■ Particles

As a part of speech, particles are defined as words that are not independent, attach to various words, and do not conjugate. They work in reverse word order from English prepositions, and are sometimes called postpositions. Their functions are various, and particles are divided into further sub-categories. There are several theories on the classification, name, and membership of individual particles.

Some of the main particles include case particles, such as *ga, o, ni, de, kara, made, to,* and *no,* coordinate particles, such as *to, ka, ya* (e.g., *kōhii {to/ka/ya kōcha}*), conjunctive particles, such as *to, ba, tara, kara, node, ga, keredomo,* and *nagara,* focus particles, such as *mo, sae, made, dake, bakari, shika, koso,* sentence-final particles, such as *ka, wa, yo, ne,* and interjection particles, such as *ne* and *sa*.

Of these, focus particles used to be called modal particles (*kakari joshi*) or adverbial particles (*fuku joshi*). Recently they have come to be called focus particles because of their function of "focusing." It remains to be seen how binding particle*, wa,* will be handled in the future. The form *no* in *Akai <u>no</u> o kudasai* 'Please give me the red <u>one</u>' is sometimes called a "quasi-nominal particle" (*juntai joshi*), but it should be considered a formal noun, along with *koto.*

As evident from their membership, the same word form may be used as different types of particles. For instance, in *Tarō ga Hanako <u>to</u> kekkon shita* 'Taro married Hanako,' *to* is used as a case particle, whereas in *Tarō <u>to</u> Hanako ga kekkon shita* 'Taro <u>and</u> Hanako got married'*,* it is used as a coordinate particle. As for *made*, it is used as a case particle in *Tarō ga eki <u>made</u> itta* 'Taro went <u>as far as</u> the station', while it is a focus particle in *Tarō <u>made</u> ga kesseki shita* '<u>Even</u> Taro was absent'. In the latter pair of example sentences, the two usages are considered semantically related.

Particles are relational words, and many of them are used to show the syntactic and semantic relationship between the preceeding element and the other element. Based on this understanding, the particles are divided into three groups. (1) Particles that show the syntagmatic relationship with other constituents in the sentence (e.g., case particles, particles of parallel relationship, conjunctive particles); (2) particles that show the paradigmatic relationship between an element and other similar elements (e.g., focus particles); (3) particles that show the subjective attitude of the speaker (e.g., interjectional particles, sentence-final particles). Of these, interjectional particles and sentence-final particles in (3) are different from other particles in that they are not involved in constructing the proposition. Rather, they possess modal functions. All particles share the morphological characteristics of being non-conjugating and dependent, but syntactically and semantically heterogeneous forms coexist within the category of particles.

→ 格 Case (2-D), 並列を表す形式 Forms Signifying Parallel Relationship (2-J), 終助詞の用法 Use of Sentence-Final Particles (2-H), とりたて Focus (2-I), コト・ノ・トコロ─名詞節 *Koto, No, Tokoro* – Noun Clauses (2-J)

● References

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