

A STUDY OF ONE JAPANESE ASPECT : THE *VERB+TE IRU* FORM AND ITS MEANINGS*

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Abstract

This paper discusses the meanings of the aspectual form *Verb+te iru*, in Japanese. Various *verb+te iru* forms can be categorized semantically into three classes: *continuing action*, *resulting state*, and *series*, with each representing different underlying forms.

Those underlying structures show semantically unique distinctive features, including the perfectivity of each verb with either a plus or minus value ([−perfective] for continuing action and [+perfective] for resulting state and series). The *-iru* form also carries semantic information about continuity and repetition in the underlying structure.

In the surface sentential representations various adverbs (including phrases and clauses) can determine what kind of underlying semantic structure a given *V+te iru* form has.

We consider three verb categories (activity, achievement, and accomplishment) to explain their relationship with the *V+te iru* form. Activity and accomplishment verbs have both [+perfective] and [−perfective] phases. If these verbs have [−perf] in the underlying form, they carry the meaning of continuing action in the form of *V+te iru*. If they have [+perf], they convey the meaning of either resulting state or series. Achievement verbs have only [+perf] value and convey the potential meaning of either resulting state or series.

Introduction

Since the time that Kindaichi (1950, 1955) set the postwar foundation for the study of Japanese tense and aspect in the middle of this century, many linguists, including Suzuki (1957, 1958), Fujii (1966), Takahashi (1969), Mikami (1972), Yoshikawa (1973), and Okuda (1985) have investigated the appropriateness of his categorization of Japanese verbs, the meaning descriptions of their various aspectual phenomena, and the relationship between tense and aspect in these

verbs.

This paper is primarily concerned with the meanings of the aspectual form *Verb+te iru*, leaving the taxonomy of the verbs themselves as a secondary matter. This paper will discuss these issues with respect to the following considerations:

- I) a discussion of semantic considerations for various types of combinations of the *Verb+te iru* form, which indicate roughly either the continuous aspect of actions or states;
- II) a justification of semantically unique structures for each *Verb+te iru* form, using underlying structures and distinctive features; and
- III) a discussion of what kind of verb [cf. Vendler's (1967) verb categories] can be involved in each *Verb+te iru* form, and on what sentential elements we based the meanings of this aspectual form on the surface level.

I) The *Verb + te iru* form and its meanings

The main goal of this section is to clarify the *Verb+te iru* form on the basis of semantic criteria. Fujii (1966) recognizes six different meanings for this aspectual form.

(1) *Continuing action*

Hon o yonde iru. '(I) am reading a book.'
book ACC reading

(2) *Duration*

Zitto site iru. '(I) am being still.'
still doing

(3) *Resulting state*

Ima wa kekkon site iru. '(I) am married now.'
now TOPIC be married

(4) *Experience*

Sudeni siriatte iru. '(We) already know each other.
already know each other

(5) *State*

Yama ga sobiete iru. 'The mountain rises high.'
mountain NOM rise high

(6) *Repetition*

Ima yuumeizin ga dondon sinde iru.
now celebrities NOM one after another dying
'Celebrities have been dying one after another lately.'

We assume that not all of these six categories are necessary because some categories are subsumed under others. The following discussion will demonstrate how some of these categories may be collapsed.

The first category, *continuing action*, refers to the ongoing movement of a certain action or event which is of a homogeneous nature. It is definitely necessary since all activity and accomplishment verbs [cf. Vendler (1967 : 107)] followed by the *-te iru* form can have this meaning.

