Predicate Marking Strategies in Early Japanese Vernacular Glossing:
A Preliminary Study

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1. Introduction

Orthographical techniques to render Sinitic texts into Japanese pre-11th century c.e.
1. Morphosyntactic glossing
2. Phonological glossing
3. Unmarked (render into Japanese without the aid of glosses)

2. Research Question

What is the distribution of glossing methods on sentence-final predicates throughout glossed renditions of Sinitic Buddhist texts?
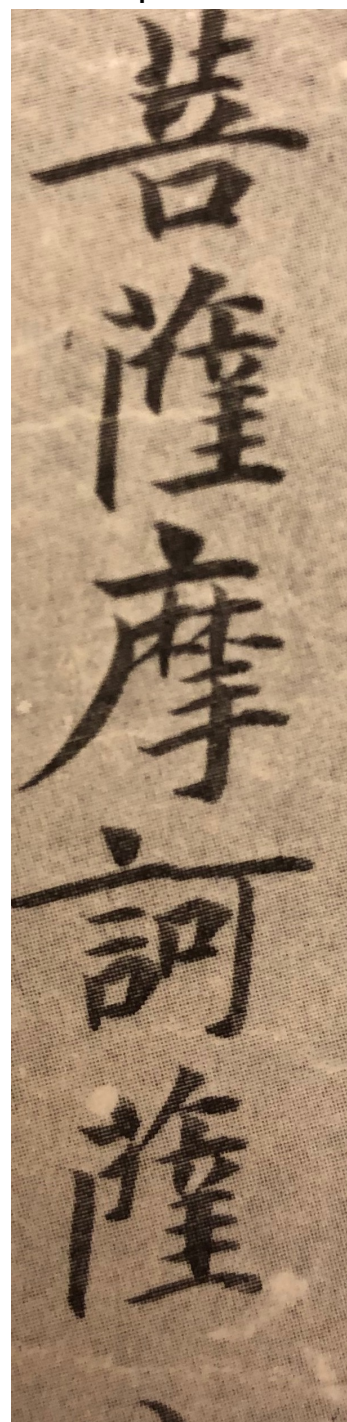
3. Methodology

Source: ca. 9th century glossed *Immeasurable Meanings Sutra* (無量義経 *Muryōgikyō*), found in Kabutogi & Nakada 1979

Code all sentence-final predicates for number of (1) Morphosyntactic glosses, (2) Phonological glosses, (3) Unglossed morphemes predicted (due to context)
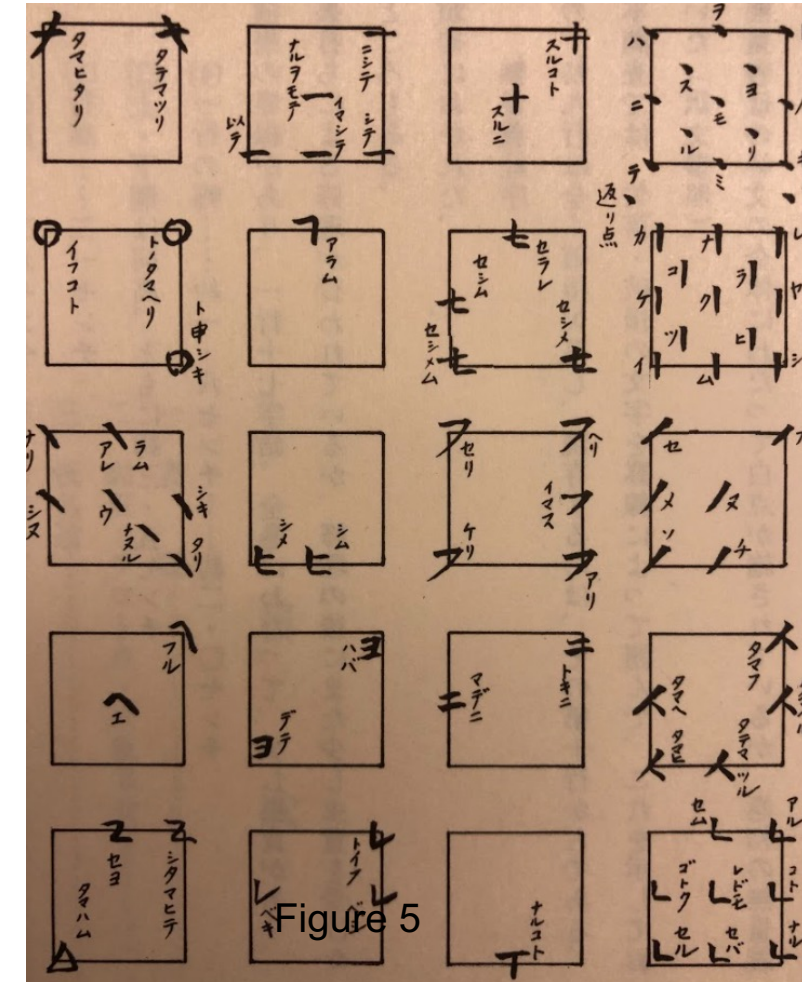
Figure 1: Common morphosyntactic glossing scheme

