

## On the Meaning of *-kake* in Japanese

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### 複合動詞「～かける」の意味に関する一考察

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#### Abstract:

Japanese exhibits a group of compound verbs whose second component is *-kake*. Kindaichi (1955/1976) observes that *-kake* refers to two aspectual phases termed *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ (the phase which is midway through the ongoing event progression) and *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ (the phase which is immediately before the actual occurrence of an event). Although these terms may seem straightforward, it remains unclear what relation holds between the two phases. This paper offers an elucidation of the meaning of *-kake* on the basis of Van Valin and LaPolla’s (1997) Aktionsart classification while drawing on a cognitive notion of “foregrounding” (Talmy, 2000). It proposes that (i) *-kake* marks a temporal point during the course of an event prior to the onset of an atelic phase, either dynamic or static, and that (ii) the terms *sidootai* and *syoogentai* represent alternative conceptualizations of the position of the temporal point indicated by *-kake*: the left side of the event’s progression (i.e. the already completed phase) is foregrounded and depicted using the term *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ when the target phase is durative, and the right side of the event’s progression (i.e. the yet to be completed phase) is foregrounded and portrayed using the term *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ when the target phase is non-durative.

#### 1. Introduction

Japanese exhibits a group of compound verbs whose second component is *-kake*. These compound verbs constitute the predicate of a sentence, giving rise to a reading that pertains to an aspectual phase of the event denoted by the base verb. Sentence (1a) without *-kake* forms a semantic contrast to (1b) with *-kake*.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. musu-ga            sin-de-i-ru.  
         insect-NOM    die-L-exist-NPST.  
         ‘The insect is dead.’

- b. musu-ga sini-kake-te-i-ru.  
 insect-NOM die-KAKE-L-exist-NPST.  
 ‘The insect is about to die.’

(1a) depicts the dead condition of the insect, whereas (1b) refers to a different condition, in which the insect is on the verge of death.<sup>2</sup>

The seminal work on aspectual phases of *-kake* is found in Kindaichi (1955/1976, p. 50-52) where it is observed that *-kake* refers to two aspectual phases termed *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ and *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’.<sup>3</sup> The former refers to the phase immediately before the actual occurrence of an event, whereas the latter refers to the phase which is at a midpoint within the entire progression of the event. Furthermore, Kindaichi (1955/1976) notes that *syoogentai* and *sidootai* are related to the aspectual class of the base verb in the sense of Kindaichi (1950/1976). Specifically, (i) *-kake* is incompatible with *zyootai doosi* ‘stative verbs’ (e.g. \**ari-kake-* ‘exist-KAKE’), (ii) *-kake* with *keezoku doosi* ‘continuation verbs’ (e.g. *yom-* ‘read’) may refer to either of the phases (e.g. *yomi-kake-ta* ‘read-KAKE-PST’ may refer to *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ if the actor turned her attention to the beginning of a sentence but subsequently decided not to read at all, or to *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ if the actor has actually started reading but stopped in the middle of the sentence), and (iii) *-kake* with *syunkan doosi* ‘instantaneous verbs’ (e.g. *sin-* ‘die’) yields only the *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ reading (e.g. sentence (1b) depicts the phase immediately before the actual occurrence of the dying event).

In contrast, Himeno (1979, 1999) notes that some *syunkan doosi* ‘instantaneous verbs’ can yield the *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ reading such as in sentence (2).

- (2) odoriko-wa yuruku hiraki-kake-te-i-ru  
 dancer-TOP loosely open-KAKE-L-exist-NPST
- akai tubomi-o eran-da. (Himeno, 1999, p. 136)  
 red bud-ACC choose-PST.  
 ‘The dancer chose the still-blossoming red flower.’

According to Himeno, the phase depicted by sentence (2) is *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ because blossoming has already begun in this scene even though the base verb *hirak-* ‘open’ is a *syunkan-doosi* ‘instantaneous verb’. Kindaichi’s analysis would predict that such a verb would yield the *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ reading.

