

Discourse-Initial *Too* and Epistemic Modality

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This paper discusses what I call the discourse-initial *too*, which has not been discussed so far. Usually, sentences containing the conjunctive adverb *too* with the meaning of *also* are felicitous only when it follows another sentence, as in (1). However, *too* can appear discourse-initially and can be uttered unexpectedly without sounding remotely peculiar, as in (2).

- (1) Kyoto is nice. Nara is nice, too
(2) It's nice here, too.

Discourse-initial *too* in (2) does not require any antecedent. While Kyoto is the antecedent for Nara in the example in (1), there is neither antecedent nor contrastive focus in (2).

Japanese *mo*, which can be translated as *too* or *also*, can also be used discourse-initially:

- (3) Yo-mo fuke-ta. Mo neru-to shi-yo.
night-also grow-PAST already sleep-COMP do-let's
"It's late, indeed. It's time to go to bed."

There is no antecedent for *yo* "night" to which *mo* "too" is attached. *Yo* "night" is not particularly contrasted with anything else. While Numata (1986) and Teramura (1984) do not pay attention to the discourse-initial behavior, such *mo* expresses attenuation according to the former, and admiration according to the latter. Similar to *too* in English, regular *mo*-sentences are felicitous only when they follow another sentence, as in (4).

- (4) #(Kyoto-wa i-shi,) Nara-mo ii.
Kyoto-TOP good-and Nara-also good
"Kyoto is good and so is Nara."

In (4), Nara is contrasted with its antecedent Kyoto.

Why do discourse-initial *too* and *mo* "too" not require their antecedents? This paper analyzes discourse-initial *too* as an epistemic necessity modal and an emphatic marker, similar to *indeed* or *really*. *Too* is a sentential modal that associates with a whole proposition.

- (5) [| too |] = $\lambda p_{\langle s, t \rangle}. \lambda w. \forall w'. [wRw' \rightarrow p(w')] = 1$
(R: epistemic accessibility relation, w: possible world)

In all the worlds epistemically accessible from the actual world to the speaker, the proposition to which *too* is attached is true (Kratzer 1981). In other words, the speaker

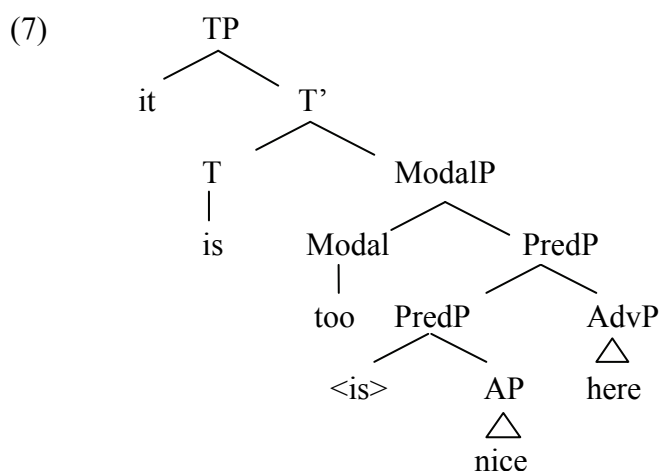
believes that the proposition holds true. The interpretation of (2) is true, if and only if the speaker believes that the location s/he is in is nice.

Therefore, the discourse-initial *too* is similar to epistemic *must*, and semantically, to *really* and *indeed*. According to Romero and Han (2004), *really* and *indeed* are epistemic adverbs, which express the speaker's evaluations.

(6) Nara is really good.

The proposition in (6) is true if Nara is good in any of the speaker's belief world.

Given such a meaning of the discourse-initial *too*, the sentential modal *too* should take higher scope over the proposition in the syntactic tree, as in (7).



The syntactic structure of the expletive construction in (2) is given in (7), in which *too* c-commands PredP in base position. *Nice* and *here* are assumed to be raised higher so that *too* is spelled out in the lower position compared to them.

In this manner, this paper presented an analysis of the novel use of *too* from semantic and syntactic perspectives.

References

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