

## Copus based study of Japanese dialects: Regional differences in case marking system

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In Standard Japanese, nominative phrase is marked with a particle *-ga*, and accusative phrase is marked with a particle *-o*. In some Japanese dialects, however, such case markers may drop. Our presentation discusses in detail the regional differences in the case marking system in Japanese.

Concerning whether the nominative and/or accusative particles are expressed overtly, the following regional tendency is observed:

(1) *Case marking system:*

|                 | <i>with case markers</i> |         | <i>without case markers</i> |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Dialect:</i> | Kagoshima < Hiroshima    | < Osaka | • Tokyo < Hirosaki          |
| <i>Region:</i>  | (Kyushu)                 | (Sanyo) | (Kansai) (Kanto) (Tohoku)   |
| <i>AAP</i>      | 94.3%                    | 91.8%   | 40 ~ 60% 5.6%               |

(*AAP* = Appearance of accusative particle)

In (1), overt case particles appear in a high ratio in southern regions such as Kagoshima (Kyushu region) and Hiroshima (Sanyo region), whereas such case particles do not appear in a high ratio in northern regions such as Hirosaki (Tohoku region). Kansai and Kanto regions are located in between Kyushu-Sanyo and Tohoku, in which nominative/accusative phrases often appear without overt case particles. In spoken Tokyo Japanese, for example, such case markers drop, as exemplified in (2).

(2) Taro hon yon-deru yo.

Taro.NOM book.ACC read-PROG FNL

Taro is reading a book.

The regional differences shown above are discovered by using “Corpus of Japanese Dialects,” which our project has started to build since 2016 to search databases of spoken discourse in Japanese that are collected by National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics. Our presentation will discuss differences in the case marking system, introducing a general outline of this corpus project.