The phases denoted by the terms *sidootai* and *syoogentai* require further scrutiny as it remains unclear what relation holds between the two phases. Furthermore, it has not been specified whether all ‘continuation verbs’ are associated with both phases, nor has it been clarified whether the ‘instantaneous verbs’ are associated with one of the two phases or both. This paper offers an elucidation of the meaning of *-kake*. It proposes that *-kake* marks a temporal point during the course of an event prior to the onset of an atelic phase, either dynamic or static, and that the labeling of said temporal point as either *sidootai* or *syoogentai* depends on durativity of the target phase as well as how one conceptualizes the position of the temporal point indicated by *-kake*: i.e. to which phase of the event one directs one’s greater attention (Talmy 2000, p. 76) thereby portraying the scene either as the already completed phase or the yet to be completed phase. In addition, this paper will clarify the relation between the two phases and an aspectual class using the Aktionsart classification proposed in Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) (henceforth VVLP).

This paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 provides preliminary information on aspectual classes; Section 3 discusses the aspectual phases associated with *-kake*; and Section 4 contains the conclusion.

## 2. Preliminary

The distribution of *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ and *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ has been discussed with reference to Kindaichi’s (1950/1976) four-way aspectual classification. Alternatively, this paper employs VVLP’s (1997) Aktionsart classification since it is more discriminately detailed, dividing classes on the basis

of features that include durativity and telicity, factors to which *-kake* is especially sensitive.

VVLP (1997) divide verbs into ten Aktionsart classes. Five of these classes are non-causative: state (e.g. *ar-* ‘exist’), activity (e.g. *nak-* ‘cry’), achievement (e.g. *oti-* ‘fall’), accomplishment (e.g. *toke-* ‘melt (intransitive)’) and active accomplishment (e.g. *tabe-* ‘eat it’). The remaining five classes are their respective causative counterparts (e.g. causative accomplishment: *tokas-* ‘melt (transitive)’). They are distinguished by four features: telicity (the event culminates), punctuality (the event takes place instantaneously), dynamicity (the event involves an action) and staticity (the state consists of uninterrupted uniform phases). The features of non-causative classes are given in (3).

- (3)
- |    |                        |  |
|----|------------------------|--|
| a. | State                  | : [+static][−dynamic][−telic][−punctual] |
| b. | Activity               | : [−static][+dynamic][−telic][−punctual] |
| c. | Achievement            | : [−static][−dynamic][+telic][+punctual] |
| d. | Accomplishment         | : [−static][−dynamic][+telic][−punctual] |
| e. | Active Accomplishment: | [−static][+dynamic][+telic][−punctual]   |
- (Adapted from VVLP, 1997, p. 93)

Each Aktionsart class is represented by a lexical decompositional system called “logical structures” which is exemplified in (4).

- (4)
- |    |                        |  |
|----|------------------------|--|
| a. | State                  | : <b>exist'</b> (x)  |
| b. | Activity               | : <b>do'</b> (x, [ <b>cry'</b> (x)])                             |
| c. | Achievement            | : INGR <b>fallen'</b> (x)  |
| d. | Accomplishment         | : BECOME <b>melted'</b> (x)                                      |
| e. | Active Accomplishment: | <b>do'</b> (x,[ <b>eat'</b> (x, y)])&BECOME <b>consumed'</b> (y) |
| f. | Causative              | : [ <b>do'</b> (x, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME <b>melted'</b> (y)]         |

Of these classes, the logical structures of state, activity, achievement, and accomplishment (4a-d) are simplex in that they consist of a single event component (e.g. BECOME **melted'** (x) in (4d)), whereas the logical structures of active accomplishment and causative classes (4e-f) are complex in that they consist of two subevent components (e.g. ‘**do'** (x, Ø)’ and ‘BECOME **melted'** (y)’ in (4f)). In terms of correspondence between Kindaichi’s (1950/1976)

classification and the Aktionsart classification (VVLP, 1997), *zyotai doosi* ‘stative verbs’ (verbs that can denote state without *-te-i*) are equivalent to state verbs; *syunkan doosi* ‘instantaneous verbs’ (verbs that express the resultative state when marked by *-te-i*) correspond to achievement and accomplishment, and *keezoku doosi* ‘continuation verbs’ (verbs that yield the progressive sense when marked by *-te-i*) subsumes activity, active accomplishment, and causative verbs.<sup>4</sup>

Before proceeding, it is necessary to show how a telic event and the resultative state are expressed in Japanese. We can observe this by considering (5).

