Characteristics of Japanese structures that give rise to English cleft constructions

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This study examines how Japanese structures translated as English wh-clefts or English it-clefts correspond to these two types of English cleft constructions at the pragmatic level. By examining empirical data, this study demonstrates that both Japanese *wa*-clefts and Japanese non-cleft structures render the discourse functions of wh-clefts and it-clefts and that these two Japanese structures tend to complement each other with respect to the types of discourse functions they render or the information status of the constituents in the salient position. The results also shed light on the similarities and differences among the three cleft constructions – *wa*-clefts, wh-clefts and it-clefts – with respect to the types of discourse functions and the range of constituents permitted in the salient position.

Keywords: *Wa*-clefts, Non-cleft structures, English cleft constructions, Discourse function, Information status

0. Introduction

This study explores which Japanese structures are translated from Japanese to English as English wh-clefts (e.g. *What you have to do is check the train timetable immediately*) or as English it-clefts (e.g. *It was John who broke the window*), and how these Japanese structures render the discourse functions of the English clefts. As the background to this study, we give an overview of Yamada (2016).

Yamada (2016) examined the effect of the discourse functions of wh-clefts and it-clefts on the choice of Japanese constructions in translations. When these two types of English cleft constructions are translated into Japanese, *~ no wa ... da* constructions (henceforth, *wa*-clefts) tend to be chosen as the Japanese counterpart. However, wh-clefts and it-clefts differ from each other pragmatically as well as syntactically. Further, Japanese *wa*-clefts do not contain all the discourse functions of wh-clefts and it-clefts and are not always interchangeable with wh-clefts and it-clefts. Based on previous studies covering the discourse functions of cleft constructions (e.g. Weinert and Miller 1996; Sunakawa 2005), Yamada (2016) focused on the following discourse functions of wh-clefts, it-clefts and *wa*-clefts. First, although in some cases wh-clefts function to overtly express contrast as in (1), wh-clefts have a forward-pointing function; that is, a function that marks an important starting point for what follows.

Example (2) is an instance of a wh-cleft with a forward-pointing function.

(1) What you're looking at now is a record of the construction work, not the excavation.
(example (7a) in Yamada 2016: 238, originally from Peter Lovesey, *The Vault*: 25)

(2) 'Watch you?' she said. This could be worse than she'd imagined.
'Aye. Well no. <u>What I mean is, I'd like you to keep your eyes skinned and see if there's any other sod watching us.</u> […]'
(example (15a) in Yamada 2016: 241, originally from Reginald Hill, *Midnight Fugue*: 80)[1]

In (2), the specificational aspect of the clefts is a background feature. The forward-pointing discourse function is not found in it-clefts and *wa*-clefts.

Second, unlike wh-clefts, it-clefts are preferred when overtly expressing contrast, as in (3).

(3) 'My name's Roddy Liddle,' the young man was telling them. 'I work for Megan.'
'And who exactly *is* Megan?' Rebus asked. Liddle stared at him as if he were maybe making a joke. 'All our boss told us,' Rebus explained, 'was to come down here and talk to someone with that name. Apparently she phoned him.'
'<u>It was me who did the phoning</u>,' Liddle said, making it sound like yet another arduous task that he'd taken in his stride.
(example (17a) in Yamada 2016: 242, originally from Ian Rankin, *Exit Music*: 68)[2]

In this example, the clefted constituent[3] (i.e. *me*) is contrasted with *she* (= *Megan*). However, there are it-clefts that do not have a specificational function; some it-clefts have cleft clauses carrying new information and function to assign a property to an entity rather than to specify that entity. Consider (4) below.

(4) It was then that her phone sounded.
(example (26a) in Yamada 2016: 246, originally from Jeffery Deaver, *Roadside Crosses*: 178)

In this example, the clefted constituent (i.e. *then*) is anaphoric and links with the preceding discourse,

whereas the information carried by the cleft clause is new and it assigns a property to the clefted constituent.

Finally, *wa*-clefts denote a specificational function consistent with the discourse function of the it-cleft in (3). The subject of the *wa*-cleft is a proposition in which one element is unspecified, and the unspecified element is specified as a referent in the predicate (see Sunakawa 2005).

Based on empirical research, Yamada (2016) demonstrated that the discourse functions of wh-clefts strongly influence the choice of *wa*-clefts. When wh-clefts function to overtly express contrast, 80.0% (32 out of 40 instances) of wh-clefts are translated in Japanese as *wa*-clefts. In contrast, when wh-clefts mainly function as forward-pointing, 89.5% (34 out of 38 instances) of the wh-clefts are translated as Japanese non-cleft structures.

For it-clefts, the discourse functions of the clefts have less influence on the choice of *wa*-clefts: 31.6% (18 out of 57 instances) of the it-clefts expressing overt contrasts were translations of some non-cleft structures. This is partly because of the tendency of the clefted constituents of it-clefts to be subjects in the non-cleft counterparts. In Japanese, subjects are indicated by the particle *ga*, which has several types, one of which has an exclusive feature. The feature enables the selection of Japanese uncleft structures to specify an entity functioning as the subject in a non-cleft counterpart. In short, for it-clefts, the types of clefted constituents also influence the choice of Japanese counterparts.

Yamada (2016) left several questions to be answered by further studies. For example, when it-clefts covertly express contrast and cleft clauses carry new information, the function of the cleft is to assign a property to an entity rather than to specify that entity (see (4)). This feature of it-clefts is predicted to be inconsistent with the specificational function of *wa*-clefts; however, in 10 out of 40 instances (25.0%), it-clefts which covertly express contrast and have cleft clauses carrying new information were translated as *wa*-clefts. What explains this result? This question was left for further research.

