

Argument Ellipsis in Japanese Right Dislocation

Synopsis: Despite of its strict head-final SOV character, Japanese has a construction where some phrase appears in the sentence-final position. This construction is called Japanese Right Dislocation (JRD). As shown in (1), both subjects and objects can appear in JRD (e indicates a gap and the particle *-yo* is attached to make the sentence more natural).

- (1) a. e_i sono hon-o yonda-yo, Taroo-ga_i b. Taroo-ga e_i yonda-yo, sono hon-o_i
 that book-Acc read-Prt Taroo-Nom Taroo-Nom read-Prt that book-Acc
 ‘(lit.) e_i read that book, Taroo,’ ‘(lit.) Taroo read e_i , that book,’

There have been proposed three types of approaches to JRD. They are schematically summarized in (2).

- (2) a. $[[_{YP} \dots \overset{\uparrow}{t_i} \dots V] XP_i]$ b. $[XP_i [_{YP} \dots \overset{\uparrow}{t_i} \dots V]] \rightarrow [[_{YP} \dots \overset{\uparrow}{t_i} \dots V], [XP_i t_i]]$ c. $[_{YP} \dots pro_i \dots V], [_{XP_i} [_{YP} \dots \overset{\uparrow}{t_i} \dots V]]$

Under the first type of analysis in (2a), the dislocated phrase XP directly undergoes rightward movement (cf. Haraguchi 1973, Simon 1989). The second type in (2b) claims that the XP undergoes leftward movement first and then remnant movement of YP takes place (cf. Endo 1996, Murayama 1999, and Kurogi 2007). The third type in (2c) argues that JRD consists of two clauses, where the second clause is a repetition of the first one, and the gap in JRD is a phonetically null pronoun *pro*. The surface XP-final order is derived by leftward movement of XP within the second clause followed by deletion of YP (cf. Abe 1999, Tanaka 2001; see also Kuno 1978).

In this paper, we first point out that all these three approaches fail to capture the behavior of JRD with Negative Polarity Items (NPI) and quantifiers. To solve this problem, we propose a modification of the third approach. Specifically, we propose that the gaps in JRD are created via ellipsis, in particular, via the ellipsis process called *Argument Ellipsis* (cf. Oku 1998, Kim 1999 and Saito 2004). To substantiate our proposal, we provide a novel observation that NPIs can be subject to Argument Ellipsis.

Then, we discuss the implications of the proposed analysis. We argue that our analysis provides a novel test ground for analyses which assumes Argument Ellipsis. Specifically, we show that our analysis supports i) Takahashi’s (2008) argument that null elements can undergo scrambling, and ii) Saito’s (2007) hypothesis that Argument Ellipsis and radical *pro*-drop arise from the same source.

Problems of the previous approaches: Tanaka (2001) observes that the gap in JRD can be overtly realized as a full-fledged phrase *LGB-o* or as a pronoun *sore-o* ‘it’, as in (3), though movements in Japanese generally resists resumption, as in (4) (cf. Saito 1985).

- (3) Taroo-ga {LGB-o/sore-o/ e_i } yonda-yo, LGB-o_i
 Taroo-Nom LGB-Acc/it-Acc read-Prt LGB-Acc ‘(lit.) Taroo read LGB/it/ e_i , LGB_i’
 (4) LGB-o_i Taroo-ga {*LGB-o/*sore-o/ $^{ok}t_i$ } yonda-yo
 LGB-Acc Taroo-Nom LGB-Acc/it-Acc read-Prt ‘(lit.) LGB_i, Taroo read LGB/it/ t_i ’

Thus, it is difficult for the two approaches in (2a-b) to capture this difference, because they crucially assume that the dislocated phrase itself undergoes movement. On the other hand, the gap in JRD is *pro* under the third approach in (2c), which we call the “clause-repetition + deletion” approach, so that it is not surprising if it can be realized overtly.

However, this approach faces a problem under close scrutiny. In Japanese, a phrase is turned into an NPI if the suffix *-sika* ‘only’ is attached to it, and as a NPI, it requires negation to appear, as shown in (5a-b).

- (5) a. Taroo-ga LGB-o yonda b. Taroo-ga LGB-**sika** {*yonda/ ^{ok}yom -**anak-atta**}
 Taroo-Nom LGB-Acc read ‘Taroo read LGB’ Taroo-ga LGB-only read/read-Neg-Past ‘Taroo read only LGB’

With this in mind, let us consider the examples in (6).

