

(Formal/Syntax)

**More Than One, but At Most Two Thematic -wa in Japanese:
An Argument for the Bi-sentential Analysis of Right-Dislocation**

Ever since Kuno's (1973) insightful observation on the interpretation of the topic marker -wa in Japanese, it is accepted that the thematic (but not contrastive) topic -wa is allowed "one per sentence" and it must appear in the "sentence-initial/left-most peripheral position." Hence, even when there are multiple instances of -wa (1)–(2), only the left-most -wa (at LF) can be interpreted as the theme (Saito 2007).^{Fn.1, 2} I point out here the hitherto unnoticed fact that there can in fact be (at most) "two" instances of the thematic -wa when right-dislocation (RD) is involved (3)–(6). I argue that this new novel observation, together with Saito's (2007) cartographic approach to the thematic interpretation of -wa (Heycock 2006), lends further support for Kuno's (1978) bi-sentential analysis of RD (I) extended in Tanaka 2001 and others ([0]).

(I) [S₁ [SUB ... pro_{XP} ... V-T SFP]], [S₂ XP [SUB ... t_{XP} ... V-T SFP]]. (XP = RDed element, derived
→ SUB ... pro_{XP} ... V-T SFP, XP (= PF output) via scrambling.)

As depicted in (I), under the bi-sentential analysis, RD involves (a) generation of "two" independent sentences, (b) pro in the first sentence (S₁) corresponding to the "RDed" element in the second sentence (S₂) which is derived by scrambling, and then (c) followed by the (PF-)deletion of all but except the "scrambled/RDed" element in the S₂. Since RD structure under the bi-sentential analysis involves "two" sentential structures to begin with, there can potentially be "two" left-most peripheral/sentence-initial position in a given expression that can host the thematic interpretation. Assuming with Saito's (2007) cartographic analysis which postulates the "ThP (Thematic Phrase)" at the layered CP (Rizzi 1997) and covert/LF thematization process of the left-most wa-phrase to ThP-Spec (which is to be mapped to Information Structure; Heycock 2006), wa-marked SUB in the S₁ and RDed wa-marked OBJ in the S₂ in (3), (5), and (6) can (but need not) undergo thematization to their respective ThP, given that they are the left-most element in their sentence (at LF), as depicted in (II) (N.B. the same analysis holds for the left-most wa-marked OBJ and RDed wa-marked SUB in (4)).

(II) (a) "overt" RD via scrambling and (PF-)deletion in S₂ (to be mapped to LF and PF):

[S₁ [SUB-wa ... pro_{XP} V-T SFP]], [S₂ XP-wa [SUB-wa ... t_{XP} V-T SFP]].

(b) (LF) Thematization (to be mapped to Information Structure): (Thematized phrases are in a box.)

[S₁ [_{ThP} SUB-wa] [t_{SUB-wa} ... pro_{XP} V-T SFP]], [S₂ [_{ThP} XP-wa] [t_{XP-wa} SUB-wa ... t_{XP} V-T SFP]].

→ SUB-wa ... pro_{XP} V-T SFP, XP-wa (= PF output)

Note that the thematic element need not be the left-most element in a given sentence, and can be preceded by another XP(s) ((2), (5), and (6)). The (linearly left-most) RDed DO in S₂ in (5), for example, can be radically reconstructed, and hence the (linearly second) RDed IO-wa becomes the left-most element in S₂ at LF and is allowed to undergo thematization. This parallels with Saito's analysis for (2), where the scrambled OBJ/DO-wa can be radically reconstructed and makes possible the (linearly second) SUB-wa to undergo thematization (see Fn.2). Note crucially that when there are two (or more) RDed wa-phrases (6), only one of them can be interpreted as the theme, in line with "one theme per sentence" restriction.

