

On the Identical Function of Bangla and Japanese Substantive Verbs as an Aspectual Marker

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The aim of this study is to compare the morphosyntactic structure of the substantive verbs of Bangla and Japanese and their functions as aspectual marker. The BSV *aach* and the JSV *iru* will be the topic of the present study. Despite belonging to different language families, both BSV *aach* and JSV *iru* show a similar morphosyntactic feature. These verbs are posited in the predicate as principal verbs to form existential sentences. They are both defective verbs because they do not function in a regular paradigm of aspect and tense as a full verb does. In addition to the function as principal verb, both BSV *aach* and JSV *aru/iru* serve similar functions as an aspectual marker. As an aspectual marker, they are infixes between the base of the verb and the tense marker. The SV *aach* and *aru/iru* reflect the various aspects suffixed to different forms of verbs, such as the stem form and gerundive form of verbs. Aspects represent semantic notions, but SV is the structural (morphosyntactic) representation of aspects. The morphosyntactic representation of the aspects are called auxiliary verbs in traditional grammar in the sense that they ascribe additional meanings to the main verb.

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INTRODUCTION

Japanese and Bangla are two Asian languages which belong to two different families. Japanese is a language independent of any family, although there is a view that the Japanese language belongs to the Ural-Altai language family. There is no sufficient linguistic information available in support of this view. On the other hand, Bangla belongs to the Indic group of the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European family. So the two languages of different families have no historical relation at all as far as we know from the evidence available to us. It is evident from the research done up to now that no lexical items are synonymous in the two languages. But we are surprised to find that many syntactic and morphosyntactic categories are similar in many cases in the two languages. There are also some morphosyntactic similarities between the two languages in many cases (Faquire 1995: 79). There are certain verbs in both Bangla and Japanese which are common in functions. Substantive verbs are of the kind that they have a role in ascribing aspectual phenomena with a combination of tenses infixing between the base of a verb and a tense marker. That is, the substantive verbs with their existential locative features are morphosyntactically aspect markers in both Bangla and Japanese.

In this work the BSV *aach* will have to be taken for our discussion in comparison to the JSV *aru/iru*, both of which have existential locative features.

Substantive Verbs in Bangla in Comparison with Those of Japanese

A substantive verb is a verb which expresses substantive ideas. Five roots express the substantive ideas in New Bangla: *aach*=to exist, *ho/ha*=to become, *thak*=to remain, *roh*=to remain, *bot*=to be certainly. The verb *aach* expresses existential locative feature in a sentence. The literary meaning of the verb *aach* is "to be or to exist in a place." Bangla *aach* comes from Second Middle Indo-Aryan *acchai* (Chatterji 1970: 5, 103).

The verbs *aru/iru* are substantive verb with existential locative features in Japanese. They are known as stative verbs (状態動詞)¹ in another approach of categorization. That is, the literary meaning of both *aru* and *iru* is "to be or

In this paper the following abbreviations shall be used:

BES=Bangla Existential Sentence; BS=Bangla Sentence; BSV=Bangla Substantive Verb with existential locative feature, i.e., the verb *aach*; EES=English Existential Sentence; ES=English Sentence; JES=Japanese Existential Sentence; JS=Japanese Sentence; JSV=Japanese Substantive Verb with existential locative feature, i.e., the verb *aru/iru*; SV=Substantive Verb; acc.=accusative; gdv.=gerundive; gen.=genitive; loc.=locative; nom.=nominative; past=past tense; pres.=present tense; top.=topical; 3p.=3rd person.

¹ Some linguists prefer to use the term "activity verb" and "state verb" in place of "action verb" and "stative verb" respectively.

to exist in a place.” According to Japanese grammar, the verb *aru* is a consonant stem verb (五段動詞), while the verb *iru* is a vowel stem verb (上一段動詞) (McClain 1981: 3–4). The verb *aru* indicates the existence of living beings and the verb *iru* indicates the existence of inanimate objects, while both inanimate objects and living beings are indicated by the BSV *aach*.

Aach is a defective verb in Colloquial Bangla as well as Middle Bangla (Chatterji, S. K. 1970: 1037). Similarly, JSV *aru/iru* are defective, too, in modern Japanese. The SVs are defective verbs, in that they do not function in regular paradigms of aspect, tense, person, and grade of person as full verbs. It is worth mentioning that defective verbs are different from irregular verbs (DinMuhammad 1985: 27). Both BSV and JSV are intransitive and unique in kind. The SVs have two kinds of usage—usage as a principal verb and usage as an aspectual marker.

