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"Da" and "Dearu" in Japanese

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0. Introductory Remarks

"Da" and "dearu" are frequently heard or seen at the end of Japanese sentences as both spoken and written expressions. These two words, at first glance, appear to be synonyms (at least) to the native speakers of Japanese. The matter of the fact, however, indicates that it is neither simple nor clear to the native speakers of this language.

In this paper, I wish to show that "da" and "dearu" in Japanese are copulative verbs, that "dearu" is a derived variant of "da," and that there exist two fundamental differences between the two words; namely, morphological and semantic differences.

It is clear to all of us that "da" and "dearu" are morphologically different. However, what is not immediately clear to us is whether these two words are semantically different or not. For this reason, I will argue, first, that "da" expresses an "assertion" (or a "conclusion") of the speaker or the writer who tries to convey certain information to his or her audience (listeners or readers) in both the spoken and the written languages.

Second, I will argue that even though both "da" and "dearu" appear in the spoken and written languages, "da" is seen as either a spoken or a written expression, while "dearu" is more often seen as a written expression than it is heard as a spoken expression.

Third, I will argue that when "da" is used at the end of a sentence (without being attached extra elements such as sentence particles to it), it is very likely that "da" indicates that it is used by a male speaker in the spoken language, while "dearu," which appears as a written expression, does not indicate whether it is used by a male or a female writer. In other words, "dearu" is used by both
"Da" and "Dearu" in Japanese

sexes especially in the written language.

In addition, I will show that these differences just delineated above can be observed as well from a pragmatic point of view, which in turn provide further support for the conclusion I am trying to induce in this paper.

1. "Da"

It seems to be the case that there exists a controversy over how "da" is grammatically categorized among the linguists. However, "da" is categorized as a copulative verb in the grammatical framework advocated in this paper. 1) "Da," of course, conjugates as the following paradigm shows and has various grammatical forms. 2)

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<tr>
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<th>Non-Past</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Form</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>de(wa)-datta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Form</td>
<td>desu</td>
<td>de(wa)deshita</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Form</td>
<td>de(wa)-nai</td>
<td>arimasen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Form</td>
<td>deshita</td>
<td>de(wa)nakatta</td>
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As is clear from the above grammatical paradigm, "da" is a non-past, affirmative, informal form. Note also that "dearu" is not included in the above paradigm. The reason for this is due to the fact that "dearu" is a derived variant of "da," as has already been mentioned previously. In its due course, another inde-
pendent evidence that "dearu" is a derived variant of "da" will be shown. That is, it will be shown that "dearu" is basically used as a written expression in Japanese and it is, in general, true that written forms are considered to be derived from their spoken expressions.

"Dearu," of course, conjugates as the following grammatical paradigm shows and has its own grammatical forms.

**Copulative Verb ("Dearu")**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Form</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dearu</td>
<td>deari-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masu</td>
<td>nai</td>
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As the reader might have already recognized, "da" and "dearu" have exactly the same forms in the negatives in the two paradigms above. This fact indeed constitutes the most reliable and viable evidence that "dearu" is a derived variant of "da."

The grammatical terminology indicated in the above paradigms concerning "da" and "dearu" and their actual words will be shown to be very meaningful in our later discussion. To be more specific on this point, it will be concluded that the informal forms are basically used as written expressions and the formal forms, as spoken expressions.

Now, we are in a position to discuss various types of sentence patterns that
contain "da" at the end. As has already been mentioned above, "da" is heard or seen in both the spoken and the written languages. First, we will consider a case where "da" is uttered in the spoken language. Thus, observe the following example, first. (See the "List of Abbreviations" provided at the end of this paper for grammatical terminology employed in this and subsequent examples.)

(1) Sore wa ii kangae-da.

That TOP good idea be-INFO

That is a good idea.

