BE GOING TO AND BE ABOUT TO: JUST BECAUSE DOC BROWN WAS GOING TO TAKE US BACK TO THE FUTURE DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE WAS ABOUT TO DO SO

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The aim of this paper is to explain, from a systematic and unified point of view, the following two facts: (i) sentences containing *be going to* (*be going to*-sentences) can easily go with adverbials of future time reference such as *tomorrow*, while sentences containing *be about to* (*be about to*-sentences) basically cannot, and (ii) in narrative texts *be going to*-sentences in the past tense tend to be used to indicate fulfillment of the situation expressed by the infinitive, whereas *be about to*-sentences in the past tense tend to be used to imply unfulfillment of it. To provide an explanatory basis for these two issues, the present paper formulates the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences. It is shown that the temporal structures interact with such factors as metonymy and the nature and grammar of narrative texts, resulting in the observed differences between the two types of sentences.*

Keywords: *be going to, be about to, temporal structure, adverbials of future time, narrative texts*

1. Introduction

It is often said in the literature that sentences containing *be going to* (*be going to*-sentences) and sentences containing *be about to* (*be about to*-sentences) both refer to the near future and are often interchangeable with each other (e.g. Coates (1983) and Leech (1987)). However,

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just because *be going to*-sentences are often interchangeable with *be about to*-sentences does not necessarily mean that they are synonymous. In fact, in certain environments they behave differently from each other. This kind of phenomenon has not received a satisfactory explanation thus far, mainly because there have been few studies on the differences between *be going to* and *be about to*, though there have been many studies on the differences between *will* and *be going to* (e.g. Binnick (1971, 1972), Declerck (1991a, 1991b), Haegeman (1989), Higuchi (1991), Nicolle (1997, 1998), Palmer (1987) and Wada (1996)).

This paper will provide a basis for a fuller study on the differences between *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences by accounting for the following two facts. One is that *be going to*-sentences can easily go with future-time adverbials (FT adverbials) like *tomorrow*, while *be about to*-sentences basically cannot. The other fact is that in narrative texts *be going to*-sentences in the past tense (*was going to*-sentences) tend to be used to suggest fulfillment of the situation expressed by the infinitive (I-situation),¹ whereas *be about to*-sentences in the past tense (*was about to*-sentences) tend to be used to imply unfulfillment of the I-situation.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 observes the two differences between *be going to*-sentences and *be about to*-sentences, which are to be the main issues of this paper. After the temporal structures of *be going to*-sentences and *be about to*-sentences are formulated based on three background assumptions in section 3, the two issues are accounted for in terms of the temporal structures of both sentences in section 4. Section 5 makes concluding remarks.

2. Issues

This section observes two differences between *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences, i.e. their difference in co-occurrence with FT adverbials and their different behavior in narrative texts, which are to be the main issues.

I will start with the difference in co-occurrence with FT adverbials

¹ The term *situation* stands for whatever described by a predicate, and the term *event time* for the time of a situation.

between *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences. It is often pointed out in dictionaries and grammar books that *be going to*-sentences can go with FT adverbials such as *tomorrow*, while *be about to*-sentences cannot.

- (1) a. Doc Brown is going to leave tomorrow.
- b. Mana is going to play the *koto* next week.
- (2) a. *Doc Brown is about to leave tomorrow.
- b. *Mana is about to play the *koto* next week.

This difference in acceptability might be explained by a frequently-mentioned statement that since *be about to*-sentences refer to more immediate future than *be going to*-sentences, the former cannot occur with FT adverbials such as *tomorrow* and *next week* which refer to the “non-immediate” future.

However, such a statement cannot account for the fact that *be going to*-sentences can also refer to the immediate future, as shown in (3).

- (3) a. Doc Brown is going to leave in an hour/in a minute.
- b. The glue is going to be dry in half an hour.

(Declerck (1991a: 115))

Moreover, some native speakers who consider (2) to be unacceptable feel that (4) is acceptable or not completely unacceptable.²

- (4) a. ?I am about to leave for America tomorrow, so I am afraid I cannot see you this afternoon.
- b. ?We are about to move next week, so we are very busy preparing.

The frequently-mentioned statement as it is cannot explain this fact, either.

Let us now move to the difference between the ways in which *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences are used in narrative texts.³ It is

² The acceptability judgment of (4) is shaky. Rodney Huddleston (personal communication) considers that (4) seems a little odd, but not drastically so. One of my informants feels (4) appropriate, while another judges it to be unacceptable, though for both of them (4b) is odder than (4a). Note that one informant considers that (4a) is appropriate in an afterthought reading, i.e. a reading where a speaker adds *tomorrow* to the *be about to*-sentence as an afterthought to clarify the exact time.

³ By narrative texts, I mean so-called third-person narratives, but not so-called first-person narratives which describe the narrator's personal world, in this paper. See Chafe (1994) for further discussion.

often said that in unembedded clauses both *was going to-* and *was about to-*sentences pragmatically indicate unfulfillment of the I-situation (see Declerck (1991a: 113) and Quirk et al. (1985: 218)), as exemplified below:

- (5) a. You were going to give me your address. [... but you didn't ...']
 - b. The police were going to charge her, but at last she persuaded them she was innocent. (Quirk et al. (1985: 218))
- (6) a. I was about to protest when Mr. Smith interrupted me.
 - (Jespersen (1931: 362))
 - b. I was about to go to bed when the telephone rang.
 - (Swan (1995: 3))

However, the statement is applicable only to conversational texts; in fact, this is not true for narrative texts or narratives, which are defined as consisting of sentences used by the narrator to describe scenes (including events and states) that are narrated as experiences from his point of view,⁴ and which offer a great contrast to other parts of stories or fictions such as the conversational, the indirect-speech complement, and the represented-speech part. In narratives, *was going to-*sentences tend not to be followed by sentences which make the I-situation at issue unfulfilled and as a result tend to imply fulfillment of that I-situation; by contrast, *was about to-*sentences tend to be followed by sentences which interrupt the realization of the I-situation in question and thus tend to indicate unfulfillment of that I-situation. For example, in M. Puzo's *The Godfather*, all of the seven relevant *was going to-*sentences are used to indicate fulfillment of the I-situation; of six relevant *was about to-*sentences, five examples are used to indicate unfulfillment of the I-situation.

To illustrate the point, let me first observe (7), where the I-situations of the *was going to-*sentences are all realized later than the time of the narrative-now at issue.

