

24.902: Problem Set #5: due Thursday, Dec. 6

Problem One

Japanese, as we've seen, is head-final:

- (1) John-wa nattoo-o tabeta yo
John TOP nattoo ACC ate ASSERTION
'John ate the nattoo'
- (2) John-wa [nattoo-ga oisii tte] itta yo
John TOP nattoo NOM delicious that said ASSERTION
'John said that nattoo is delicious'

But it does allow phrases, including DPs and CPs, to be postposed to postverbal position:

- (3) John-wa tabeta yo, [nattoo-o]
John TOP ate ASSERTION nattoo ACC
'John ate it, the nattoo'
- (4) John-wa itta yo, [nattoo-ga oisii tte].
John TOP said ASSERTION nattoo NOM delicious that
'John said it, that nattoo is delicious'

Such postposing isn't always possible, however. Here are some more relevant data:

- (5) John-wa [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta ka] siritagatteiru yo.
John TOP Mary NOM what ACC ate Q wonders ASSERTION
'John wonders what Mary ate'
- (6) John-wa siritagatteiru yo, [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta ka]
John TOP wonders ASSERTION Mary NOM what ACC ate Q
'John wonders it, what Mary ate'
- (7) John-wa [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta tte] itta no?
John NOM Mary NOM what ACC ate that said Q
'What did John say that Mary ate?'
- (8) John-wa itta no, [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta tte]?
John NOM said Q Mary NOM what ACC ate that
*'What did John say that Mary ate?' (*can mean*: "Did John say what Mary ate?")
- (9) Dare-ga [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta ka] siritagatteiru no?
who NOM Mary NOM what ACC ate Q wonders Q
'Who wonders what Mary ate?'

- (10) Dare-ga siritagatteiru no, [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta ka]?
 who NOM wonders Q Mary NOM what ACC ate Q
 'Who wonders it, what Mary ate?'
- (11) Dare-ga [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta tte] itta no?
 who NOM Mary NOM what ACC ate that said Q
 'Who said that Mary ate what?'
- (12) Dare-ga itta no, [Mary-ga nani-o tabeta tte]?
 who NOM said Q Mary NOM what ACC ate that
 *'Who said that Mary ate what?' (*can mean*: "Who said what Mary ate?")

How would the theory that we discussed on November 26 account for these facts? (please don't get distracted by *ga* 'NOM' and *wa* 'TOP'; in general, matrix clauses in Japanese typically ought to contain a *wa*-marked phrase, so some of these examples contain instances of *wa* for that reason. The distribution of *wa* and *ga* is irrelevant to the solution. Also irrelevant is the weirdness of some of the English translations; I've tried to translate the Japanese postposing examples with some kind of marked word order in English, but you shouldn't take my English translations too seriously)

Problem Two

The last sentence we considered in our discussion of reconstruction was meant to show that reconstruction is limited in its ability to fix ill-formed sentences:

- (13) *He_i seems to John_i's mother to be expected to win.

Examples like (13) seem to teach us that reconstruction cannot completely eliminate the pronounced copy in this movement chain; in other words, reconstruction cannot prevent *he* from binding *John*, violating Condition C.

Consider the following data and their implications for reconstruction. Assume the judgments given (though feel free to write notes of protest if your own judgments are different), and start by assuming the binding theory we developed in class (though feel free to modify it if you feel that modification is necessary).

- (14) *John_i expected him_i to seem to me to be a genius
 (15) John_i expected me to seem to him_i to be a genius
 (16) *John_i expected me to seem to himself_i to be a genius

What do these facts tell us about the effects of reconstruction?

- (17) *He_i seems to me to be expected to appear to him_i to be a genius
 (18) I seem to him_i to be expected to appear to him_i to be a genius

These data support a conclusion we've already reached about the nature of A-movement. What is that conclusion? How do these data support it?