To determine whether or not Yamada's findings were just a reflection of the data being investigated, further research using different data is necessary. To deal with the questions left unanswered in Yamada (2016), a closer examination of the characteristics of the Japanese structures that give rise to English cleft constructions is needed using Japanese texts. Although Yamada focused on several discourse functions of wh-clefts, it-clefts and *wa*-clefts, there are other discourse functions that should be considered when examining cleft constructions in Japanese and English.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore which Japanese structures are translated from Japanese to English as wh-clefts or it-clefts, and how these Japanese structures render the discourse functions of the English clefts. The results of this investigation enrich the understanding of how Japanese structures correspond to English cleft constructions at the pragmatic level. This information is of particular importance not only in contrastive cleft construction studies across languages (e.g. Ahlemeyer

and Kohlhof 1999; M. Johansson 2001; S. Johansson 2001; Gómez-González and Gonzálvez-García 2005; Gundel 2008; Katz Bourns 2014) but also in understanding L2 learners' discourse management (e.g. Boström Aronsson 2003; Callies 2009; Hasselgård 2014). Previous research has found that L2 pragmatic acquisition is difficult even for advanced learners for various reasons. For example, there are contexts wherein the use of the cleft construction in one language is appropriate but the use of its corresponding cleft construction in another language is pragmatically odd (e.g. Katz Bourns 2014). This means that learners have to learn contexts in which L2 cleft constructions are used appropriately. Another possible reason is that unlike the grammatical inappropriateness, learners can convey information even if they use constructions that are pragmatically inappropriate, which makes it difficult for learners to notice the pragmatic inappropriateness.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows. In the next section, the data for this study is explained; in Sections 2 and 3, the characteristics of the Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts and wh-clefts are examined. In Section 4, the implications of the findings are discussed and in Section 5, conclusions of this study are presented.

1. Data

Eight Japanese novels and their respective English translations served as sources of data; these are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. *Data sources*

Japanese original novels	English translations
Keigo Higashino's *Seijo no kyuusai*	*Salvation of a Saint* (translated by Alexander O. Smith with Elye J. Alexander)
Hiromi Kawakami's *Sensei no kaban*	*The Briefcase* (translated by Allison Markin Powell)
Haruki Murakami's *Shikisai o motanai Tazaki Tsukuru to, kare no junrei no toshi*	*Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage* (translated by Philip Gabriel)
Yoko Ogawa's *Hakase no aishita suushiki*	*The Housekeeper and the Professor* (translated by Stephen Snyder)
Arimasa Osawa's *Shinjukuzame*	*Shinjuku Shark* (translated by Andrew Clare)
Hideo Yokoyama's *Rokuyon*	*Six Four* (translated by Jonathan Lloyd-Davies)
Shuichi Yoshida's *Akunin*	*Villain* (translated by Philip Gabriel)
Banana Yoshimoto's *Amurita*	*Amrita* (translated by Russell F. Wasden)

The original Japanese novels depict the present-day Japanese society.

First, the wh-clefts and it-clefts were manually collected from all pages of the English versions if there were less than 300 pages in the novel. However, if there were more than 300 pages, the wh-clefts and it-clefts were taken from the first 300 pages of the novel.[4] Similar to Yamada (2016), only it-clefts that had cleft clauses and occurred in declarative clauses were collected.[5] In total, 68 instances of wh-clefts and 156 instances of it-clefts were extracted.

Then, the Japanese structures that had been translated into these wh-clefts and it-clefts were extracted, as shown in Tables 2 and 3.[6]

Table 2. *Japanese structures translated into English wh-clefts*

English translation / Original Japanese structures	wh-cleft overtly expressing contrast	wh-cleft covertly expressing contrast	
		wh-cleft with a forward-pointing function	others
wa-cleft	22 (78.6%)	3 (11.1%)	11 (84.6%)
non-cleft structure	6 (21.4%)	24 (88.9%)	2 (15.4%)
TOTAL	28 (100%)	27 (100%)	13 (100%)

Table 3. *Japanese structures translated into English it-clefts*

English translation / Original Japanese structures	it-cleft overtly expressing contrast	it-cleft covertly expressing contrast	
		cleft clause carries new information	cleft clause carries given/accessible information
wa-cleft	15 (38.5%)	35 (43.75%)	18 (48.6%)
non-cleft structure	24 (61.5%)	43 (53.75%)	19 (51.4%)
ga-cleft/ no equivalent expression in original novel	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.5%)	0 (0.0%)
TOTAL	39 (100%)	80 (100%)	37 (100%)

The data showed a similar tendency to Yamada's (2016) in terms of the proportional distribution of *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures, with wh-clefts overtly expressing contrast and wh-clefts showing a forward-pointing function. (Recall that in Yamada 2016, 80.0% of the wh-clefts that overtly express contrast were translated as Japanese *wa*-clefts, whereas 89.5% of the wh-clefts with a forward-pointing function were translated as Japanese non-cleft structures.) The following question arises from Table 2: what characteristics do the Japanese structures categorised as 'others' have?

When Japanese structures were translated as it-clefts overtly expressing contrast, as many as 61.5% of the Japanese structures were non-cleft structures (see Table 3). As it-clefts that overtly express contrast have a specificational function, it is natural that *wa*-clefts, which denote the specificational function, are translated into English as it-clefts but how do the Japanese non-cleft structures render the specificational function of it-clefts? Moreover, when Japanese structures are translated as it-clefts which covertly express contrast and have cleft clauses carrying new information, roughly 44% of the Japanese structures are

wa-clefts. When it-clefts covertly express contrast and cleft clauses carry new information, the clefts function to assign a property to an entity rather than to specify that entity. This function is not consistent with the specificational function of *wa*-clefts. What, then, is the discourse function of *wa*-clefts translated as it-clefts which covertly express contrast and have cleft clauses that carry new information? We propose some answers in the following sections.

Before examining the characteristics of Japanese structures that give rise to English cleft constructions, a clarification of the assessment process of the clefted constituent and cleft clause is given. The information status of the clefted constituent and cleft clause was assessed by applying Chafe's (1994) notion of activation. In Chafe's (1994) consciousness-based approach to information flow, information is divided into three types: new information, which is information newly activated at a given point in a discourse; given information, which is information already activated; and accessible information, which is information that was previously semi-active. When the notion of activation is applied, the information status of the clefted constituent and the cleft clause in example (3) for instance is assessed as follows: both the clefted constituent and the cleft clause carry given information as the referent *me* expressed by the clefted constituent is already activated and the proposition that someone had called Rebus's boss, that is, the proposition expressed by the cleft clause in (3), was activated in the preceding discourse.