The next necessary category is the third category, *resulting state*. It expresses a resulting condition after a certain change has taken place with respect to the agent. We discuss it now for clarity of explanation. In example (3), the event 'to marry' occurred at some time in the past and the resulting state 'to be married' continues up to the point of speaking. Similarly, the word *owaru* 'to finish' can also contribute the meaning of a resulting state in the form of *owatte iru* (*owar+te iru*). Many other verbs, especially those indicating achievements [cf. Vendler (1967 : 107)] fall into the same pattern with the help of the *-te iru* form. Thus, it is reasonable to retain this category for one of the meanings of the aspectual form in question. We turn now to the second category, *duration*. This category, as recognized by Fujii (1966 : 111)¹, is very similar to the first category in terms of the continuity of the original activity or event. Fujii, however, pays attention to the internal structure of the continuous state to differentiate the former from the latter. That is, Fujii considers duration to be *dooitu no zyootai no keizoku* 'continuity of the same state' while continuing action is *kokizami na undoo no renzoku* 'repetition of small discrete movements' (this definition is different from ours). On the other hand, our position is that example (2), *zitto site iru*² 'being still' could belong to the first category if the meaning of the continuous input of energy on the part of the agent is emphasized. In other words, both (1) and (2) share the same homogeneous quality of a continuous condition in which the agent's active effort keeps working.

Another example of Fujii's second category is *Tokei ga tomatte iru* 'The clock has stopped.' This example, however, does not seem to belong to either category (1) or (2) because it represents neither a progressive action (or event) nor the continuity of an unchanged state. Rather, it indicates a resulting state after the change (*tomaru* 'stop') of the agent, and this is characteristic of the third category. As mentioned earlier, achievement verbs are classical examples that fit the pattern of category (3) and *tomaru* turns out to be such a verb. Other verbs of Fujii's category (2), such as *syagamu* 'squat down,' *tatu* 'stand up,' and *suwaru* 'sit down,' also follow the pattern of category (3). Thus, Fujii's category (2) can be disposed with on the basis of the fact that all members may be assigned to either category (1) or (3).

We turn now to the fourth category, *experience*. As discussed in Ikegami (1981), category (4) is a particular case of category (3). Ikegami explains quite

convincingly that the former reading appears when the subject of a sentence is a human being. In addition, these two categories can be considered the same if we pay attention to their resulting states which continue to the present time. In other words, in (3), the event 'to marry' took place in the past and the resulting state 'to be married' continues up to the time of speaking; in (4), the event 'to get acquainted' occurred in the past and the resulting state 'to know each other' continues up to the present moment of speaking.

Fujii (1966: 105-112) comments that category (3) is compatible with such adverbs as *ima (wa)* 'now' and *genzai (wa)* 'at present' because the speaker's interest is on the present moment of state rather than on what happened in the past. In category (4), on the other hand, the speaker pays special attention to the past event rather than to the resulting state as it is at the present moment. The *Verb+te iru* form, therefore, may not be modified by the adverbs in question.

Ando (1982) questions this explanation saying that whenever the speaker uses the *Verb+te iru* form (instead of the perfective *Verb+ta* form), he presupposes the importance of the present resulting condition of the past event. Ando's criticism concerns the following examples from Fujii.

- (7) a. *Kare wa genzai kekkon site iru.* 'He is married now.'
 he TOPIC at present be married
 b. *Kare wa Syoowa 15-nen ni kekkon site iru.* 'He married in 1940.'
 he TOPIC Showa year in be married

According to Fujii, (7a) carries the meaning of a resulting state, whereas (7b) indicates an experience. Ando comments that if there were not much importance on the present resulting state in the *Verb+te iru* form of (7b) sentences such as (8), where both clauses express past events, should be perfectly grammatical.

- (8) ? *Kare wa Syoowa 15-nen ni kekkon site iru ga, kyonen rikon site simatta.*
 he TOPIC Showa year in be married but last year divorced
 'He married in 1940, but got divorced last year.'

We also observe that Fujii's judgment is not convincing. If we followed his judgment, sentence (9) would indicate a resulting state and (10) an experience.

- (9) *Ima (de) wa sitte iru.* '(He) knows (something) now.'
 now TOPIC know
 (10) *Sude ni sitte iru.* '(He) knew (something) already.'
 already know

Since the adverbs in these sentences are complementary, they should not be able to appear in the same sentence. They can, however, be used in the

same sentence without (much) awkwardness, as sentence (11) shows.

