

# Evidence against Movement in Japanese Relative Clauses\*

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## 1. Background

Many researchers (Hoji (1985), Murasugi (1991, 2000), Matsumoto (1997)) have claimed that Japanese has no movement-derived relative clauses.

- Evidence for this conclusion? Two types:
  1. There are things Japanese relatives can do that can't be due to movement (evidence for the existence of non-movement derived relatives)
  2. There are things movement-derived relatives can do but Japanese relatives can't (evidence against the existence of movement-derived relatives)
- Lots of positive evidence for the existence of non-movement derived relatives in Japanese in the literature
- Not much evidence against the availability of a movement analysis

## Goal

- Present new evidence showing that Japanese does not have the option of movement-derived (=Head Raising) relative clauses

## 2. Previous Evidence

Existence of Non-Movement Relatives

- Gapless Relatives
  - (1) a. [syuusyoku-ga muzukasii] buturigaku (Kuno (1973), via Murasugi (2000))  
getting-job-NOM hard-is physics  
'physics, which is hard to get a job in'

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b. [genki-ga deru] kuruma (Matsumoto (1997))  
 energy-NOM comes-out car  
 ‘the car which, when you drive it, you come to feel energetic’  
 (*Lit.* ‘(the) car (that) energy arises’)

c. [tuti-o koneta] katamari (Murasugi (2000))  
 soil-ACC softened-and-mixed clod  
 ‘the clod that was produced by softening and mixing soil’  
 (*Lit.* ‘(the) clod (that) one softened and mixed soil’)

- Island-violating Relatives

(2) [[dasita tegami-ga] todokanakatta] hito (Kuno 1973)  
 sent letter-NOM arrive-NEG-PAST person  
 ‘the person<sub>i</sub> who the letter  $e_i$  sent didn’t arrive’

### Movement-derived Relatives?

Evidence in the literature for the non-existence of movement-derived relatives is not as convincing as the evidence for the existence of non-movement-derived relatives:

### Adjuncts

Related adjunct phrases receive a highest-clause interpretation only:

(3) [Mary-ga [John-ga  $e_i$  kaetta to] omotteiru] riyuu<sub>i</sub> (Murasugi (2000))  
 Mary-NOM John-NOM left C think-PROG reason  
 ‘the reason Mary thinks that John left’  
 = the reason  $x$  s.t. Mary has reason  $x$  for thinking John left  
 ≠ the reason  $x$  s.t. Mary thinks that John had reason  $x$  for leaving

(4) [Mary-ga [John-ga  $e_i$  kaetta to] omotta] hi  
 Mary-NOM John-NOM left C thought day  
 = the day  $x$  s.t. Mary thought on day  $x$  that John left  
 ≠ the day  $x$  s.t. Mary thought that John left on day  $x$

These examples show that Japanese doesn’t have movement of adjunct phrases; they don’t say anything about arguments. Maybe only argument NPs can raise in Japanese.

### Arguments

Evidence from reflexive binding? (Hoji 1985)

(5) a. [the picture of himself]<sub>i</sub> [that John<sub>i</sub> likes  $t_j$  best]  
 b. John<sub>i</sub> likes the picture of himself<sub>i</sub>

- (6) a. \*[John<sub>i</sub>-ga e<sub>j</sub> taipusita] zibun<sub>i</sub>-no ronbun<sub>j</sub>  
 John-NOM typed self-GEN essay  
 ‘self<sub>i</sub>’s essay that John<sub>i</sub> typed’
- b. John<sub>i</sub>-ga zibun<sub>i</sub>-no ronbun-o taipusita  
 John-NOM self-GEN essay-ACC typed  
 ‘John<sub>i</sub> typed self<sub>i</sub>’s essay’

Problem: all evidence involving “picture of” NPs should be treated with caution; moreover, Japanese *zibun* is NOT equivalent to English himself/myself/etc. Japanese *zibun* is known to exhibit many properties unlike English reflexives.

Conclusion: Hoji’s evidence is suggestive, but not conclusive

### 3. New evidence against movement of arguments in Japanese relatives

The phrase in (7) is ambiguous:

- (7) The first book [that John said [that Tolstoy wrote]] (Bhatt 2002)

- a. *High Reading*: the  $\lambda x$  first [book,  $x$ ] [John said that Tolstoy had written  $x$ ]  
 = the first book about which John said that Tolstoy had written it
- b. *Low Reading*: the  $\lambda x$  [John said that [first [Tolstoy had written [book,  $x$ ]]]]  
 = the  $x$  s.t. John said the first book Tolstoy had written was  $x$

Bhatt (2002) argues that the ambiguity in (7) can only be derived under a Head-Raising analysis. Bhatt claims that if the Head-Raising analysis were unavailable, only the high reading would be possible.

The corresponding phrase in Japanese only gets the high reading:

- (8) [[Mishima-ga kaita to] sensei-ga osietekureta] saisho-no hon  
 Mishima-NOM wrote C teacher-NOM taught first-GEN book  
 ‘the first book that the teacher told us that Mishima wrote’
- a. *High Reading*: the  $\lambda x$  first [book,  $x$ ] [teacher said that Mishima wrote  $x$ ]  
 = the first book about which the teacher said that Mishima had written it
- b. *\*Low Reading*: the  $\lambda x$  [teacher said that [first [Mishima had written [book,  $x$ ]]]]  
 = the  $x$  s.t. the teacher said the first book Mishima had written was  $x$

Multiple embedding can create multiply ambiguous sentences in English, as seen in (9); the various readings for this sentence can be coerced by insertion of the NPI *every*:

- (9) (This is) the first book [John said [that the teacher said [that Tolstoy wrote]]].
- a. This is the first book John ever said that the teacher said that Tolstoy wrote.  
= the first book s.t. John said that the teacher said that Tolstoy wrote it
  - b. This is the first book that John said that the teacher ever said that Tolstoy wrote.  
= the  $x$  s.t. John said that  $x$  was the first book about which the teacher said that Tolstoy wrote it
  - c. This is the first book that John said that the teacher said that Tolstoy ever wrote.  
= the  $x$  s.t. John said the teacher said the first book that Tolstoy wrote was  $x$ .