- (5) a.      otoko-ga                      taore-ta.  
               man-NOM                      fall-PST.  
               ‘The man fell.’
- b.      otoko-ga                      taore-te-i-ru.  
               man-NOM                      fall-L-exist-NPST.  
               ‘The man is lying (as a result of falling).’

(5a) expresses that a falling event took place while (5b) depicts the man’s state of lying as a result of falling. Note here that the same verb root *taore-* ‘fall’ is used. This sentence pair shows that the resultative state is expressed by adding a sequence *-te-i* to a telic verb in Japanese (cf. Kindaichi, 1955/1976, p. 8). This relationship can be represented schematically as in Figure 1.

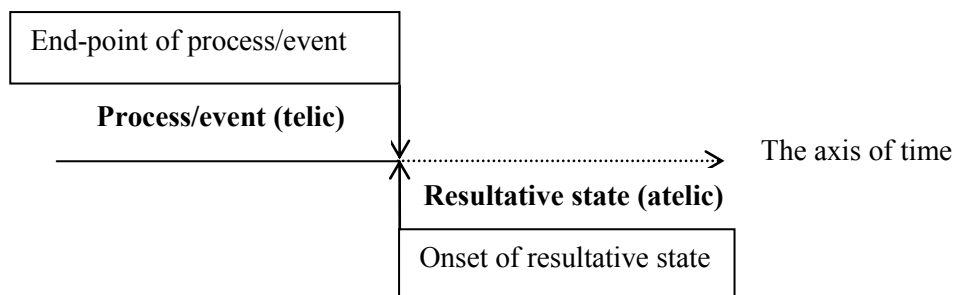


Figure 1: The relation of a telic event and the resultative state

Figure 1 illustrates that the end point of the process or event, in effect, coincides with the onset of the resultative state: i.e. the atelic state sets in when the telic event completes. This conceptualization of the terminus of the process concurring

with the onset of the resultative state has a bearing on the later discussion when we compare the characteristics of telic and atelic events. We will examine the meaning of *-kake* while keeping this configuration in mind.

### 3. Aspectual phases

As far as the meaning of *-kake* is concerned, Kageyama and Yumoto (1997) speculate that *-kake* has one meaning and comment that “the two readings [that correspond to the readings of *syoogentai* and *sidootai*] arise depending on the meaning, particularly the aspect, of the verb it is combined with” (p. 83-84).<sup>5</sup> Our goal in this section is to support their view, explicating which stage of an event each aspectual phase refers to according to an Aktionsart class of the base verb. We first discuss the classes with simplex logical structures (accomplishment, achievement, and activity) and then turn to the classes with complex logical structures.<sup>6</sup>

#### 3.1 Accomplishment

The accomplishment class includes verbs such as *kawak-* ‘dry’ and *katamar-* ‘harden’. The hallmark of accomplishment verbs is that they are telic and durative: i.e. it takes time for the event to complete. Consider the meaning when an accomplishment verb *kawak-* ‘dry’ forms a compound with *-kake* such as in sentence (6).

- (6)      sentakumono-ga      kawaki-kake-te-i-ru.  
         laundry-NOM      dry-KAKE-L-exist-NPST.  
         ‘The laundry is about to dry.’

This sentence denotes a condition in which the laundry feels mostly dry yet still a touch moist. Given this meaning, we hypothesize that *-kake* indicates one temporal point within a process and offers details about the condition of an entity that hold true at the specific temporal point. This temporal point can be

diagrammed as in Figure 2, where the process is conceptualized as a line that progresses in parallel with the time axis.

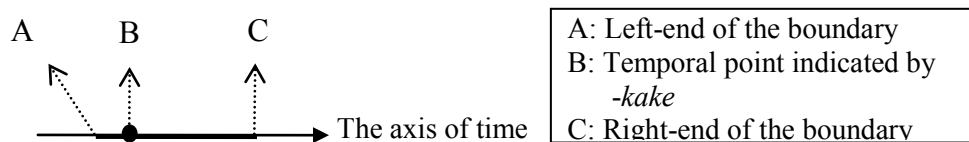


Figure 2: Schematic representation of *-kake*

In Figure 2, the thick line represents the entire process: *A* is the left end of the boundary (e.g. the onset of a drying event), *C* is the right-end of the boundary (e.g. the terminus of the drying event), and *B* represents the temporal point indicated by *-kake*. *B* is characterized relative to *A* and *C* in that it is past *A* and prior to *C*. While *B* appears to be located closer to *A* as represented in this diagram, the position of *B* is variable and could correspond to a number of possible positions along the axis.