Imagine that two people are talking and one of them said to the other, "sore wa ii kangae-da. (That is a good idea.)" At this point, it is quite reasonable for the native speakers of Japanese to assume that the sentence has been uttered by a male speaker. (It is, of course, necessary to supply more detailed information for the situation I am trying to delineate above. That is, we can imagine that the speaker of this sentence is probably a superior (or an equal) to the listener in social ranking, or that the situation that took place was informal, and so on.) On the other hand, if we assume that the speaker is a female, then it is quite reasonable for us to imagine that she would have uttered, "Sore wa ii kangae-ne." or "Sore wa ii kangae-da wa-ne," which apparently shows some characteristics that are unique to the female speakers. This in turn suggests that "da," as it appears by itself without any other extra elements such as sentence particles attached to it, is said to be a male speech style in the spoken language in Japanese.3)

In this connection, it should be noted that it may well be possible that "da" as shown in (1) above can be uttered by one of the female speakers if they are very intimate friends each other in the conversation. However, if both male and female speakers are present in the conversation, then the female speaker would have probably said, "Sore wa ii kangae-ne." or "Sore wa ii kangae-da wa-ne," both of which show some characteristics that are unique to the female speakers of Japanese.

It is concluded from the foregoing discussion that "da" in sentences like (1) above shows "roughness" that is unique to the male speakers of Japanese in the
spoken language and has been uttered by a male speaker.

Next, we will consider a case where the same type of sentence appears in written contexts. Thus, observe the following written passage.

(2) Saikin, kaimono wo suru toki, kaimonokyaku wa
Recently, go shopping when shoppers TOP
jibun no kaimono-bukuro wo jisan suru yoo-da.
self's shopping bags OBJ bring seem-be-INFO
Sore wa ii kangae-da. Shikashi, kaimono ni iku toki wa
That TOP good idea be-INFO However, go shopping when TOP
kanarazushimo ie kara iku to wa kagirana-i. Kaisha no kaeri mo
not necessarily house from go that case Office way home
areba, omoitsuki de iku koto mo aru no-da.
is thought by go sometimes be-INFO
Tsumari, kaimono-bukuro wo itsumo mochi-aruite-i-ru to wa
Namely, shopping bags OBJ always carry that TOP
kagiranai no-dearu.
not necessarily case

It seems (to be the case) that shoppers nowadays bring their own shopping bags with them when they go shopping. That is a good (swell) idea. However, it is not always the case that shoppers go shopping (directly) from their houses. They sometimes go shopping from their offices and some other time (they go shopping) just by thought (or by chance). That is, it is not always the case that they carry their shopping bags with them all the time.

It can be observed from the above written passage that it is not clear at all whether this use of "da" is a male or a female speech style. In fact, all we can say from the passage is that it is completely neutral as to whether "da" is a male or a female speech style. That is, we simply fail to observe that "da" expresses "roughness" that is unique to the male speech style. This in turn leads to the following conclusion: "Da" in the written language expresses an "assertion (or a
conclusion)" of the speaker and is neutral as to a gender difference.

Thus, "da" is said to have different semantic functions when we consider them in both the spoken and the written languages. We should like to summarize the foregoing discussion in the following fashion.

"Da":  
  a) indicates an "assertion (or a conclusion)" by the speaker.  
  b) indicates a male speech style in the spoken language.  
  c) indicates an "assertion (or a conclusion)" and a neutral speech style in gender in the written language.

Based on this conclusion, let us examine more examples that contain "da" in both the spoken and the written languages.

(3) (Aa), kyoo wa totemo ii tenki-da.  
(Wow) today TOP very good wheather-be-INFO  
(Wow), it's a beautiful day today.

(4) Sono kangae wa amarinimo chuushooteki-da.  
That idea TOP too abstract-be-INFO  
(Motto gutaikeki-ni hanashite-hoshi-i.)  
More concretely tell me want-you to-PRES  
That (your) idea is too abstract (to understand or to follow).  
(So, I want you to tell me (about it) more concretely.)

