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A historical and morphosyntactic analysis of Japanese epistemic markers (*dearoo/daroo* and *-oo*)

1 Introduction. In Early Middle Japanese (EMJ), *-amu* is used as the epistemic modal marker. This morpheme is considered a suffix, not a free morph, because when used with a PredP (Nishiyama 1997), it must be accompanied with a be-support (

iff the morpheme has a distinct semantic profile. But if we assume that *-oo* denotes the epistemic modal meaning, the semantics of de_1 must be seen vacuous; thus, this analysis is untenable.

4 Single morpheme approach. Given these problems, it is difficult to see de_1 as a predicative copula de_2. This paper, thus, proposes that *dearoo* is lexicalized, single-morpheme, and the two epistemic modals occupy different positions in syntax: position-wise, *dearoo* is higher than *-oo* (unlike the view in Haraguchi and Shimamura 2011). First, *-oo* is present in the head of TP, c-selecting a PredP, just like the English *will*; hence, the predicative copula takes the *k*-form, not the *i*-form (= (7)). Second, following Cinque (1999: 130), we consider that an epistemic marker can be placed in a position higher than T, as in Korean, Guyanese Creole, Garo and Oksapmin, and *daroo* occupies this higher position, as in (8); since it c-selects a TP, a tense-distinction is observed (= Obs 1).

(7) [$_{TP}$ [$_{PredP}$ atsu k] *(ar-)oo]   (8) [$_{EpiP}$ [$_{TP}$ atsu i]   dearoo]
     hot   PRED be-EPI   hot   PRED.PRS EPI
     '(it) will be hot' (rather, archaic)   '(it) will be hot'

Then, how do we account for fact that *dearoo* is historically derived from the sequence of *de ar-oo*? To answer this question, we assume a reanalysis has played an important role (Roberts 2007). First, there was a historical stage where *-oo* is the only epistemic marker, which is a phonologically reduced from of *-amu*, as in (2). When this marker was used with a noun/nominal adjective, we have the sequence of *de ar-oo*, as shown in (9)a.

(9) a. [$_{TP}$[$_{PredP}$konnan de] ar-oo].   b. [$_{PredP}$[$_{NP}$konnan] t_i] [$_T$de$_i$-ar-oo].
       difficult   PRED be-EPI   difficult   PRED-be-EPI
       '(it) will be difficult.'   '(it) will be difficult.'

Second, when adjacent to *ar-*, the predicative copula postsyntactically moves to create a head-complex [$_{EPI}$*de-ar-oo*], as in (9)b. This analysis is supported by the following observations: (i) that a contraction is applicable to this sequence (*de-ar-oo* > *daroo*). Notice that this contraction (*de ar* > *da*) cannot be applied when *de* and *ar* are not in the same terminal node, as in (10)a. (ii) That de_1 cannot be separated from *ar-* (= Obs 4) also supports this conclusion that de_1 and *ar-* are in a single node. (iii) Unless we assume that *dearoo* appears in the same node, it remains unclear why *dearoo* can optionally reduce to *roo*, as shown in (10)b; if the morphological boundaries retain, it is hard to explain why the truncation boundary is between *a* and *r*.

(10) a. inu   {de ari/*dari}, petto de   ar-u.   b. [$_{TP}$ [atsu k]   at-ta] (da)roo
        dog-PRED be   pet PRED be-PRS   hot PRED be-PST (be.)EPI
       '(it) is a dog and my pet.'   '(it) will be hot'

Finally, newer generations exposed to the patterns in (9) acquire the grammar in a way different from the earlier generations (Roberts 2007; Lightfoot 2006), reanalyzing *dearoo* as a single lexicalized epistemic marker as in (11)a, without a head-movement unlike in (9)b. Here, it is analyzed as being base-generated in Epi (Cinque 1999:130, 2004). Since it is no longer derived from a Pred, it can be used not only with a noun/nominal adjective, but also c2 T3ant same t5, 08)