The BSV in Comparison with the JSV in the Paradigms of Tense and Aspect

In this section we shall illustrate the defectiveness of BSV and JSV. All the traditional grammarians except H. Azad (1983: 18) agree with the view that Bangla has a three-way distinction in the category of tense: present, past, and future. But no exhaustive study has been done yet on aspectual behavior of verbs in Bangla. But we can categorize aspects into two main distinct categories on the basis of the data analyzed by the traditional grammarians: perfective aspects in contrast with the imperfective aspect, each of which is subdivided into a number of distinct categories.

The BSV *aach* as principal predicative verb occurs in present and past tenses only in combination with perfective aspect in New Bangla (Chatterji 1970: 1037). But the remaining forms occur in combination with other tenses, and categories of aspects are substituted by the corresponding forms of the stem *thak*, which itself is a full verb functioning in a regular paradigm (DinMuhammad 1986: 27). It is worth mentioning that unlike Japanese, person and grade of subject in Bangla belong to a paradigm, and Bangla verbs vary according to the paradigm for persons and grade. The inflectional morphemes suffix to the verbal form must agree with person and grade of the subject.

Japanese has a two way distinction of tense: non-past (present and future tense) and past. Japanese aspects fall into two main distinct categories: perfective aspect and continuative aspect (Takahashi 1985: 10). Each of these can be subdivided into a number distinct categories. The continuative aspect includes, among others, subclasses of aspects, durative, resultative, progressive, and habitual. The SV *aru/iru* in Modern Japanese occur in both non-past and past tenses only in combination with perfective aspect but not with the continuative aspect.

The Usage of BSV *Aach* in Comparison with JSV *Aru/Iru* as Principal Verb

As a principal finite verb, the SVs are placed at the end of sentence in the predicate to form existential sentences. That is, the types of sentences formed with the SVs are called existential sentences.

As we found in the previous discussion, both BSV and JSV do not function in a regular paradigm of tenses and aspects due to the defectiveness of the SVs. So, it is possible to construct the following sentences of perfective aspects, as in the following (1), (2), (3) and (4) with the above mentioned SVs used as a principal verb, but the sentences of progressive aspects as in (5), (6), (7) and (8) are not possible to construct.

The following is a comparison of the usage of BSV *aach* with JSV *aru/iru* as principal verbs in the present tense with the perfective aspect:

- (1) BES: *Desk-er upor-e boi aach-e.*
desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-pres.-3p.
JES: *Tsukue-no ue-ni hon-ga a-ru.*
desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-inanimate-pres.
EES: There is a book on the desk.
- (2) BES: *Bagan-e kukur aach-e.*
Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-pres.-3p.
JES: *Niwa-ni inu-ga i-ru.*
Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-animate-pres.
EES: There is a dog in the garden.

The usage of BSV *aach* in comparison with JSV *aru/iru* as a principal verb in the past tense in combination with the perfective aspect follows:

- (3) BES: *Desk-er upor-e boi (aa)ch-i-lo.*²
desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-past.-3p.
JES: *Tsukue-no ue-ni hon-ga a-t-ta.*
desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-inanimate-past.
EES: There was a book on the desk.
- (4) BES: *Bagan-e kukur (aa)ch-i-(lo).*
Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-past.-3p.
JES: *Niwa-ni inu-ga i-ta.*
Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-animate-past.
EES: There was a dog in the garden.

The usage of BSV *aach* in comparison with JSV *aru/iru* as principal verb in both present and past tenses in combination with the progressive aspect:

² The BSV */aach/* changed to */chi/* in the past tense due to phonemic changes.