(5) Gakumon to wa nakanaka jikan ga kakaru mono-da.  
Learning TOP long time OBJ take indeed-be-INFO  
(The pursuit of) learning indeed takes a long time (to achieve).

(6) Subete wo sasae-rare-ru no wa ningen no ai-da.  
Everything OBJ support-POTEN CLEFT human's love-be-INFO  
It is human love that can support everything.
What "da" in all these sentences above is trying to convey is the speaker's or the writer's assertion. Let us take example (3), for instance, to see this is indeed the case. In (3), the speaker is simply trying to assert "Aa, kyoo wa ii tenki (a beautiful day, today)" by the use of "da." So it is quite reasonable to conclude that "da" is used by a speaker or a writer to convey his or her "assertion" to his or her audience in both the spoken and the written languages. It should also be noted here that "da" can, of course, be used by a speaker or a writer without requiring any audience. That is, the speaker or the writer can utter or write to himself (or herself) in a soliloquy. In such a case, it should be interpreted that "da" does not show any gender difference.

We are now in a position to consider "dearu" in the subsequent section.

2. "Dearu"

As has already been noted previously, it is quite reasonable to assume that "dearu" is a derived variant of "da." However, we begin to wonder why there exists such a thing as a variant. In order to answer this naive question, we would like to consider "da" and "dearu" used as a pair in the same type of sentence patterns below.

First, our focus of attention is directed to the following pairs of sentences.

(7) a. Ningen wa kangaeru ashi-da.
Man TOP thinking reed-be-INFO

*Man is a thinking reed.*

b. Ningen wa kangaeru ashi-dearu.
Man TOP thinking reed-be-INFO

*Man is a thinking reed.*

Whales TOP mammals be-INFO

*Whales are mammals.*
b. Kujira wa honyuudooobutsu dearu.
Whales TOP mammals be-INFO
Whales are mammals.

(9) a. Wagahai wa neko da.
I TOP cat-be-INFO
I am a cat.

b. Wagahai wa neko dearu.
I TOP cat-be-INFO
I am a cat.

(10) a. Kare wa ichinichi-juu nani mo shi-na-i.
He TOP all day long nothing do-NEG-PRES
Jinsei ni tsukarete-i-ru no-da.
Life in tired-PROG be-INFO
He does not do anything all day long. It's that he is tired in his life.

b. Kare wa ichinichi-juu nani mo shi-na-i.
He TOP all day long nothing do-NEG-PRES
Jinsei ni tsukarete-i-ru no-dearu.
Life in tired-PROG be-INFO
He does not do anything all day long. It's that he is tired in his life.

(11) a. Kanojo wa ima koi wo shite-i-ru.
She TOP now in love be-PROG-PRES
Jinsei ga tanoshii wake-da.
Life OBJ enjoy no wonder-be-INFO
She is in love (right) now. No wonder she is enjoying her life.

b. Kanojo wa ima koi wo shite-i-ru.
She TOP now in love PROG-PRES
Jinsei ga tanoshii wake dearu.
Life OBJ enjoy no wonder-be-INFO
She is in love (right) now. No wonder she is enjoying her life (as you might as well guess).

(12) a. Jinrui wa shinri to heiwa wo motomete ikiru beki-da.
Human beings TOP truth and peace OBJ seek and live should-be-
INFO

Human beings should live seeking for truth and peace.
b. Jinrui wa shinri to heiwa wo motomete ikiru beki-dearu.
Human beings TOP truth and peace OBJ seek and live should-be-
INFO

Human beings should live seeking for truth and peace.

Life in TOP suffer time SUBJ exist-seem-be-INFO
It seems to be the case that there are times when people suffer from their life.
b. Jinsei ni wa nayameru toki ga aru-yoo-dearu.
Life in TOP suffer time SUBJ exist-seem-be-INFO
It seems to be the case that there are times when people suffer from their life.