- (7) a. And now, finally, Albert Neri, alone in his Bronx apart-

⁴ Narrative texts can be divided into Foreground, which includes sentences of non-stative situations and narrative *when*-clauses, and Background, which includes sentences of stative situations (see Hopper (1979) and Reinhart (1984)).

ment, was going to put on his police uniform again. He brushed it carefully. Polishing the holster would be next (Puzo (1969: 426))

- b. Nothing was going to stop him from owning this girl, possessing her, locking her in a house and keeping her prisoner only for himself. (Puzo (1969: 340))
- c. She was head of a great conglomerate, she was married to the man she loved and she was going to have his baby. (Sheldon (1983: 201))

In (7a), for example, Albert Neri, a former policeman and now a guard for a mafia boss, actually kills another mafia boss with his police uniform on later than the time of this scene.

It should be kept in mind that *was going to*-sentences themselves do not represent fulfillment of the I-situation. Observe (8):

- (8) ... The sharks surrounded the raft now, Each nudge tilted the raft at a precious angle. It was going to capsize at any moment. (Sheldon (1983: 67))

The I-situation of the *was going to*-sentence, i.e. the raft's capsizing, does not occur later than the time of this scene. Thus, *was going to*-sentences do not determine unfulfillment of the I-situation; rather, they can indicate it depending on the content of the following sentences or the context, and tend to be so used.

On the other hand, the I-situation of *was about to*-sentences often does not actually materialize, as shown in (9).

- (9) a. Michael was touched. He was about to tell the young man to go away again, but he thought, why not let him stay? (Puzo (1969: 127))
- b. The man didn't move. Benjamin bent his knees slightly and was about to move toward the door when he felt an arm closing around his neck. He trashed away. (Webb (1963: 191))
- c. Marty was about to ask another question—something about paradoxes and Doc always talking about their responsibility to the past—when he heard the woman scream. (Gardner (1990: 112))

In (9a) the unfulfillment of the event of Michael's telling the young man to go away is implied by the content of his thought. In fact, the I-situation does not happen later than the time of this scene.

It should be stressed, however, that *was about to*-sentences alone do

not represent unfulfillment of the I-situation, but rather they merely imply unfulfillment of the I-situation by combining with the subsequent sentences which suggest or represent unfulfillment of that I-situation. This statement is demonstrated by (10), where the I-situation of the *was about to*-sentence actually happens because the subsequent sentences do not interrupt the realization of the I-situation.

- (10) A storm, which had been brewing all evening, was about to break The clock tower read 10:04 And lightning struck the clock tower. (Gardner (1989: 1))

As the last sentence shows, the I-situation of the *was about to*-sentence, i.e. the break of the storm, actually occurs. Thus, *was about to*-sentences can be used to imply fulfillment of the I-situation.

To recapitulate the second difference, in narratives *was going to*-sentences tend to be used to imply fulfillment of the I-situation along with the subsequent sentences which do not interrupt the realization of that I-situation, whereas *was about to*-sentences tend to be used to indicate unfulfillment of the I-situation along with the following sentences which make that I-situation interrupted or unfulfilled.

The two above-mentioned differences between *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences have never been given a systematic explanation thus far, let alone a unified account. In order to provide a basis for a systematic and unified account of the two issues, I will construct the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences in the next section.

3. Temporal Structure

3.1. Background Assumptions

This subsection is concerned with three background assumptions on the basis of which the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences are to be established. First, it is assumed in terms of finite tense morphemes that English has two absolute tenses, i.e. the past and the present.⁵ In this view, both *be going to* and *be about to*

⁵ For further justification of this assumption, see Huddleston (1995) and Wada (1999).

with the present tense morpheme are not future tense markers, but rather represent the present tense.

Secondly, following Wada (1999), I adopt the Aux-as-main-verb hypothesis based on a prototype approach. The prototype approach states that the central members of a certain category share a large number of attributes, while the peripheral members share a small number of attributes.⁶ Thus, on the Aux-as-main-verb hypothesis based on the prototype approach, auxiliary verbs can be viewed as non-central or peripheral members of the category "main verb": after all, auxiliaries share fewer characteristics of main verbs than full or lexical verbs, i.e. central members of the main verb, especially in morphological and syntactic terms. As a consequence, I can argue that irrespective of differences in morphological and syntactic behavior, each verb which has (rich) semantic content can equally describe one situation and thus express one event time (E).

Thirdly, I assume that if the combination of more than one word can be regarded as a semantic unit, such a unit as a whole represents one situation and thus one event time. By a semantic unit, I mean a verbal unit whose constituents are semantically closely related to each other, representing a kind of idiomatic meaning in a broad sense. This type of expression ranges from true idioms, i.e. truly noncompositional expressions (such as *kick the bucket*), to what Nunberg, Sag and Wasow (1994) call idiomatically combining expressions, i.e. collocations with fully literal or compositional interpretations (such as *take advantage of*). What is important here is that a semantic unit which includes more than one predicate (or verb) is assumed to represent one situation and thus one event time.

3.2. Constituent Combination Pattern of *Be Going To*- and *Be About To*-Sentences

On the basis of the second and third assumptions, I argue that the temporal structure of *be going to*-sentences consists of the event time represented by the semantic unit *be going to* (E_{G1}) and the event time represented by the infinitive (E_{G2}), whereas the temporal structure of

⁶ For this kind of approach to auxiliaries, see also Heine (1993).

be about to-sentences is composed of the event time represented by the verb *be* (E_{A1}) and the event time represented by the semantic unit *about to* + infinitive (E_{A2}).⁷

- (11) a. *Be Going To*-Sentences: E_{G1} (*be going to*) + E_{G2} (infinitive)
 b. *Be About To*-Sentences: E_{A1} (*be*) + E_{A2} (*about to* + infinitive)

The reason why *be going to* forms a semantic unit, on one hand, and *about to* + infinitive forms a semantic unit, on the other, can be accounted for in the following manner.

I will first consider *be going to*. As stated in the literature (e.g. Hopper and Traugott (1993) and Sweetser (1988)), *be going to* diachronically derives from the combination of the movement-verb *go* in the progressive form and the *to*-infinitive of purpose or result by means of reanalysis. As for *be going*, it is originally the progressive form of *go* and synchronically constitutes an idiomatic expression (often referred to as “go-future”), thus forming a semantic unit. This view is supported by the ungrammaticality of (14), (16) and (17b) below. As for *to*, since the contraction form of *going to*, i.e. *gonna*, exists which can be viewed as the reflection of the semantic fusion, the *to* at issue is semantically inseparable from *going*. Moreover, the *to* of *be going to*-sentences cannot be deleted in VP-deletion.

- (12) a. John is willing to come, but he's not going to.
 (Palmer (1987: 140))
 b. *John is willing to come, but he's not going.