- (5) BES: **Desk-er upor-e boi aach-(ch)-e.*
 desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-(SV)-pres.-3p.
 JES: **Tsukue-no ue-ni hon at-te-(i)-ru.*
 desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-inanimate-(SV)-3p.
 EES: *There is(ing) book on the table.
- (6) BES: **Bagan-e kukur aach-(ch)-e.*
 Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-(SV)-pres.-3p.
 JES: **Niwa-ni inu-ga i-te-(i)-ru.*
 Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-animate-(SV)-pres.
 EES: *There is(ing) dog in the garden.
- (7) BES: **Desk-er upor-e boi (aa)ch-(ch)-ilo.*
 desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-(SV)-past-3p.
 JES: **Tsukue-no ue-ni hon-ga atte-(i)-ta.*
 desk-gen. on-loc. book-nom. exist-inanimate-(SV)-
 past.
 EES: There was(ing) book on the table.
- (8) BES: **Bagan-e kukur (aa)ch-(ch)-ilo.*
 Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-animate-(SV)-past.-3p.
 JES: **Niwa-ni inu-ga ite-(i)-ta.*
 Garden-loc. dog-nom. exist-animate-SV-past.
 EES: *There was(ing) dog in the garden.

The morpheme */-ch-/* in the bracket of the above sentence is the contracted form of BSV *aach*.³ On the other hand, */-a-/* and */-i-/* is the head of the JSV *aru* and *iru*, respectively. Actually the */-ch-/* of BSV *aach* and */-a-/* and */-i-/* of JSV *aru* and *iru*, respectively, are morphemes which reflect aspects. These SVs must be in the formation of aspects categories. But the above predicative principle verbs are themselves SVs, and these SVs never take another SV as aspectual marker (Nakau 1986). This is the uniqueness of SVs which stimulated me to undertake the present study.

The Usage of BSV *Aach* in Comparison with JSV *Aru/Iru* as an Aspectual Marker

In the above discussion we have investigated the structure, function, and nature of the SV as predicative principal verbs in both BES and JES. In this section we are concerned with investigating the aspectual function of BSV */(aa)-ch/* and JSV */-a-(ru)/* and */-i-(ru)/*. To clarify the meaning of aspect, we can recall the definition of aspect given by B. Comrie, which conveys that "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a

³ The morphological representation of SV *aach*, *aru* and *iru* will be made as in */(aa)-ch/*, */-a-(ru)/* and */-i-(ru)/*, respectively.

situation” (Comrie 1989: 3). The term “aspect” is used to represent a semantic notion, but it has morphosyntactic representation through inflectional/conjugational suffix. A predicative verb form of both Bangla and Japanese can easily be segmented into two parts: the first part is the lexical morpheme derived from the verb and the second part an the inflectional suffix known as an auxiliary verb in the traditional grammar, which carries tense, aspect, and concord with the subject (Matthews 1993: 102, 131). Auxiliary verbs are verbs that give additional meanings to main verbs (McClain 1993: 38). We can again say that the predicative verb of a complete sentence is composed of the elements—verbal form, aspectual marker, and tense marker, each of which carry the aspectual notion and as a whole reflect the aspectual phenomena (Nakau 1976: 421). Sometimes the whole of the predicative phrase is involved in determining a preference among different aspectual interpretations. It is the inflectional suffix that changes with aspect, tense, and concord (Azad 1983: 10–11). Japanese verb forms do not carry concord with the subject i.e., inflectional morphemes of Japanese do not change with the change in the person and grade of the subject.

Now it can be presumed that there is an element inherent in the inflectional suffix, which can be named aspectual marker and is a part of a predicative verb. There are a few aspectual markers in the paradigm of aspect, but we are only concerned with the aspects that are inherent in SV i.e., BSV /-(aa)-ch/ and JSV /-i-(ru)/ and /-a-(ru)/. SVs, which have been called aspectual markers here, fuse with the base of the principal verb so that these cannot be perceived as separate verbs. The BSV reflects mainly the progressive aspect and perfective aspect, while JSV reflect, among others, progressive, resultative, durative, and habitual aspects. We will keep the discussion within the limits in these four aspects—progressive, resultative, durative, and habitual. The progressive and resultative are the two basic aspects that JSV reflect, while durative and habitual are derived forms of aspects (Tamamura 1992: 67). Thus, the BSV and JSV reflect only a common aspect, the progressive aspect. This interpretation can be established by means of the following example sentences.

SV Reflecting Progressive Aspects

To reflect aspects, the SV is infixed between the verbal form and a tense marker. The BSV /-(aa)-ch/ suffixes to the stem form of the verb to reflect the progressive aspect, while the JSV /-i-(ru)/ suffixes to a gerundive form of the action verb to reflect the same. The following are sentences of the progressive aspect generated by BSV in comparison with JSV:

- (9) BS: *She (ekhon) chithi likh -ch -e.*
 He nom. (now) letter-acc. write-stem-SV-pres.-3p.
 JS: *kare wa, (ima) tegami o kai-te-i-ru.*
 He-nom. (now) letter-acc. write-gdv.-SV-pres.-3p.