Be alive if good fortune SUBJ exist-should-be-INFO
As long as you are alive (in this world), there should be some good fortune.
b. Ikite-ireba, ii koto ga aru-hazu-dearu.
Be alive if good fortune SUBJ exist-should-be-INFO
As long as you are alive (in this world), there should be some good fortune.
We will now consider these pairs of sentences above step by step below. First, let us commence our discussion by examining the pair of sentences given in (7).

(7) a. Ningen wa kangaeru ashi-da.
Man TOP thinking reed-be-INFO
(I am asserting you that) \textit{man is a thinking reed}. (Assertion)

b. Ningen wa kangaeru ashi-dearu.
Man TOP thinking reed-be-INFO
(I am explaining to you that) \textit{man is a thinking reed}. (Explanation)

The pair of sentences is translated into Japanese from the famous expression created by the French scholar (Blaise Pascal; 1623-1662). In French, it should be written as "un roseau pensant," and in English, "Man is a thinking reed." It seems to be quite natural that these two expressions in Japanese appear as either spoken or written expressions. What is important about these two Japanese sentences here is the fact that the speaker or the writer is trying to convey the information assertively in (8)a, while the speaker or the writer is trying to convey the same information in such a way that he or she explains it to
his or her audience (listeners or readers) in (7)b. Incidentally, the one that is seen in our dictionaries or scholarly books is the one given in (7)b. This in turn means that "dearu" reveals the speaker's or the writer's intention of explaining the information he or she is trying to convey to his or her audience. (It should be noted here that when the "dearu" form is used in the spoken language, then it is very likely that the speaker is quoting it to his or her audience.)

Next, we will consider a case where the speaker or the writer tries to convey general information (as opposed to fixed expressions such as a quotation) to his or her audience. Thus, observe the following pair of sentences.

   Whales TOP mammals -be-INFO
   (I am asserting you that) *whales are mammals.* (Assertion)

b. Kujira wa honyuu-doobutsu -dearu.
   Whales TOP mammals -be-INFO
   (I am explaining to you that) *whales are mammals.* (Explanation)

It is highly likely that (8)b, rather than (8)a, would naturally come out of the native speaker of Japanese. The reason for this stems from the fact that when one tries to convey certain information which requires some kind of explanation, he or she is very likely to choose the "dearu" form, rather than the "da" form which conveys the speaker's or writer's assertion. It is not certainly the case that (8)a is not used at all. (8)a can also be used in such contexts where the speaker or the writer tries to convey the information assertively.

There is a famous piece of novel work entitled "Wagahai wa neko-dearu. (I am a cat)," which was written by Soseki Natsume (1867-1916).

(9) a. Wagahai wa neko -da.
   I TOP cat-be-INFO
   *I am a cat.* (Assertion)
(9a) sounds a bit strange to the native speakers of Japanese. This is partly due to the fact that we have changed a part of the established (or a fixed) expression, and partly due to the fact that the combination, "Wagahai wa (I [an old form] TOP)" and "neko (cat)," goes most naturally with "dearu" in cases like this (a title of novel), in which the writer tries to explain (or report) the proposition to his audience, rather than to assert it to his audience. However, it should also be noted that (9a) can, of course, be used if appropriate discourse contexts are supplied.

To sum up, (9)a signifies the writer's assertion, while (9)b signifies the writer's explanation of the proposition "wagahai wa neko."

Both "da" and "dearu" often follow "no" (nominalizer)," which is preceded by a noun (phrase) or a clause in Japanese. We will consider a pair of sentences that contains this "no" in the following.