Talmy (2000, p. 76-84) notes that the same scene can be framed differently depending on which region is placed at the forefront of one's attention, or "foregrounded". An alternative construal is available to capture the condition denoted by *-kake*. While *kawaki-kake*- 'dry-KAKE' denotes one condition, it can be rendered in two ways: we may state that 'The laundry is half-dried' if the phase between *A* and *B* in Figure 2 (i.e. the already completed phase) is the target of the depiction, or 'The laundry is about to dry' if the phase between *B* and *C* (i.e. the yet to be completed phase) is the target of the depiction.

### 3.2 Achievement

Let us now examine achievement verbs. The achievement class includes verbs such as *sin-* 'die' and *oti-* 'drop'. They are telic and punctual, and hence the event is supposedly completed instantaneously. However, in reality, the instantaneity might involve a varying degree of temporal span. For instance, the event of a

man's falling from the upright position to the ground seems to involve distinguishable temporal intervals. On the other hand, if we consider the event of 'dying', the process of change-of-state from being alive to being dead seems to involve virtually no duration.

Let us examine more closely what kind of readings these two verbs yield when they co-occur with *-kake*. Sentence (7) shows an example of *taore-* 'fall' used in a novel.

- (7) aomuke-ni                      taore-kake-ta.  
his back-on                      fall-KAKE-PST.  
'He almost fell on his back..' (Text: Natuki)

The context where this sentence occurs indicates that the man's posture has changed from an upright position to a pre-collapsing position, where his body was halfway down to the ground, but somehow he managed to stabilize himself without falling down completely and subsequently walked away. *Taore-kake-* 'fall-KAKE' refers to the mid-point of the falling event; this condition can be conveyed in two ways. It could be rendered as 'The man was halfway to falling' if the left half of the progression is characterized (the phase between *A* and *B* in Figure 2), or 'The man was about to fall' if the right half of the progression is characterized (the phase between *B* and *C* in Figure 2). A similar point can be observed with *sin-* 'die'. Sentence (8) shows an example of *sin-* 'die' used in a novel.

- (8) mukasi    kiri-no-naka-de    sini-kake-ta-koto-ga                      ari-masu.  
long ago    fog-GEN-inside-at    die-KAKE-PST-event-NOM    exist-POL.  
'Long ago, once, I almost died in the fog.' (Text: Ikesawa)

This sentence appears in a context where a boy was ice skating alone on a frozen lake in a forest and got lost in the fog. He was physically well, but he thought that he would likely have frozen to death if he had not been rescued. In the end, it turns out that the boy managed to get out of the fog. Obviously, he did not die. Still, he describes this incident with *sini-kake-ta* 'I was about to die'. Soga (1983)

notes that “*sin-i-kakeru* ... mean[s] that some kind of process toward death has already started” (p. 190). This suggests that the punctual event of dying in (8) is reconceptualized as a process involving some temporal span analogous to the process of falling in (7). The compound *sini-kake*- ‘die-KAKE’ refers to the mid-point of this process, and the condition can be depicted in two ways by applying the same pattern that we used for *taore-kake*- ‘fall-KAKE’ (i.e. ‘I was halfway through the stage which would have lead to death’ or ‘I was about to die’).

The observations made regarding accomplishment verbs also apply to achievement verbs: (i) *-kake* marks a temporal point prior to the end point of the telic event, and (ii) the condition entailed by *-kake* can be depicted in two ways by referring to (a) the already completed phase or (b) the yet to be completed phase.

### 3.3. Activity

The next group of verbs is the activity class. Activity verbs are durative and atelic. Consider the meaning of *-kake* in the following sentence where the base verb is *nak*- ‘cry’.

- (9)      $\text{akanboo-ga}$       $\text{naki-kake-te-i-ru.}$   
            $\text{baby-NOM}$       $\text{cry-KAKE-L-exist-NPST.}$   
           ‘The baby is starting to cry.’