These two phenomena suggest that *going* and *to* also constitute a semantic unit. Thus, *be going to* as a whole constitutes a semantic unit.

I now turn to *be about to*. I will present three syntactic phenomena which support the claim that the form *about* + *to*-infinitive (A-infinitive), but not *be about to*, forms a semantic unit.

First of all, the A-infinitive can occur with copulas other than *be*, as exemplified in (13a, b).

⁷ This argument is contradictory to Quirk et al.'s (1985: 143) statement that both *be going to* and *be about to* are verbal idioms.

- (13) a. ..., and at times the sheer cliffs seemed about to close in.
 b. When the Plymouth neared, it veered toward him and seemed about to run him down.

(The Brown Corpus (Brown))

This contrasts clearly with the case where *going to* cannot occur with copulas other than *be*.

- (14) a. *..., and at times the sheer cliffs seemed going to close in.
 b. *When the Plymouth neared, it veered toward him and seemed going to run him down.

Secondly, the combination of *as if* and the A-infinitive is impeccable while the combination of *as if* and *going to* is out of the question.

- (15) a. Maude swooped up the cup and hiked up her top hoop as if about to take off with a racing start. (Brown)
 b. Marc took a step toward as if about to restrain his younger brother by sheer force, but

(The British National Corpus (BNC))

- (16) a. *Maude swooped up the cup and hiked up her top hoop as if going to take off with a racing start.
 b. *Marc took a step toward as if going to restrain his younger brother by sheer force, but

Thirdly, the A-infinitive can modify the head noun, occurring in the position after a relative clause, but *going to* cannot.

- (17) a. Someone threw a beer bottle at me, and hit a guy who was behind me about to pour a pint over my head.

(BNC)

- b. *Someone threw a beer bottle at me, and hit a guy who was behind me going to pour a pint over my head.

From the definition of a semantic unit presented in section 3.1, we can state that a semantic unit is a fixed expression that basically does not allow any of its constituents to disappear or to be replaced by any other semantically equivalent word when used to express its meaning. In this view, the impeccability of the sentences in (13), (15) and (17a) shows that *be about to* does not form a semantic unit, but rather the predicative adjective *about* + *to*-infinitive (A-infinitive) constitutes one.⁸

⁸ In both COBUILD² and LDOCE³, the *about* in question is defined as a (predicative) adjective.

The above observations lead to the conclusion that in terms of verbal constituents *be going to*-sentences consist of the semantic unit *be going to* and the infinitive, while *be about to*-sentences are composed of *be* and the semantic unit *about + to*-infinitive. Since one verbal constituent (including a semantic unit) is considered to represent one event time, both sentences contain two event times respectively, as shown in (11).

3.3. *Be About To*-Sentences as the Combination of *Be To*-Sentences and *About*

Before going to the construction of the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences, I will say that the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences semantically reflects that of *be to*-sentences and a temporal property of the adjective *about*.⁹ Taking into account the generally accepted intuition that *be to*-sentences represent the event time of the *to*-infinitive as coming sometime in the future while *be about to*-sentences represent it as coming in the near (or immediate) future, I can safely claim that *be about to*-sentences are, in terms of temporal structure (or semantics), made of *be to*-sentences with a temporal property of *about*, i.e. "temporal nearness" (this point will be discussed in detail in section 3.4.2.2). What is important here is that *about* does not have any influence on *be*, but rather affects the *to*-infinitive in that its property moves the position of the event time of the *to*-infinitive very close to the event time of *be*. This *about* is semantically a kind of modifier which modifies the *to*-infinitive, related not to *be* but to the *to*-infinitive. This point is compatible with the view that in terms of verbal constituents *about* in *be about to*-sentences combines with the *to*-infinitive to form the A-infinitive, i.e. a semantic unit; for a set of words which are semantically closely related to each other often behave together syntactically.

In order to verify the claim that *be about to*-sentences have a temporal structure which reflects the temporal structure of *be to*-sentences with

⁹ It is true that while *be about to*-sentences have both finite and nonfinite forms, *be to*-sentences have only finite forms (cf. Sugayama (1998) and Yagi (1996)). However, what is relevant to the present discussion is similarities between their temporal structures. Cf. also note 11.

temporal properties of *about* as a modifier, I will show that *be* and the *to*-infinitive do not form a semantic unit, but rather constitute two discrete verbal constituents; by proving that *be to*-sentences are divided into two discrete verbs, i.e. *be* and the *to*-infinitive, I can claim that modifiers such as *about* are inserted into the position between the two verbs, modifying the *to*-infinitive, and as a result I can argue that *be about to*-sentences inherit temporal properties of *be to*-sentences with those of *about* as a modifier. Along the lines of Sugayama (1998), I will justify the above-mentioned statement with respect to *be to*-sentences by adducing as evidence two syntactic phenomena indicating that *be* and the *to*-infinitive are semantically considerably separated from each other. After all, a semantic unit is by definition a set of constituents which are semantically closely related to each other.

First, it is a fact that a parenthetical expression can be inserted between *be* and the *to*-infinitive.

(18) We are, I believe, to start tomorrow. (Sugayama (1998: 173))
 Second, the *to* of *be to*-sentences can be deleted in VP-deletion. This case makes a sharp contrast with the case where *have to*, which has the contraction form *hafta* and thus can be regarded as a semantic unit, does not allow *to* to be deleted.

- (19) a. Bill is to leave at once, and Alice is (to) also.
 b. Bill has to leave at once, and Alice has *(to) also.

(McCawley (1988: 249))

These phenomena suggest that *be* and the *to*-infinitive are not semantically closely related to each other. Thus, they do not constitute a semantic unit.

Before concluding this subsection, let me strengthen the position that *about* in *be about to*-sentences is a predicative adjective functioning as a modifier. This can be done indirectly by showing that other predicative adjectives can combine with *be to*-sentences to modify the *to*-infinitive.¹⁰

- (20) Time is sure to bring a lot of changes. (BNC)
 (21) Yet travellers are certain to be met with overwhelming hospitality. (BNC)

¹⁰ Kunio Nishiyama (personal communication) brought this point to my attention.

Taking into consideration the fact that other predicative adjectives can come in the position before the *to*-infinitive to modify it, it is no wonder that the predicative adjective *about* occurs in the same position.

To summarize, the parallel in the constituent combination pattern between *be about to*- and *be to*-sentences, namely that *be about to*-sentences consist of *be* and the semantic unit *about* + *to*-infinitive and *be to*-sentences are composed of *be* and the *to*-infinitive, enables me to claim that *be about to*-sentences are temporal-structurally the combination of *be to*-sentences and the predicative adjective *about* modifying the *to*-infinitive.