(10) a. Kare wa ichinichi-juu nani mo shi-na-i.
He TOP all day long nothing do-NEG-PRES
Jinsei ni tsukarete-i-ru no-da.
Life in tired-PROG NOM-be-INFO

*He does not do anything all day long.*

(I am asserting you that) *he is tired in his life.* (Assertion)

b. Kare wa ichinichi-juu nani mo shi-na-i.
He TOP all day long nothing do-NEG-PRES
Jinsei ni tsukarete-i-ru no-dearu.
Life in tired-PROG NOM-be-INFO

*He does not do anything all day long.*

(I am explaining to you that) *he is tired in his life.* (Explanation)

(10)a should be interpreted in such a way that the speaker or the writer is
trying to inform the reason that "he is tired in his life" assertively to his or her audience, while (10)b should be interpreted in such a way that the writer is trying to explain the same information to his or her audience. In other words, there is a difference between the two words, "da" and "dearu": "Da" is used by the speaker or the writer when he or she tries to convey certain information to his or her audience assertively, while "dearu" is used by the writer when he or she feels necessary to explain certain information to his or her audience.

Let us examine another pair of sentences that contains "da" and "dearu," which are immediately preceded by "wake (no wonder)," which in turn is immediately preceded by a noun (phrase) or a clause, and see if the line of our argument is correct.

(11) a. Kanojo wa ima koi wo shite-i-ru.
   She TOP now in love PROG-PRES
   Jinsei ga tanoshii wake-da.
   Life OBJ enjoy no wonder-be-INFO
   She is in love (right) now. (I am asserting you that) no wonder she is enjoying her life (much). (Assertion)

b. Kanojo wa ima koi wo shite-i-ru.
   She TOP now in love PROG-PRES
   Jinsei ga tanoshii wake-dearu.
   Life OBJ enjoy no wonder-be-INFO
   She is in love (right) now. (I am explaining to you that) no wonder she is enjoying her life (much). (Explanation)

In this pair too, the speaker or the writer is trying to convey the undoubted reason, "no wonder she is enjoying her life much," to his or her audience assertively in (11)a, while the writer is trying to convey the same information in such a way that he or she explains it to his or her audience.

Immediately below, we will consider the two contrastive words in sentences that contain "beki (should)," "yoo (seem)," "hazu (should)," and "soo (look, or appear)," all of which are immediately followed by "da" and "dearu."
"Da" and "Dearu" in Japanese

(12) a. Jinrui wa shinri to heiwawo motomete ikiru beki-da.
Human beings TOP truth and peace OBJ seek and live should-be-INFO
(I am asserting you that) human beings should live seeking for truth and peace. (Assertion)
b. Jinrui wa shinri to heiwawo motomete ikiru beki-dearu.
Human beings TOP truth and peace OBJ seek and live should-be-INFO
(I am explaining to you that) human beings should live seeking for truth and peace. (Explanation)

"Beki" is roughly translated as "should" in English, which in turn is preceded by a clause. In (12)a, the sentence is interpreted in such a way that the speaker or the writer is asserting the information that precedes "da." While in (12)b, the sentence is interpreted in such a way that the writer is explaining the same information that precedes "dearu" to his or her audience.

The same line of argument holds viable with the pair of sentences below as well.

Life in TOP suffer time SUBJ exist-seem-be-INFO
(I am asserting you that) it seems to be the case that there are times when people suffer in their life time. (Assertion)
b. Jinsei ni wa nayameru toki ga aru-yoo-dearu.
Life in TOP suffer time SUBJ exist-seem-be-INFO
(I am explaining to you that) it seems to be the case that there are times when people suffer in their life time. (Explanation)

That is, the speaker or the writer is trying to convey the information before "da" by asserting it to his or her audience in (13)a. On the other hand, the speaker or the writer is trying to convey the same information in such a way that he or she explains it to his or her audience in (13)b.

Exactly the same line of argument is applicable to the following pair of sen-
tences that contains "hazu (should)" also.

Be alive if good fortune exist-should-be-INF
(I am asserting you that) there should be some good fortune, (only) if you are alive (in this world). (Assertion)
b. Ikite-ireba, ii koto ga aru-hazu-dearu.
Be alive if good fortune exist-should-be-INF
(I am explaining to you that) there should be some good fortune, (only) if you are alive (in this world). (Explanation)

In these example sentences too, "da" indicates the speaker's or the writer's assertion in (14)a, while "dearu" indicates the speaker's or the writer's intention of explaining the information to his or her audience in (14)b.