To elaborate on the meaning of this sentence, it would be helpful to employ the aspectual term “onset” (Freed 1979). Since the term “onset” has already been used in a different sense in this paper, we will employ the alternative term “preinceptive” following Binnick (1991, p. 196) (cf. Soga 1983, p. 29). According to Freed, “onset” (or the “preinceptive” phase) refers to the temporal segment where the event has not yet completely started but is imminent. For instance, the sensation experienced prior to sneezing would take place during the preinceptive phase of sneezing, or if someone was reaching out her hand to open the door but then did something else, her initial action took place during the preinceptive phase of opening the door.

We can now elaborate on the meaning of sentence (9) by using this term. This sentence depicts a scene where a baby who had been previously quiet is just beginning to vocalize something that is not yet a full-blown cry. The temporal point that *-kake* refers to in (9) is situated at a mid-point during the preceptive phase, prior to the genuine onset of the full-fledged activity of crying. Strictly speaking, we can describe the mid-point of the preceptive phase in two ways in much the same way as we can describe the mid-point of events of the accomplishment and achievement classes of verbs.

Now we can compare the meaning of *-kake* when it forms a compound with an accomplishment, an achievement, and an activity verb. Recall that *-kake* marks a temporal point prior to the end point of a telic event (accomplishment and achievement). In addition, recall that the end point of the telic event coincides with the onset of the resultative state (cf. Figure 1). Since the resultative state is atelic, it can be stated that *-kake* marks a temporal point prior to the onset of the atelic state. Note that this characterization also applies to the case of activity, since activity denotes a dynamic atelic state. This leads us to the postulation given in (10).

- (10) *-Kake* marks a temporal point prior to the onset of an atelic phase of either a dynamic event or a resultative state.

The postulation in (10) can be elaborated further by referring to Figure 2. This elaboration allows us to say that *-kake* indexes a temporal point *B* past the left boundary point *A* but somewhere prior to the right boundary point (the onset of the atelic phase marked by *C*) and, furthermore, the phase sandwiched between *A* and *C* can be: (i) the preceptive phase of activity (cf. (9)) or (ii) the process of accomplishment (cf. (6)) or achievement (cf. (7)). Stated differently, *-kake* requires that the event denoted by the base verb has progressed to a certain stage and that this progression will eventually lead to an atelic phase.

The question that emerges at this point is how the distinction of *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ and *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ relates to (10). Based on the

examples we have seen, we can say that accomplishment (*hirak-* ‘open’ (2)) is associated with *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’, whereas achievement (*sin-* ‘die’ (1b)) is associated with *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’. Furthermore, since a compound with activity (e.g. *nak-* ‘cry’ (9)) expresses a condition where the full-fledged action has not yet started, we can also say that activity is associated with *syoogentai*. Note that the phase in question is durative when considering accomplishment but non-durative when considering achievement and activity. Hence it can be stated that the term *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ is used for a durative phase and *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ for a non-durative phase. Moreover, the former is a characterization of the progression that foregrounds the left side of the progression (i.e. the phase between *A* and *B* in Figure 2), whereas the latter is a characterization that foregrounds the right side of the progression (i.e. the phase between *B* and *C* in Figure 2). Naturally, *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ implies that the event is still at an early stage, whereas *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ gives a prominence to the idea that the resultative state is about to set in or that the full-fledged event of activity is about to begin.

### 3.4. Verbs with complex logical structures

Now we must examine verbs that have complex logical structures. They are comprised of causative verbs and active accomplishment verbs. They either have two activity components or an activity and a change-of-state component. We will argue that (10) can be maintained even if the event consists of multiple subevent components. First of all, let’s consider the case of a causative activity verb *yuras-* ‘rock’ in (11).

- (11) Ken-wa            yurikago-o        yurasi-kake-te yame-ta.  
 Ken-TOP        cradle-ACC        rock-KAKE-L stop-PST.  
 ‘Ken was going to/starting to rock the cradle but stopped (doing so).’

Causative activity verbs are durative and atelic. They consist of two activity components: one represents the actor’s (*Ken*’s) activity, and the other represents

the undergoer's (*the cradle's*) activity. The two activities take place in synchronization with the latter being manipulated by the former, and these two activities are preceded by a preinceptive phase where the actor starts to rock the cradle. Since causative activities only have the dynamic atelic phase, (10) predicts that *-kake* refers to a temporal point during the preinceptive phase. In fact, this is borne out by reading (11). The sentence depicts a temporal point that is situated during the preinceptive phase of the rocking event (i.e. the stage where *Ken* might have reached out for the cradle to start rocking it but the event ceased sometime before the full-fledged rocking action takes place).

