

# Morphosyntactic Changes and Sociolinguistic Variation in the Language of Kyōgen A Corpus-Based Analysis of *Toraakirabon* (1642)

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**Abstract** The aim of this paper is to analyse morphosyntactic structures in the language of kyōgen – a traditional form of Japanese comic theatre developed in the fourteenth century – from a sociolinguistic perspective, i.e. by highlighting differences in usage across various categories of characters, using the *Corpus of Historical Japanese (CHJ)*. This paper will focus on the use of the particles *ga* and *no* with nominative and attributive functions and on the decline of *kakari-musubi* with *koso* in *Toraakirabon* (1642). The analysis will reveal that linguistic characterization is rendered not only through the lexicon, but also, as in the case of female characters, through a particular use of morphosyntactic structures, which appears less influenced by linguistic innovations.

**Keywords** Kyōgen. *Toraakirabon*. Late Middle Japanese. Sociolinguistic variation. Japanese case particles. *Kakari-musubi*. Gendered language.

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## 1 The Language of Kyōgen, its Periodisation and its Sociolinguistic Variation

Kyōgen is a form of comic theatre that developed in the fourteenth century as an interlude between *nō* plays. Both *nō* and kyōgen are still performed today in a language rather distant from contemporary Japanese; however, the language of kyōgen is easier for today's spectators to understand. Indeed, at kyōgen performances, it is common to see the audience laugh at the characters' comical jokes. The reason for this is that whereas the courtly and solemn language of *nō* is related to Early Middle Japanese (800-1200), that of kyōgen is based on the language spoken at the turn of the seventeenth century. In addition, kyōgen allows for a dynamic articulation of dialogues. The characters are often ordinary people: in addition to demons, *daimyō* and masters, we also find servants and common sellers.

It is difficult to date the language of kyōgen since the transcription of the first texts only began in the early Tokugawa period (1603-1867). In the *Tenshō kyōgenbon* 天正狂言本 - the earliest source of kyōgen plays, dating back to approximately 1578 - the plays are not transcribed but are simply sketched, which suggests that the actors at the time did not learn any lines by heart, but improvised using the language of their time. The authors of these sketches are unknown. We may suppose that they based their work on what had been handed down orally from master to disciple over generations (Ruperti 2015). The decision to put the dialogues into writing was probably due to the need to codify and define a repertoire in a language that was beginning to become obsolete. The first transcription in dialogic form is the so-called *Toraakirabon* 虎明本, in eight volumes, written by Ōkura Toraakira 大蔵虎明 (1597-1662) in 1642 with the aim of handing down the scripts to future generations of actors. In the preface, he states that it is an accurate transcription of what has been transmitted for generations. The late appearance of the first kyōgen scripts makes the dating of their language rather difficult. Comparative studies reveal that the language recorded in *Toraakirabon* shares several morphosyntactic characteristics with the language used in *shōmono*<sup>1</sup> as well as in the Christian sources, in particular those written in the vernacular of the late Muromachi period (1336-1573), such as *Esopo no fabulas* - henceforth *Esopo* - and *Feiqe monogatari* - henceforth *Feiqe*

<sup>1</sup> The so-called *shōmono* 抄物 are commentaries, or lecture notes, on Chinese classics and Buddhist scriptures written between the second half of the fifteenth century and the mid-sixteenth century. The language used is very similar to that of the Christian materials, suggesting that many of the changes they record had already occurred by the middle of the sixteenth century (Yuzawa 1929, 1970; Frellesvig 2010).

(Yamada 2003; Yi 2011).<sup>2</sup> However, the language of kyōgen is not always used as a source by language historians, since it represents a language spoken between two linguistic stages, Late Middle Japanese (1200-1600) and Modern Japanese (1600-).<sup>3</sup> The periodisation of the history of the Japanese language commonly follows the division into historical periods, so that Old Japanese is the language of the Nara period, Early Middle Japanese the language of the Heian period; Late Middle Japanese is the language of the Kamakura, Muromachi and Azuchi Momoyama periods, while Modern Japanese runs from the 1600s onwards. Obviously, this classification is not based on historical criteria alone. Late Middle Japanese is the linguistic stage which witnessed the emergence of the main morphosyntactic changes that would eventually lead to the Japanese language as we know it today. The language of *Toraakirabon* does reflect Late Middle Japanese, the language in which the kyōgen repertoire was codified, but at the same time it is influenced by the spoken language of the early seventeenth century. Kamei, Ōtō, Yamada (1964a, 283) claim that one should not consider the language of kyōgen an accurate representation of the spoken language of the Muromachi period: it presents some conservative features, while also being influenced by the changes that were taking place at the beginning of the Tokugawa period. Iwai (1973), for example, uses extracts from the *Kyōgenki* 狂言記 to describe the morphological characteristics of the language of the Muromachi period,<sup>4</sup> but states that, being a work written in the Tokugawa period, it could be influenced by the language of that time, especially *kamigatago*, the language spoken in the Kansai region (Iwai 1973, 3). Frellesvig (2010, 364) uses an example from *Kyōgenki* to describe a characteristic that emerges in the Japanese of the Tokugawa period. Although he admits that the language of kyōgen reflects many features of the language of the Muromachi period, *Toraakirabon* is not included in the list of useful sources for reconstructing Late Middle

**2** Collectively referred to as *Kirishitan shiryō* キリシタン資料, the Christian sources are the works produced by the Jesuit missionaries who arrived in Japan starting in 1549. Until their expulsion in 1639, the missionaries conducted their evangelisation work with extreme dedication. They learned both classical and spoken Japanese and produced a vast number of written resources, such as grammars, dictionaries and texts on Christian doctrine. In 1591, they brought a movable-type press, which they used to print works that came to be known as *kirishitan-ban*. *Feiqe monogatari* (*The Tale of the Heike*) and *Esopo no fabulas* (*Aesop's Fables*), printed in Amakusa in 1592 and published in one volume in 1593, are the most valuable sources for the reconstruction of Late Middle Japanese (1200-1600), since they are both written in the contemporary vernacular using the Latin alphabet.

**3** Here we follow the periodisation adopted in Frellesvig (2010), where modern Japanese is considered to be the language in use from 1600 to the present day. Other periodisations introduce a break between the Tokugawa and Meiji periods, resulting in a division into pre-modern Japanese and modern Japanese.