3.4. Temporal Schemata of *Be Going To*- and *Be About To*-Sentences

I am now in a position to consider the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences in detail, and formulate their temporal schemata.

3.4.1. Temporal Schema of *Be Going To*-Sentences

This subsection constructs the temporal structure of *be going to*-sentences. As I noted in section 3.2, *be going to*-sentences have a temporal structure consisting of the two event times: the event time associated with *be going to*, i.e. E_{G1} , and the event time associated with the infinitive, i.e. E_{G2} .

The first to be observed is which time-area the two event times belong to. *Be going to*-sentences in the present tense prototypically require that E_{G1} be located in the present area and E_{G2} be situated in the future area. This is verified by the following sentences:

- (22) a. Now we are going to have no money at the end of the month. (Haegeman (1989: 297))
 b. Now Makiko is going to drive with me tonight.

In both cases, the present-time adverb *now* modifies *be going to* and a future-time adverb the infinitive.

The next task is to examine what kinds of internal temporal structures the two predicates of *be going to*-sentences represent. As for the infinitive, its internal structure can change depending on the type of predicate in the form: for example, the internal structure of events differs from that of states. On the other hand, the internal structure of *be going to* is constant. It reflects the properties of the verb *go* in the progressive form and those of *to*. I will take a closer look at them one by one.

I begin with *be going*. The temporal meaning of *be going*, which diachronically derives from the spatial meaning of “an ongoing process of physical movement” by metaphorical extension, represents an ongoing process of movement along the time line in the center of which a time of orientation (O) is located. A time of orientation is a base time for the calculation of the position of event times, and is identified with the speech time (S) in the case of present-tense forms. It should be noted here that the ongoing process of a transitional event like the going must entail its beginning part; i.e., in order for such an event to be in progress at a given time of orientation, its beginning part has to have already happened by that time.

I now turn to *to*. I follow Duffley's (1992) assumption that the temporal relation of ‘A to B,’ where A and B symbolize predicates, means that B temporally comes later than A. In *be going to*-sentences, the *to* at issue represents an end-point of the ongoing process expressed by *be going*, and the I-situation continuously follows the end point. This statement is verified by the fact that in *be going to*-sentences the time of the I-situation cannot be simultaneous with, or anterior to, the time of *be going*.

(23) a. ??Mary is going to be at home now.

b. *He is going to have finished it yesterday.

(Araki, Ono and Nakano (1977: 436))

To sum up, the internal structure of the situation represented by *be going to* (the BGT-situation) consists of three temporal segments, i.e. the beginning part, the ongoing process, and the end-point. For convenience' sake, they are labelled the onset, the nucleus, and the coda, respectively. The temporal structure of *be going to*-sentences shows that at a time of orientation a preparatory stage toward the realization of the I-situation, i.e. the BGT-situation, is in progress, and the end of the BGT-situation is continuously followed by the beginning of the I-situation. I note, in passing, that if the I-situation is an event, it typically consists of the three temporal segments: the onset, the nucleus, and the coda.

In order to complete the temporal schema of *be going to*-sentences, the notion of temporal focus (TF) must be introduced. Temporal focus is defined as a speaker's focus fixed on (part of) an event time to which he is directing his special attention. It is demonstrated in Wada (1996, 1999) that this notion is useful not only for distinguishing among meanings of tense forms which are supposed to have similar meanings

(such as differences between sentences containing *be going to* and *will*), but also for explaining why a variety of uses can be derived from one tense form (such as the volitional and the predictive use of sentences containing *will*). Following Wada (1996, 1999), I assume that with *be going to*-sentences, the TF is fixed on E_{G1} , i.e. the event time represented by *be going to*, which belongs to the present area. This is illustrated by (24):

(24) She is going to have twins. (Leech (1987: 61))

Be going to-sentences are usually said to be present-oriented. If I assume that this is the reflection of the TF's being fixed on E_{G1} , I can explain why sentence (24) is typically used to focus on the present cause of her bearing twins, i.e. her being pregnant, which is associated with E_{G1} .

All the above things considered, the temporal structure of *be going to*-sentences can be represented schematically as follows:

Time flows from left to right. The cross points to the position of the time of orientation. The BGT-situation is symbolized by the rectangle with both of the edges painted black which denote the onset and the coda. The I-situation is symbolized by the shaded rectangle. Both rectangles represent the time-span, but the length of the time-span varies according to the subjective judgment of the speaker (and/or the hearer) based on contexts. In addition, the semantic content of the BGT-situation varies according to that of the I-situation. This means that the BGT-situation itself cannot represent a particular meaning, and only at the level of pragmatics can we specify the semantic content of the BGT-situation. It should be kept in mind that in the case of *be going to*-sentences in the present tense, the BGT-situation typically occupies the whole of the present area in the center of which S is located, the coda of the BGT-situation marking the end of the present area, and thus the I-situation occurs in the future area.

For a better understanding of this schema, consider (26):

(26) Doc Brown is going to take us back to the future.

The semantic content of the three temporal segments of the BGT-situation is, for example, as follows: the onset expresses Doc's pushing the switch of the time machine to set the time axis; the nucleus expresses the process of his setting the time machine; and the coda expresses his finishing up the setting. The I-situation, i.e. his taking us back to the future, becomes real consecutively (if not in a strict sense) after the end of the BGT-situation.

3.4.2. Temporal Schema of *Be About To*-Sentences

I turn now to *be about to*-sentences. In section 3.3, I showed that *be about to*-sentences consist of *be to*-sentences and *about* in terms of temporal structure (semantics). Thus, clarifying the temporal characteristics of *be to*-sentences and *about* provides a basis for establishing the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences. In this subsection, I will first construct the temporal schema of *be to*-sentences, and, then, add temporal properties of *about* to it to establish the temporal schema of *be about to*-sentences.

3.4.2.1. *Be To*-Sentences

In section 3.3, it was shown that the form *be + to*-infinitive is not a semantic unit, but rather divided into two verbs, i.e. *be* and the *to*-infinitive. In this view, together with the consequence of the Aux-as-main-verb hypothesis presented in section 3.1,¹¹ *be to*-sentences have a temporal structure consisting of two event times with one expressed by *be* (E_{T1}) and the other by the *to*-infinitive (E_{T2}).

(27) a. He's to come tomorrow. (Palmer (1987: 160))

b. The President is to visit Nigeria next month.

