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The theme of this paper is the verbal aspect of the modern Japanese. It is said that the study of aspect is comparatively progressing among the studies of the modern Japanese. In fact, many papers on aspect have been published by many scholars and the discriptive studies on the Japanese aspect have thrown light on the problems on aspect.

However, the theoretical problem on aspect have been hardly treated. Though the concept of grammatical category is introduced into the Japanese linguistics and it is said that aspect as a grammatical category exists in Japanese as well as Russian, such problems as what grammatical category is and how aspect is regarded as a grammatical category have never examined. The only paper which treats such theoretical problems is "About studies of aspect" written by Okuda Yasuo in 1977.

Chapter1

In this chapter I am concerned not with the history of the study on aspect, but with Okuda's study. Okuda's study is not only the base of my study but also the base of many aspectogists' studies. Okuda stated that a site-iru form of action-verb expresses the continuation of action and a site-iru form of change-verb expresses the continuation of the result of change. But Okuda's definition is not so clear. Then I examine his definition of action, change, aspect and so on.

Chapter2

Section1

As a principal meaning among individual meanings, a suru form expresses reaching the limit and a site-iru form expresses continuing of the process. As a basic meaning, a suru form expresses the general fact meaning. It is the most free from the context. As a marginal meaning, a suru form expresses not-process and a site-iru form expresses process.

Section2

Actions expressed by predicative verbs are divided into temporally localized actions and temporally not localized actions. The latter is divided into iterativity, habituality and temporal generality. The former contains summary action, multiplicative action, distributed action and so on. The verbs expressing temporally localized actions have aspectual opposition and the verbs expressing temporally not localized actions shows the semantical or formal defect of aspectual opposition.

Chapter3

In this chapter I examine the system of aspectuality, I examine if the opposition of suru form and site-iru can be called aspect as a grammatical category. I investigate the meaning of si-tutu-aru, siyo-to-suru, site-aru, site-oku etc., and define the status of them in the system of aspectuality. I call si-hajimeru, si-tuzukeru and si-owaru stage-verbs, and sirabeageru, oituku etc. the way of action.

Chapter4

Section1

In this section I examine the limitativity which is the most general aspectual character of actions expressed by verbs. Terminative verbs and aterminative verbs exist in the center of limitatuvity. Perfectives (suru forms) of terminative verbs express reaching the limit and continuatives(site-iru forms) of terminative verbs express being on the stage after reaching the limit. Aterminative verbs mostly express continuing of the process in continuative, but in perfectives it can express the beginning of the process.

Section2

In this section I examine not characterized "way of action". Activity as one of the way of action is more abstruct and complexed action than concrete action.

Section3

Verbs expressing feature and relation don't have aspectual opposition, so they have not been examined so much. But such verbs have aspectual forms like other verbs.

Chapter 5

Section1

Site-iru, site-aru, sita-koto-ga-aru express perfect. It is not clear if parfect is different from aspect or it is a kind of aspect. I examine the system and status of perfect. Perfect is divided into explicit perfect and implicit perfect. Explicit perfect is divided into factivity and precedence. Implicit perfect is expressed by site-oku and sita.

Section2

In this section the relation between perfect and verbal meaning is examined. Kudo Mayumi states that all verbs express actional perfect, but most of verbs expressing actional perfect are terminative verbs.

Section3

In this section the contextual function of perfect expressed by site-iru is examined. Perfect of precedence expresses the temporal relation to other events and perfect of factivity expresses the logical relation to other events.

Chapter6

Section1

In this section aspectual-temporal meaning of verbs in the narrative of novels is examined. Kudo's theory on this point is different from mine. The most significant differece is in the analysis of the aspectual meaning of perfective on narrative.

Section2

In this section temporal-semantical relation of suru and site-iru in the discourse is examined. Suru and site-iru express not only the temporal relation to other actions but also the other semantical relations to other actions.