{t_i}]]] was important to himself

(b) The thing [_{CP} which C⁰ [_{TP} John T⁰ ate in Wivenhoe]] was an Indian food.

This syntactic argument seems to bolster the validity of the analysis in (30a) where the semantic variable is represented syntactically as the Operator.

6. Concluding remarks

We have investigated the semantic nature of specificational pseudoclefts, in particular, a type that den Dikken et al. (2000) call Type A SPCs, which has a full TP in its counterweight. We critically assessed Nishiyama's (2009) argument on copula sentences from the viewpoint of this Type A SPCs of den Dikken et al. We confirmed that because of the lack of the interpretation of Type A SPCs, Nishiyama (2009) does not consider a certain *wa*-copula sentence (like (20)) as a specificational sentence, asserting that the sentence is an example of predicational sentences. Thus, the consequence of this is that under his interpretation of relevant sentences, it would be impossible to correctly interpret *hodo*-construction in Japanese as a Type A SPC. In other words, we argued that *hodo*-constructions that appear in Japanese comparative correlative constructions are Type A SPCs exactly in the same way as are the type of copula constructions above.

We also suggested that Nishiyama's NP involving a variable remains to be extended. His assumption is that the value of the variable in such a NP is only an NP, as well. However, we have argued that the variable takes not only NPs but also APs, CPs and so forth. It is this CP value that makes it possible to interpret Japanese comparative correlatives' *hodo* clause as a DP involving a variable. With this, we find that the semantics of Japanese comparative correlatives is compatible with Higgins's defining notion of SPCs, i.e. "*what fulfills a certain condition*" (Nishiyama (2008: 14), in reference to Higgins (1979)).

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