Next, we can group causative accomplishment and active accomplishment verbs together since they are patterned similarly with respect to durativity (i.e. the actor's activity progresses in parallel with a process of change-of-state that occurs to the undergoer because the actor is acting on the undergoer throughout the process). In terms of event composition, there is a preinceptive phase to the actor's activity which is followed by the process that is driven by the activity. Since the resultative state realizes as the coda, it is predicted that *-kake* would mark a temporal point sometime prior to the onset of the resultative state including the preinceptive phase. The sentences in (12) basically confirm this point: (12a) contains the causative accomplishment verb *tokas-* 'melt', and (12b) contains the active accomplishment verb *tabe-* 'eat it'.

- (12) a.      bataa-o            tokasi-kake-te    yame-ta.  
              butter-ACC        melt-KAKE-L    stop-PST.  
              'I was going to/started to melt the butter but stopped (doing so).'
- b.      banana-o            tabe-kake-te     yame-ta.  
              banana-ACC        eat-KAKE-L     stop-PST.  
              'I was going to/started to eat the banana but stopped (doing so).'

*Tokasi-kake-* 'melt-KAKE' can refer to a condition that holds during the preinceptive phase of the actor's action (e.g. the actor placing the butter in the pot and starting to turn on the stove) and the phase during which the butter begins melting before the resultative state sets in. Likewise, *tabe-kake-* 'eat-KAKE' can refer to a condition during the preinceptive phase of the actor's action (e.g. the

actor reaching for the banana and starting to peel it) and the phase during which the banana is being consumed before the resultative state sets in.

Finally, we must consider causative achievement verbs. These verbs come in two groups. We can call these groups “onset causation” and “extended causation” following Talmy (2000, p. 418). In the onset causation group, the actor’s completed action causes the occurrence of the undergoer’s state. An example would be *ringo-o otos-* ‘drop an apple’ where the event of the apple being dropped is caused by the actor’s release of the apple. A notable characteristic of this event is that the process is unstoppable once the actor takes an action. Because of this ‘unstoppability’, *-kake* can only target the preinceptive phase of the actor’s activity. This leads us to the reading shown in sentence (13).

- (13) ringo-o            otosi-kake-te    yame-ta  
 apple-ACC        drop-KAKE-L    stop-PST  
 ‘I was about to drop the apple but didn’t.’

The only available reading of this sentence is that the actor was going to drop the apple but decided not to. On the other hand, in the extended causation group, the actor’s force persists throughout the process. An example would be *ire-* ‘put’ where the actor’s transferring action causes an object to move into a container. In this case, the event consists of the preinceptive phase of the actor’s activity and the subsequent process, just as we saw in the case of onset causation as shown in (13). However, unlike onset causation, the process of extended causation is controlled throughout by the actor, and hence the process is stoppable. Therefore, *-kake* can target both the preinceptive and process phase of the event. The following example confirms that both readings are available in this group.

- (14) tiizu-o            reezooko-ni    ire-kake-te    yame-ta.  
 cheese-ACC        fridge-into    put-KAKE-L    stop-PST.  
 ‘I was going to put the cheese in the fridge but stopped (doing so).’

*Ire-kake-* ‘put-KAKE’ can refer to a condition that holds during the preinceptive phase of the actor’s action (e.g. the actor picking up the cheese with the intention

of putting it into the fridge) and the phase before the resultative state sets in (e.g. before the cheese actually makes contact with the rack in the fridge). In terms of the *syoogentai-sidootai* distinction, *otos-* ‘drop’ (causative achievement, onset causation) yields only the *syoogentai* reading that refers to the preinceptive phase of the actor’s activity, but *ire-* ‘put’ (causative achievement, extended causation), *tokas-* ‘melt’ (causative accomplishment), and *tabe-* ‘eat it’ (active accomplishment) can yield both the *syoogentai* reading that refers to the preinceptive phase of the actor’s activity as well as the *sidootai* reading that refers to the initial phase of the change-of-state process. Although these distributions might imply how complex the event structure of the base verb might be, the point to be emphasized is that there is one single temporal point which *-kake* marks throughout the course of the event, as suggested by Kageyama and Yumoto (1997, p. 83-84).