- (11) ? *Ima (de) wa (moo) sude ni sonna koto wa daredemo sitte iru.*
 now TOPIC already already such thing TOPIC everybody know
 'Lit. Now everybody knows such a thing already.'

Similarly, sentences such as *Ima (de) wa sude ni ame ga yande iru* '(lit.) Now rain is stopped already.' and *Ima (de) wa sude ni kare no byooki mo naotte iru* '(lit.) Now he is recovered from the disease already' are also possible. These pieces of evidence against Fujii lead us to believe that category (4) should not be separated from category (3), but should be, instead a part of it.

Fujii's fifth category is *state*. Obviously, sentences such as *Yama ga sobiete iru* 'The mountain rises high' include the *-te iru* form. The question is, however, if this *-te iru* form is a real aspectual form like the others we have examined so far. Okuda (1985 : 89) mentions that *sobiete iru* 'rise high' and *arihurete iru* 'be ordinary' lack the infinitive forms **sobieru* and **arihureru*, respectively. If the *-te iru* forms were real aspectual phenomena, they would such oppositional pairs. Okuda further states that verbs such as *iru* 'be' and *aru* 'be' by themselves do not qualify as aspectual phenomena either, since there are no oppositional pairs **ite iru* and **atte iru*, respectively. His point is that a single isolated verbal form does not constitute an aspect; an oppositional pair is minimally required.³ Let us illustrate his observations with the following chart.

Aspectual form A	Aspectual form B
<i>Kansei-soo</i> (perfective)	<i>Keizoku-soo</i> (progressive)
<i>aruku</i>	<i>aruite iru</i>
<i>aru, iru</i>	<i>*atte iru, *ite iru</i>
<i>*sobieru, *arihureru</i>	<i>sobiete iru, arihurete iru</i>

For Okuda, a 'complete' aspect needs both aspectual forms A and B. Thus, *aruku* 'walk' on the first line legitimately has aspect, but none of the verbs on the second or third lines does, since they are unevenly distributed. In passing, We should point out that his *kansei-soo* 'perfective' features a view of the situation as a single whole (his term is 'globality') without emphasis on the internal, separate phases of the situation [Comrie (1976 : 16) shares this view].

Okuda's explanation of the fundamental assumption of aspect is well taken, although his predecessors, including Kindaichi, Suzuki, Takahashi, and Yoshikawa, seem to have overlooked this rudimentary point. We thus accept Okuda's observation concerning oppositional aspectual pairs and consequently eliminate category (5), from our current list of aspectual meanings.

We move on to Fujii's final category, *repetition*. This category is related

to the first category in terms of a series of repetitive actions or events. The former, however, features a series of discrete actions or events, whereas the latter characterizes the homogeneous nature of the situation. Example (6) illustrates this category, and emphasizes the iteration of a discrete event, 'to die.' Achievement verbs such as *sinu* 'die,' *otiru* 'drop,' and *tuku* 'turn on' are classical examples which carry the meaning of repetition in the form of *Verb+te iru* most naturally.

This category can easily be expanded to correspond to the aspectual verb-type *series* of Freed (1979 : 53) [and Vendler's (1967 : 108) *habits*]. Freed defines series as:

an aspectual verb-type which has the temporal characteristics of either an activity, an accomplishment, or an achievement (or some states), which is considered to occur repeatedly or habitually. It therefore names an event that occurs repeatedly, each time containing (or consisting of) the onset and/or the nucleus and/or the coda characteristic of a single occurrence of that event as named by the activity, the accomplishment, or the achievement which corresponds to the series

The main difference between Freed and Fujii is that the former includes activity and accomplishment verb-types as well as achievement, which can carry the sense of a series. For example, *smoking* is an activity which has a temporal segment called the nucleus. However, Freed's example, *Ellen kept smoking despite the doctor's orders* has a consequence: *Ellen smoked repeatedly despite the doctor's orders*, and the verb, *smoking* is used as a series. As well, an accomplishment, *painting a picture*, can be used as a series in a sentence like, *He kept painting pictures*, since the sentence has a consequence: *He painted pictures repeatedly*.