**4** *Kyōgenki* is a collection of about 200 kyōgen plays published in the Tokugawa period, many of which are shared between schools (Ōkura, Izumi and Sagi).

Japanese. In March 2015, the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) includes *Toraakirabon* – in the version edited by Ōtsuka (2006) – in the *Corpus of Historical Japanese* (henceforth *CHJ*), in the section on the Muromachi period (Ichimura et al. 2015). Regardless of its connection with a specific linguistic stage, we can consider *Toraakirabon* one of the most valuable sources for the reconstruction of the language spoken at the turn of the seventeenth century. As in *shōmono* and the Christian sources, the language of *Toraakirabon* presents all the morphosyntactic changes which occurred in Late Middle Japanese, painting the picture of a very dynamic linguistic stage, in which new forms have not yet completely replaced more archaic ones. Previous studies have noted a degree of sociolinguistic variation in the use of morphosyntactic structures, made evident by the presence of numerous types of characters. However, this variation is limited to aspects of pragmatics, particularly politeness. As Kamei, Ōtō, Yamada (1964a, 299) suggest, all characters speak the same language. Even anthropomorphic characters such as gods, demons and spirits use the same expressions as human beings. The language employed does not therefore vary depending on one's profession or role. According to Kamei, Ōtō, Yamada, the only variation that can be observed is the one related to levels of politeness and from this point of view the language of kyōgen can be considered a faithful reflection of the spoken language of the time.

In her unpublished PhD dissertation, Sitasuwan (1986) analyses some features of the language of kyōgen, basing her study on a selection of plays included in the two volumes of *Kyōgenshū* 狂言集, edited by Koyama Hiroshi (1960-1961) as part of the series *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*. Sitasuwan focuses her analysis on the honorific language and the use of onomatopoeic expressions (*giseigo* and *gitaigo*). She notes that while all characters in kyōgen speak in the same way, whether they are demons, merchants or peasants, there is a distinction in speech levels that reflects the social relation between characters: for example, between a master and his servant, or between a man and a woman. In order to see how characters interact and how their relations develop in the plays considered, Sitasuwan examines the system of speech levels and describes the use of personal pronouns and the corresponding predicates between characters belonging to different social classes. Particularly interesting is her classification of personal pronouns according to the parameters of politeness and formality: cf. [tab. 1] and [tab. 2]. In order to illustrate a common conversational situation between men and women, Sitasuwan presents the plot of *Mikazuki*, an *onna kyōgen* (women kyōgen), and describes the pronouns and predicates used by the two characters, the husband and the wife: the husband calls himself *midomo* or *soregashi*

and calls his wife *sonata*,<sup>5</sup> while the woman calls her husband *konata*, uses *gozaru* – a predicate that shows a certain level of respect – and calls herself *warawa*, a first-person pronoun used only by women. Other conversational situations, like those between master and servant, or between a priest (*yamabushi*) and the spirit of a crab, are also described, in order to give an idea of how the language used in kyōgen dialogues varies according to sociolinguistic parameters.

**Table 1** First-person pronouns, listed by decreasing degrees of deference

| First-person pronoun | Addressee                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>ware</i>          | inferior                      |
| <i>kochi</i>         | inferior                      |
| <i>mi</i>            | inferior                      |
| <i>midomo</i>        | slightly inferior or superior |
| <i>soregashi</i>     | equal                         |
| <i>watakushi</i>     | superior                      |
| <i>gusō</i>          | superior (used by priests)    |
| <i>warawa</i>        | superior (used by women only) |

**Table 2** Second-person pronouns, listed by decreasing degrees of deference

| Second-person pronoun    | Addressee |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| <i>onore</i>             | inferior  |
| <i>sochi</i>             | inferior  |
| <i>nanji</i>             | inferior  |
| <i>wagoryo</i>           | equal     |
| <i>sonata</i>            | equal     |
| <i>konata</i>            | superior  |
| <i>katagata</i> (plural) | superior  |

An interesting study on sociolinguistic variation in the language of *Toraakirabon* is provided by Hachiya (1998), who analyses the copular forms used for the *nanori* 名ノリ, i.e. the presentation of a character making his/her entrance on stage: each character introduces him/herself by using a nominal predicate (predicate name and copula). Extensive variation was made possible by the high number of copular forms that had emerged in Late Middle Japanese. In Old and Early Middle Japanese, the copulas were *tari* and *nari*, the latter

<sup>5</sup> I have chosen to employ the Hepburn system for the transcription of the linguistic forms of Late Middle Japanese, so as to reproduce the pronunciation in use at the time in the most straightforward manner.

deriving from the analytic form *ni ari*, which coexisted with the other two. An alternative to the analytic form was the variant *nite ari*, from which the form *de ari* emerged via fusion. In Late Middle Japanese, the attributive form of the existential verb *aru* replaced the conclusive *ari*, so we have *nite aru* and *de aru*, from which the forms *da* and *ja* later developed (*de aru* > *dea* > *da*; *de aru* > *jaru* > *ja*). In addition to the existential verb *aru*, other verbs were also used in the analytic form to express deference to one's addressee, such as *gozaru*, *ojaru* and *oryaru*. The existential verb could also be replaced by the general polite marker *sōrō*, thus forming copular forms such as *de sōrō* and *nite sōrō*. Some scholars believe that the copula *desu*, used in contemporary Japanese, derives from *de sō* (< *de sōrō*). In *Toraakirabon* we find contracted and non-contracted, synthetic and analytic forms of the copula, to which suffixes are often attached to express further politeness. The text uses these forms to express sociolinguistic variation in relation to different types of characters. Hachiya (1998, 113-29) analyses 231 plays included in *Toraakirabon* and classifies the copular forms in the *nanori* according to the characters employing them. He notes, for instance, that the copula *nari*, the most archaic of those occurring in these plays, is used only four times and only by gods. The copula *saburō*, a phonetically different version of *sōrō*, is only used by female characters. In *Arte da lingoa de Iapam* (1604-08) – edited or directed by João Rodrigues – there is a passage on the differentiation of copular forms stating that in solemn contexts, such as letters to the *shōgun*, the copula *nari* is more suitable than *sōrō*. This suggests that the archaic form is the one with a higher degree of politeness and formality. The author also says that *saburō* (*saburō* in the original spelling) is the form used by women.<sup>6</sup> The copular form most commonly used in the *nanori* of *Toraakirabon* is the one with the verb of existence *gozaru/goza-aru*. Another copular form used only by women is *oryarashimasu*, where the verb *oryaru* is suffixed with *shimasu* to further raise the level of politeness.<sup>7</sup> Besides the honorific forms, we also find *nite aru*, used by demons and foxes, since it is typical of the written language, and *ja*, used by common people. The more innovative form *desu* is used by bonzes (*yamabushi*) and by the less elegant *daimyō*. Indeed, according to Hachiya, it is possible to divide *daimyō* into two groups: the more elegant one uses *gozaru*, the less refined one uses *desu*. In table 3 the copular forms used in the plays included in *Toraakirabon* are listed

<sup>6</sup> According to Hachiya (1998) the pronunciation used by women was *samurō*.