ES: He is (now) writing a letter.

The sentences refer to a specific single action in progress.

- (10) BS: *Taro Jiro-ke mar-ch-e.*
 Taro-nom. Jiro-loc. beat-stem-SV-pres.-3p.
 JS: *Taro wa Ziroo o nagut-te -i -ru.*
 Taro-nom. Jiro-loc. beat-gdv.-SV-pres.-3p.
 ES: Taro is beating Jiro.

The sentences refer to a series of repetitive actions occurring continuously.

- (11) BS: *Gadi goti koma-cch-e.*
 Car-nom. speed-acc. lesen-stem-SV-pres.-3p.
 JS: *Kuruma ga supido o otoshi-te-i-ru.*
 Car-nom. speed-acc. slowing down-gdv.-SV-pres.-3p.
 ES: The car is slowing down.

The sentence refers to an event shifting from one state to another. The above three sentences show the different facets of the progressive aspects. (All the Japanese progressive sentences are adopted from Nakau 1976: 430.)

In forming the morphosyntactic structure of the progressive aspect in Bangla, BSV is suffixed to the stem of the verb. The stem of the verb is known as *dhatu* in traditional grammar of Bangla. The BSV */(aa)-ch/* is suffixed to the *dhatu* only in modern standard colloquial Bangla (Cholito Bhasha).⁴ The BSV */(aa)-ch/* is contracted to */-ch-/* when it infixed as aspectual marker between the *dhatu* and tense marker. In Japanese, the aspectual markers */-a-(ru)/*, */-i-(ru)/* are suffixed to the gerundive form of the verb to reflect the aspects. The basic gerundive form of a Japanese verb ends in */-te/*, which is changed to */-de/* in case by a phonological adjustment rule (McCawly 1968; in Miyagawa 1989: 186).

SV Reflecting the Aspects Other than the Progressive Aspects

The BSV */(aa)-ch/* reflects a very limited number of aspects. But the morphosyntactic structure in combination with the Japanese gerundive form of a verb and JSV */-i-(ru)/* reflects several other types of aspects, depending on what type of verbs immediately preceded them. There may be a reason for

⁴ But the BSV */(aa)-ch/* is suffixed to the present participle form of verb in place of stem form of the verb to reflect the progressive aspect in the premodern Bangla literary language known as Shadu Bhasha. The present participle form of Bangla verb ends in morpheme */-ite/* (The present participle form is different from the infinitive form; Like the present participle form, the infinitive form in Bangla ends in */-ite/* morpheme, Chatterji 1971: 999), which is similar to the Japanese *te*-form of verb. But Bangla verb endings in */-ite/* is a present participle, while Japanese */-te/* form is gerundive. Thus, the above example of progressive aspect will be as in *likh-ite-ch-e*, write progressive in Bangla Shadhu Bhasha.

this, viz. the progressive as a tense form is a comparatively new concept in Bangla. This form does not seem to have been fully established in Bangla before the 17th century (Chatterji 1970: 1021). The documents indicate that a definite form for the progressive had to be employed, where the verbal form had preceded aspectual marker /-(aa)-ch-/ ended in /-i-/, as in *kor-i-ch-e*—Do-Progressive. This progressive tense form is contracted gradually to as in *kor-ch-e*—Do-Progressive in standard colloquial Bangla (Cholito Bhasha) of the 19th century (Chatterji 1970: 1019–25). It is a rare case, where the BSV /-(aa)-ch/ as aspectual marker reflects the aspects other than the progressive aspect, despite being suffixed to the stem form of a verb.

The diversified aspectual functions of the progressive tense form seems to have evolved through its long period of existence in the history of the Japanese language. The JSV /-i-(ru)/ indicates different types of aspects, depending on what class of verbs immediately precede them. The various aspectual functions reflected by the JSV /-i-(ru)/ are shown below:

Resultative Aspect

When the JSV /-i-(ru)/ is suffixed to certain action verbs, like instantaneous verbs (瞬間動詞) such as *tsumo-ru*=to be pile and *shin-u*=to die, represent the present resultative aspect, which designates a state that results from the perfection of the action involved. The example is:

- (12) JS: *Ano yama wa, (sude ni) yuki ga tsumot-te-i-ru.*
 That mountain-top. (already) snow-nom. be piled-gdv.-SV-pres.
 That mountain has (already) been covered with snow.