Note that under the bi-sentential analysis of RD, the "two theme" interpretation made available by RD does not undermine neither Kuno's (1973) "one theme per sentence" restriction nor "sentence-initial/left-most peripheral" condition. In fact, the "two theme" interpretation involving RD is what is expected and allowed. In addition, the thematic interpretation of (wa-marked) RDed element is in consonant with Kuno's (1978) observation that RDed position can be an old/given information.

Note also that the "two theme" interpretation made available by RD raises a (potential) problem for the remnant movement analysis of RD (Fukutomi 2008), which involves a single sentence with the scrambling of "RDed" element followed by a remnant movement of all but except the "RDed" element.

¹ (i) in (1)–(2) is ruled out by a unique theme ("one theme per sentence") restriction.

² I follow Saito's (2007) argument that (ii) in (2) is made available via the radical reconstruction of scrambled OBJ-wa (Saito 1989), followed by the thematization of SUB-wa, while (iii) is made available via A-scrambling of OBJ-wa (without radical reconstruction), followed by the thematization of OBJ-wa.

Data: (“LP” (left-most periphery) here should be understood as “phonologically” in a given sentence.) (1)–(4)’s interpretations. (iv)/two contrastive topic reading is always available but put aside here.

- (i) “two theme”: ‘Speaking of Ken and speaking of pizza, he ate it.’
(ii) SUB-theme: ‘Speaking of Ken, he ate pizza.’ N.B. (i) is not possible under Kuno’s (1973)
(iii) OBJ-theme: ‘Speaking of Ken, he ate it.’ “one theme per sentence” restriction.
(iv) no theme: ‘Ken (but not Marie) ate pizza (but not hot dog).’ = two contrastive topic reading
- (1) SUB-*wa*-OBJ-*wa*-V: SUB-*wa* at LP, OBJ-*wa* at non-LP (2-way ambiguous) (Saito 2007)
Ken-*wa* piza-*wa* tabeta (yo). a. SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
K.-TOP pizza-TOP ate (SFP) b. OBJ-*wa* (i. *theme but ii. ^{OK}contrastive)
(i) *a-i.+b-i., (ii) ^{OK}a-i.+b-ii., (iii) *a-ii.+b-i. ((i)=“two theme” impossible)
- (2) OBJ-*wa*-SUB-*wa*-V: SUB-*wa* at non-LP, scrambled OBJ-*wa* at LP (3-way ambiguous) (Saito 2007)
piza-*wa*_i Ken-*wa* t_i tabeta (yo). a. SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
pizza-TOP K.-TOP ate (SFP) b. OBJ-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
(i) *a-i.+b-i., (ii) ^{OK}a-i.+b-ii., (iii) ^{OK}a-ii.+b-i. ((i)=“two theme” impossible)
- (3) SUB-*wa*-V, OBJ-*wa*: SUB-*wa* at LP, RDed OBJ-*wa* at LP (4-way ambiguous) See also (5).
Ken-*wa* pro_{RD} tabeta yo, piza-*wa*_{RD}. a. SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
K.-TOP ate SFP pizza-TOP b. RDed OBJ-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
(i) ^{OK}a-i.+b-i._{RD}, (ii) ^{OK}a-i.+b-ii._{RD}, (iii) ^{OK}a-ii.+b-i._{RD} ((i)=“two theme” possible with RD)
- (4) OBJ-*wa*-V, SUB-*wa*: RDed SUB-*wa* at LP, OBJ-*wa* at LP (4-way ambiguous)
pro_{RD} piza-*wa* tabeta yo, Ken-*wa*_{RD}. a. RDed SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
pizza-TOP ate SFP K.-TOP b. OBJ-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