<sup>7</sup> In *Torahirobon* 虎寛本, written by Ōkura Torahiro 大蔵虎寛 (1758-1805) in 1792, both the existential verb *oryarashimasu* in copular forms and *saburō*, used in the *nanori* of female characters, are replaced with *gozaru*. Hachiya (1998) thinks that these expressions were features of women's language in the Muromachi and early Tokugawa period, and that by the end of the 18th century they had already disappeared.

by decreasing degrees of formality, along with some remarks on their sociolinguistic variation [tab. 3].

**Table 3** Copular forms in *Toraakirabon*

| Copular forms                               | Remarks  |
|---|--|
| <i>nari</i>                                 | mainly used by gods  |
| <i>nite oryarashimasu, de oryarashimasu</i> | used by women  |
| <i>nite gozaaru, de gozaaru</i>             | most used copular expressions in the <i>nanori</i> ; more formal and respectful than <i>nite/de sōrō</i> |
| <i>nite gozaaru, de gozaaru</i>             |  |
| <i>nite goaru, de goaru</i>                 |  |
| <i>nite samurō, de samurō</i>               | used by women; the pronunciation may have been <i>saburō</i>   |
| <i>nite sōrō, de sōrō</i>                   | also used by anthropomorphic beings, such as <i>enma</i>   |
| <i>nite oryaru, de oryaru</i>               | not used in the <i>nanori</i>  |
| <i>nite ojaru, de ojaru</i>                 |  |
| <i>nite aru, de aru</i>                     | typical of the written language, used by demons  |
| <i>desu</i>                                 | used by priests and by unrefined <i>daimyō</i>   |
| <i>ja</i>                                   | typical of colloquial language, used by male masters and <i>daimyō</i>                                   |

Watanabe (2015) offers another study on sociolinguistic variation in *Toraakirabon* by presenting the results of a corpus-based analysis using the *CHJ*. She discusses the usage of *to omou* and *to zonzu*, which are concluding expressions employed to state one's opinion. In the *gunki monogatari*, as well as in Christian sources, such as the *Feiqe*, the concluding expression *to zonzu* is used when the speaker is addressing someone of higher or equal status. On the other hand, *to omou* is used when the speaker is in a higher or equal social position than the listener. In other words, in Late Middle Japanese *to zonzu* is rarely used to address inferiors, while *to omou* is rarely used to address superiors. The results of Watanabe's investigation lead to the conclusion that in *Toraakirabon*, *to zonzu* is used when the speaker's status is lower than or equal to that of the listener, whereas *to omou* is used if the speaker's status is higher or equal. As an expression of politeness towards the audience, *to zonzu* is also frequently used in *nanori* and monologue situations. However, female characters tend to prefer the expression *to omou*, often suffixed with the polite marker *sōrō* (*to omoi sōrō*). This is because the humble expression *to zonzu* probably had a solemn ring that made it unsuitable for female characters. Moreover, the gender difference was also rendered graphically by using *kana* instead of *kanji* to transcribe the marker *sōrō*. The concluding expression *to omoi sōrō* と思ひそうろう therefore becomes

a feature of women's language. Interestingly, the only male characters to use the expression *to omoi sōrō* are bonzes. The two expressions, *to zonzu* and *to omou*, are used distinctly in *Toraakirabon* as well as in works written in the Kamakura and Muromachi periods. However, unlike in the *gunki monogatari*, the expression *to zōji sōrō* (*to zonzu + sōrō*) does not appear even once in *Toraakirabon*.

As we have seen from the studies presented so far, while the various categories of characters in *kyōgen* employ the same language, a degree of sociolinguistic variation can nonetheless be observed, especially in the sphere of pragmatics and politeness. The female characters tend to use even more polite language: certain humble expressions are indeed typical of female speech. In the present study, I wish to investigate this aspect even further by taking as my parameters two of the main morphosyntactic changes affecting Late Middle Japanese, in order to verify whether certain categories of characters are more or less influenced by these linguistic innovations. The parameters in question are the particles *ga* and *no*, used with attributive and nominative functions, and the use of *kakari-musubi* with *koso*. The investigation will be based on the *CHJ* developed at the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (2016).

## 2 Sociolinguistic Variation in the Use of Particles in *Toraakirabon*

### 2.1 Particles with Nominative and Attributive Functions from Old to Late Middle Japanese

In Modern Japanese *no* is a general attributive particle,<sup>8</sup> while *ga* is a nominative particle that marks the subject of both independent and subordinate clauses. This specification is necessary since in Old and Early Middle Japanese these particles were used to mark only the subject of adnominal and other subordinate clauses.<sup>9</sup> They also functioned as attributive particles. No particles existed for the marking of the subject of an independent clause. However, there was a distributional difference between *ga* and *no*, both in the adnominal function and the subject-marking function. While *no* had a wider distribution, the particle *ga* was mainly used with pronouns and noun referring to human beings. In Early Middle Japanese the use of *ga* became increasingly restricted, with the particle only occurring after personal pronouns, for example *wa ga tsuma* (my wife), and after proper

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<sup>8</sup> It is also used to mark the subject of adnominal clauses in specific cases.

<sup>9</sup> The expression 'adnominal clause' here refers to all nominalised clauses that have the predicate in the attributive form, including headless nominalised clauses.



nouns of persons related or dear to the speaker. This restricted use of *ga* influenced subsequent developments, leading to a distributional differentiation in the use of the two particles. This differentiation became more marked in the final stages of Late Middle Japanese, in the Muromachi period. In the attributive function, the particle *ga* was exclusively used to mark personal pronouns and the names of persons, while *no* continued to have a wider distribution. The use of *ga* as a subject marker, both in independent and subordinate clauses, expanded dramatically, becoming an exclusive nominative case particle in the Tokugawa period. By contrast, *no* maintained its attributive function (Shibatani 1990) [tab. 4].

