

Examples of phrases marked with *-wa* (は)

Data from *Genki I* (Banno et al. 1999); Kuno (1973); Masuoka (1993)

I. Is *-wa* a subject marker?

- (1) Watasi-**wa** Tanaka desu. → *What is the difference here?*
I COP-FML-NPST
- Watasi-**wa** Tanaka desu. *used to introduce oneself*
 Watasi-**ga** Tanaka desu. *used in response to question, “Which of you is Tanaka?”*
- And, crucially, in the opposite contexts these are infelicitous
- (2) Syuumatu-**wa** taitei nani-o simasu ka.
weekend-WA usually what-ACC do-FML-NPST C[+Q]
- (3) Kyoo-**wa** Kyooto ni ikimasu.
today-WA Kyoto to go-FML-NPST
- (4) Bunpoo-**wa** kono hon de benkyoo-simasita.
grammar-WA this book INST study-do-FML-PAST
- (5) Ryoori-**wa** syuzin-ga saisyo ni hasi-o tukemasu.
food-WA IG.husband first NI chopsticks attach-FML-NONPAST
- (6) Zoo-**wa** hana-**ga** nagai.
elephant nose long-NONPAST

II. Noncontrastive *-wa* or contrastive *-wa*?

- (7) Watasi-**wa** [syuumatu ni]-**wa** hon-**wa** yomimasu kedo, benkyoo-**wa** simasen.
I weekend LOC book read-FML-NPST but study do-FML-NPST-NEG

III. More examples to consider

(8) Infelicitous (contextually inappropriate) examples

- What factor distinguishes these from (9)?

(a) # *Dono hito-wa anata-no oniisan desu ka.*
which person you-GEN older.brother COP C[+Q]
Intended meaning: 'Which person is your older brother?'

(b) # *Hito-ri-no otoko-wa totuzen hanasikakete kimasita.*
one-CL-GEN man suddenly talk-TE come-FML-PAST
Intended meaning: 'A man suddenly came and spoke (to me).'

(9) These next examples are fine

(a) *Anata-no oniisan-wa dono hito desu ka.*
you-GEN older.brother which person COP C[+Q]
(Translation?)

(b) *Hitori no otoko-ga totuzen hanasikakete kita.*
one-CL-GEN man suddenly talk-TE come-PAST
'A man suddenly came and spoke (to me).'

Otoko-wa pen to tetyoo-o te ni site-ita.
man pen and notebook hand NI do-TE-PAST
'The man had a pen and a notebook in his hand.'

(10) In this context...

Kinoo tikaku de densya-no dassen.ziko-ga atta.
yesterday nearby at train-GEN derailling-accident-NOM exist-PAST

...would you use *-wa* or *-ga* in these two follow-up sentences? And, how to gloss?

(a) *Gen.in-_____ untensyu-no hutyuui datta.*
cause-_____ driver-GEN carelessness COP-PAST

(b) *Untensyu-no hutyuui-_____ gen.in datta.*
driver-GEN carelessness-_____ cause COP-PAST

(11) What is the difference between these two answers? And does A2 have a contrastive or a noncontrastive *wa*-phrase?

Q: *Asita dare-ga ikimasu ka?*
tomorrow who go-FML-NPST C[+Q]

A1: *Nakano-san-ga ikimasu.*

A2: *Nakano-san-wa ikimasu.*