In the above sentence, *tsumot-te-i-ru* expresses a presently continuing state that has resulted from the event of snow falling.

Durative Aspect

The JSV /-i-(ru)/ expresses the durative aspect, if it is suffixed to the gerundive form of the stative verb, such as *shir-u*, *sum-u*, *ni-ru*. The following are the examples for this phenomenon:

- (13) JS: *Sono uwasa wa, dare demo shit-te-i-ru.*
 That rumor-top. every body know-gdv.-SV-pres.
 Everybody knows that rumor.
- (14) JS: *Haha-oya wa Kobe ni sun-de-i-ru.*
 Mother-nom. Kobe-loc. live-gdv.-SV-pres.
 Mother lives in Kobe.

Habitual Aspect

The JSV /-i-(ru)/ as aspectual marker reflects the habitual aspect suffixed to certain action verbs. The example sentence is:

- (15) JS: *Chichi wa konogoro roku-ji ni oki -te -i-ru.*
 Father-nom. nowadays 6 o'clock-loc. get up-gdv.-
 SV-pres.
 My father gets up at 6 o'clock nowadays.

Aspects Reflecting JSV */-a-(ru)/*

Up to now, we have discussed the aspectual functions of the JSV */-i-(ru)/* of the two JSVs. Below, we will discuss the aspectual function of the remaining JSV */-a-(ru)/*. When the JSV */-a-(ru)/* as an aspectual marker is suffixed to certain transitive action verbs, the sentence turns into the passive form and the present resultative aspect is reflected, as in the following:

- (16) JS: *Denki ga tsuke -te -a -ru.*
 light-nom. switch on-gdv.-SV-pres.
 The light is switched on.

It is implied in the above sentence that someone switched on the light at a certain point in the past and the light is still on.

BSV Reflecting the Perfective Aspects

From the above discussion it can be seen that the SV of our discussion reflects aspects which are imperfective. The BSV */-(aa)-ch-/* reflects the imperfective aspect suffixed to the stem form of the verb, while the JSV */-i-(ru)/* reflects continuative aspects suffixed to the gerundive form of verb. Deviating from the morphosyntactic functions of JSV, the BSV */-(aa)-ch/* as an aspectual marker reflects both imperfective and perfective aspect. In the above discussion, we have shown the phenomenon of imperfectivity of the SV; now the phenomenon of perfectivity of */-(aa)-ch/* will be shown. To reflect perfective aspect, the BSV */-(aa)-ch/* is suffixed to the gerundive form of Bangla verb which ends in morpheme */-e-/* in standard colloquial Bangla (Cholito Bhasha).

The BSV */-(aa)-ch-/* reflects perfective aspect, when it is infixes between the gerundive form of Bangla verb and tense marker. Examples sentences are:

- (17) BS: *She chithi likh -e -ch -e.*
 He-nom. letter-acc. write-gdv.-SV-Perfect-pres.-3p.
 He has written a letter.
- (18) BS: *Rohim pani khe -e -che -e*
 Rohim-nom. water drink-gdv.-SV-Perfect-pres.-3p.
 Rahim has drunk water.

Types of Aspectual Markers: Stem versus Gerundive Aspectual Marker

Two types of aspectual markers have been dealt with in this essay: (a) aspectual markers which are suffixed directly to the stem of the verb, and (b) Aspectual markers that are suffixed to the gerundive form of the verb. The BSV */(aa)-ch/* is suffixed to both the stem form of the verb and gerundive form of the verb to reflect the progressive and perfective aspects, respectively. The JSV is suffixed only to the gerundive form of verbs to reflect the continuative aspects. Following the Miyagawa's idea (Miyagawa 1989: 180), the aspectual marker that is suffixed to the stem form of the verb can be called stem aspectual marker. And the aspectual marker that is suffixed to the gerundive form of the verb can be called gerundive aspectual marker. The BSV */(aa)-ch-/* is suffixed to both the stem form and gerundive form of verbs. So, the BSV */(aa)-ch-/* is a stem aspectual marker as well as a gerundive aspectual marker.