2. Characteristics of Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts

2.1. Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts overtly expressing contrast

In the data, there were 39 instances at which the Japanese structures were translated as it-clefts that overtly expressed contrast, 15 of which were *wa*-clefts, as exemplified in (5) and (6).[7]

(5) a. Kyoushitsu-o yameru no wa Hiromi-chan-no hou na
school-ACC quit NLZ TOP Hiromi-dear-GEN side COP
noni, watashi-ga heya-o deteiku nan te
although I-NOM room-ACC go out PT PT

(Keigo Higashino, *Seijo no kyuusai*: 296) (Underline added)

b. Me leaving first, even though it's you who's quitting.

(*Salvation of a Saint*: 262) (Underline added)

(6) a. Kotae-ta no wa Kuramae dat-ta.
answer-PAST NLZ TOP Kuramae COP-PAST

(Hideo Yokoyama, *Rokuyon*, (*Jou*): 160-161)

b. 'Who would be willing to consider leaving the document here?'
Mikami's question prompted Suwa to look up from his notes. […]
'What about the other three?'
'Right, yes.' This time it was Kuramae who responded.
(*Six Four*: 134) (Underline added)

In (5a), the subject of the *wa*-cleft is the proposition that X is quitting. The unspecified element X is specified as the referent in the predicate (i.e. *Hiromi*), who is overtly contrasted with the speaker of (5a). Similarly, in (6a), the subject of the *wa*-cleft is the proposition that X responded to the question about the situation of the other three press agencies. The unspecified element X is specified as the referent in the predicate (i.e. *Kuramae*), who is overtly contrasted with Suwa.

Referents in the predicates of *wa*-clefts function as the subject in the non-cleft counterparts of the *wa*-clefts, as illustrated in (5') and (6').

(5') Hiromi-chan-no-hou-ga kyoushitsu-o yameru.
Hiromi-dear-GEN-side-NOM school-ACC quit
(6') Kuramae-ga kotae-ta.
Kurama-NOM answer-PAST

There were 13 such instances out of 15. The strong tendency of the referents in the predicates of the *wa*-clefts to function as the subject in the non-cleft counterparts of *wa*-clefts is consistent with the tendency of the clefted constituents in it-clefts to function as the subject in the non-cleft counterparts of it-clefts.[8]

There were 24 instances at which the non-cleft structures were translated as it-clefts, 15 of which were instances where the particle *ga*, which denotes exclusiveness, explicitly contrasted the referent expressed by the subject NP with a limited set of other referents, as exemplified in (7) and (8).

(7) a. E? to Sensei wa ii, kubi-o kashigeru.
what? QT sensei TOP say head-ACC tilt
Tsukiko-san koso, anotoki-no danshi to dokoka ni
Tsukiko-Ms PT that time-GEN man PT somewhere PT
it-ta n desu ka. Sensei-ga kikikaeshi-ta.
go-PAST NLZ COP Q sensei-NOM retort-PAST
E? to kondo wa watashi-ga kubi-o kashigeru.
what? QT this time TOP I-NOM head-ACC tilt

(Hiromi Kawakami, *Sensei no kaban*: 158) (Underline added)

b. What? Sensei said, tilting his head. Tsukiko, weren't you the one who went off with some young man? he retorted.
What? This time it was I who tilted my head.

(*The Briefcase*: 101) (Underline added)

(8) a. Sono Kishitani-ga kizui-ta.
that Kishitani-NOM notice-PAST

(Keigo Higashino, *Seijo no kyuusai*: 194)

b. Kusanagi peeked into the next room. Utsumi was standing in front of the sink, a man kneeling next to her. He had his face stuck into the cabinet beneath the basin, so Kusanagi couldn't see who he was. Kishitani was standing next to them.
It was Kishitani who noticed the new arrival first.

(*Salvation of a Saint*: 166-167) (Underline added)

In (7a), the particle *ga* explicitly contrasts the referent expressed by the subject NP (i.e. *watashi*) with a limited set of other referents in the discourse (i.e. *Sensei*). In (8a), *ga* explicitly contrasts the referent expressed by the subject NP (i.e. *Kishitani*) with a limited set of other referents in the discourse. Again, examples such as (7) and (8) are consistent with the tendency of the clefted constituents in it-clefts to be the subjects of the non-cleft counterparts.

Examples (7a) and (8a) show that some factors at the pragmatic level play an important role in the choice of non-cleft structures with the particle *ga* over *wa*-clefts. In (8a), as the expression *sono* ('that') indicates, the referent expressed by the subject NP (i.e. *Kishitani*) is given information, as it was already mentioned in the previous sentence. Therefore, choosing a non-cleft structure with the particle *ga* rather than a *wa*-cleft controls the information flow in discourse. In (7a), the narrator of the story (i.e. *watashi*) is explicitly contrasted with Sensei. By repeating the same structure (see the first and last sentences in (7a)), the contrast between these two people is enhanced.

Examples such as (7) and (8) are instances at which a simple clause in one language is translated into a more complex structure. Why is it that a more complex structure is chosen in translation from Japanese to English? One plausible explanation for this may come from the tendency of the English subject to be 'least likely to carry intonational prominence in ordinary declaratives' (Gómez-González and Gonzálvez-García 2005: 177).

The remaining it-clefts were translations of Japanese non-cleft structures in which the contrast was explicitly given in the context (e.g. (9a)) or by using particles such as *dake* ('only') (e.g. (10a)).