- (6) Taroo-ga e_i {*yonda-yo/ ^{ok}yom -**anak-atta-yo**}, LGB-**sika**_i
 Taroo-Nom read-Prt/read-Neg-Past-Prt LGB-only ‘(lit.) Taroo read e_i , only LGB_i’

(6) indicates that *-sika* NPIs can appear in JRD (cf. Kuno 1978, Murayama 1999), and that negation is required even if an NPI appears in the post-verbal position. Then, the clause-repetition + deletion approach predicts that the gap in (6a) can be overtly realized, on a par with (3). This prediction, however, is not fully borne out:

- (7) Taroo-ga { ok LGB-**sika**/*sore-o}_i yom-**anak-atta-yo**, LGB-**sika**_i
 Taroo-Nom LGB-only/it-Acc read-Neg-Past-Prt LGB-only ‘(lit.) Taroo read only LGB/it_i, only LGB_i’

As in (7), the gap cannot be realized as a pronoun, while the full-fledged NPI can fill the gap. The similar pattern can be found in JRD with quantifiers like *nanika* ‘something’, as in (8).

- (8) Taroo-ga { ok **nanika-o**/*sore-o/ e_i } yonda-yo, **nanika-o**_i
 Taroo-Nom something-Acc/it-Acc read-Prt something-Acc ‘(lit.) Taroo read something/it/ e_i , something,’

The pattern observed so far is that the gap can be realized as a full-fledged expression, but not as a pronoun in JRD with an NPI/quantifier. The situation is problematic for not only the clause-repetition + deletion approach but also the other two approaches: For the former, it is not clear why the gap cannot be realized as an overt pronoun if the gap is null pronoun *pro*; for the latter, it is mysterious why the gap can be realized as a full-fledged phrase if the gap is a trace only in JRD.

Proposal: We propose a modification of the clause-repetition + deletion approach. In particular, we propose that the gap in JRD can be created via Argument Ellipsis. Argument Ellipsis is proposed to explain Otani & Whitman’s (1991) observation regarding the ambiguity of sentences like (9a); the null object in the second clause allows not only the strict-identity reading in which what Hanako read is Taroo’s book, but also the sloppy-identity reading in which what Hanako read is *Hanako’s* book. This is not expected if the null object is simply *pro*, because if an overt pronoun replaces *e* in (9a), the sloppy-identity reading disappears.

- (9) a. Taroo-wa zibun-no hon-o yonda; Hanako-mo e yonda
 Taroo-Top self-Gen book-Acc read Hanako-also read ‘(lit.) Taroo read his book; Hanako also read e ’
 b. Taroo-wa zibun-no hon-o yonda; Hanako-mo zibun-no hon-o yonda

Under the Argument Ellipsis analysis, the null object is in fact a full-fledged phrase, and it undergoes ellipsis as in (9b) (elements elided by Argument Ellipsis are indicated as abc). This explains why (9a) has the sloppy-identity reading; *zibun* ‘self’ in the second clause,

which is eventually made covert by Argument Ellipsis, can take *Hanako* as its antecedent, independent of *zibun* in the first clause.

Adopting this idea, we claim that a JRD sentence with an NPI/quantifier has the following structure in (10), where the NPI/quantifier in the first clause is elided by Argument Ellipsis, and the XP in the second clause is deleted under identity with that in the first clause, giving rise to the surface linear order of JRD. Assuming that Argument Ellipsis is optional, this analysis explains the observation that the gap can be realized as a full-fledged phrase, but not as an overt pronoun.

(10) [NPI/quantifier_i [_{XP} ... t_i ... V]], [NPI/quantifier_j [_{XP} ... t_j ... V]]

Note that this analysis presupposes that an NPI/quantifier can be subject to Argument Ellipsis. The fact that the null object in (11) allows sloppy-identity reading suggests that NPIs are subject to Argument Ellipsis.

(11) Taroo-wa zibun-no hon-sika yom-anai; Hanako-mo *e* yom-anai
Taroo-Top self-Gen book-only read-Neg Hanako-also read-Neg '(lit.) Taroo reads only his book; Hanako reads *e*'

As for quantifiers, Takahashi (2008) observes that quantifiers are subject to Argument Ellipsis, on an independent ground. (12) has a reading where the set of teachers respected by Taroo is different from the set of teachers respected by Hanako:

(12) Taroo-ga taitei-no sensei-o sonkeisiteiru; Hanako-mo *e* sonkeisiteiru
Taroo-Nom most-Gen teachers-Acc respects Hanako-also respects
'(lit.) Taroo respects most teachers; Hanako also respects *e*'

He points out that this is not expected if *e* is merely *pro*, and claims that quantifiers can be elided via Argument Ellipsis.

Implications: We argue that our analysis provides a novel test ground for analyses adopting Argument Ellipsis. In particular, we examine two recent proposals on Argument Ellipsis, and argue for them. The first one is Takahashi's (2008) argument that null elements can undergo scrambling. He observes that if the overt object quantifier takes wide scope over the quantifier subject in the first clause, the null object in the second clause can also take wide scope, as shown in (13a). This is unexpected if the null object quantifier stays in situ, because in Japanese the object cannot take wide scope over the subject without scrambling (cf. Kuroda 1971, Hoji 1985).