(Bundschuh 2021: 6)

4. Examples

Example 1

Immeasurable Meanings Sutra line 55
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 20)
菩薩摩訶薩ありキ。
bosatu makasatu *ari*ki
bodhisattva mahāsattva be-PAST

Example 2

Immeasurable Meanings Sutra line 170
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 31)
善く是の時を知りけり。
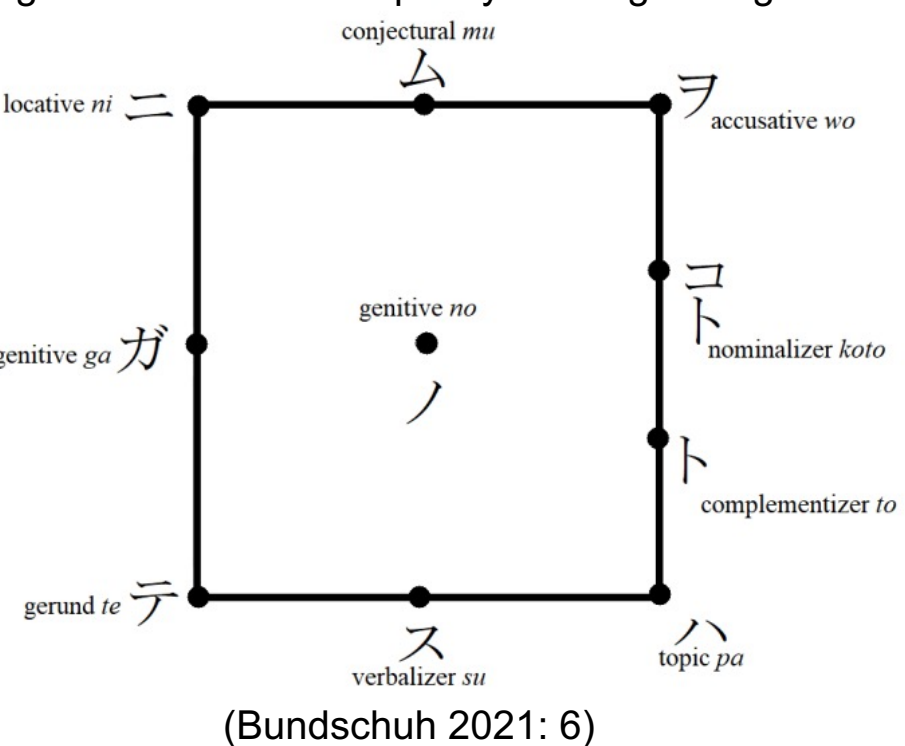Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 92)
yoku kono toki *wo siri*keri
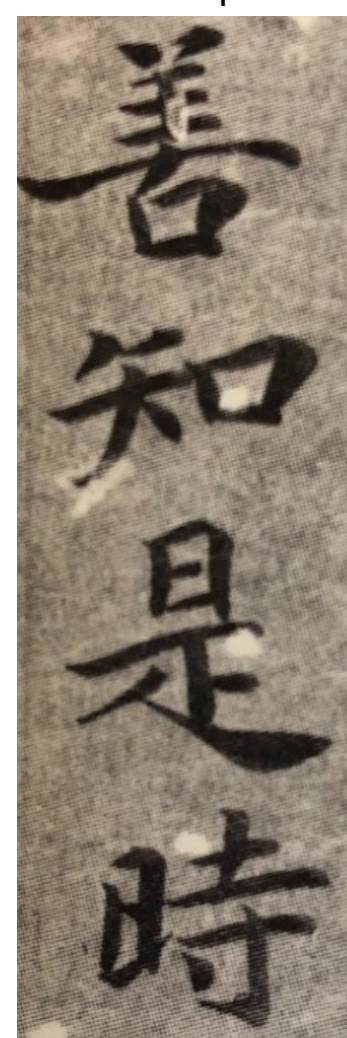well this time ACC learn-MIR

Example 3

Immeasurable Meanings Sutra line 426
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 56)
異（なる）こと無くアラシメヨ。
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 116)
koto(naru) *koto* na*ku* ARA-SIMEYO
differ NMLZ not be-CAUS