(9) a. Kare-wa Sari de wa naku, betsu-no onnanoko to
he-TOP Sari COP TOP not another-GEN girl PT
sannenkan tsukiat-teori,
for three years go out-PROG

(Shuichi Yoshida, *Akunin*, (*Jou*): 41)

b. But the truth was that it was another girl who'd gone out with the boy, not Sari,

(*Villain*: 23) (Underline added)

(10) a. Sensei-no koe dake wa, saishonokorokara mimi ni nokot-ta.
Sensei-GEN voice only TOP from the beginning ear PT remain-PAST

(Hiromi Kawakami, *Sensei no kaban*: 196)

b. Even once we began chatting now and then, I still barely ever looked at his face. He was just an abstract presence, quietly drinking his saké in the seat next to mine at the counter.
It was only his voice that I remembered from the beginning.

(*The Briefcase*: 126) (Underline added)

In short, Japanese structures that have specificational functions give rise to it-clefts that overtly express contrast, and specified elements tend to be the subjects in Japanese non-cleft structures (e.g. (7a) and (8a)) or function as subjects in the non-cleft counterparts of the *wa*-clefts (e.g. (5') and (6')).

2.2. Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts which covertly express contrast and have cleft clauses carrying new information

There were 80 instances at which the Japanese structures were translated as it-clefts that covertly expressed contrast and had cleft clauses that carried new information, 35 of which were instances at which the *wa*-clefts were translated in English as it-clefts, as exemplified in (11) and (12).

(11) a. Mootaabooto-ga 'Tomikawamaru' ni kaet-teki-ta
motorboat-NOM Tomikawamaru PT return-SUB-PAST
no wa, sorekara sanjuppungo dat-ta.
NLZ TOP then after thirty minutes COP-PAST
(Arimasa Osawa, *Shinjukuzame*: 216)

b. It was thirty minutes later that the motorboat returned to Tomikawa.
(*Shinjuku Shark*: 155)

(12) a. Hannin-ga sandome-no denwaokake-teki-ta no
kidnapper-NOM third time-GEN call-SUB-PAST NLZ
wa yoku muika-no gogo yojisugi dat-ta.
TOP next 6th day-GEN p.m. after four o'clock COP-PAST
(Hideo Yokoyama, *Rokuyon*, (*Jou*): 85)

b. It was after 4 p.m. on the following day that the kidnapper's third call had finally come in.
(*Six Four*: 68-69)

In (11a), the proposition expressed by the subject of the *wa*-cleft carries new information as the proposition that the motorboat returned to Tomikawa had not been previously mentioned. Similarly, in (12a), the proposition expressed by the subject of the *wa*-cleft carries new information as the proposition that the victim's family had received the kidnapper's third call had not been previously mentioned.

When *wa*-clefts are translated as it-clefts, the referents in the predicates of the *wa*-clefts tend to be time expressions, as in (11a) and (12a). Sunakawa (2005: 121) suggested that ~ *wa* … *da* constructions, wherein the focus is on the referent in the predicate, functionally provide background information about the story that the speaker introduces in the discourse and give the temporal setting for the story. Sunakawa (2005: 120) claimed that when this type of construction has this function, the propositions expressed in the topic position carry unpredictable new information and the referents in the predicates tend to be time expressions.[9] The *wa*-clefts in (11a) and (12a) provide background information about the story that the speaker introduces in the discourse and give a temporal setting for the story, which is further supported by the position in which the *wa*-clefts occur: (11a) is placed in the paragraph-initial position and (12a) is the second sentence of a new paragraph and is thus placed in the near paragraph-initial position. Therefore, it could be surmised that *wa*-clefts such as those in (11a) and (12a) have the it-clefts' function of a narrative opening, a function which was proposed by Miller (2008[2]: 146).[10]

Although Sunakawa (2005) did not mention the information status of the time expressions, our data suggest that the time expressions used to indicate the temporal setting for the story that the speaker introduces in the discourse tended to carry new information; there were 29 instances at which the

referents in the predicates of *wa*-clefts were time expressions,[11] 23 of which (79.3%) carried new information.

There were 43 instances at which non-cleft structures were translated as it-clefts, 7 of which were instances at which the particle *ga* was used to mark the referents expressed by the subject NPs. At the remaining 36 instances, 20 (55.6%) had time expressions which were clefted constituents in the corresponding it-clefts. At some instances, the time expressions carried new information; however, in other cases, the time expressions carried given information (15 out of 20 instances), as exemplified in (13a) and (14a).

(13) a. Sonnatoki ni, Sensei ni battarito yukiat-ta.
that time PT sensei PT unexpectedly run into-PAST
(Hiromi Kawakami, *Sensei no kaban*: 102)

b. It was then that I unexpectedly ran into Sensei.
(*The Briefcase*: 65)

(14) a. Otoko wa Samejima-no me-o nozokikon-da. Sonotoki ni
man TOP Samejima-GEN eye-ACC look into-PAST then PT
nat-te, youyaku nanika-o kanjitot-ta.
become-TE finally something-ACC sense-PAST
(Arimasa Osawa, *Shinjukuzame*: 10) (Underline added)

b. "What?" The man looked Samejima in the eye. It was only then that he seemed to sense something more in this long-haired man than the twentysomething youngster he'd taken him for.
(*Shinjuku Shark*: 12) (Underline added)

In (13a), the time expression in the initial position is anaphoric and creates a cohesive tie with the preceding discourse; however, the proposition that the narrator of the story unexpectedly ran into Sensei is new information. Therefore, it is suggested that (13a) renders the it-clefts' function of assigning a property to an entity, a reasoning that can also be applied to (14). In (14a), the time expression *sonotoki* ('then') denotes the time when the man looked Samejima in the eye and therefore carries given information, while the proposition that the man sensed something carries new information.

We now examine the seven instances at which the particle *ga* is used to mark the referents expressed by the subject NPs. Six of these instances were where the referents carried given information, as exemplified in (15a) and (16a).