Freed's observation can also be applied to the *Verb+te iru* form in Japanese.

- (12) *Kanozyo wa isya no tyuukoku o musu-site tabako o sutte iru.*
 she TOPIC doctor of advice ACC ignore cigarette ACC smoking
 'She keeps smoking in spite of the doctor's advice.'
- (13) *Kare wa yoku e o kaite iru.*
 he TOPIC frequently picture ACC drawing
 'He draws (paints) pictures frequently.'

Both *sutte iru* in (12) and *kaite iru* in (13) have the meaning of repetition or habit.

Having examined Fujii's six categories of meaning for the *Verb+te iru* form, we can reduce the number of categories to three. Let us summarize the features of these three categories.

- A) *Continuing action*: Some action or event which started in the past still continues at the time of the speech act.

- B) *Resulting state*: A past change of action or event is still in effect at the time of the speech act.
- C) *Series*: An action or event has occurred repeatedly or habitually up to the time of the speech act.

We will justify our position that these different meanings of the *Verb+te iru* form are attributable to different underlying forms in the immediately following discussion.

II) Underlying representations of the *Verb + te iru* form

In the preceding section we extracted three different types of meanings of the *Verb+te iru* aspectual form. Those three surface representations have unique underlying forms in terms of semantic characteristics. In the following discussion we will demonstrate the general abstract underlying formats of each type of aspectual form in question, and provide examples of derivations leading to the surface level.

A') Continuing action:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} / V \text{ (stem)} & + \textit{iru} & / \\ [-\textit{perfective}] & [+continuous] & \end{array}$$

e. g., /*kak + iru*/.....> [*kai-te iru*] '(I) am writing.'
te insertion

The second line shows the general underlying form of this category of meaning (between slashes), followed by an example of the derivation. In this example, the sequence of morphemes between the slashes to the left of the arrow is the level of the underlying form and the structure to the right of the arrow (in brackets) is the surface representation, through the transformation, *te* insertion. The general underlying form shows the semantic information where each feature is indicated with a plus or minus value. The feature, *perfectivity*, is used for classifying verbs and the aspectual form-*iru* (Since [+continuous] is a subdivision of [-perfective], only the former is indicated as the distinctive feature of the -*iru* form to avoid redundancy). The perfectivity indicates, as Comrie (1976 : 16) defines it:

the view of a situation as a single whole without distinction of the various separate phrases that make up the situation/Indicating the end of a situation is at best only one of the possible meanings of a perfective form.

He further (1976 : 19) defines an imperfective form, on the other hand, as one which 'pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation.' Imperfectivity is most typically subdivided into habitual and continuous. According to Mikami (1972 : 215) there are only a few imperfectives among the Jap-

anese verbs. He classifies only *zyootai doosi* 'state verbs,' [see also Kindaichi (1950)] such as *iru* 'be' and *aru* 'be' as imperfectives, while he classifies *keizoku doosi* 'continuous verbs,' *syunkan doosi* 'instantaneous verbs,' and *tokusyu doosi* 'special verbs' [i. e., those verbs which always take the *-te iru* form (e. g., *sugurete iru* 'be superior')] as perfective.

Unlike Mikami's dichotomy of verbs on the basis of perfectivity, we believe that many verbs have both aspectual phases of perfectivity and imperfectivity within themselves [see also Soga (1981)]. For example, *yomu* 'read' has a [-perfective] phase, which carries the potential meaning of the ongoing action of reading; and it also has a [+perfective] phase, indicating the potential meaning of the action of reading as a single whole. Therefore, the sentence, *Kare wa hon o yonde iru* 'He is reading a book/He has read a book,' has two readings as the translation shows. The first reading carries the [-perfective] phase, and the second the [+perfective] phase.