(Swan (1995: 87))

In the case of present-tense forms, as shown in (27), E_{T1} is located in the present area. As for E_{T2} , since *to* in the temporal relation of 'A to B' expresses posteriority, E_{T2} is typically viewed as occurring in the fu-

¹¹ This hypothesis should be considered to be operative here because the *be* of *be to*-sentences is always finite, and is regarded as a kind of modal auxiliary in terms of both its morpho-syntactic and semantic behavior (see Sugayama (1998: 169–172) for discussion).

ture. This claim is confirmed by the fact that in (27) future-time adverbs modify E_{T2} . Moreover, the view that in this construction *to* represents the posterior relation between *be* and the infinitive is borne out by the unacceptability of (28) and (29), where both of the infinitives are meant to refer to past and present time, respectively.

(28) *He is to have arrived yesterday.

(Araki, Ono and Nakano (1977: 435))

(29) *Mary is to be playing tennis now.

(Rodney Huddleston (personal communication))

It should be noted here that in *be to*-sentences *be* is a copula. This is supported by the fact that the *to*-infinitive of *be to*-sentences can be juxtaposed to a predicative adjective or noun.

(30) a. He was new to the school and to be debagged the following day.

b. The old man is an idiot and to be pitied.

(Sugayama (1998: 174))

It is generally said that the copula *be* represents a very schematic situation or more or less empty semantic content. Given this, it can be assumed that in effect E_{T1} functions merely as a time of orientation for E_{T2} , but not as a pure event time, i.e. the event time of a semantically-rich situation.

The next to be considered is which event time of *be to*-sentences the TF is fixed on. Generally speaking, it is less likely to focus on a situation that has poor semantic content than one that has rich semantic content. Thus in this construction, the TF is prototypically directed at E_{T2} , i.e. the event time of the *to*-infinitive, but not E_{T1} , i.e. the event time of *be*.

The above observations lead to the following temporal schema of *be to*-sentences, where the cross denotes the position of E_{T1} .

Note that the I-situation occurs sometime in the future relative to E_{T1} as a time of orientation.

3.4.2.2. *Be About To*-Sentences

I now move to the construction of the temporal schema of *be about*

to-sentences. Before going further, however, let me reconfirm the sense of *about* which is relevant in this construction. As I noted in section 3.3, the relevant property of *about* is the sense of 'temporal nearness,' which metaphorically derives from the sense of 'spatial nearness.'

With this in mind, I now go to a detailed consideration of the temporal schema of *be about to*-sentences. First of all, because in this construction *about* expresses temporal nearness, combining with the *to*-infinitive to form the A-infinitive which is part of a *be about to*-sentence, the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences is such that the event time of the A-infinitive, i.e. E_{A2} , is located in the future which is very close to E_{A1} , i.e. the event time of *be* as a time of orientation.

Now consider the position of the TF in *be about to*-sentences. I will claim that unlike the case of *be to*-sentences, the TF is not fixed on the whole of the event time of the I-situation, but rather is restricted to part of E_{A2} corresponding to the onset of the I-situation. This claim is verified in the following manner. A *be about to*-sentence is a construction whose temporal structure reflects that of a *be to*-sentence and the 'temporal nearness' sense of *about*, and *about* temporal-structurally functions as a modifier of *be to*-sentences. Since modifying something means distinguishing modified entities from others, the information conveyed by a modifier is salient for that purpose. Thus in the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences, what is salient is the temporal nearness represented by the modifier *about*, namely, that the event time of the infinitive is very close to the event time of *be*, which is the information that the temporal structure of *be to*-sentences itself cannot convey. To highlight this temporal nearness, a speaker's focus is considered to be not on the whole of the event time of the I-situation, but on part of the event time corresponding to the onset of the I-situation, i.e. the edge of the I-situation that is adjacent to the event time of *be*, which evokes the notion of temporal nearness. This claim is justified because narrowing a focus is effective in highlighting something. The above discussion motivates me to argue that the TF is restricted to the onset part of E_{A2} , i.e. the salient part of the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences.

I now turn to the problem of which time-area the I-situation of *be about to*-sentences belongs to. Here I claim that the onset part of E_{A2} , which is salient by virtue of the TF, is temporal-structurally incorporated into the present area; at the stage of interpretation, the I-situa-

tion as a whole is interpreted as located in the present area because of the function of the "part for the whole" metonymy, which roughly states that a salient part of an entity can represent the whole of the entity. Note here that the metonymy at issue is operative at the construction level, but not at the lexical level.

There are at least two reasons for my claim made above. The first reason is that E_{A2} can be modified by the present-time adverb *now*.

(32) Doc Brown is about to leave now.

This shows that the I-situation, i.e. Doc's leaving, is interpreted as incorporated into the present area established by *now* by way of the interpretation process mentioned above.

It is true that in the case of *be to-* and *be going to-*sentences, too, the event time of the infinitive can be modified by *now*.

(33) a. Doc Brown is going to leave now.

b. Doc Brown is to leave now.

But it must be recalled here that there is no restriction as to the temporal distance between S and the event time of the I-situation in the temporal structures of *be to-* and *be going to-*sentences, which make a sharp contrast with the temporal structure of *be about to-*sentences that forces part of the I-situation into the present area. Thus, for example, it is possible with *be going to-*sentences that the speaker feels that the BGT-situation is very short or instantaneous and thus as if the I-situation following the BGT-situation were also located in the present time, so that the I-situation can be interpreted as incorporated into the present area established by *now*. The same account applies to *be to-*sentences. In summary, the I-situation of *be about to-*sentences must basically be interpreted as occurring in the present area because of their temporal structure, whereas the I-situation of *be going to-* or *be to-*sentences can be interpreted as incorporated into the present area by virtue of their temporal structures.

This line of argument is borne out by the fact that both *be to-* and *be going to-*sentences are not interpreted as representing their I-situations as incorporated into the present area without present-time adverbs, whereas *be about to-*sentences alone are so interpreted; the latter statement is supported by the fact that *be about to-*sentences basically cannot be modified by future-time adverbs (see section 4.1). Thus, the presence of sentences like those in (33) does not undermine my claim that *be about to-*sentences temporal-structurally require part of E_{A2} to be incorporated into the present area.

The second reason concerns the fact that the A-infinitive of *be about* *to*-sentences occurs in the complement clause of perception verbs.

- (34) a. Did I see him about to swing low in a chariot? (Brown)
 b. His leading character finds himself about to become a father to two different children, one through artificial insemination. (The Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen Corpus (LOB))

Given that the time of the complement clause of perception verbs is generally assumed to coincide with that of the main (perception) verb, I can explain why (34) is acceptable in the following manner. In the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences, the onset part of E_{A2} , which is highlighted by the TF, belongs to the same time area as the time of the main verb, and in the case of the present-tense version, the onset part of E_{A2} is regarded as incorporated into the present area, which the event time of the main (perception) verb belongs to. As a result, at the stage of interpretation the I-situation as a whole is interpreted as located in the present area because of the "part for the whole" metonymy at issue.