(15) a. Ningen tte kantan da naa, to omot-ta.
human PT simple COP FP QT think-PAST
Kantansa-ga idai da to mo.
simplicity-NOM great COP QT also
(Banana Yoshimoto, *Amurita*, (*Ge*): 92) (Underline added)

b. Aren't people simple creatures?
… or so I thought.
But at the same time I figured it was that simplicity which made them great.
(*Amrita*: 232) (Underline added)

(16) a. Sono kuuseki-o, 0-ga kigou toshite hyoujishi-tekure-teir-u
that vacancy-ACC 0-NOM signal as tell-SUB-PROG-NONP
n da.
NLZ COP
(Yoko Ogawa, *Hakase no aishita suushiki*: 219)

b. Using the arm of the chair to write on, he scribbled down the numbers of 38 and 308. Then he drew two thick lines under the zero. "Thirty-eight is made of three 10s and eight 1s; 308 is three 100s, no 10s, and eight 1s. The tens place is empty, and it's the 0 that tells us that. Do you see?"
(*The Housekeeper and the Professor*: 141) (Underline added)

In (15a) and (16a), the referents marked by the particle *ga* carry the information already introduced in the discourse and, therefore, create cohesive ties with the preceding discourse. The information carried by the predicates, however, is new and assigns properties to the referents marked by *ga*; therefore, (15a) and (16a) render the it-clefts' function of assigning a property to an entity.

It should be noted that all referents marked by the particle *ga* were inanimate subjects in the data, wherein three were instances at which the inanimate subjects were followed by transitive verbs, as in (16a). This is interesting, considering the tendency for Japanese language to avoid using inanimate subjects with transitive verbs. Why, then, is (16a) acceptable? According to previous studies related to the use of inanimate subjects with transitive verbs, there are certain conditions under which such a usage is acceptable. One condition is that the usage is permissible when the transitive verb includes the subsidiary verb '~ *tekureru*' (e.g. Nishimura 1998: 196), a condition which is fulfilled in (16a).

The above discussion is summarised in Table 4.

Table 4. *Characteristics of Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts which covertly express contrast and have cleft clauses carrying new information*

Corresponding it-clefts / Japanese structures	discourse function of it-cleft	clefted constituent in it-cleft	information status of clefted constituent
wa-cleft	opening a narrative	time expression	new
non-cleft structure with the particle *ga*	assigning a property to an entity	inanimate subject	given
other non-cleft structure	(assigning a property to an entity)	(time expression)	(given)

Declerck (1984) divided what Prince (1978) called *informative-presupposition clefts* into two types; one where both the clefted constituent and the cleft clause carry new information, and the other where the clefted constituent carries given information but the cleft clause carries new information. As Table 4 indicates, *wa*-clefts give rise to the former type of it-cleft and non-cleft structures give rise to the latter type.

Unlike the case of non-cleft structures in which the particle *ga* is used to mark the referents expressed by the subject NPs, for other non-cleft structures, the number of instances that render the it-clefts' function of assigning a property to an entity was limited (15 out of 36 instances; 41.7%). Because of this, the results of the other non-cleft structures are in parentheses in Table 4. Why do the rest of the instances not show a certain tendency in the case of other non-cleft structures? One possible explanation for this is that the other non-cleft structures are single clauses with no focus particles, meaning that whether the it-cleft is chosen as a corresponding construction or not is largely dependent on how translators interpret Japanese non-cleft structures.

2.3. Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts that covertly express contrast and have cleft clauses carrying given/accessible information

There were 37 instances at which Japanese structures were translated as it-clefts that covertly expressed contrast and had cleft clauses that carried given/accessible information, 18 of which were *wa*-clefts and 19 of which were non-cleft structures. Miller (2008[2]: 146) stated that 'the contrastive element is much reduced or absent' in it-clefts which 'give salience to times and places' (Miller 2008[2]: 146). This notion clearly applies to some of the instances in our data, as exemplified in (17) and (18).

(17) a. Konnafuuni otouto to futarininat-ta no wa
like this younger brother PT be together-PAST NLZ TOP
hajimete dat-ta.
first time COP-PAST

(Banana Yoshimoto, *Amurita*, (*Jou*): 202)

b. I felt unusual waking up to the sound of the waves, and Yoshio was always with me. It was the first time that my brother and I had spent so much time together.

(*Amrita*: 120) (Underline added)

(18) a. Tattaima, kishashitsu-o oidas-are-ta bakari da.
just now press room-ACC boot-PASS-PAST just COP

(Hideo Yokoyama, *Rokuyon*, (*Jou*): 64)

b. 'That would be …' Suwa's words trailed off. Mikami couldn't blame him. It was only moments earlier that the press had unceremoniously booted him out of their room.

(*Six Four*: 50) (Underline added)

In (17a), the proposition expressed by the subject of the *wa*-cleft is introduced in the preceding sentence and thus carries given information. In contrast, the referent in the predicate of the *wa*-cleft is an expression denoting frequency and carries new information; however, the referent is not overtly contrasted with anything else. In (18a), the proposition that the press booted Suwa out of the press room only moments earlier had already been introduced in the discourse. In this example, the time expression is given salience and is not overtly contrasted with anything else.

Although Miller (2008[2]) suggested a case in which clefted constituents were times and places, in our data as well, the contrastive element seemed to be reduced or absent when the constituent that appeared in a clefted constituent position in a corresponding English it-cleft denoted reasons. Consider the following.

(19) a. Ima wareware-ga kokorookinaku monosashi-ga
now we-NOM without considering it seriously ruler-ACC
tsukaeru no mo, 0-no okage na no da
be able to use NLZ TOP 0-GEN thanks COP NLZ COP

(Yoko Ogawa, *Hakase no aishita suushiki*: 220)

b. A ruler begins at zero. […] So it's zero that allows us to use a ruler, too."

(*The Housekeeper and the Professor*: 141) (Underline added)

(20) a. 'Jishinmanman desu ne'
be confident COP-POL FP
'Sakkino Yamamoto Keiko-no kao-o mi-te, kakushin
that Yamamoto Keiko-GEN face-ACC look-TE confidence
shi-ta. […]
do-PAST

(Keigo Higashino, *Seijo no kyuusai*: 282) (Underline added)

b. 'You sound confident.'
'It was the look on Ms Yamamoto's face that sold me. […]

(*Salvation of a Saint*: 248) (Underline added)

Example (19) describes that zero allows us to use a ruler[12] and (20) describes that looking at Ms Yamamoto's face leads the speaker to become confident of his assumption. Similar to (17a) and (18a), the contrastive element is reduced or absent in (19a) and (20a).