**Table 4** Development of the uses of *ga* and *no* (Iwai 1973; Shibatani 1990; Kobayashi 2005; Frellesvig 2010)

|   |           | Old<br>Japanese<br>(Nara) | Early<br>Middle<br>Japanese<br>(Heian) | Late Middle<br>Japanese<br>(Kamakura) | Late Middle<br>Japanese<br>(Muromachi) | Modern<br>Japanese<br>(Tokugawa) | Modern<br>Japanese<br>(from Meiji<br>onwards) |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|
| Attributive function  | <i>ga</i> | +                         | +                                      | +                                     | +                                      | -                                | -   |
|   | <i>no</i> | +                         | +                                      | +                                     | +                                      | +                                | +   |
| Nominative function<br>- Independent clause                                   | <i>ga</i> | -                         | -                                      | +/-                                   | +                                      | +                                | +   |
|   | <i>no</i> | -                         | -                                      | +                                     | +/-                                    | +/-                              | -   |
| Nominative function<br>- Subordinate<br>clauses (excluding<br>adnominal ones) | <i>ga</i> | +                         | +                                      | +                                     | +                                      | +                                | +   |
|   | <i>no</i> | +                         | +                                      | +                                     | +/-                                    | +/-                              | -   |
| Nominative<br>function – Adnominal<br>clauses                                 | <i>ga</i> | +                         | +                                      | +                                     | +                                      | +                                | +   |
|   | <i>no</i> | +                         | +                                      | +                                     | +                                      | +                                | +/-   |

The uneven distribution between the two particles, which had overlapping functions, is believed to underlie the sociolinguistic differentiation that developed in the Kamakura period: *ga* was used to convey a deprecating and humble attitude and tended to occur with nouns referring to familiar persons, such as one's wife, whereas *no* expressed a deferential, respectful or neutral attitude towards the referent of the marked nominal. In *Arte da lingua de Iapam* (1604-08) this sociolinguistic differentiation is described explicitly, proving that it was still productive until the beginning of the Tokugawa period:

*ga* is used in careful speech and it indicated that what is referred to by the noun preceding it is deprecated. It is used with a first-person pronoun or a third-person pronoun referring to a low-ranked person. Also it is used to slight or deprecate other persons. *No* is normally used in the relative ([nominalized]) clause marking the

second- and third- person pronouns, and it connotes deference or at least non-deprecation of the referent. In the attributive function, there are two [particles]. *No* is used with the second- and third-person pronouns to refer to respected persons, and *ga* is used with the first-person pronoun and the third-person pronoun to refer to a low-ranked person, and sometimes with the second-person when the person is to be deprecated. (Rodrigues 1604-08, 501-3, cit. in Shibatani 1990, 356)

Rodrigues's description points to the sociolinguistic differentiation of the two particles, in both the attributive and the nominative functions, offering a clear link with personal pronouns. Moreover, it suggests that the use of the particle *no* with a nominative function was beginning to be confined to subordinate clauses. Indeed, towards the middle of the Tokugawa period, the differentiation could not be maintained, since the particles began to occur with a complementary distribution: *ga* was used with a nominative function, and *no* almost exclusively with an attributive function. Frellesvig (2010, 368) is puzzled by Rodrigues' (1604-08, 501-3) description because the differentiated use of the two particles would not appear to be confirmed by its usage in texts, e.g. in *Esopo*, where the particle *ga* marks most kinds of subjects. He attributes this description to an internalised representation of certain metalinguistic concepts from earlier periods. In describing the characteristics of the Japanese language of the Muromachi period, Iwai (1973, 209-11) notes a differentiated use of the particles *no* and *ga* when marking proper nouns. He presents examples where the particles are used with a nominative function in subordinate clauses and argues that the particle *no* is used to show respect towards a person, while *ga* is used neutrally or to mark first-person pronouns as a kind of humble form of expression.

Yamada (1997) examines the use of the particles *ga* and *no* with nominative function in *Toraakirabon*, highlighting the differences from a pragmatic point of view and drawing a correlation with the predicate type. He counts all the occurrences of the two particles when they mark a subject in independent clauses, in adnominal clauses and in other subordinate clauses, obtaining the results schematically shown in table 5 [tab. 5]. As is evident, the two particles are used as subject markers in all clause types. Interestingly, the particle *ga* is the prevalent one in independent and subordinate clauses, with 92% and 86.6% of occurrences respectively. In adnominal clauses, on the other hand, the particle *no* is prevalent with 57.3% of occurrences. As far as differentiation on the sociolinguistic level is concerned, Yamada states that *no* has a strong honorific connotation, as it marks honorific pronouns in correlation with verbs in honorific form, whereas *ga* has a wide range of uses. Yamada's (1997) study is extremely important, since it is the only thorough investigation of

the use of these particles in *Toraakirabon*.<sup>10</sup> However, it presents only a few examples of the differentiated use of these particles from a sociolinguistic point of view and does not offer systematic data related to the usage by certain categories of characters. Furthermore, there is no data on the variation in the use of the two particles when they have an attributive function.

**Table 5** Occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* with a nominative function in *Toraakirabon* (Yamada 1997, 156)

|   | <i>ga</i>   | <i>no</i>   | Total |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------|
| Independent clauses                               | 1224 (92%)  | 107 (8%)    | 1331  |
| Subordinate clauses<br>(excluding adnominal ones) | 785 (86.6%) | 121 (13.4%) | 906   |
| Adnominal clauses                                 | 202 (42.7%) | 271 (57.3%) | 473   |

## 2.2 Aim of the Study and Methodology

The aim of the present study is to analyse the usage of the particles *ga* and *no* with a nominative and attributive function in *Toraakirabon* and to verify the distributional and sociolinguistic differentiation described in previous studies. The investigation has been conducted using the *CHJ*, where the text of *Toraakirabon* is included – in Ōtsuka’s (2006) edition – with a specification of the characters. The analysis has been restricted to first- and second-person pronouns in the dialogues, thus excluding captions and quotations. A total of 963 concordances have thus been extracted and analysed, of which 749 present a personal pronoun marked by the particle *ga* and 214 a personal pronoun marked by the particle *no*. The first- and second-person pronouns marked by the two particles are listed in table 6 [tab. 6].