(i) ^{OK}a-i._{RD}+b-i., (ii) ^{OK}a-i._{RD}+b-ii., (iii) ^{OK}a-ii.+b-i._{RD} ((i)=“two theme” possible with RD)
- (5) SUB-*wa*-V, DO-IO-*wa*: SUB-*wa* at LP, RDed IO-*wa* at non-LP preceded by RDed DO cf. (2), (3).
(?)Ken-*wa* pro_{RDj} pro_{RDi} kaeshieta yo, CD-*o*_{RDi} Naomi-ni-*wa*_{RDj}. ‘Ken returned CD to Naomi.’
K.-TOP returned SFP CD-ACC N.-DAT-TOP
a. SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive) b. RDed IO-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
(i) ^{OK}a-i.+b-i._{RD}, (ii) ^{OK}a-i.+b-ii._{RD}, (iii) ^{OK}a-ii.+b-i._{RD} ((i)=“two theme” possible with RD)
- (5’) (N.B. the same pattern holds for IO-*wa* at LP, RDed SUB-*wa* at non-LP preceded by RDed DO.)
(?)pro_{RDk} Naomi-ni-*wa* pro_{RDi} kaeshieta yo, CD-*o*_{RDi} Ken-*wa*_{RDk}.
a. RDed SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive) b. IO-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
(i) ^{OK}a-i._{RD}+b-i., (ii) ^{OK}a-i._{RD}+b-ii., (iii) ^{OK}a-ii._{RD}+b-i. ((i)=“two theme” possible with RD)
- (6) SUB-*wa*-V, DO-*wa*-IO-*wa*: SUB-*wa* at LP, RDed IO-*wa* at non-LP preceded by RDed DO-*wa*
(?)Ken-*wa* pro_{RDj} pro_{RDi} kaeshieta yo, CD-*wa*_{RDi} Naomi-ni-*wa*_{RDj}. ‘Ken returned CD to Naomi.’
K.-TOP returned SFP CD-TOP N.-DAT-TOP cf. (5), DO without -*wa*.
a. SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive) b. RDed IO-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
c. RDed DO-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive) [Only the relevant interpretations are provided here.]
(i)a. *a-i.+b-i._{RD}+c-i._{RD}, (i)a’. *a-ii.+b-i._{RD}+c-i._{RD}, ((i)a/a’=“three/two theme” impossible)
(i)b. ^{OK}a-i.+b-i._{RD}+c-ii._{RD}, (i)b’. ^{OK}a-i.+b-ii._{RD}+c-i._{RD} ((i)b/b’=“two theme” possible with RD)
- (6’) (N.B. the same pattern holds for DO-*wa* at LP, RDed SUB-*wa* at non-LP preceded by RDed IO-*wa*.)
(?)pro_{RDk} pro_{RDj} CD-*wa* kaeshieta yo, Naomi-ni-*wa*_{RDj} Ken-*wa*_{RDk}.
a. RDed SUB-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive) b. RDed IO-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive)
c. DO-*wa* (i. theme or ii. contrastive) [Only the relevant interpretations are provided here.]
(i)a. *c-i.+a-i._{RD}+b-i._{RD}, (i)a’. *c-ii.+a-i._{RD}+b-i._{RD}, ((i)a/a’=“three/two theme” impossible)
(i)b. ^{OK}c-i.+a-i._{RD}+b-ii._{RD}, (i)b’. ^{OK}c-i.+a-ii._{RD}+b-i._{RD} ((i)b/b’=“two theme” possible with RD)

References: [K] (a) Kuno, S. 1973. *The Structure of the Japanese Language*. MIT Press. (b) Kuno, S. 1978. *Danwa-no Bumpo* [Grammar of Discourse]. Taishukan. [S] Saito, M. 2007/in press. Optional A-scrambling. *JK* 16. [0] (a) Abe, J. 2004. On Directionality of Movement: A Case of Japanese RD. *TELS* 58, 54-61. (b) Kato, T. 2007. On the Nature of LBC: Syntactic or Phonological? *SICOGG* 9, 39-51. (c) Sugisaki, K. 2006. Early Acquisition of Basic Word Order: New Evidence from Japanese. *BUCLD* 29, 582-591. (d) Tanaka, T. 2001. RD as scrambling. *Journal of Linguistics* 37, 551-579. [F] Fukutomi, Y. 2008. RD in Japanese: A Preliminary Study. *DGfs* 30.