#### 4. Conclusion

This paper has argued that *-kake* marks a temporal point during the course of an event prior to the onset of an atelic phase, either dynamic or static, and requires that the event has progressed up to the point marked by *-kake*. Furthermore, it has argued that the terms *sidootai* and *syoogentai* represent alternative conceptualizations of the position of the temporal point indicated by *-kake*: the left side of the progression (i.e. the already completed phase) is “foregrounded” (Talmy, 2000, p. 76) and depicted using the term *sidootai* ‘beginning phase’ when the target phase is durative, and the right side of the progression (i.e. the yet to be completed phase) is “foregrounded” and portrayed using the term *syoogentai* ‘emergent phase’ when the target phase is non-durative.

In terms of Kindaichi’s (1950/76) verbal classification, the readings pertaining to the two phases are distributed as follows: (i) *syoogentai* is associated with one subset of ‘instantaneous verbs’ (achievement) while *sidootai* is associated with another subset of ‘instantaneous verbs’ (accomplishment), and (ii) not all ‘continuation verbs’ are associated with both readings (causative activity

and a subset of causative achievement yield only the *syoogentai* reading). Although the distribution might suggest the internal complexity of the event structure of the base verb, the association of a particular term with an aspectual class is a mere reflection of conventionalization as to which phase is portrayed depending on the temporal character of the event denoted by the base verb.

Kuno and Takami (2003) examine the readings of *-kake* that occur in the *V-kake-no N* construction (cf. Kishimoto, 1996) such as *toke-kake-no koori* ‘almost melted ice’.<sup>7</sup> Kuno and Takami (2003) propose that the condition depicted by the construction must be “in the observable stage close to the ‘change-of-state’ point designated or implied by the V” (p. 291). By ‘change-of-state’ point, they mean “the goal point for telic ... verbs, and the inception point ... for atelic verbs” (ibid.). Their observation is consistent with what we have observed in this paper, and suggests that the meaning of *-kake* that appears as the predicate in the matrix clause is essentially inherited in the nominalized construction. A closer comparison in the future would reveal whether or not *-kake* is subject to further common semantic constraint.

This paper has demonstrated that a lexical aspectual analysis based on the Aktionsart classification (VVLP, 1997) combined with a cognitive approach sheds light on the meaning of *-kake* in Japanese.

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### Notes

1. The following abbreviations are used: ACC=accusative, GEN=genitive, INGR=ingressive, L=linker, NOM=nominative, NPST=non-past, PST=past, POL=polite, and TOP=topic.

2. One caveat is that English does not have any single lexical item that precisely corresponds to the meaning of *-kake*, and hence it would be rendered differently using expressions such as *almost*, *be about to*, *starting to*, and *halfway* but the number of different glosses should not be equated with the number of senses *-kake* has. See Morgan (1969) for a discussion of the readings of English *almost* that give rise to analogous readings to *-kake*. See also Dowty (1979, p. 243) whether these readings are “vague” or “ambiguous”.
3. In other literature, *-kake* is classed under the category of “inceptive or inchoative” (Martin, 1975, p. 442-443) and “attenuative” (Soga, 1983, p. 187-192). In Park (2005), *-kake* is classed as an element that expresses “prospective Aktionsart (*syoozensoo*)” (p. 222), which is defined as “*genkai-tassee no (tyoku)zen no kyokumen*” (ibid.). She rejects the *syoogentai-sidootai* analysis, claiming *syoozensoo* as the meaning of *-kake*, although it is not specified what “*genkai*” refers to. I observe that her characterization is an analogue of *syoogentai* in the sense that it is a description that foregrounds the yet to be completed phase of the event. See Section 3 for the discussion of this topic.
4. Kindaichi’s “fourth class” is a subset of achievement verbs.
5. The original is given in Japanese and the translation is my own.
6. The state class is not discussed since it is incompatible with *-kake*.
7. Toratani (1998) and Tsujimura & Iida (1999) independently deal with the meaning of *-kake* in the nominalized construction. Toratani uses the terms “halfway” and “be about to”, while Tsujimura & Iida use the terms “halfway” and “inception”. “Halfway” corresponds to the *sidootai* reading, and “be about to” and “inception” correspond to the *syoogentai* reading.

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