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<sup>10</sup> Similar data on the use of the particles *ga* and *no* in *Toraakirabon* can be also found in Gotō (2017).

**Table 6** First- and second-person pronouns in *Toraakirabon*<sup>11</sup>

| First-person pronouns | Second-person pronouns |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>kochi</i>          | <i>kimi</i>            |
| <i>midomo</i>         | <i>konata</i>          |
| <i>ore</i>            | <i>nanji</i>           |
| <i>soregashi</i>      | <i>onore</i>           |
| <i>wa</i>             | <i>onushi/nushi</i>    |
| <i>warawa</i>         | <i>sochi</i>           |
| <i>watakushi</i>      | <i>sonata</i>          |
|                       | <i>wagoryo</i>         |
|                       | <i>ware</i>            |

Among the first-person pronouns, *midomo*, *ore*, *wa* and *warawa* are marked only by the particle *ga*. Among the second-person pronouns, *konata* is only marked by the particle *no*, whereas *nanji* is marked only by the particle *ga*. All other particles occur with both *ga* and *no*. It is quite clear why the second-person pronouns *konata* and *nanji* are each associated with a specific particle: they are pronouns used to address superiors and inferiors, respectively. *Warawa*, the pronoun used only by female characters, is always marked by *ga*, reinforcing the degree of humbleness of the language employed. However, it is somewhat unclear why *midomo* and *ore* have *ga* as their particle, since these pronouns are used to address equals or inferiors. The second-person pronoun *ware* occurs only once, uttered by the character *son-in-law*.<sup>12</sup>

All concordances have been analysed grammatically and divided according to the 127 characters uttering those phrases. They have also been classified according to the function of the particle, attributive or nominative, and, for the nominative function, according to clause type - independent, adnominal or subordinate - similarly to what was done in Yamada (1997).

### 2.3 Results and Discussion

Table 7 illustrates the data on the number of occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* marking a first-person pronoun in *Toraakirabon*. As we can see, the two particles have overlapping functions and mark the first-person pronoun with both attributive and nominative functions

<sup>11</sup> In this study, unlike in Sitasuwan (1986), *gusō* (愚僧) has not been included among personal pronouns. In the *CHJ* it has been classified as a noun.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the sentence: *itsu ware ga ore ni sake o kureta zo* (when did you give me alcoholic drinks?), uttered by a *son-in-law* in the play *Koimuko* (40-虎明1642\_03013; 880).

in all clause types. However, *ga* is the most common particle, occurring in 92.6% of cases [tab. 7].

**Table 7** Occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* marking a first-person pronoun<sup>13</sup>

|           | Attributive | Nominative-independent clauses | Nominative-subordinate clauses | Nominative-adnominal clauses | Total       |
|-----------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| <i>ga</i> | 198 (88%)   | 151 (97.4%)                    | 123 (95.3%)                    | 79 (91.9%)                   | 551 (92.6%) |
| <i>no</i> | 27 (12%)    | 4 (2.6%)                       | 6 (4.7%)                       | 7 (8.1%)                     | 44 (7.4%)   |

Table 8 illustrates the data on the number of occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* marking a second-person pronoun in *Toraakirabon*. Again, the two particles have overlapping functions and mark the second-person pronoun in both attributive and nominative functions in all clause types. In contrast to what happens with first-person pronouns, *ga* is the chosen particle only for the nominative function, although the difference in adnominal clauses becomes less pronounced. With the attributive function, the chosen particle is *no*. We can explain these data by pointing to the sociolinguistic variation in the use of the two particles mentioned in previous studies. The particle *ga*, expressing a humble attitude, is the particle chosen for first-person pronouns, while the particle *no*, which has an honorific value, is the particle chosen for second-person pronouns. We do not find this kind of sociolinguistic variation when the two particles are used with a nominative function, since the particle *ga* at the time was already acquiring the exclusive status of a nominative case particle [tab. 8].

**Table 8** Occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* marking a second-person pronoun

|           | Attributive | Nominative-independent clauses | Nominative-subordinate clauses | Nominative-adnominal clauses | Total       |
|-----------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| <i>ga</i> | 37 (23,7%)  | 62 (86.1%)                     | 69 (81.2%)                     | 30 (54.5%)                   | 198 (53.8%) |
| <i>no</i> | 119 (76,3%) | 10 (13.9%)                     | 16 (18.8%)                     | 25 (45.5%)                   | 170 (46.2%) |

Let us now focus our analysis on female characters [tab. 9]. In *Toraakirabon* there are 56 sentences uttered by women in which a first-person pronoun is marked by the particle *ga*. Although the most frequently used pronoun is *warawa* (1), we can find the whole range of first-person pronouns, previously listed [tab. 6], except for *kochi*.

<sup>13</sup> Percentages are approximated to the first numeral (also in the next tables).

It is particularly interesting to note that none of the 56 first-person pronouns is marked by the particle *no*. It is true that looking at the overall percentages of [tab. 7] we would have expected a low percentage, under 10%, but it seems quite significant that not a single occurrence is to be found. From this it may be inferred that the first-person pronoun *warawa*, typical of women's language, is only marked by the particle *ga*. It is difficult to determine at this point whether *warawa-ga* is a lexical bundle or whether the choice of the particle is driven by pragmatic and sociolinguistic factors. All the other first-person pronouns, including *soregashi* and *watakushi*, which in *Toraakirabon* occur with both *ga* and *no*, are only marked by the particle *ga* in the case of female characters (2). This may be a particular pragmatic choice made to increase the level of humbleness of the language used by women. Looking at the data concerning second-person pronouns, we find exactly the opposite situation. Second-person pronouns are marked by the particle *no* in 82.5% of cases. There are seven cases in which, probably for the purpose of denigration, female characters utter sentences in which the second-person pronoun is marked with the particle *ga*. One is the case of the Woman from the play *Inabadō* addressing her husband, who wants to end their marriage, as *nanji-ga*. Again, the woman in the play *Setsubun* addresses the demon who wants to seduce her as *sonata-ga* (3). The others are all cases where an angry wife addresses her husband, as in the play *Hanago*, where the jealous wife addresses her cheating husband as *nanji-ga* (twice) and *onore-ga*, and the play *Hikkukuri*, where the ill-tempered wife addresses her husband, who wants to divorce her, as *wagoryo-ga*.<sup>14</sup>

- (1) *kore wa warawa ga isseki nite oryarashimasu*  
 this TOP I ATTR thing COP-HON.NONPST  
 "This is mine", woman in the play *Yase matsu* (40-虎明1642\_05032; 4290).