Do All the Verbs Take Aspectual Markers?

There are some verbs which never take the aspectual marker due to semantic and etymological reasons. The BSV and JSV of our discussion never take the SV as aspectual marker as analyzed in our previous discussion. We do not have sufficient data of Bangla to decide on this matter, but we can presume, based on our observation that, almost all of the Bangla verbs take the aspectual marker */(aa)-ch-/*, except the substantive verb roots like *bot*=to be certainly, *roh*=to be, etc., including BSV */(aa)-ch/*=to exist. Certain Japanese verbs that designate a state, such as *deki-ru*=to be able, *i-ru*=to need, *yousu-ru*=to require, including JSV *i-ru*=to exist, *a-ru*=to exist, etc., never take the */-a-(ru)/*, */-i-(ru)/* as aspectual markers (Kin'daiichi 1950, in Teramura 1984: 123-24). All Bangla verbs that take the aspectual marker */(aa)-ch/* normally reflect the progressive aspect, irrespective of structure or function, unlike that of Japanese.

The SV as a Reflector of Deviated Aspectual Functions

The SVs in our discussion on aspectual markers do not always reflect the typical aspect that SV generally reflects due to the variation in the category of verb and temporal phenomena.

The SV */(aa)-ch-/* in Bangla as an aspectual marker sometimes represent the simple future tense instead of reflecting the progressive aspect due to the insertion of the future temporal lexical item in the sentence. This notion can be understood from the following sentences:

- (19) BS: *She agamikal dhaka ash-ch-e.*

He-nom. tomorrow Dhaka come-prog. pres. 3rd. p.
He will come to Dhaka tomorrow.

There is an aspectual marker /-(aa)-ch-/ suffixed to the sentence final verb which should reflect the progressive aspect in the present tense, but this sentence expresses an action in the simple future tense.⁵

There are unique kinds of stative verbs that show syntactically and semantically different behaviors, such as *shi-ru*=to know, *mot-su*=to have, *ni-ru*=to resemble, *sum-u*=to reside/live, *waka-ru*=understand, *fuku-mu*=contain, *sobie-ru*=tower, etc., which neither carry temporal notion nor express aspects, despite being preceded by aspectual marker JSV /-i-(ru)/ (Kin'daiichi 1950; in Teramura 1984: 124). This fact can be observed from the following sentences:

- (20) JS: *Yama ga sobie-te i-ru.*
Mountain-nom. rise (soar)-gdv.-SV-pres.
The mountain rises (it peaks). (Takahashi 1985: 15)
- (21) JS: *Ie no naka wa hissori-shi-te-i-ta.*
House-gen. inside-acc. be silent-gdv.-SV-past.
It is silent inside the house. (Takahashi 1985: 15)

These verbs in the above sentences, independent of any action, are not expressing an aspect. The state expressed in these verbs is indifferent to starting and completion points. Thus the sentences are free from aspectual function, despite the predicative verb carrying the aspectual marker /-i-(ru)/. To be free from the aspectual phenomenon despite the presence of the aspectual marker is called neutralization of aspect (Takahashi 1984). Neutralization of aspect is a common phenomenon in both Bangla and Japanese.

CONCLUSIONS

From the above analysis we can come to the conclusion that there are certain substantive verbs both in Bangla and in Japanese which as principal verbs perform the similar functions in the forming of existential sentences. These SVs of both languages have some common properties, such as defectiveness in functions. Besides functioning as principal verb, these verbs perform morpho-syntactic functions which are identical in function in both the languages. In the morphosyntactic function, they reflect the various aspects being infixed in between the base of the verb and the tense marker. When they function as reflecter of aspects, they are no longer called substantive verbs, since they occur as aspectual markers. Among the Bangla and Japanese substantive verbs, Japanese substantive verbs cover a vaster area of aspects than those of Bangla. The

⁵ Interestingly, the durative and habitual aspects in Bangla are sometimes expressed with the simple present tense form.

morphosyntactic function which the SVs represent are the common features of the Indian languages of the Indo-Aryan branch. Despite being infixed in between a verbal form and a tense marker, sometimes they reflect neither temporal notion nor aspectual notion. Then the SVs reflect the phenomenon that is called neutralization of aspect. In this brief discussion I have made an attempt to identify the common features in the domain of the functions of SVs of the two languages.

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