This line of argument is indirectly confirmed by the fact that unlike *be about to*-sentences, *be to*- and *be going to*-sentences cannot occur in the complement position of perception verbs.

- (35) a. *I saw John to leave for America.
 (Rodney Huddleston (personal communication))
 b. *Hannah heard the Wilsons going to take a trip to Egypt.
 (Kirsner and Thompson (1976: 207))

The perception-verb construction requires its complement-clause time to be simultaneous with its main-clause time by virtue of the simultaneous nature of perception; thus, the sentences in (35) are unacceptable because in the case of *be to*- and *be going to*-sentences, the event time of the infinitive (i.e. E_{T2} or E_{G2}) is temporal-structurally viewed as located in the future relative to the event time of the finite (perception) verb, which is contradictory to the nature of perception.¹²

¹² An anonymous *EL* reviewer has suggested that the unacceptability of (35b) might undermine my analysis of *be going to*-sentences based on the Aux-as-main-verb hypothesis because under this hypothesis E_{G1} , i.e. the event time of (*be*) *going to*, could be seen as simultaneous with the main-clause time. However, this is not the case. My explanation for the unacceptability of (35b) goes as follows. The

Having justified my position on the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences, I will represent its present-tense version schematically as follows:

PRES denotes the present area which is symbolized by the broken-line rectangle, and is meant to cover the onset part of E_{A2} associated with the I-situation.

To illustrate the point, observe (37):

(37) The DeLorean is about to start.

In (37), the I-situation is the DeLorean's start and the onset of the I-situation is the omen of the DeLorean's start. Since the TF is fixed on the onset part of E_{A2} which is temporal-structurally incorporated into the present area, the DeLorean's start itself is interpreted as if it were located in the present area by means of the "part for the whole" metonymy.

direct complement of perception verbs is assumed in the literature to require that its situation be concrete or particular enough to be perceived directly. If this is the case, I can straightforwardly explain why (35b) is unacceptable: since, as I noted in section 3.4.1, the BGT-situation itself cannot represent any concrete or particular situation, but rather denotes a general situation which is to be specified at the level of pragmatics, E_{G1} , i.e. the event time of the BGT-situation, cannot be associated with the event time of the perception verb by virtue of the nature of the direct complement of perception verbs. This explanation is justified by the fact that *be going to*-sentences can occur in the *that*-clause complement of perception verbs.

(i) Hannah heard (that) the Wilsons were going to take a trip to Egypt.

It is said in the literature that when a perception verb occurs with a *that*-clause complement, the verb no longer represents direct perception, but rather expresses cognition or inference based on perception (see Duffley (1992) for example). Thus in (i), the verb *hear* means 'understand by hearing.' This linguistic fact explains the acceptability of (i) because this construction does not require that the BGT-situation be concrete or particular, but rather allows us to recognize the BGT-situation as a vague concept or to infer the particular meaning of the BGT-situation. From the above discussion, I conclude that the ungrammaticality of (35b) is ascribed to the nature of the direct complement of perception verbs which requires that the relevant situation be particular enough to be perceived directly and its event time be simultaneous with the event time of the perception verb.

4. Explanation

In this section, I will demonstrate that the temporal schemata of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences formulated in section 3 provide an explanatory basis for the two differences presented in section 2.

4.1. Adverbials of Future Time Reference

I will begin by explaining why *be going to*-sentences behave differently from *be about to*-sentences with respect to co-occurrence with FT adverbials.

Consider (1a) and (2a) again, repeated here as (38a) and (38b):

- (38) a. Doc Brown is going to leave tomorrow.
- b. *Doc Brown is about to leave tomorrow.

Schema (36) explains why sentence (38b) is unacceptable. In the case of *be about to*-sentences the I-situation as a whole is interpreted as belonging to the present area, so there arises a semantic clash if the I-situation is modified by FT adverbials. Hence the unacceptability of (38b). By contrast, as schema (25) shows, in the case of *be going to*-sentences the I-situation is typically regarded as located in the future area, so it can be modified by FT adverbials. Hence (38a) is acceptable.

I now turn to an explanation of (3) and (4), repeated here as (39) and (40):

- (39) a. Doc Brown is going to leave in an hour/in a minute.
- b. The glue is going to be dry in half an hour.
- (40) a. ?I am about to leave for America tomorrow, so I am
 afraid I cannot see you this afternoon.
- b. ?We are about to move next week, so we are very busy
 preparing.

I first explain why (39) is perfectly acceptable. As I stated in section 3.4.1, in the case of *be going to*-sentences with the present tense the length of the BGT-situation, which obtains at S, is variable according to the speaker's subjective judgment based on contexts; in other words, the information as to the temporal distance between S and E_{G2} is unspecified in their temporal structure. This is attributed to the nature of *be going*, which merely states that something is ongoing at S and does not specify the length of the BGT-situation at all. Thus, if the BGT-situation is viewed as very short, the I-situation, located in the future relative to the BGT-situation, comes closer to S, and thus, *be*

going to-sentences can go with immediate-future adverbials, as shown in (39). On the other hand, if the BGT-situation is seen as very long, the I-situation comes to be situated in the far future and thus *be going to*-sentences can go with remote-future adverbials, as shown in (41):

- (41) If Winterbottom's calculations are correct, this planet is going to burn itself out 200,000,000 years from now.

(Leech (1987: 61))

Let me next account for why some native speakers consider (40) to be acceptable or not drastically odd. Recall that in the case of *be about to*-sentences in the present tense the information as to the temporal distance between S and E_{A2} is specified in their temporal structure, namely, that E_{A2} is very close to S, and the onset part of E_{A2} is located in the present area; this is ascribed to the nature of *about*. Thus, *be about to*-sentences cannot go with FT adverbials from a temporal-structural point of view, as (2) has shown. Why, then, does (40) seem not so bad or acceptable to some native speakers? I claim that in this case a psychological adjustment is introduced at a level of pragmatics, which comes after the level of the modification by time adverbials, and, as a result, the degree of the acceptability of (40) becomes higher. In such environments as those in (40), where the semantic content of the second conjunct pragmatically suggests that the speaker does not have enough time to prepare for the departure, it is easy to infer that the speaker psychologically feels that E_{A2} comes very close to S, while E_{A2} actually comes in the future by virtue of the modification by an FT adverbial, which is basically not allowed by the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences. It is possible for some native speakers to give priority to this psychological imminence, but not to the actual temporal distance between S and E_{A2} . Thus such native speakers can subjectively extend the present area to cover the I-situation which is objectively located in the future; as a result, they can incorporate the I-situation into the extended present area. Hence (40) is not so bad or acceptable to them. But for other native speakers who strictly obey the information as to the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences, (40) is still unacceptable or not perfectly acceptable because in (40) there is actually a temporal distance between S and E_{A2} because of the presence of FT adverbials.¹³

¹³ The fact that the acceptability judgment about (40) is shaky supports my ex-

4.2. Narrative Texts

The temporal structures proposed in section 3, together with idiosyncratic characteristics of the grammar and nature of narrative texts, explain why in narratives *was going to*-sentences tend to be used with the following sentences which do not imply unfulfillment of the I-situation of *was going to*-sentences, while *was about to*-sentences tend to occur with the following sentences which indicate or guarantee unfulfillment of the I-situation of *was about to*-sentences.