- (2) *watakushi ga tokoro no hito mo*  
 I ATTR place ATTR person too  
*mairarete gozaru*  
 come-HON-INF EXIST.NONPST  
 "People from my place came too", woman in the play *Hōchō muko* (40-虎明1642\_03005; 14460).

<sup>14</sup> The meaning of the grammatical abbreviations is as follows: ATTR: attributive; CONJ: conjunction; COP: copula; EXCL: exclamatory; EXIST: existential verb; HON: honorific; INF: infinitive; NEG: negative; NOM: nominative; NONPST: non-past; PRT: particle; PST: past; TOP: topic. In brackets the Sample ID (サンプルID) and the Character Starting Position (開始位置) as given in the *CHJ*.

- (3) *sonata ga osoroshii*  
 you NOM frightening-NONPST  
 “You are frightening”, *woman* in the play *Setsubun* (40-虎明1642\_04009; 7950).

**Table 9** Occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* marking first- and second-person pronouns in clauses uttered by all female characters

| Character                              | First-person pronoun |               | Second-person pronoun |                   |
|--|----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
|  | <i>ga</i>            | <i>no</i>     | <i>ga</i>             | <i>no</i>         |
| wife                                   | 26                   | -             | 5                     | 18                |
| woman                                  | 25                   | -             | 2                     | 5                 |
| old nun                                | 2                    | -             | -                     | 3                 |
| widow                                  | 2                    | -             | -                     | 2                 |
| nun <i>Nyakuichi</i>                   | -                    | -             | -                     | 2                 |
| woman of Kamigyō                       | 1                    | -             | -                     | 1                 |
| aunt                                   | -                    | -             | -                     | 1                 |
| woman of Shimogyō/<br>woman of Kamigyō | -                    | -             | -                     | 1                 |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>56 (100%)</b>     | <b>0 (0%)</b> | <b>7 (17.5%)</b>      | <b>33 (82.5%)</b> |

Let us make a comparison with some of the main male characters in *Toraakirabon* [tab. 10]. As for first-person pronouns, in 13.5% of cases they are marked by the particle *no*, probably because in those cases the characters do not need to use humble language: cf. (4) and (5). Regarding second-person pronouns, the situation is the opposite for female characters, as *ga* is the prevalent particle, especially in the case of characters such as the *master*, the *daimyō* and the *official in charge of the market*. Particularly interesting is the case of the *daimyō*, who always use the particle *ga* for the first-person pronoun, and in most cases for the second-person pronoun too. From a comparison of the data pertaining to female and male characters, we can conclude that the sociolinguistic differentiation of the two particles, as described by Rodrigues (1604-08, 501-3), is consistently and pedantically applied by the female characters, who use extremely polite and respectful language. At the same time, these characters may be showing their anger and displeasure by addressing their interlocutors with a second-person personal pronoun marked with the particle *ga*.

- (4) *sore wa watakushi no chijin de gozaru*  
 that TOP I ATTR acquaintance COP.NONPST  
 “It is someone I know”, *Tarō kaja* in the play *Mejika komebone* (40-虎明1642\_01018; 2250).

- (5) *okura wa kotogotoku watakushi no azukarimarashita*  
 storehouse TOP entirely I NOM keep.HON.PAST  
*ga sayō no mono wa gozaranu*  
 CONJ like that ATTR thing TOP EXIST.NEG.NONPST  
 “I took care of the entire storehouse, but there is nothing like that”, *Tarō kaja*  
 in the play *Awataguchi* (40-虎明1642\_02011; 2940).

**Table 10** Occurrences of the particles *ga* and *no* marking first- and second-person pronouns in clauses uttered by leading male characters

| Character                           | First-person pronoun |                   | Second-person pronoun |                 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
|                                     | <i>ga</i>            | <i>no</i>         | <i>ga</i>             | <i>no</i>       |
| <i>Tarō kaja</i><br>master          | 78                   | 16                | 11                    | 34              |
| <i>daimyō</i><br>husband            | 37                   | 8                 | 33                    | 6               |
| man                                 | 33                   | -                 | 13                    | 5               |
| official in charge<br>of the market | 27                   | 2                 | 11                    | 8               |
| priest                              | 10                   | 3                 | 2                     | -               |
| shyster                             | 4                    | 1                 | 9                     | 1               |
|                                     | 9                    | 2                 | 1                     | 3               |
|                                     | 7                    | -                 | 1                     | 4               |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>205 (86.5%)</b>   | <b>32 (13.5%)</b> | <b>81 (57%)</b>       | <b>61 (43%)</b> |

### 3 Sociolinguistic Variation in the Use of *kakari-musubi* in *Toraakirabon*

#### 3.1 The Decline of *kakari-musubi* with *koso* in Late Middle Japanese

The *kakari-musubi* is a typical construction of the classical Japanese language, whereby a constituent marked by an emphatic (*so/zo, namo/namu, koso*) or interrogative (*ka, ya*) particle, called the *kakari* particle, corresponds to a predicate (*musubi*) in a form other than the conclusive form (*shūshikei*). The *kakari* particle requires the predicate to be in the adnominal form (*rentaikei*), except in the case of the particle *koso*, which requires the predicate to be in the exclamatory form (*izenkei*) instead. It systematically occurs in both Old and Early Middle Japanese. The decline of *kakari-musubi* begins in the Kamakura period, until it disappears altogether in the transition from Late Middle to Modern Japanese (Ōno 1993). Forms of *kakari-musubi* are preserved in the language varieties of the Ryūkyū and in some mainland varieties (Shinzato 2013).