As examples (17) — (20) show, *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures are similar with respect to the type of constituents that appear in the clefted constituent position in the corresponding English it-cleft. Constituents that appear in the clefted constituent position in the corresponding it-clefts tend to be either time expressions (e.g. (17) and (18)) or expressions denoting reasons (e.g. (19) and (20)). However, *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures are different from each other with respect to the information status of the constituents appearing in the clefted constituent position in the corresponding it-clefts. For the *wa*-clefts, 55.6% (10 out of 18 instances) of the constituents were new information. Conversely, for non-cleft structures, 78.9% (15 out of 19 instances) of the constituents were given/accessible information.

3. Characteristics of Japanese structures that give rise to wh-clefts

In this section, the characteristics of Japanese structures that give rise to wh-clefts are examined. There were 28 instances in which the Japanese structures were translated as wh-clefts that overtly expressed contrast, majority of which were instances where the *wa*-clefts were translated as wh-clefts (22 out of 28 instances; 78.6%), as exemplified in the following:

(21) a. Ima hitsuyou na no wa, chikara de wa naku
now necessary COP NLZ TOP force COP TOP not
kotoba dat-ta.
word COP-PAST

(Hideo Yokoyama, *Rokuyon*, (*Jou*): 253)

b. What he needed now was words, not force.

(*Six Four*: 212)

(22) a. Kamera sae motanakat-ta. Shashin-ga nannoyakunitatsu darou?
camera even bring not-PAST photo-NOM be good for what will
Kare-ga motome-teir-u no wa namami-no ningen
he-NOM require-SUB-NONP NLZ TOP actual-GEN human
deari, nama-no kotoba na no da.
COP actual-GEN word COP NLZ COP

(Haruki Murakami, *Shikisai o motanai Tazaki Tsukuru to, kare no junrei no toshi*: 278) (Underline added)

b. He didn't even take a camera. What good were photos? What he was seeking was an actual person, and actual words.

(*Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*: 197) (Underline added)

In (21a), the referent in the predicate of the *wa*-cleft is overtly contrasted with the preceding element *chikara* ('force'). In (22a), the referent in the predicate of the *wa*-cleft is overtly contrasted with the preceding element *shashin* ('photos'). In these examples, the *wa*-clefts render a specificational function of wh-clefts.

The Japanese structures that give rise to wh-clefts that have a forward-pointing function are now examined. This function has been termed in various ways (e.g. *gist-marking* in Kim 1995: 255). There were 27 instances at which the Japanese structures gave rise to wh-clefts that have a forward-pointing function, the majority of which were instances at which the non-cleft structures were translated as wh-clefts (24 out of 27 instances; 88.9%). Yamada (2016: 239) classified three typical types of Japanese non-cleft structures as translations of wh-clefts, as follows:

(i) noncleft structures roughly corresponding to the noncleft counterparts of wh-clefts
(ii) noncleft structures in which the cleft clauses of wh-clefts are translated into some expression illustrating the macro-discourse function of the wh-clefts
(iii) noncleft structures in which the cleft clauses of wh-clefts are not translated

(Yamada 2016: 239)

Basically, our data were in accordance with these three types of non-cleft structures as the non-cleft structures that resulted in the wh-clefts that have a forward-pointing function can be classified into three

types. The first type is the case in which non-cleft structures roughly correspond with the non-cleft counterparts of wh-clefts, as exemplified in (23).

(23) a. Mouichido hassou-o tenkanshinakyaikenai.
one more time idea-ACC need to shift
(Keigo Higashino, *Seijo no kyuusai*: 264)

b. Too bad; I had high hopes for that one. What we need now is another shift in approach.
(*Salvation of a Saint*: 231) (Underline added)

The second type is where the non-cleft structures contain expressions that illustrate a forward-pointing function, as in (24) and (25).

(24) a. Yousuruni, mada yoku wakaran no da
in short yet well not know NLZ COP
(Keigo Higashino, *Seijo no kyuusai*: 170)

b. What it means is we're not really sure about anything yet
(*Salvation of a Saint*: 146-7)

(25) a. Tsumari ai tte iu no wa, aru kondishon-o
in other words love QT say NLZ TOP a condition-ACC
arawasu kigou da tte iu koto?
indicate sign COP QT say thing
(Banana Yoshimoto, *Amurita*, (*Jou*): 236)

b. "What you're trying to say is that love symbolizes a certain condition."
(*Amrita*: 140)

The Japanese expressions *yousuruni* ('in short') in (24a) and *tsumari* ('in other words') in (25a) serve to express the speaker's summarising of the preceding discourse.

The third type is where the non-cleft structures neither correspond to the non-cleft counterparts of wh-clefts, nor contain expressions that illustrate the forward-pointing function, as in (26) below.

(26) a. ‘Anta-ga yasumi-o tot-ta tte koto wa, Kizu tte,
You-NOM vacation-ACC take-PAST QT thing TOP Kizu QT
ano otoko-o tsukamaeta n daro. […]
that man-ACC arrest-PAST NLZ will
(Arimasa Osawa, *Shinjukuzame*: 300) (Underline added)

b. “So, when you said you’d taken a vacation, what you really meant was you’d arrested that guy Kizu. I bet. […]
(*Shinjuku Shark*: 213) (Underline added)

Of these three non-cleft structure types, more than half were of the second type (14 out of 24 instances). A possible reason for this may be that this type of non-cleft structure contains expressions illustrating the forward-pointing function, which makes it easier for translators to associate this type of non-cleft structure with wh-clefts.

Instances at which Japanese structures are translated as wh-clefts that covertly express contrast and do not have a forward-pointing function are now examined. As Table 2 shows, out of 13, 11 were instances at which the *wa*-clefts were translated as wh-clefts (84.6%), as exemplified in (27) and (28).