4.2.1. Two Types of Consciousness

I will first clarify the relevant properties of the nature and grammar of narrative texts which, being different from those of conversational texts, can influence the difference of the tendencies of *was going to*- and *was about to*-sentences in narratives. To this end, Chafe's (1994) distinction between two types of consciousness is useful. Consciousness is roughly defined as a small segment of human mind which is active when the experiencer refers to the surrounding world (see Chafe (1994: 28)). He admits two types of consciousness which function as deictic centers for deictic elements: the "representing consciousness," i.e. the deictic center for tense and person, and the "represented consciousness," i.e. the deictic center for adverbs of space and time.

In conversational texts, these two types of consciousness belong to the speaker, being congruent and located at S. However, in third-person fictions with the past tense, i.e. narratives in our terminology, the narrator's represented consciousness belongs to a different self (such as a main character) at a relevant time of orientation in the past, i.e. the narrative-now. This is verified by the fact that described situations at the narrative-now can be modified by *now*, a deictic-time adverb. This suggests that in narratives the narrator can describe or report situations or scenes via the narrator's represented consciousness fused with a

planation here (see also note 2). For one thing, whether or not a speaker can regard the I-situation in question as incorporated into the extended present area depends on the speaker's subjective judgment as to how far into the future the present area is allowed to be extended. For another, the judgment about to what extent the subjectivity judgment at issue can cancel E_{A2}'s constructionally-internalized closeness to the speech time differs from speaker to speaker.

character's self at a relevant time of orientation in the past. It is this difference of the position of the represented consciousness that affects the difference of the tendencies between *was going to*- and *was about to*-sentences under consideration.

4.2.2. *Be Going To*-Sentences

Having clarified what the grammar operative in narratives is like, let me now account for the tendency concerning *was going to*-sentences. As I mentioned in section 2, in conversational texts *was going to*-sentences tend to imply unfulfillment of the I-situation, but in narrative texts they tend to be compatible with the following sentences which indicate fulfillment of the I-situation of *was going to*-sentences. I will show that the difference of the tendency in question depends on the differences in nature and grammar between the two types of texts.

It should first be considered why in unembedded clauses of conversational texts, *was going to*-sentences tend to indicate unfulfillment of the I-situation pragmatically, as shown in (5) above. In this case both types of consciousness are located at S, from which the speaker evaluates situations in the past: the TF is directed at the BGT-situation representing an ongoing process which obtains at a certain time of orientation in the past, and thus the subject's intention or the cause of the I-situation represented by the BGT-situation is highlighted. It is often the case with the past tense version that whether or not the I-situation (i.e. a future-in-the-past situation coming later than the relevant time of orientation) actually happened is identifiable to the speaker because it can be viewed as a fact in the past. These things being considered, it can easily be inferred that by using *was going to*-sentences, the speaker wants to express the actualization of the BGT-situation, which is highlighted, and the non-actualization of the I-situation, which is not highlighted.

Moreover, if a speaker intended to express the actualization of the I-situation, he would use a tense form which can straightforwardly express it, i.e. *be to*-sentences in the past tense (*was to*-sentences) or sentences containing the *would* + infinitive form (*would*-sentences). As for *was to*-sentences, since the TF is fixed on E_{T2} associated with the I-situation (see schema (31)) and the speaker usually knows whether the I-situation actually happened, *was to*-sentences are usually used to imply the actualization of the I-situation in the past (cf. Palmer (1987: 160-161)), from which the notion of "destiny" often derives,

especially in narratives.¹⁴ I turn now to *would*-sentences. It is often said that sentences containing *will* are future-oriented. Within my framework, it means that the TF is fixed on the event time of the I-situation (see Wada (1996, 1999: Ch. 7) for justification). Together with the view that the I-situation of *would*-sentences can be treated as a fact in the past, the TF's being on the I-situation suggests that *would*-sentences tend to be used to indicate the realization of the I-situation. From these observations, the hearer tends to infer that by using *was going to*-sentences, the speaker restricts himself to highlighting the information which *was to*- or *would*-sentences cannot convey, namely the actualization of the subject's intention or the cause of the I-situation obtaining at the relevant time of orientation. Thus, in conversational texts *was going to*-sentences tend to imply that the I-situation does not actually materialize.

Why, then, in narratives do *was going to*-sentences tend to be used with the subsequent sentences which suggest fulfillment of the I-situation in question? To illustrate this, consider (42):

- (42) And now, finally, Albert Neri, alone in his Bronx apartment, was going to put on his police uniform again. He

¹⁴ As an anonymous *EL* reviewer points out, within my framework, where the temporal structure of *was about to*-sentences is constructed based on that of *was to*-sentences, a question might naturally arise as to why *was to*-sentences are often accompanied by the sense of 'destiny,' while *was about to*-sentences are not. It is accounted for in the following manner. Let me begin by considering how the sense of 'destiny' is implied in the use of *was to*-sentences, especially in narratives. Since the temporal structure of *was to*-sentences itself does not represent the temporal closeness of E_{T2} to the relevant time of orientation in the past, it can represent E_{T2} as coming in the far future relative to that time of orientation. Generally, the situation in the far future is uncontrollable for the subject whose consciousness adheres to the relevant time of orientation. This is a necessary condition for a "destiny" reading. On the other hand, the narrator usually knows whether or not the I-situation associated with E_{T2} occurred because he can view it as a fact in the past; i.e., because he has the eye of God in a sense, he knows what will happen to the subject at issue. This is another necessary condition. It is the interaction of the two conditions that enables *was to*-sentences to imply the sense of 'destiny' in appropriate contexts. Based on these observations, I can now explain why *was about to*-sentences do not indicate the sense of 'destiny' in narratives; since *was about to*-sentences temporal-structurally represent the closeness of E_{A2} to the relevant time of orientation in the past, the first necessary condition for a "destiny" reading is not met. Thus, a "destiny" reading is not possible with *was about to*-sentences.