Having discussed perfectivity and imperfectivity, we account for the example of A'). The phrase, *kaite iru*, is actually ambiguous in isolation, meaning either 'be writing' or 'have written.' However, in this example, which indicates continuing action, *kaku* 'write' features [-perfective] phase with the help of *-iru*, which conveys the meanings of imperfectivity (continuity). Many expressions of the *V+te iru* form can be ambiguous, but in actual discourse situations, linguistic and/or non-linguistic contexts help to avoid confusion in communication. We will take up such linguistic contexts in section III.

All activity verbs and accomplishment verbs contain the value [-perfective]. Some of these activity verbs are *aruku* 'walk,' *naku* 'cry,' *warau* 'laugh,' *hasiru* 'run,' *nemuru* 'sleep,' *taberu* 'eat,' *oyogu* 'swim,' *huru* 'rain/snow,' etc. Some accomplishment verbs are (*e o*) *kaku* 'paint (a picture),' (*ie o*) *tateru* 'build (a house),' (*hon o*) *yomu* 'read (a book),' (*ryoori o*) *tukuru* 'cook (a meal),' etc. Note that we don't mean that those verbs followed by the *-te iru* form always carry the sense of continuing action (they may also carry a sense of resulting state depending on adverbs). We would like to emphasize that the meaning of the *V+te iru* form is not in a one-to-one correspondence with the meaning of verbs themselves.

B') Resulting state:

$$\begin{array}{c} / V \text{ (stem)} \quad + \quad iru \quad / \\ \text{[+perfective]} \quad \text{[+continuous]} \end{array}$$

e. g., / *kekkon-s* + *iru* / > [*kekkon-s-ite iru*]
te insertion

'(I) am married.'

The major difference between the general underlying forms of A') and B') is

that the former contains a verb marked [-perfective], while the latter is marked [+perfective]. Achievement verbs are typical examples which carry the semantic value of [+perfective]; e. g., *sinu* 'die,' *tuku* 'turn on,' *hanareru* 'go away,' *tomaru* 'stop,' *owaru* 'finish,' *wasureru* 'forget,' *sotugyoo-suru* 'graduate,' (*mono o*) *nakusu* 'lose (something),' (*kyoogi ni*) *katu* 'win (a game),' etc. Achievement verbs are not the only examples which have a [+perfective] value. Note that activity and accomplishment verbs also contain this value. Thus the activity verb *taberu* 'eat' has a [±perfective] value and is ambiguous in semantics when in the form of *V+te iru* suggesting the meanings of both A') and B') above. In that case there are two different underlying structure available as below.

1. / *tabe* + *iru* /.....> [*tabe-te iru*]
 [-perfective] [+continuous]
2. / *tabe* + *iru* /.....> [*tabe-te iru*]
 [+perfective] [+continuous]

Example 1 gives the reading of a progressive or continuing action of eating; '(I) am eating,' and example 2 carries the meaning of the resulting state after the action of eating; '(I) have eaten/(I) ate.' Those meanings of the *V+te iru* forms can often be enforced by adverbs (incl. phrases and clauses) in actual conversational contexts. If *ima* 'now' is placed in front *tabete iru*, the aspectual form definitely means the progressive action. If *zutto mae ni* 'long time ago' is inserted before *tabete iru*, the whole phrase unmistakably means the resulting state of the action.

C) Series:

As we recall, this category features a repeated or habitual action or event up to the point of the speech act. The verbs involved in this meaning are required to be marked [+perfective] and the aspectual form, *-iru*, has to have the imperfective ([+continuous]) feature. So far, this feature description is the same one as that of resulting states. However, as touched upon above, there is a clear semantic difference between a resulting state and a series. In order to describe the repetition of an action or event for a series, we must add one more feature, 'repetitive,' in the aspectual form of *-te iru*

3. / *oti* + *iru* /.....> [*oti-te iru*]
 [+perfective] [+continuous] 'to have dropped'
 [-repetitive]
4. / *oti* + *iru* /.....> [*oti-te iru*]
 [+perfective] [+continuous] 'to keep dropping'
 [+repetitive]

Examples 3 and 4 can be used respectively in such sentences as the following.