(27) a. Tsukuru-ga ima menomaeni shi-teir-u no
Tsukuru-NOM now in front of him do-SUB-NONP NLZ
wa, kare-ga ayun-deki-ta no to wa mattaku
TOP he-NOM walk-SUB-PAST NLZ PT TOP completely
chigau shurui-no jinsei-o ayun-deki-ta,
be different kind-GEN life-ACC walk-SUB-PAST
hitori-no josei-no sukoyakana nikutai dat-ta.
one person-GEN woman-GEN sound body COP-PAST
(Haruki Murakami, *Shikisai o motanai Tazaki Tsukuru to, kare no junrei no toshi*: 319)

b. What Tsukuru saw in front of him now was the healthy body of a woman who had walked a completely different path in life from the one he’d taken.
(*Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*: 227)

(28) a. Taisetsu na no wa, sono karera ni, shitsubou
important COP NLZ TOP the they PT disappointment
mo sogaikan mo kanjis-ase-nai youna
PT a sense of alienation PT feel-CAUS-not like
keisatsukikou-o tsukuriageru koto da.
police structure-ACC create thing COP

(Arimasa Osawa, *Shinjukuzame*: 141)

b. What was necessary was the creation of a police structure that didn't alienate them or confound their hopes.

(*Shinjuku Shark*: 104)

In (27a), the referent in the predicate of the *wa*-cleft functions as an object in the non-cleft counterpart of the *wa*-cleft, is given salience and is not overtly contrasted with anything else; six of the *wa*-clefts were of this type. In (28a), the referent in the predicate of the *wa*-cleft functions as a subject in the non-cleft counterpart of *wa*-cleft. The referent is given salience and is not overtly contrasted with anything else. It is worth noticing here that the non-cleft counterpart of (28a) is an adjective sentence, as exemplified in (28').

(28') sono karera ni, shitsubou mo sogaikan mo
the they PT disappointment PT a sense of alienation PT
kanjis-ase-nai youna keisatsukikou-o tsukuriageru
feel-CAUS-not like police structure-ACC create
koto-ga taisetsu da.
thing-NOM important COP

In our data, five of the *wa*-clefts were of this type.

Weinert and Miller (1996: 196) suggested that wh-clefts covertly expressing contrast merely give 'some prominence to the constituents following the cleft clause'. Here, we suggest that *wa*-clefts such as those in (27a) and (28a) render the function of giving salience to the clefted constituents.[13]

Here a question arises: why do some *wa*-clefts that give salience to referents in the predicates give rise to wh-clefts and not it-clefts? As demonstrated in 2.3, there are it-clefts that give salience. There are two possible factors that influence the choice of wh-clefts over it-clefts. The first relates to the length of the referents in the predicates of *wa*-clefts. While clefted constituents in it-clefts tend to be short, those in wh-clefts tend to be long.[14] Because of this, it-clefts are not preferred in (27a) and (28a) where the

referents in the predicates of the *wa*-clefts are long.

The other factor is the type of constituent that appears in the clefted constituent position in the corresponding English cleft construction. As pointed out in 2.3, constituents appearing in the clefted constituent position in it-clefts that give salience tend to be either time expressions or expressions denoting reasons. However, constituents appearing in the clefted constituent position in wh-clefts that give salience tend to be either noun phrases functioning as objects in the corresponding non-cleft counterparts or noun phrases functioning as subjects in the corresponding adjective sentences.

4. Implications of the findings

English wh-clefts and it-clefts are what Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1365) call *information-packaging constructions*, meaning that they are different from their more basic non-cleft counterparts in the way the information is presented. These cleft constructions have several discourse functions. The following tables illustrate the findings in Sections 2 and 3 in terms of the discourse functions of it-clefts and wh-clefts that Japanese structures give rise to.

Table 5. *Discourse functions of it-clefts that Japanese* wa*-clefts give rise to and wh-clefts that Japanese* wa*-clefts give rise to*

discourse functions of it-clefts	discourse functions of wh-clefts
- overtly expressing contrast - opening a narrative - giving salience	- overtly expressing contrast - giving salience

Table 6. *Discourse functions of it-clefts that Japanese non-cleft structures give rise to and wh-clefts that Japanese non-cleft structures give rise to*

discourse functions of it-clefts	discourse functions of wh-clefts
- overtly expressing contrast - assigning a property to an entity - giving salience	- forward-pointing

Tables 5 and 6 indicate that both *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures render the discourse functions of wh-clefts and it-clefts and that these two types of Japanese structures tend to complement each other. When Japanese structures give rise to English wh-clefts, *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures clearly complement each other; while *wa*-clefts give rise to wh-clefts that overtly express contrast or those that give salience, non-cleft structures give rise to wh-clefts that have a forward-pointing function.

Situations are more complicated, however, for it-clefts. While *wa*-clefts give rise to it-clefts that open a narrative, non-cleft structures give rise to it-clefts that assign a property to an entity. However, both *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures give rise to it-clefts that overtly express contrast. A mixed picture emerges in the case of it-clefts that give salience. Both *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures give rise to this type of it-cleft, but it can be said that these two types of Japanese structures complement each other on the grounds that they are different from each other with respect to the information status of the clefted constituents in the corresponding it-clefts (see 2.3).[15]

Considering these findings from the viewpoint of contrastive cleft construction studies in Japanese and English, similarities and differences between *wa*-clefts and it-clefts emerge. Both *wa*-clefts and it-clefts overtly express contrast and, as demonstrated in 2.1, the strong tendency of the referents in predicates of *wa*-cleft to function as subjects in the non-cleft counterparts of *wa*-clefts is consistent with the tendency of the clefted constituents in it-clefts to function as subjects in the non-cleft counterparts of it-clefts. On the other hand, the findings here suggest three differences between *wa*-clefts and it-clefts. First, unlike it-clefts, *wa*-clefts do not have the function of assigning a property to an entity (see 2.2). Second, compared with it-clefts, *wa*-clefts are less likely to give salience to referents conveying given/accessible information (see 2.3). Finally, unlike it-clefts, *wa*-clefts can give salience to long referents and to referents functioning as subjects in the corresponding adjective sentences (see Section 3).