(13) a. Taitei-no sensei-o_i zyosi-no dareka-ga t_i sonkeisiteiru; Dansi-no dareka-mo *e* sonkeisiteiru
most-Gen teacher-Acc girl-Gen someone-Nom respects boys-Gen someone-also respects
'(lit.) Most teachers_i, some girl respects t_i ; some boys respects *e*'
b. Taitei-no sensei-o_i; zyosi-no dareka-ga t_i sonkeisiteiru; Taitei-no sensei-o_j; dansi-no dareka-mo t_j sonkeisiteiru

He then proposes that the object quantifier in the second clause undergoes Argument Ellipsis in the scrambled position, as in (13b), and this ensures the scope ambiguity of (13). Then, let us turn to JRD. Abe (1999) observes that JRD induces scope ambiguity, as in (14).

(14) Sannin-no otoko-ga e_i tazuneta-yo, hutari-no onna-o_i
three-Gen men-Nom visited-Prt two-Gen women-Acc '(lit.) Three men visited e_i , two women_i (3>2, 2>3)'

Under the proposed analysis, (14) has the structure in (15), where the object quantifier undergoes Argument Ellipsis in the scrambled position. Note that if the elided object quantifier in the first clause stays in situ, the first clause can have only the 3>2 reading. Then, even though the 2>3 reading is available in the second clause due to scrambling of the object, these two readings contradict with each other. Hence, it is predicted that (14) has only the 3>2 reading, contrary to the fact.

(15) [hutari-no onna-o_i [sannin-no otoko-ga t_i tazuneta-yo]], [hutari-no onna-o_j [sannin-no otoko-ga t_j tazuneta-yo]]

Thus, the proposed analysis provides a support for Takahashi's argument on a similar but significantly different ground.

Furthermore, the proposed analysis argues for Saito's (2007) hypothesis that Argument Ellipsis and radical *pro*-drop arise from the same source. His argument is partly based on the fact that the distribution of the elements elided by Argument Ellipsis overlaps with that of *pro*. Saito (1985) observes that relative clauses with quasi-adjuncts like locative/temporal expressions does not exhibit Subjacency effects, like with those with arguments (cf. Kuno 1973), while those with true adjuncts like manner/reason expressions do, as in (16). Based on these observations, Murasugi (1991) concludes that quasi-adjuncts are arguments of the event predicate, so that they can make use of *pro*, whereas true adjuncts are not (cf. Perlmutter 1972).

(16) [[[[e_i e_j mensetu-o uketa] gakusei_i-ga minna ukatta] {^{ok}kyoositu/^{ok}hi/*hoo-hoo/*riyuu}]]
interview-Acc had students-Nom all passed classroom/day/method/reason
'(lit.) the classroom/day/method/reason_j [that all the students_i [who_i had an interview e_j] passed the exam]'

Saito (2007) observes that this difference between these two types of adjuncts is also found in Argument Ellipsis.

(17) Taroo-wa zibun-no {ie-de/tanzyoobi-ni/yarikata-de/misu-de} kubi-ni-natta; Hanako-mo *e* kubi-ni-natta
Taroo-Top self-Gen house-at/birthday-on/method-by/miss-by was.fired Hanako-also was.fired
'(lit.) Taroo was fired at his house/on his birthday/by his method/because of his miss; Hanako was also fired *e*'

In (17), *e* allows sloppy-identity readings only if it is taken to correspond to quasi-adjuncts. Then, our analysis predicts that quasi-adjunct NPIs can appear in JRD but pure adjunct NPIs cannot. This prediction is in fact borne out, as shown in (18).

(18) Taroo-ga e_i kubi-ni-nar-anaka-ta-yo, kare-no {^{ok}ie-de-sika/^{ok}tanzyoobi-ni-sika/*yarikata-de-sika/*misu-de-sika}_i;
Taroo-Nom was.fired-Neg-Past-Prt his house-at-only/birthday-only/method-by-only/miss-by-only
'Taroo was fired e_i , only {at his house/on his birthday/by his method/because of his miss}_i'

Thus, the proposed analysis argues for Saito's (2007) hypothesis.

Selected references: Abe, J. (1999) On Directionality of Movement: A Case of Japanese Right-dislocation, ms., Nagoya U. | Kuno, S. (1978) *Danwa-no Bunpoo [Grammar of Discourse]*. | Oku, S. (1998) *A Theory of Selection and Reconstruction in the Minimalist Program*, Ph.D. diss., U. of Connecticut. | Saito, M. (2004) Ellipsis and Pronominal Reference in Japanese Clefts, *Studies in Modern Grammar* 36. | Saito, M. (2007) Notes on East Asian Argument Ellipsis, *Language Research* 43. | Takahashi, D. (2008) Quantificational Null Objects and Argument Ellipsis, *LI* 39. | Tanaka, H. (2001) Right-dislocation as Scrambling, *Journal of Linguistics* 37.