5. *Happa ga zimen ni otite iru.*
 leaves NOM ground on have fallen
 'The leaves have fallen on the ground.'
6. *Happa ga tugitugini otite iru.*
 leaves NOM one after another keep falling
 'The leaves keep falling one after another.'

Sentence 6 implies the repetitive action of leaves falling down one after another, while sentence 5 suggests no such repetition but a present condition after leaves fell on the ground in the past.

One might claim that sentence 6 can be categorized in our continuing action because the falling action of leaves keeps going on the point of speech act. However, recall that the aspectual form in 6 is not of a homogeneous character but each action is discrete, whereas our continuing action requires the homogeneity of the action or event. Yoshikawa (1973: 172) says that the verb *deru* 'go out' (and *otiru* 'drop') can mean *keizoku* 'continuity' (besides resulting condition) in the aspectual form of *dete iru*. Actually, as indicated above, *dete iru* also should be analyzed as a series of homogeneous action. Other verbs that can mean a series are activity verbs including *suu* 'smoke' and *hataraku* 'work,' achievement verbs such as *sinu* 'die,' *tuku* 'turn on,' and accomplishment verbs including (*ronbun o kaku* 'write (a paper),' and (*hon o yomu* 'read (a book).')

We repeat the general formats as a means of summarizing our findings

A') Continuing action:

$$\begin{array}{c} / V(\text{stem}) + iru / \\ [-\text{perf}] \quad [+cont] \\ \quad \quad \quad [-rep] \end{array}$$

B') Resulting state:

$$\begin{array}{c} / V(\text{stem}) + iru / \\ [+perf] \quad [+cont] \\ \quad \quad \quad [-rep] \end{array}$$

C') Series:

$$\begin{array}{c} / V(\text{stem}) + iru / \\ [+perf] \quad [+cont] \\ \quad \quad \quad [+rep] \end{array}$$

III) The *V + te iru* form and its surface contexts

In the preceding section we examined the underlying forms of each meaning of the *v+te iru* form and found that they carried semantically unique distinctive features. We now examine the examples where a full sentential context is available and check what factors determine which underlying forms

are utilized for those sentences.

1. *Akira wa ima sono hon o yonde iru.*
 TOPIC now that book ACC reading
 'Akira is reading the book.'
2. *Megumi wa sudeni sono hon o yonde iru.*
 TOPIC already that book ACC have read
 'Megumi has read the book already.'

What is responsible for the different meanings of these sentences is the adverbs of each sentence. The adverb *ima* in 1 supports the explanation of the continuative action of *yomu* 'read,' whereas *sudeni* in 2 normally supports the explanation of the resulting state of reading which happened in the past. An accomplishment verb, *yomu* 'read' has two values for perfectivity. The adverb, *ima*, is the most typical vocabulary item for arousing the [-perfective] value of a verb, while *sudeni* normally goes with the [+perfective] value of a verb. Therefore, the *V+te iru* form in 1 and 2 has the underlying forms 1' and 2' respectively.

- 1'. / *yom* + *iru* /
 [-perf] [+cont]
 [-rep]
- 2'. / *yom* + *iru* /
 [+perf] [+cont]
 [-rep]

These representations demonstrate that two values of perfectivity of the verb stem, *yom*, differentiate one meaning from the other.

Also observe the following pair where an achievement verb is included.

3. *Senzyoo ni ooku no heisi ga sinde iru.*
 battlefield in many of soldiers NOM dead
 'Many soldiers are dead in the battlefield.'
4. *Ooku no heisi ga tugitugini sinde iru.*
 many of soldiers NOM one after another have died
 'Many soldiers have been dying one after another.'