brushed it carefully. Polishing the holster would be next
(=(7a))

In this case, unlike the case of conversational texts, while the representing consciousness is fixed at the time of narration, the represented consciousness is located at a relevant time of orientation in the past, i.e. the narrative-now. Since the representing consciousness of the narrator directs the TF at the event time of the BGT-situation obtaining at the time of orientation in the past, the represented consciousness holding at that time through which the narrator has access to described situations comes to be focused on and active. This implies that the grammar operative in this case is similar to that operative in the case of the present-tense version in conversational texts in that the relevant time of orientation in the past, to which the represented consciousness adheres in narrative texts, functions in a sense as S, to which the represented consciousness adheres in conversational texts. The BGT-situation, i.e. a preparatory stage leading to the I-situation, is entailed in the temporal structure of a *was going to*-sentence, holding at the relevant time of orientation, and the narrator has access to a proposition described by the *was going to*-sentence via the represented consciousness adhering to that time of orientation. Thus, the narrator feels as if the BGT-situation were an ongoing situation for him and thus the I-situation were no longer a fact in the past, but rather a situation in the future, so that the fulfillment of the I-situation tends to be strongly indicated without the subsequent sentences which suggest its interruption; for unless it is interrupted, the I-situation which follows the BGT-situation is taken necessarily to happen. However, the realization of the I-situation of *be going to*-sentences, whether the present or the past tense version, can possibly be interrupted after the BGT-situation occurs. Thus, *was going to*-sentences in narratives can be used to imply unfulfillment of the I-situation, as exemplified in (8) presented in section 2.

From these observations, I conclude that the fact that in narratives *was going to*-sentences have a tendency to be used to imply fulfillment of the I-situation derives from the interaction between the characteristics of their temporal structure and those of the grammar operative in narratives.

4.2.3. *Be About To*-Sentences

Finally, I will consider why in narrative as well as conversational

texts, *was about to*-sentences tend to be used with the following sentences which imply unfulfillment of the I-situation of *was about to*-sentences. To this end, let me start by representing the schema which shows the mechanism of *was about to*-sentences' implying unfulfillment, or more precisely interruption of the realization, of the I-situation in (43):

The broken-line rectangle denotes the time area in the center of which a relevant time of orientation (O) is located, and is meant to cover the onset of the I-situation. The schema shows that just after the actualization of the onset, the realization of the nucleus is interrupted.

To illustrate this, consider (44), for instance.

- (44) She reached for a telephone on her desk but just as she was about to dial, Benjamin held up one of his hands and began shaking his head. (Webb (1963: 100))

Here, the onset of the I-situation of the *was about to*-sentence is her taking up the receiver, and just after it occurs, the nucleus of the I-situation, i.e. the event of her dialing itself, is interrupted by Benjamin's action. Hence, the *was about to*-sentence in question is felt to show the unfulfillment of the I-situation.

This mechanism comes naturally from the characteristics of the temporal structure of *be about to*-sentences, where the TF is not directed at the whole of E_{A2} , but rather restricted to part of E_{A2} corresponding to the onset of the I-situation, and the onset part of E_{A2} belongs to the same time area as E_{A1} , i.e. the event time of *be*, which is simultaneous with the relevant time of orientation. Since it is a general view that a highlighted (or salient) part is hard to ignore, only after the onset comes true can (the nucleus of) the I-situation be interrupted.¹⁵ A

¹⁵ The reason why *was to*-sentences are usually used to indicate fulfillment of the I-situation while *was about to*-sentences, which are temporal-structurally based on

similar explanation can be given for (9a-c).

The question that is yet to be solved is why — unlike *was going to*-sentences — *was about to*-sentences tend to be used to imply unfulfillment or interruption of the realization of the I-situation in narrative as well as conversational texts. This question can also be explained in terms of the temporal structure of *was about to*-sentences with the two types of consciousness. As schema (43) suggests, the TF is not directly fixed at the relevant time of orientation. Thus, the represented consciousness, which adheres to that time of orientation, is not focused on and thus not active. This means that the narrator has access to events or scenes described by *was about to*-sentences from the time of the narration, i.e. the present time, to which the representing consciousness adheres. In other words, the grammar operative here is in essence similar to that of the past-tense version in conversational texts. (Of course in conversational texts the represented consciousness is also situated at S, but this makes little difference with respect to the present discussion.) Thus, from the time of narration the narrator evaluates the situation described by *was about to*-sentences in which at the relevant time of orientation there is no movement toward the realization of the I-situation in the temporal structure, which is attributed to the static and schematic properties of the copula *be*.¹⁶ Therefore, it is less likely that the I-situation comes true. Why, then, does the onset of the I-situation tend to take place? Since, as we have seen, the onset part of E_{A2} is salient in the target time area in the center of which the relevant time of orientation is located, it is likely that only the onset of the I-situation takes place and the rest of it, situated in another time area that is not a target one, is interrupted. A similar analysis applies to *was about to*-sentences in conversational texts.

The above discussion has shown that the reason why *was about to*-

was to-sentences, tend to be used to imply unfulfillment of the I-situation is mainly due to the difference of the position of the TF between the two sentences. For the explanation for the tendency of *was to*-sentences under consideration, see section 4.2.2. I am grateful to an anonymous *EL* reviewer for drawing my attention to this point.

¹⁶ Masao Okazaki (personal communication) brought this discussion to my attention.

sentences tend to be used to suggest unfulfillment of the I-situation in narrative as well as conversational texts is ascribed to the very characteristics of their temporal structure together with the grammar operative in narrative texts, especially the function of the two types of consciousness.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I have formulated the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences in order to resolve the following two questions from a systematic and unified point of view: (i) why *be going to*-sentences can easily go with FT adverbials, whereas *be about to*-sentences usually cannot without contexts rich enough to evoke the psychological closeness of the I-situation to S, and (ii) why in narrative texts *was going to*-sentences tend to be compatible with subsequent sentences which do not interrupt the realization of their I-situation, while *was about to*-sentences tend to indicate unfulfillment of the I-situation with the help of the semantic content of subsequent sentences.

It has been shown that not only the properties of the constituents of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences but also the difference of the combination pattern of their constituents contributes to the differences in temporal structure between the two sentences. The claim that the temporal structures of *be going to*- and *be about to*-sentences are different from each other provides an explanatory basis for the two above-mentioned issues in interaction with such factors as the "part for the whole" metonymy and the idiosyncratic nature and grammar of narrative texts.

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