著者

Saito Shinji, Oka Toshifusa, Hashimoto Manabu, Homma Shinsuke

タイトル

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Notes on Relativization in Japanese

Shinji Saito, Toshifusa Oka
Manabu Hashimoto, Shinsuke Homma

In this talk, we have argued for the existence of the relative clauses in Japanese that are derived by movement, as well as those derived by non-movement.

The relative clause (1b) lacks the sort of island effect observed in the scrambling case (1a), which is derived by the syntactic movement of the scrambled phrase:

(1) a. *sono-kuruma-o, [Taro-o ga [e yugohita kodomo]-o stained kid
shikaritsuket
scolded
Lit. "That car, Taro scolded the kid who stained."
b. [Taro-o ga [e yugohita kodomo]-o shikaritsuketa]
kuruma;
Lit. "the car which Taro scolded the kid who stained"

We attributed the lack of island effect in this relative clause to the availability of an empty resumptive pronoun \( \text{pro} \) in the gap position of the relative clause. We have assumed the following licensing condition on \( \text{pro} \):

(2) In Japanese, \( \text{pro} \) is licensed by abstract Case-assignment.

However, some sort of movement must be involved in those relative clauses where \( \text{pro} \) is not available in the relevant gap.

Firstly, the following semantic constraint on resumptive pronouns prevents \( \text{pro} \) from appearing in the gap position of the relative clauses that are headed by a quantified NP.

(3) An NP with the feature [+pronominal] cannot have a
quantified NP in A'-position as its antecedent.
(Chao and Sells (1983), Saito (1985))

Hence, a gap in such a relative clause must obligatorily be a trace left by movement. The island effect in the following sentence tells us that this is so. Consider:

(4) *[Hanako-ga [e, nagutta otoko]-o aishiteiru]dono-onna-mo,
guy ACC love
Jiroo-o nagutta
Lit."Any woman that Hanako loves the guy who hit hit Jiro."

Secondly, the relativization of (i) an adjunct and (ii) a topic phrase also must involve movement because neither a gap in an adjunct position nor the one in a topic position does not meet the licensing condition of pro (2). The island effect observed below shows that this is the case:

(5) *[Mary-ga [e, John-o sashita hito]-o aishiteiru] naifu
person love
Lit."the knife which Mary loves the person who stabbed
John with"

(6) a. Reagan-wa [Nancy-ga byooki-da]
TOP NOM be ill
Lit."As for Reagan, Nancy is ill in bed."
b. ??[Taroo-ga [[e, [Nancy-ga byooki-da]]-toyuu uwasa]-o
kiita Reagan
heard
Lit."Reagan, who Taro heard a rumor that Nancy is ill in bed"