Some gapless relatives in Japanese are not gapless.

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ABSTRACT:

This presentation targets a subcategory of gapless relatives (GRs) in Japanese exemplified in (1) where the relativized head nominal forms a causal connection to the event described in the embedded clause:

(1)   sakana-ga   kogeru nioi
       fish-NOM   burn   smell
       'the smell of fish's burning'

We argue for a proposal where an implicit event argument (IEA) undergoes relativization, in a manner similar to but extended from earlier proposals (Kunihiro 1980 and Tsai 1997). Its schematic representation is given in (2)

(2)   [[[sakana-ga kogeru $_{VP}$] [~~TOKI~~ $_{VP}$] kogeru $_{TP}$] C [~~TOKI~~ $_{CP}$] [TOKI $_{DP}$ $_{DP}$] NO $_{ModP}$] [nioi $_{DP}$] $_{DP}$]

Here, the capitalized relativized head *TOKI* 'time' is an IEA originally base-generated as the temporal modifier of the embedded stage-level (s-level) predicate *kogeru* 'burn'. This IEA is displaced from the base-generated position via overt Move in the manner proposed by Tonoike (2008), finally landing in the complement position of the covert modification particle *NO* 'of'.

It is widely known that Japanese and Chinese have GRs. GRs differ from ordinary relative clauses in that embedded clauses of GRs have no argument slot for the relativized head to occur. Japanese GRs are exemplified below:

(3)   a.   sakana-ga   kogeru nioi   (=(1))
       b.   Yamada-ga   kanningu-shita kekka
            Yamada-NOM   cheat-did   result
            'the result of Yamada's cheating'
       c.   shushoku-ga   muzukashii gengogaku
            getting_job-NOM   hard   linguistics
            'linguistics, which is hard to get a job'

Throughout generative researches (e.g., Tsai 1997 for Chinese, and Murasugi 2000 for Japanese), there have been much cross-linguistic discussions on GRs, but what "GR" refers to seems rather indeterminate among those previous studies. Identification of GRs is based on conflicting evidence. Hence, in this presentation we limit our attention to GRs of (3a) type.

Argument for our proposed relativization approach comes from several facts. Above all, Tsai's (1997) argument for what he calls sloppy relatives in Chinese is worth paying attention to. Tsai points out that a stative predicate cannot be the predicate of an embedded clause of a sloppy relative. (4) is Tsai's (25a) but the literal translation is mine:

(4)   *[[Akiu (hen) congming]   de   haochu]   hen duo.
       Akiu very   intelligent   PNM   benefit   very many
      'The benefits of Akiu being very intelligent are very many.' (Lit.)

This suggests that the relevant expressions are associated with actions or events. From this Tsai concludes that his sloppy relatives involve relativization of an IEA. Notice that the same restriction also holds in the case of (3a):

(5)   *sakana-ga   sekituidoobutsu-dearu nioi
       fish-NOM   vertebrate-is   smell
       'the smell of fish being a vertebrate' (Lit.)

(5) is headed by the nominal predicate *sekitsuidoobtsu-dearu* 'verbebrate-is'. This predicate is categorized as

an individual-level (i-level) predicate. The ungrammaticality automatically follows by adopting the proposed relativization analysis where an IEA *TOKI* is base-generated as the adjunct of an embedded predicate because i-level predicates cannot be typically associated with a spatiotemporal modifier (Kratzer 1996).

Another piece of evidence is the other side of the same coin as the one we saw above. Previous studies have revealed that the distinction of s-level and i-level predicate is closely related to that of thetic and categorical interpretation: Typically, s-level predicates bring the thetic interpretation while i-level predicate the categorical reading. The impossibility of (3a)'s selecting an i-level predicate is then borne out by the ungrammaticality of (6) given a shared assumption that -*wa* marked NP sentences bear the categorical reading:

(6)   *sakana-wa kogeru nioi

A crucial difference of a proposed analysis from Tsai's proposal is found in that ours assumes an IEA to undergo relativization via Move while Tsai assumes it to be base-generated in the embedded CP. Our proposal is preferable when we consider Higginbotham's (1985) requirement that event argument be existentially bound. Tsai's proposal, as it stands, cannot satisfy this requirement. However, our proposal where the IEA is base-generated as the adjunct of an embedded predicate fares well given the widely held assumption that existential binding targets the predicate projection domain (Diesing 1992).

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