Again, Japanese can only get the highest reading:

- (10) [[[Mishima-ga kaita to] sensei-ga osietekureta to] John-ga itta] saisho-no hon  
Mishima-NOM wrote C teacher-NOM taught C John-NOM said first book  
= the  $\lambda x$  first [book,  $x$ ] [John said that [teacher said that Mishima wrote  $x$ ]]  
 $\neq$  the  $\lambda x$  [John said that [first [book,  $x$ ] [teacher said that Mishima wrote  $x$ ]]]  
 $\neq$  the  $\lambda x$  [John said that [teacher said that [first [Mishima wrote [book,  $x$ ]]]]]

These facts strongly suggest that Japanese relative clauses *can't* be derived by movement, at least of the head-raising variety.

#### 4. One Final Concern

Perhaps Japanese has movement-derived relatives, but only matrix NPs can move. Haig (1976) notes that while Japanese relative clauses can optionally contain overt resumptive pronouns, this is not possible in singly embedded relative clauses:

- (11) a. [yoofuku-o kiteiru] sini  
suit-ACC wearing gentleman  
b. \*[kare<sub>i</sub>-ga yoofuku-o kiteiru] sini<sub>i</sub>  
he-NOM suit-ACC wearing gentleman  
'the gentleman who is wearing a suit'

- Possibly a sign that relativization out of a matrix-clause argument position is done by movement in Japanese
- What we need is evidence suggesting that even non-cyclic movement is prohibited in the derivation of Japanese relative clauses.

The sentence in (12a) has a reading in which the word *hahaoya* ‘mother’ seems to contain a null possessor, and gets a bound reading under *subete-no seito* ‘all the students’. This bound reading is only possible when *hahaoya* is c-commanded by *subete-no seito*, as seen in (12b).

- (12) a. *subete-no seito-ga*            *hahaoya-o*    *kiratteiru*  
          all-GEN students-NOM mother-ACC hate  
          ‘all the students hate (their) mother’ – *bound reading ok*  
       b. *hahaoya-ga*    *subete-no seito-o*            *kiratteiru*  
          mothers-NOM all-GEN students-ACC hate  
          ‘mothers hate all (their) sons’            – *bound reading not ok*

If relativization is via movement, the clause-internal copy should license a bound reading, if it is c-commanded by the *subete-no* phrase. But the bound reading is never possible for the head noun of a relative clause:

- (13) [*subete-no seito-ga*            *kiratteiru*] *hahaoya-no*    *namae-ga*    *nazeka*    *onaji*    *datta*  
          all-GEN students-NOM hate            mothers-GEN name-NOM somehow same were  
          ‘(the) mothers who all the students hated for some reason all had the same name’

The sentence in (13) can’t be interpreted such that *hahaoya* is bound by *subete-no seito*, meaning ‘the mother of each student who hated his own mother’.

## 5. Non-reconstruction of English relatives with resumptive pronouns

In English relative clauses involving resumptive pronouns, scopal reconstruction of adjectival modifiers is blocked.

- (14) This is the first book that they said if Shakespeare wrote it, then the Norton Anthology would need revising.

= the  $\lambda x$  first [book,  $x$ ] [they said if Shakespeare wrote  $x$  then the Norton Anthology would need to be revised]  
          ‘*the first book about which they said if Shakespeare wrote it then . . .*’

≠ the  $\lambda x$  [they said that if [first [Shakespeare wrote [book,  $x$ ] then the Norton Anthology would need to be revised]]]  
          ‘*the  $x$  s.t. they said if  $x$  was the first book Shakespeare wrote then . . .*’

The unavailability of the low reading can be seen when we try to coerce it with insertion of *ever*; the resulting sentence is ungrammatical:

- (15) \* This is the first book that they said if Shakespeare ever wrote it, then the Norton Anthology would need revising.

This is further evidence that reconstruction is only available with movement. If Japanese relatives involve a silent pronoun acting as a variable in the relative clause (an idea advanced by Perlmutter (1972); but cf. Haig (1976)), then reconstruction is predicted to be impossible, as it is in English relatives that use this strategy.

## Conclusion

- Evidence from adjectival modification provides strong support for the idea that movement-derived relatives don't exist in Japanese.
- Non-reconstruction of English relatives with resumptive pronouns is consistent with the idea that Japanese uses a silent pronoun in lieu of movement.
- Therefore some languages exploit movement (Head Raising) while others do not.
- The scopal reconstruction of adjectival modifiers can be used to diagnose the exclusion as well as the availability of movement-derived relatives in a given language.

## Future Directions

Correlate the non-existence of Head-Raising relatives with other properties of Japanese:

- lack of relative complementizers
- unavailability of relative clause internal topic phrase

Look for typological generalizations concerning availability/lack of head-raising, using reconstruction of adjectival modifiers as an empirical diagnostic

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