The final pair of sentences contains "soo (appear or look)." These example sentences also seem to point to the same conclusion.

(15) a. Jinrui no toosooshin wa shibaraku wa
Human beings competition TOP for a while EMPH
.tsuzuki-soo-da.
continue-seem-be-INFO
(I am asserting you that) it appears to be the case that the competitive mind (instinct) of human beings (will) continue for a while.
(Assertion)
b. Jinrui no toosooshin wa shibaraku wa
Human beings competition TOP for a while EMPH
.tsuzuki-soo-dearu.
continue-seem-be-INFO
(I am explaining to you that) it appears to be the case that the competitive mind (instinct) of human beings (will) continue for a while.
(Explanation)
In all these pairs of sentences adduced above (i.e. (7)-(15)), "da" seems to express the speaker's or the writer's intention of asserting the information he or she is trying to convey to his or her audience, while "dearu" seems to express the writer's intention of explaining the same information to his or her audience.

Now, we will examine a different type of sentence pattern that is seen or heard in mathematics or in logic below.

(16) A wa B. B wa C. Yueni A wa C-dearu.
A TOP B B TOP C Therefore A TOP C-be-INFO
A equals B. B equals C. Therefore, A equals C.

It seems to be the case that "dearu" sounds much more natural in this type of sentence pattern. This fact strongly suggests that the writer is trying to convey the information in such a way that he or she is explaining it to his or her audience. Let us see what happens if we replace "dearu" with "da" in such a sentence pattern.

(17) A wa B. B wa C. Yueni A wa C-da.
A TOP B B TOP C Therefore A TOP C-be-INFO
A equals B. B equals C. Therefore, A equals C.

It is noted that this sentence sounds a bit funny (too rough) to the native speakers of Japanese. What we can imagine from this sentence pattern is a sort of situation where the speaker or the writer is asserting this sentence to himself, or is angrily asserting it to his audience. This in turn means that "dearu" is much more appropriate and favored over to "da" in sentence patterns like this one.

It seems to be the case that the sentences sound a bit unnatural if we replace "dearu" with either "dearimasu" or "dearimashita." "Dearimasu" is a non-past, affirmative, formal form, and "dearimashita" is a past, affirmative, formal form of "dearu." Thus, observe the following examples.
These sentences would probably sound more natural as spoken expressions. However, it appears to be the case that these expressions in the spoken language are only uttered by certain groups of people (or older people) in limited situations. For instance, these patterns may be uttered when the speaker narrates old folklore or old stories to their children. For this reason, all of the following examples sound a bit unnatural.

(19) ʼNingen wa kangaeru ashi-dearimasu.  
(I am explaining to you that) man is a thinking reed.

(20) ʼKujira wa honyuu-doobutsu-dearimasu.  
(I am explaining to you that) whales are mammals.

(21) ʼWagahai wa neko-dearimasu.  
(I am explaining to you that) I am a cat.

(22) Kare wa ichinichiju nani mo shi-na-i.  
ʼJinsei ni tsukarete-i-ru no-dearimasu.  
(He does not do anything all day long.)  
(I am explaining to you that) he is tired in his life.

(23) Kanojo wa ima koi wo shite-i-ru.  
ʼJinsei ga tanoshii wake-dearimasu.  
(She is in love (right) now.) (I am explaining to you that it is) no wonder she is enjoying her life (much).

The unnaturalness associated with these sentences is, in large part, due to the pragmatic reasons. That is, it is necessary for these sentences to be put in
appropriate discourse contexts to make much sense. However, I should like to leave this task for those who are expertise in pragmatics and will not go into any further than this here.

