

The Semantics of *sugi-* ‘exceed’ in Japanese

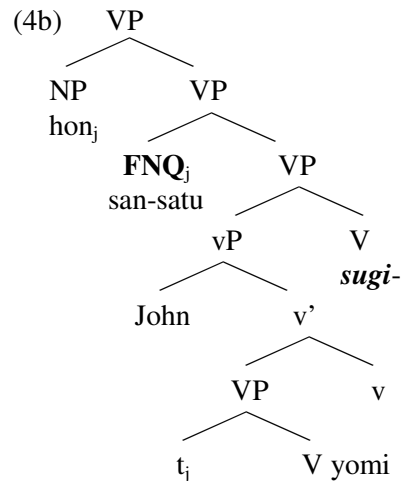
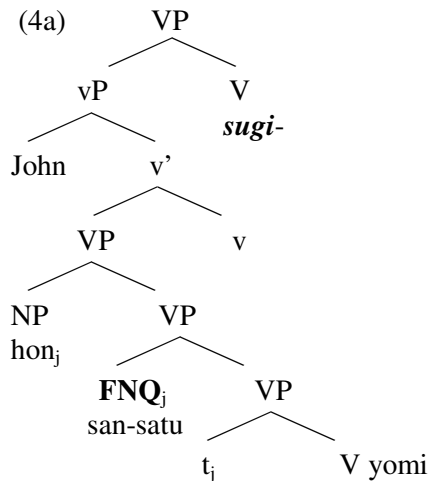
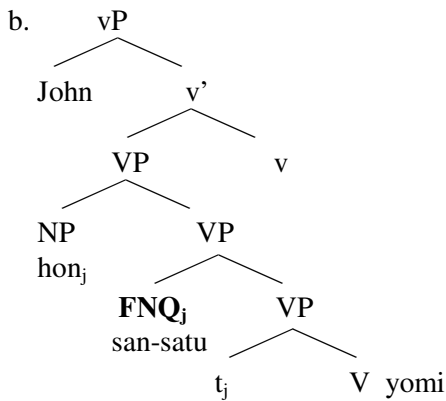
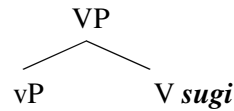
Introduction: Japanese has a verb *sugi-* ‘exceed’. When it combines with *yomi* ‘read’ in (1), the sentence is ambiguous between two readings: (i) ‘There are 3 books that John read more than he should have’; (ii) ‘John read more than he should have by 3 books’ (Nakanishi 2004). The floating numeral quantifier (FNQ) *san-satu* ‘3 CL’ in the second reading is interpreted as a differential, which describes the difference between the actual reading and the required reading. I will argue that the ambiguity in (1) is a matter of the relative scope of *sugi* and the FNQ.

(1) John-ga [hon]-o kinoo **san-satu** yomi-*sugi*-ta
 John- NOM book- ACC yesterday 3-CL read-exceed- PAST

Syntactic Analysis: (i) It has been argued that syntactically FNQ like *san-satu* in (2a) are base generated VP adverbs, which are c-commanded by their host NP. (ex.2a) (Doetjes 1997, Kobuchi-Philip 2003, 2007)

(ii) *sugi-* is a raising verb which takes a sentential complement – a vP and creates a VP (ex.3) (Koizumi 1998). (i) and (ii) predict that there are two possible structures for (1), each of which has a different scope for FNQ and *sugi-* (ex.4). In (4a), the FNQ *san-satu* is adjoined to the VP below *sugi-*; in (4b) it is adjoined to the VP above *sugi-*. I will show that (4a) and (4b) are associated with the two readings of (1).

(2) a. John-ga hon-o **san-satu** yomi-ta. (3)
 John-nom book-acc 3-CL read-past
 ‘John read 3 books.’



Semantic Analysis: Either reading of (1) entails that John failed to meet some reading requirement. They can be paraphrased in terms of counterfactual conditionals. The first reading of (1) says: ‘if John had met the reading requirement, he would have done less reading of the three books.’ The second reading says: ‘if John had met the reading requirement, he would have read three books less.’ Following work on

