

VP Ellipsis and Argument Ellipsis in Japanese

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on a syntactic operation called ellipsis, especially in Japanese. As for the Japanese elliptic phenomena within a sentence, there are mainly two different analyses: one is the VP ellipsis analysis suggested in Otani and Whitman (1991), which claims that Japanese has a syntactic operation of VP ellipsis just like English, and the other is the argument ellipsis analysis suggested in Oku (1998), which claims that there is a different type of ellipsis in Japanese. The former analysis is now fading out because of the emergence of the latter one. However, it is worthwhile to carefully investigate Japanese elliptic phenomena here again and make sure that VP ellipsis is actually unnecessary for the explanation of all Japanese examples. Since the most significant example that strongly denies the existence of VP ellipsis in Japanese is related to the impossibility of adjunct contained ellipsis in Japanese, examples relevant to it should be reexamined. As a result of a close look at examples, three crucial examples are shown in this thesis, each of which cannot be explained by the argument ellipsis analysis. It is also shown that those examples can be successfully explained by the VP ellipsis analysis. The goal of this thesis is to claim that Japanese has a syntactic operation of VP ellipsis as well as argument ellipsis by using these examples.

Sign Language and Language Instinct

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Abstract

We are born with the instinct to acquire language. The acquisition starts as early as a few months after birth. As for acquisition in infancy, the steps taken by children are similar regardless of the language he/she is learning. This kind of consistency can be found because we have Universal Grammar in our brains. However, when considering types of language other than spoken languages, to what extent does language instinct affect the acquisition?

When we look at spoken languages and sign languages, the major difference of the two is their output forms. Spoken languages use sounds to convey the information, while sign languages use gestures. Although these two differ in the element which seems to be very important in language acquisition, deaf signers follow the same steps as hearing speakers when acquiring sign languages. Similarities can also be seen in the acquisition of second language in both types of language.

By looking at sign language aphasia, we can see how each hemisphere of the brain works for languages. It may seem that spoken and sign languages are operated differently in the brain since the major element in each type of language is different. However, when we look at the patients with damage on the right or left hemisphere of the brain, we can see that sign languages are considered "language" just like spoken languages. Despite their output forms, spoken and sign languages are one and the same.

The Structures of Passivization and Raising

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the structures of passivization and raising constructions in English according to generative grammar developed by Noam Chomsky. This paper first considers the structure of passivization. It was shown that a passive sentence sometimes has a different meaning from its counterpart active sentence, that it is derived through the operations of merge and movement, and that the intimacy between a head and its complement affects the applicability of passivization. Next, I examine the structure of raising. I argue that the subject-raising construction is explained by the process of case filter and θ -criterion, and that in the object-raising construction, the verb of the main clause gives the objective case to the specifier of its complement. And then, I note the similarities between the structures of passivization and raising. We can subsume passivization and raising as one operation of movement. In addition, I notice that it is possible to explain the derivation of some kinds of *there* constructions and the progressive sentences with VP-internal subject hypothesis, EPP, and raising.

The Examination of ACD Comparing QR and Agr

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Abstract

This thesis deals with Antecedent-Contained Deletion (ACD). ACD is a kind of deletion including the identical verbs in both antecedent and subordinate clauses. (2) is an example.

(1) *Mary suspected the man who John did [_{VP} ϕ].

(2) Mary suspected everyone that John did [_{VP} ϕ].

Although (1) with a definite NP “the man” is a grammatically wrong sentence, (2) with quantifier “everyone” is correct. The problem of (1) is that if the VP *suspected the man who John did* [_{VP} ϕ] is copied to null VP, the copying is repeated eternally; the problem is called a regress problem. This thesis will inspect why only (2) can avoid the regress problem through comparing Quantifier Raising (QR) and Agreement (Agr).

QR is a theory proposed by May (1977). When the Quantifier Phrase (QP) moves to the front of the sentence in Logical Form, the regress problem is resolved because just VP *suspected t* is left in the antecedent. On the other hand, Hornstein (1995) argues against the QR analysis of ACD, and argues that the problem can be solved by applying the Agr hypothesis. He insists that the phenomenon such as QR occurs when QP is case-checked moving to Agr in LF. As a result, the regress problem is solved.

I investigated whether the theory of Hornstein (1995) is correct or not. The conclusion is that it is wrong since moving to Agr in LF also occurs in (1); it predicts that (1) is acceptable, but the prediction is not borne out.

Do, Be and Have

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Abstract

Do, Be, and Have are unique auxiliaries. They have semantic meanings when they are full verbs. However, they are also auxiliaries. When they are treated as auxiliaries, they occupy the position of I (Inflection). When they are in I position as an auxiliary, they do not have semantic meanings. So they are sometimes called 'irregular verb'.

Because of their properties, the use is difficult for Japanese who are beginners of English. I will try to clarify their properties since I believe that the clarification will lead to the advancement of English education in Japan.

Chapter I discusses *do*. I believe the unique feature of *do* is its various uses. For example, 'do-support', 'do-deletion', 'have-be raising', and so on. Chapter II discusses *be*. It is called a copula or an anomalous finite auxiliary. *Be* also has different features when it is a full verb or an auxiliary. Chapter III deals with *have*. The remarkable point of *have* is its dialectal differences. And Chapter IV discusses *have-be* raising. I also compare some English dialects like African American Vernacular English, AAVE, and focus on some ideas or opinions by linguists.