The findings also suggest two differences between *wa*-clefts and wh-clefts. The first is that the wh-clefts' forward-pointing function is seldom found in *wa*-clefts, and the second is that compared with wh-clefts, *wa*-clefts permit a much broader range of referents that can be given salience. While *wa*-clefts give salience to time expressions and expressions denoting reasons (see 2.3), such instances are not found in the case of the wh-clefts in our data.

These different functions of cleft constructions in Japanese and English may pose problems for L2 learners. For example, Hasselgård (2014: 316) found a significant underuse of English it-clefts by Norwegian learners of English and suggested that this underuse may be related to functional differences between English and Norwegian clefts. Boström Aronsson (2003) also found that English cleft constructions were used more frequently in the writings of Swedish advanced learners of English than in the writings of native English speakers. Given learner examples where the need for the use of English cleft constructions is doubtful, Boström Aronsson (2003) suggested the possibility that learners may not be fully aware of the effect of English cleft constructions on information distribution in the text. Therefore, in relation to L2 learners' discourse management, the findings in this study suggest the necessity for English and Japanese language learners to understand the similarities and differences among *wa*-clefts, it-clefts and wh-clefts in terms of discourse functions and the range of constituents permitted in the salient position.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore which Japanese structures were translated into English as wh-clefts or it-clefts and how the Japanese structures rendered the discourse functions of the English clefts. On the basis of empirical research, this study demonstrated several characteristics of the Japanese structures that give rise to wh-clefts and it-clefts. First, both *wa*-clefts and non-cleft structures were found to render the discourse functions of wh-clefts and it-clefts. Second, these two types of Japanese structures tended to complement each other with respect to the types of discourse functions they rendered or the information status of the constituents in the salient position. Further, similarities and differences were found among *wa*-clefts, wh-clefts and it-clefts with respect to the types of discourse functions and the range of constituents that were permitted in the salient position.

In our data, the proportion of *wa*-clefts that gave rise to it-clefts or wh-clefts was small. How the remaining *wa*-clefts were translated and why they were translated as structures other than it-clefts or wh-clefts are the questions that require for further research to be conducted.

Notes

[1] The underline in example (2) was added by Yamada (2016).

[2] The underline in example (3) was added by Yamada (2016). Italics are in the original.

[3] Similar to Yamada (2016), who followed previous studies on cleft constructions (e.g. Delin and Oberlander 1995; Weinert and Miller 1996), this study terms the constituent following the copula (e.g. *a record of the construction work* in (1) and *me* in (3)) the clefted constituent and the clause introduced by the wh-word in wh-clefts (e.g. *what you're looking at now* in (1)) and the clause following the clefted constituent in it-clefts (e.g. *who did the phoning* in (3)) the cleft clause.

[4] Among the English versions, *Salvation of a Saint* and *Six Four* contain more than 300 pages.

[5] As mentioned in Yamada (2016), Weinert and Miller (1996) suggested that it-clefts in which the clefted constituents contain question words have different functions from it-clefts in declarative clauses. Moreover, Weinert and Miller (1996) noted that it was not necessarily easy to distinguish it-clefts without cleft clauses from 'anaphoric *it* + copula + complement' structures. As for instances where *it* in it-clefts is replaced with *this* or *that*, they were included as it-clefts in this study as long as they had cleft clauses and occurred in declarative clauses. Our data contained one example in which *it* was replaced with *this*.

[6] Following Weinert and Miller's (1996: 200) suggestion that 'all clefts can be said to express covert contrast', this study regards cleft constructions that do not overtly express contrast as cleft constructions that covertly express contrast.

[7] In the Japanese examples, in many cases only the Japanese structures that give rise to it-clefts or wh-clefts were exemplified. As regards the abbreviations, the following abbreviations are used. ACC: Accusative, CAUS: Causative, COP: Copulative verb, FP: Sentence-final particle, NOM: Nominative, NLZ: Nominalizer, NONP: Nonpast, PASS: Passive, PAST: Past, PROG: Progressive, PT: Other particle, Q: Question, SUB: Subsidiary verb, TE: *te*-form of the verb, TOP: Topic

[8] Yamada (2016) had 57 instances of it-clefts that overtly expressed contrast, 44 of which were instances at which the clefted constituents in the non-cleft counterparts were subjects. The tendency of the clefted constituents in it-clefts to function as subjects in the non-cleft counterparts of it-clefts was also supported by other previous studies (e.g. Weinert and Miller 1996; Gómez-González and Gonzálvez-García 2005; Callies 2009; Hasselgård 2014).

[9] Sunakawa's (2005) examples used in the discussion of this discourse function were examples of *wa*-clefts.

[10] Collins (2006: 1710) suggested that the clefted constituent in it-clefts where both the clefted constituent and the cleft clause carry new information had a '"scene setting" role'.

[11] One expression that denotes frequency is included here.

[12] In example (19a), the topic particle *mo* is used, instead of *wa*. Pointing out that it is possible to replace *wa* with *mo* (e.g. Tsukuba Language Group 1995[2]), Yamada (2016) included ~ *no mo … da* constructions as instances of *wa*-clefts. Similar to Yamada (2016), we included ~ *no mo … da* constructions as instances of *wa*-clefts.

[13] Having discussed so, the category entitled as 'others' in Table 2 should be changed to 'wh-clefts giving salience'.

[14] Prince (1978: 886) found that in her data the cleft clause 'has one-third the average length of the' clefted constituent in the case of wh-cleft, whereas the cleft clause 'is nearly twice as long as the' clefted constituent in the case of it-clefts.

[15] Moreover, as demonstrated in 2.2, two different types of Japanese non-cleft structures (i.e. non-cleft structures with the particle *ga* and other non-cleft structures) correspond to it-clefts' function of assigning a property to an entity. However, it could be said that these two types of Japanese non-cleft structures complement each other on the grounds that they are different from each other with respect to the type of clefted constituent in corresponding it-clefts.

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