The decline of *kakari-musubi* in Late Middle Japanese is closely linked to the loss of the distinction between the conclusive form and the adnominal form at the end of main clauses. In Old Japanese and increasingly in Early Middle Japanese, the adnominal form was used for the purpose of making the sentence exclamatory. However, in Late Middle Japanese the use of the adnominal form in conclusive position increased greatly and the exclamatory effect faded and was lost when the adnominal form completely replaced the conclusive form, resulting in the loss of the morphological distinction between the two. The merger of the two forms triggered a whole series of morphological and syntactic changes, including a reduction in the number of verb conjugations and the loss of *kakari-musubi*. However, *kakari-musubi* with *koso* remained productive even after this change. Late Middle Japanese is the last linguistic stage in which predicates can be found in the exclamatory form, although its use is restricted to predicates related to the particle *koso*. In Christian sources, *kakari-musubi* with *koso* is still used, albeit with numerous exceptions. Kamei, Ōtō, Yamada (1964b, 43) report the presence of numerous instances of *koso* correlating with predicates in forms other than the exclamatory in *Feiqe*. He states that these cannot be due to mere carelessness on the part of Fabian (the author of the compilation), since the number of such cases is quite high. Moreover, if they were genuine errors, these would certainly have been corrected before sending the text to print. Kamei, Ōtō, Yamada interpret the co-presence of *koso-gozare* and *koso-gozaru* in the same text as a conscious attempt by the author to represent the actual spoken language. Describing the grammatical characteristics of the *Esopo*, Inoue (1968, 205-6) lists a few examples of *koso* correlated with a conclusive form, without, however, entering into the possible causes of this phenomenon. Yasuda (1985) observes the *koso*-related predicates in *Toraakirabon* and observes that in many cases, unlike in *Torakiyobon*, the predicate is not always in the exclamatory form but in different forms influenced by the spoken language. According to his analysis, forms other than the exclamatory cannot occur in “genuinely refined” (純正典雅) greetings and expressions, for which a “stable language” (不斷のことば) must be used (299). Utsunomiya (1989) examines all the predicates related to the *kakari* particle *koso* in *Esopo* and *Feiqe* and counts the number of occurrences of *musubi* in the exclamatory form (regular agreement) and in a form other than the exclamatory (non-regular agreement) in the two sources [tab. 11].

**Table 11** Occurrences of *kakari-musubi* with *koso* in *Feiqe* and *Esopo* (table adapted from Utsunomiya 1989, 156)

|                       | <b>Feiqe</b> | <b>Esopo</b> |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Regular agreement     | 197 (55.3%)  | 16 (64%)     |
| Non-regular agreement | 159 (44.7%)  | 9 (36%)      |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>356</b>   | <b>25</b>    |

The total number of occurrences is very different in the two works, partly due to the different lengths of the two texts, but the ratios are similar, with a higher proportion of regular agreements. Utsunomiya (1989, 165) also looks for the reasons for this differentiated usage and after a qualitative analysis concludes that it depends on pragmatic and sociolinguistic reasons. According to his analysis, a sentence with the regular agreement *koso-uzure* is more suitable for polite speech than *koso-rō*, the corresponding expression with a non-regular agreement, and when an inferior is addressing a superior interlocutor. This differentiated usage was found in both *Esopo* and *Feiqe*. Sentences with non-regular agreements, on the other hand, are typical of colloquial language, where it is not necessary to show respect towards one's interlocutor. Sakazume (1990) analyses sources from the Muromachi period written in the vernacular language, including *Toraakirabon*, and examines the morphological reasons for the decline of the *kakari-musubi* with *koso*. He concludes that it is closely related to the emergence of new inflective forms in Late Middle Japanese, including the past form in *-ta*, the expression of conjecture in *-rō*, and the copula *ja*, which do not include an exclamatory form in their conjugation.

As reported in previous studies, morphological changes triggered the decline of *kakari-musubi* in Late Middle Japanese. The new verbal and inflectional forms that emerged in this period led to a loss of syntactic structures that were also meant to make the language more refined. If we analyse sources written in the vernacular of the Muromachi period, it becomes clear that we are dealing with a transitional stage, as archaic forms are used alongside innovations from the spoken language and their combined use can only be explained from a pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspective.

### 3.2 Aim of the Study and Methodology

The aim of this study is twofold. Firstly, the *koso*-related *musubi* in *Toraakirabon* will be analysed, in order to quantify the number of occurrences with a regular and a non-regular agreement, so as to draw a comparison with the ratios calculated for *Esopo* and *Feiqe*. After that, we will verify whether this ratio varies depending on the type of character uttering such sentences.

Using the *CHJ*, all the concordances with the particle *koso* have been extracted from the *Toraakirabon* and analysed from the point of view of their morphological and syntactic structure. Only concordances within dialogues have been extracted, thus excluding all stage directions. I have also excluded the quotations of poems present in the dialogues and concordances where *koso* is not used as a *kakari* particle but as an interjection. The total number of concordances extracted is 363. As in Utsunomiya (1989), I have classified the *musubi* related to *koso* according to 4 categories:

1. regular agreement, if the predicate correlating with *koso* is in the exclamatory form;
2. non-regular agreement, if the predicate correlating with *koso* is in a form other than the exclamatory one;
3. cancelled agreement, if the agreement cannot be attested, due to the presence of conjunctions, like *-ni*, *-do*, *-domo* and *-ga*, which determine the form of the predicate in subordinate clauses;
4. nominal phrase, if the predicate correlating with *koso* has been omitted.

In the present study we will consider only those concordances where an exclamatory form is expected, that is ones with a regular or non-regular agreement. Moreover, I have also excluded from the analysis those concordances where *koso* is preceded by *sareba*, since – as pointed out by Yasuda (1985, 295) – *sareba-koso* is a grammaticalised form used as a conjunction and which does not require an exclamatory form in the *musubi*. The overall number of concordances considered in this study is 179.

### 3.3 Results and Discussion

Table 12 illustrates the data on the number of occurrences of *koso* with a regular or non-regular agreement in *Toraakirabon*. Out of the 179 concordances considered, only in 24 (13% of the total) the particle *koso* relates to a predicate in a form other than the exclamatory. The ratio is lower than that calculated for *Esopo* and *Feiqe* by Utsunomiya (1989) [tab. 11], which is indicative of the fact that the language of kyōgen is less influenced by the spoken language than that used in Christian sources.

**Table 12** Occurrences of *kakari-musubi* with *koso* in *Toraakirabon*

|                       | <i>Toraakirabon</i> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Regular agreement     | 155 (86.6%)         |
| Non-regular agreement | 24 (13.4%)          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>179</b>          |

If we take a closer look at the *musubi* with a non-regular agreement, we can observe that – as already noted by Sakazume (1990) – in most cases it includes the past form in *-ta*, the conjectural suffix *-rō* and the copula *ja*. In addition, we find other copular forms that emerged in Late Middle Japanese, such as *de gozaru*, *de oryaru* and *nite sōrō*, as well as the new negative form in *-nai* [tab. 13]. Based on the types of predicates we find in *musubi* with a non-regular agreement, we can therefore state that the pattern is quite similar to that described for *Esopo* and *Feiqe* by Utsunomiya (1989).