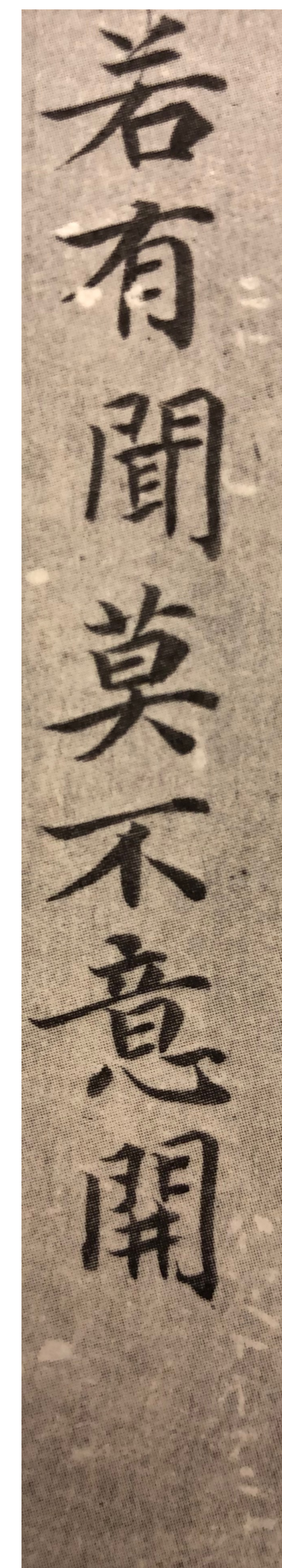Figure 2: Full morphosyntactic glossing scheme

Figure 5

(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 4)

Figure 3: Phonological glossing scheme

(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 4)

Example 4

Immeasurable Meanings Sutra line 164
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 32)
能（く）請（の）懃（め）難（き）を
懃ムルヒトを皈依（し）たてまつる」
とまうしき。
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 91)
yo(ku) syau (no) tuto(me)gata(ki) *wo*
tutoMURU PITO *wo* kiye(si)*tatematuru*
to mausiki
well all GEN rare.work ACC
work person ACC follow-HUM
COM say(HUM)-PAST

Example 5

若（し）聞（く）こと有るヒトには、（不）意、開
ケズトイフコト莫し。
(Kabutogi & Nakada 1979: 88)
mo(si) ki(ku) *koto aru* PITO *ni pa*,
i, piraKEZU TO IPU KOTO na*si*
if listen NMLZ have person LOC TOP
understanding open-NEG COM say NMLZ not.have
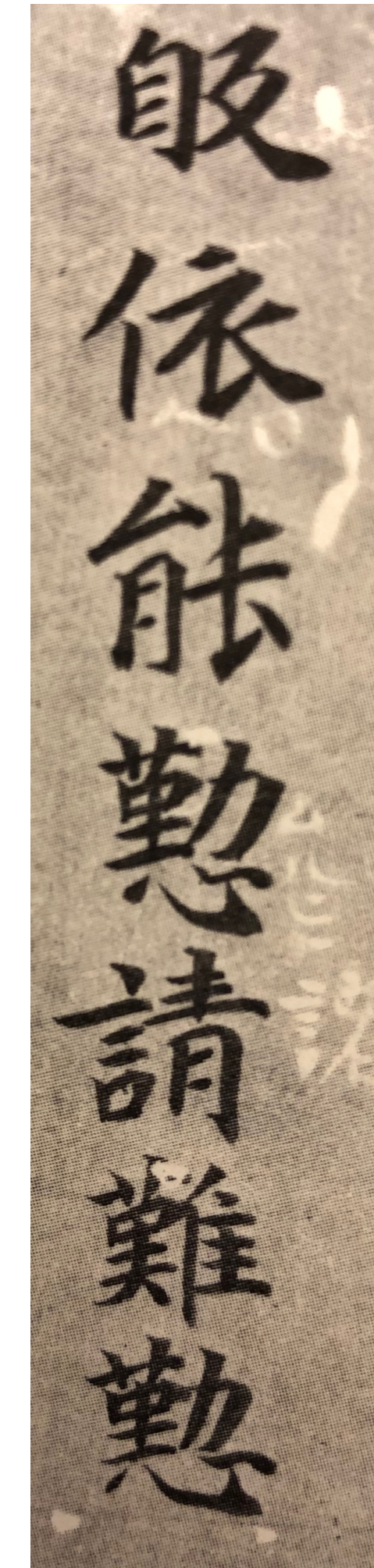
5. Findings

Out of 574 total sentence-final predicates, 448 (78%) glossed

1. Morphosyntactic glossing: 440 total (77%)
2. Phonological glossing: 16 total (3%)
3. Unglossed morphemes assumed: 101 (17%)
4. Unglossed, no morphemes assumed: 54 (9%)

Combination of glossing techniques in a s-f predicate:
1&2: 8 total (1.4%)
1&3: 27 total (4.7%)
2&3: 1 only (>.2%)

6. Conclusions

● **Due to the nature of lecture note-taking, speed was imperative**

● **Phonological glosses only used for A) predicates that contained elements morphosyntactic glosses were unable to capture due to overlap and B) when there were less common morphemes that were not part of the morphosyntactic glossing system**

● **Predicates left unglossed when A) lacking complex morphology or B) repeating morphosyntactic structures**

Select References

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★ normal type from sinographs, *italics* for morphosyntactic gloss, CAPS for phonological glosses, (parentheses) for assumed morphology