Reconstruction effects of anaphors in Japanese relative clauses

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Reconstruction effects of the anaphors have been considered as a diagnostic to determine whether the relativized NP is base-generated or moved in relative clauses (RCs) (e.g. Barss, 1986; Alexiadou, 2000; Aoun & Li, 2003). An example in English is shown in (1). The anaphor *himself* within the relativized NP can be co-referential with the embedded subject NP, which suggests that the relativized NP is moved from within the RC and gets reconstructed at LF. As for Japanese RCs, it is still controversial whether the anaphor within the relativized NP can be reconstructed. An example in Japanese is shown in (2). Hoji (1985) and Murasugi (2000) claim that the anaphor *jibun* within the relativized NP cannot be co-referential with the embedded subject NP, such as *Daisy* in (2). It indicates that the head NP is base-generated and cannot be reconstructed within the RC. However, Gunji (2002) and Hoshi (2004) argue that the anaphor *jibun* can be co-referential with the embedded subject NP, which suggests that the relativized NP is moved from within the RC and can be reconstructed at LF. Furthermore, Hoshi (2004) claims that besides *jibun*, the complex anaphor *jibun-jishin* can also be reconstructed. Thus, there seem to be inconsistent judgments upon the reconstruction effects of anaphors in Japanese RCs among previous researchers. Because of this, whether the relativized NP is base-generated or moved is still unsettled. Since all arguments from the previous studies are based on either researchers’ own or a few native speakers’ intuitive judgments, a controlled experiment to elicit data from more native speakers is necessary to clarify this issue.

Our research questions are: (i) can the anaphor *jibun* within the head NP can be reconstructed in Japanese RCs? (ii) can the anaphor *jibun-jishin* within the head NP be reconstructed in Japanese RCs? A Truth Value Judgment Task (TVJT) is used, where participants decide whether the picture matches the situation described by the given sentence. Four characters from Disney are used: Mickey, Minnie, Donald, and Daisy. The picture for (2) involving *jibun* is shown in (3). Participants then judge whether the interpretation of *jibun-no syashin* “self’s photo” in (2) matches what the picture (3) shows. Two factors are involved: (i) the anaphor type (*jibun* or *jibun-jishin*); (ii) the face photo on the picture (whether it refers to the matrix subject or the embedded subject). Therefore, we have four conditions. A total of 40 critical items are created and four lists are made by Latin Square. Each participant only sees one condition of each item. Furthermore, two types of fillers are created (20 items for each type): Type 1 fillers involve a ditransitive verb, as shown in (4), and Type 2 fillers involve a complement clause such as (5). Due to the constraint that the anaphors *jibun* and *jibun-jishin* are subject-oriented (e.g. Pica, 1987), only the subject NPs can be co-referential with the anaphors. The same two factors as in the critical items are included in fillers.

Our preliminary data shows that participants tend to accept the conditions where the anaphor refers to the matrix subject (mean score of 9.78 for *jibun* and 9.33 for *jibun-jishin*) and reject the conditions where the anaphor refers to embedded subject (mean score of 0.67 for both *jibun* and *jibun-jishin*). Two way repeated measures ANOVA found a main effect of the subject reference (*F* (1, 8) = 370, *p*<.01) but no effect of the anaphor type (*F* (1, 8) = 1.73, *p*=0.23). Also, there was no interaction between the anaphor type and the subject reference (*F* (1, 8) = 0.587, *p*=0.466). Thus, our preliminary data argues for the proposal (e.g. Hoji, 1985; Murasugi, 2000) that the head NP in Japanese is base-generated rather than moved.
Examples

(1)  a. [the portrait of himself\textsubscript{j}i that John\textsubscript{k} painted  \textsubscript{ti}.

      b. [the portrait of himself\textsubscript{jk}i that Bill\textsubscript{j} said that John\textsubscript{k} painted  \textsubscript{ti}.

(2) Mickey\textsubscript{j}-ga [[Daisy\textsubscript{k}-ga ei hunda] jibun/jibun-jishin\textsubscript{j}/k-no syashin\textsubscript{j}]-o syuhukushi-ta.

Mickey\textsubscript{ NOM} Daisy\textsubscript{ NOM} tread\textsubscript{PAST} self\textsubscript{GEN} photo\textsubscript{ACC} repair\textsubscript{PST}

“Mickey repaired self\textsubscript{j}/\textsubscript{k}’s photo that Daisy\textsubscript{k} treading.”

1. ミッキーがデイジーが踏んだ自分の写真を
   修復した。

(3)

(4) Mickey\textsubscript{j}-ga Daisy\textsubscript{k-ni jibun/jibun-jishin\textsubscript{j}/\textsubscript{k}-no-hon-o kashita.

Mickey\textsubscript{ NOM} Daisy\textsubscript{ DAT} self\textsubscript{GEN} book\textsubscript{ACC} lend\textsubscript{PAST}

“Mickey lent self\textsubscript{j}/\textsubscript{k}’s book to Daisy\textsubscript{k}.”

(5) Minnie\textsubscript{j}-ga Donald\textsubscript{n}i jibun/jibun-jishin\textsubscript{j}/\textsubscript{k}-no-tebukuro-o sute-ta to it-ta.

Minnie\textsubscript{ NOM} Donald\textsubscript{ DAT} self\textsubscript{GEN} glove\textsubscript{ACC} throw away\textsubscript{PST} that say\textsubscript{PST}

“Minnie said to Donaldk that she threw away self\textsubscript{j}/\textsubscript{k}’s gloves.”

Selected references