**Table 13** *Musubi* with a non-regular agreement in *Toraakirabon*.

| <i>Musubi</i>                                    | Number of occurrences |
|--|-----------------------|
| <i>-rō/-ran</i> (conjectural suffix)             | 6                     |
| <i>-ta</i> (past form)                           | 6                     |
| <i>ja</i> (copular form)                         | 3                     |
| <i>de/nite gozaru</i> (copular form)             | 2                     |
| <i>-nai</i> (negative form)                      | 1                     |
| <i>de oryaru</i> (copular form)                  | 1                     |
| <i>nite sōrō</i> (copular form)                  | 1                     |
| <i>nari</i> (copular form)                       | 1                     |
| <i>-tari</i> (past suffix - conclusive form)     | 1                     |
| <i>-keri</i> (past suffix - conclusive form)     | 1                     |
| quadrigrade verb – adnominal/<br>conclusive form | 1                     |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>24</b>             |

Table 14 lists the names of characters who utter sentences that include the particle *koso* related to a *musubi* with a non-regular agreement [tab. 14]. These are characters who also utter phrases that include a *musubi* with a regular agreement, so it is difficult to make generalisations (6), (7), (8). What we can observe is that many of the characters are common people, such as salesmen, fishermen and young boys, who are more likely to use colloquial language and are more sensitive to linguistic innovations. Gods, priests, bonzes and women are absent from the list. Out of the 179 concordances considered for this study, 13 are uttered by female characters and all

include a *musubi* with a regular agreement (9), (10). Here again, although the small number of occurrences does not allow us to state this with complete certainty, a more elegant and formal use of language by women is confirmed, with a marked tendency to maintain a high degree of politeness.

- (6) *kore koso makoto-ni inochi no oya ja*  
 This *kakari*PRT really life ATTR parent COP.NONPST  
 “This is exactly the person who saved my life”, *Buaku* in the play *Buaku* (40-虎明1642\_02031; 31320).
- (7) *yō koso kite kureta*  
 good.INF *kakari*PRT come.INF give.PST  
 “Welcome, thank you for coming!”, *Buaku* in the play *Buaku* (40-虎明1642\_02031; 14060).
- (8) *nagorioshiu koso gozare*  
 sorry.INF *kakari*PRT EXT.EXCL  
 “I am so sorry!”, *Buaku* in the play *Buaku* (40-虎明1642\_02031; 34020).
- (9) *ima made koso kannin shitare*  
 now until *kakari*PRT patience do.PST.EXCL  
 “It was until now that I endured”, *wife* in the play *Hige yagura* (40-虎明1642\_05027; 9590).
- (10) *tsune no fumi ka to koso*  
 usual ATTR letter final PRT quotation PRT *kakari*PRT  
*omoutare itoma no jō ja*  
 think.PST.EXCL farewell ATTR letter COP.NONPST  
 “I would have thought this was a regular letter, but it’s a letter of farewell”, *wife* in the play *Hikkukuri* (40-虎明1642\_05008; 2150).

**Table 14** Characters who utter sentences which include a *musubi* with a non-regular agreement, with the number of occurrences in brackets

|                                       |                         |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Buaku</i> , the servant (3)        | seller of cows (1)      | husband (1)                       |
| <i>daimyō</i> (2)                     | uncle (1)               | shyster (1)                       |
| <i>Bakurō</i> , the horse trainer (2) | <i>Ebisu</i> (1)        | <i>Kikuichi</i> , a blind man (1) |
| farmer from Tsukushi (1)              | fisherman of Awaji (1)  | persimmon seller (1)              |
| grandson I (1)                        | <i>Kakusui</i> (1)      | boy, son of <i>Saburō</i> (1)     |
| grandson II (1)                       | master (1)              | spirit of a bush warbler (1)      |
| rich man (1)                          | a person of Yoshida (1) |                                   |

#### 4 Concluding Remarks

In this research, the use of two morphosyntactic structures in *Toraakirabon* has been analysed using the *CHJ*: the particles *ga* and *no* with nominative and attributive functions and the *kakari-musubi* with *koso*. These two structures underwent substantial changes in Late Middle Japanese and the language of kyōgen reflects a very dynamic stage in their development. The first investigation attempted to describe the variation in the use of the particles *ga* and *no* with attributive and nominative functions, comparing the results with those reported in previous studies. The two particles have overlapping functions and occur in all types of clauses. However, *ga* seems to be the particle of choice for the first-person pronoun, whereas *no* is only preferred when marking a second-person pronoun with an attributive function. As far as the nominative function is concerned, *ga* is the most commonly used particle: this element points to an ongoing morphosyntactic change that will lead to the complete replacement of the particle *no* with nominative function. As for female characters' lines, first-person pronouns are always marked by the particle *ga*, while second-person pronouns, with few exceptions, are marked by the particle *no*. This nearly complementary distribution in the use of the two particles is consistent with the sociolinguistic differentiation reported in Rodrigues (1604-08).

The second investigation analysed the use of *kakari-musubi* with *koso* in *Toraakirabon*, in order to verify whether there is any sociolinguistic variation to be observed in the use of this syntactic structure, which had probably already disappeared in the spoken language of that time. 13% of the sentences with *koso* have a *musubi* in which the expected exclamatory form is replaced by verbal forms typical of spoken forms of Late Middle Japanese. The characters uttering sentences with a non-regular *musubi* are mostly common people, who were presumably more susceptible to innovations in the spoken language. Priests and female characters always use *musubi* with a regular agreement in the exclamatory form.

The female characters in kyōgen are thus linguistically distinguished not only through specific vocabulary, such as the use of *warawa* as a first-person pronoun and that of the copular form *de oryarashimasu*, but also through a more conservative use of morphosyntactic structures, which makes their language more elegant and polite. In kyōgen, female characters are always played by men, but they are clearly recognisable because of the white headband they wear around their head, with the two ends hanging down the sides of the face. The use of language that is distinctly feminine, in terms of both its lexical and morphosyntactic components, further contributes to their characterisation.

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