The adverbial phrases in 3 and 4 determine the meanings of resulting state and series respectively. Since the verb, *sinu* 'die,' is [+perfective] it does not give the continuing action reading. There can be three-way ambiguity for the *V+te iru* form in isolation. Observe the following examples where proper contexts clarify the meanings of the aspectual form.

5. *Kare wa ima sake o nonde iru.*
 he TOPIC now ACC drinking
 'He is drinking sake now.'

6. *Kare wa tokkuni sake o nonde iru.*
 he TOPIC already ACC have drunk
 'He has drunk sake already.'
7. *Kare wa mainiti sake o nonde iru.*
 he TOPIC everyday ACC drink
 'He drinks sake everyday.'

Sentence 5 indicates the man's ongoing action of drinking which the speaker sees. Sentence 6 can give a situation where the speaker sees an emptied bottle of sake next to the drinker. Sentence 7 shows the drinker's habitual state and the speaker does not have to see him drinking at the moment of speech. Again, the adverbs in these sentences give the appropriate context for each aspectual form in question.

Adverbial clauses (besides the word and phrase levels) also work in the same manner to determine the proper context. An example follows.

8. *Kare wa, isya ga tomeru nimo kakawarazu, sake o nonde iru.*
 he TOPIC doctor NOM stop although ACC drink (ing)
 'He still drinks sake, although the doctor has stopped him.'

In certain cases adverbs alone cannot determine the proper meaning (and the underlying form) of the *V+te iru* form. Then some extra-linguistic information has to be brought in. For example, sentence 9 (which is very close to 8) is ambiguous.

9. *Kare wa, isya ga tometa nimo kakawarazu, mada sake o nonde iru.*
 he TOPIC doctor NOM stopped although still ACC drink(ing)
 'He {still drinks / is still drinking} sake, although the doctor stopped him.'

The *V+te iru* form in 9 can be either the ongoing action which occurs in the presence of the speaker, or the habitual state of the drinker as the translations imply. The decision is outside of the grammar (i.e., pragmatics). Since it is not within this paper's scope to deal with pragmatics, we will not pursue this point further.

IV) The *V+te iru* Form and Verb Categories

As has been mentioned earlier, setting up verb categories is not the major purpose of this paper. However, it is worthwhile discussing what relationships are involved between the meanings of the underlying structures of the *V+te iru* form and verb categories.

Okuda (1985: 91) makes claims to the effect that basically there are two kinds of realizations of meanings of *V+te iru* form; (1) continuing action and

(2) resulting state, and that consequently there should also be two verb categories to go with those aspectual meanings; (1) *keizoku doosi* 'continuous verbs' and (2) *syunkan doosi* 'instantaneous verbs.'

We will revise his categories as follows. In the first section we recognized the necessity of the third meaning category of the *V+te iru* form, *series*, which features the repetitive (or habitual) action (or event) of the verb involved. Also we feel the third verb category, *accomplishment* [cf. Vendler (1967)] is needed, which comprises activities that culminate in an endpoint; e. g., *en o kaku* 'draw a circle.'

We find Okuda's labeling of the verb categories somewhat misleading. His term [inherited from Kindaichi (1950)] *keizoku doosi* 'continuous verbs' seems to represent an aspect, continuity (the *V+te iru* form). If Okuda tries to reflect any aspect at all with this term, the name fails to convey another aspect, globality (the *V+ru* form). Instead, we suggest using *activity verbs* as Vendler does and as this paper has used. Similarly, it is not advisable to use the temporal relating term *syunkan doosi* 'instantaneous verbs' for this category, since he claims that the verb category represents change in an agent rather than a length of time. Therefore, we will continue to use the term *achievement verbs* instead.