There should not be any significant difference between the two types of sentences; namely, the above "dearimsu" sentences and the "dearu" sentences semantically, both of which express speaker's or writer's intention of explaining certain information. However, there exists a stylistic difference between the two forms. That is, while "dearu" is basically used in the written language, "dearimashita" or "dearimasu" is basically used in the spoken language.

We would like to cap this section by considering another interesting expression, "••demoari, ••demoaru (not only••, but also)" sentence pattern, below.

(24) a. Kanojo wa sensei-demoari, hahaoya-demoaru.
   She TOP teacher not only-be-CONJ mother but also-be-FO-PRES
   (I am explaining to you that) she is not only a teacher but also a mother.
   
b. Kanojo wa sensei-demoari, hahaoya-demoatt.
   She TOP teacher not only-be-CONJ mother but also-be-FO-PAST
   (I am explaining to you that) she was not only a teacher but also a mother.

I assume that the reader will agree that these sentences are somehow closely related to the following examples that consist of two independent sentences.

   She is a teacher. She is a mother
   
   She was a teacher. She was a mother.
If the reader agrees that this is indeed the case, then, either "dearu" or "deatta" are used by the writer with the intension of explaining the information before these words to his or her audience.

Our discussion in this section is summarized in the following fashion.

"Dearu": 
a) expresses the writer's intention of explaining the information he or she is trying to convey to his or her audience.  
b) is basically used as a written expression.  
c) is used by both male and female speakers in the written language.  
d) The formal forms such as "arimasu" and "arimashita" are used in the spoken language, but their use is limited to certain discourse contexts.

3. Concluding Remarks

We have considered some differences that exist between "da" and "dearu" in Japanese. At the very outset, we have pointed out that "dearu" is a derived variant of "da."

We have also noted that there are at least three fundamental differences between the two words. First, "da" is used by a speaker or a writer to convey certain information assertively to his or her audience in both the spoken and the written languages. Second, "da," as it is used in the spoken language, indicates a male speech style. Third, "da," as it is used in both the spoken and the written languages, indicates an assertion by the speaker or the writer who in turn can be either a male or a female.

On the other hand, "dearu" is used by a speaker or a writer when he or she tries to convey certain information to his or her audience in such a way that he or she explains it to his or her audience. However, "dearu" is more often seen as a written expression, rather than as a spoken expression, and it frequently appears in the written texts including theses, dissertations, essays and certain types of newspaper articles. In other words, "dearu" is seen as a "report-style" expression in various written texts in Japanese.
"Dearimasu" and "Dearimashita," (which are formal forms of "dearu" and "deatta" respectively) are also used. But these forms are basically used in certain limited discourse contexts in the spoken language.
Notes

1) The grammatical framework I am advocating in this paper differs significantly from that of "Kokubunpoo (Traditional Grammar of the National Language)." In the latter framework, "da" is categorized as "jodooshi (helping verb)," while it is categorized as a copulative verb in the present framework. See Takano (2000a) for more details.

2) In addition to the basic conjugated grammatical forms of the copulative verbs shown in the main text, there are several other important grammatical formatives, which are directly shown below.

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3) See Takano (2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001) for a more detailed discussion on this particular point.

4) See Takano (2003a, 2003b) for an interesting suggestion as to how a series of language expressions such as soliloquies, imaginations, language expressions in dreams, and metaphors are treated in a certain grammatical framework. See Saegusa (2001) also for an interesting discussion on "da" which is shared by both male and female speakers in soliloquies.
"Da" and "Dearu" in Japanese

List of Abbreviations

CLEFT = Cleft (sentence marker [no wa])
CONJ = Conjunctive (form [de], etc.)
EMPH = Emphatic (marker [wa])
FO = Formal (form)
INFO = Informal (form)
NOM = Nominalizer ([no])
OBJ = Object (marker [wo])
PAST = Past (form)
POTEN = Potential (form)
PRES = Present (form)
SUBJ = Subject (marker [ga])
TOP = Topic (marker [wa])

References

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Professor, International Student Center