TEMPORALITY IN MANYÖŠHU

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Abstract: Using the Manyöšhu corpus, the paper argues that conceptual metaphor theory imposes limitations on the diversity of linguistic facts, particularly those concerning the speaker or the poet who is communicating. The paper offers explanations of the nature of time by drawing upon the inference operating within "basic sign structure", specifically, indexicality and iconicity, both of which are at the heart of human semiotic activity.

Keywords: basic sign structure, iconicity, indexicality, Japanese, Manyöšhu (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves), space-time metaphor, temporality.

1. Introduction

Manyöšhu, or 万葉集 in Japanese characters, is one of three extant written documents from the eighth century A.D., an era of Japanese history that marked a surge in historical and literary works (Konishi 1984: 633-634). (1) below shows the titles of these three works, the English translation of their titles, and the years in which they were completed.

1. a. 古事記 Kojiki [Records of Ancient Matters] (711-712)
   b. 日本書紀 Nihonshoki [The Chronicle of Japan] (720)
   c. 万葉集 Manyöšhu [Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves] (712-759)

The composition of these works was a part of the political and cultural development fostered by the new government established in 710. This flourishing era, called the
Nara period (奈良時代), continued until 794 and is widely identified as the period of Old Japanese (Okimori 2010: 23; Traugott & Dasher 2002: xiv; Tsujimura 1971: 8-9), that is, as the first historical stage of the Japanese language (A.D. 710-800). The present paper describes and explains the nature of "time", that is, the rise, origin, and development of the concept, with respect to five temporal terms: *ahida* ("during, interval"), *ato* ("trace, consequence"), *ku* ("to come"), *noti* ("later, after"), and *saki* ("tip, before, prior to"), as they occur in the 20 books of *Manyōshū*. It is important to indicate at the outset that analysis of this anthology tells us that the poets were sufficiently familiar, probably subconsciously, with such notions as "succession" and "duration" (Fraisse 1963), "temporal arrangement" (Black 1962), and "causality" (Keller 1998) to conceive of temporality.

I manually collected examples from all 4,516 poems in *Manyōshū*. While all occurrences of *ku* (702) in the current corpus, which we refer to as *Manyōshū* Corpus (hereafter, *ManCorpus*), have been identified, examples of the other four terms has been randomly selected. By "random selection" we mean that examples were collected only once. Despite this incomplete data set, we consider that randomly selected examples deserve attention as they complement our understanding of *ku* and strengthen the argument we develop in this paper. Table 1 provides a bird's-eye view of the distribution of *ku* in the *ManCorpus*. Note that the main focus in this paper will be the simplex forms of fictive usage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>simplex</th>
<th>simplex: fictive</th>
<th>compound</th>
<th>compound: aspect</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>frequency</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 702 examples of *ku* are categorized by four criteria. The simplex form, in which *ku* appears with the moving subject, occurs 324 times (46.1%) (e.g., *My lover has*...