As we have touched upon earlier, every verb for this aspectual study carries semantic information about perfectivity. Activity verbs such as *aruku* 'walk' and *nemuru* 'sleep' have both [+perfective] and [-perfective] phases. When those verbs have [-perf] in the underlying form they have the meaning of continuing action in the form of *V+te iru*. If they have [+perf] in the underlying structure they can contribute the meaning of either resulting state or series. Achievement verbs such as *tuku* 'arrive' and *umareru* 'be born' have only a [+perf] value and never have the meaning of continuing action in the *V+te iru* form. Accomplishment verbs such as (*tegami o*) *kaku* 'write (a letter)' and (*hon o*) *yomu* 'read (a book)' have both [+perf] and [-perf] phases. When those verbs have [-perf] in the underlying form they contribute the meaning of continuing action in the form of *V+te iru*. If they carry [+perf] they can indicate the meaning of either resulting state or series in the aspectual form in question.

CONCLUSION

We have investigated the following points.

- 1) Various *Verb+te iru* forms can be categorized semantically into three classes (i. e., *continuing action*, *resulting state*, and *series*) with each representing different underlying forms.

2) Those underlying structures show semantically unique distinctive features including the perfectivity of each verb with either plus or minus value ($[-\text{perf}]$ for continuing action and $[+\text{perf}]$ for resulting state and series). Also the *-iru* form carries semantic information about continuity and repetition in the underlying structure.

3) In the surface sentential representations various adverbs (including phrases and clauses) can determine what kind of underlying semantic structure a given *V+te iru* form has.

4) We considered three verb categories (activity, achievement and accomplishment) to explain their relationship with the *V+te iru* form. Activity and accomplishment verbs have both $[+\text{perf}]$ and $[-\text{perf}]$ phases. If those verbs have $[-\text{perf}]$ in the underlying form they carry the meaning of continuing action in the form of *V+te iru*. In the case of $[+\text{perf}]$ they convey the meaning of either resulting state or series. Achievement verbs have only $[+\text{perf}]$ value and convey the potential meaning of either resulting state or series.

As a summary the major points in this paper are illustrated in the schematic chart given below.

Meaning of the <i>V + te iru form</i>	Underlying form	Verb category
1. Continuing action	/ <i>V (stem) + iru</i> / $[-\text{perf}]$ $[+\text{cont}]$ $[-\text{rep}]$	Activity verbs $[\pm\text{perf}]$ <i>nomu</i> 'drink' <i>hasiru</i> 'run'
2. Resulting state	/ <i>V (stem) + iru</i> / $[+\text{perf}]$ $[+\text{cont}]$ $[-\text{rep}]$	Accomplishment verbs $[\pm\text{perf}]$ (<i>tegami o kaku</i>) 'write (a letter)' (<i>ie o tateru</i>) 'build (a house)'
3. Series	/ <i>V (stem) + iru</i> / $[+\text{perf}]$ $[+\text{cont}]$ $[+\text{rep}]$	Achievement verbs $[+\text{perf}]$ <i>tuku</i> 'turn on' <i>sinu</i> 'die'

Notes

- * I would like to acknowledge the helpful comments of Dr. James McCawley (The University of Chicago) and Stella Mentel Yamazaki (Truman College) on earlier drafts of this paper.
- 1 In this paper reference is made to a number of individual papers which were later compiled in *Nihongo Doosi no Asupekuto* (1976). When citing these papers, we have used the copyright dates of the original papers to give the reader a better sense of the historical order of these papers. But page numbers cited are those of *Nihongo Doosi no Asupekuto* which for many readers will be most convenient access to these papers.
- 2 This phrase, however, is never used in the infinitive form, **zitto suru* 'get still' and may not be suitable for the aspectual study in question (See, Pp.8-9)
- 3 There are also 'false' oppositional pairs such as *sonzaisuru/sonzai-site iru* 'exist,' *teki-suru/teki-site iru* 'be suitable,' *kyootuu-suru / kyootuu-site iru* 'be common,' etc. Since each pair conveys essentially the same meaning, these pairs of words are also eliminated from the aspectual study of this paper.

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