



snippets

Issue 19

July 2009

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5.

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Kakarimusubi in Okinawan and its microparametric implications

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1. Predictions

Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2002) propose that in Japanese, cleft constructions, nominalized in-situ focus constructions (what they call "no da" in-situ focus constructions), and sluicing are all "transformationally" linked. Specifically, nominalized in-situ focus constructions underlie clefts and sluicing. This makes one theoretical prediction. If a language/dialect close to Japanese lacks nominalized in-situ focus constructions, it should not allow syntactic cleft constructions. If sluicing is derived from syntactic clefts (Nishiyama et al. 1995), the same language/dialect should not allow sluicing, either. On the other hand, if sluicing is derived via Wh-movement + TP-deletion (see Ross 1969, Takahashi 1994), it should exist independently of clefts.

2. Okinawan

As is well known, endangered languages spoken in Japan such as the Okinawan language (and related languages) and the Hachijoo jima language, which split from Japanese more than one thousand years ago, still retain the so-called Kakarimusubi constructions, which used to be a glowing feature of Old Japanese. Kakarimusubi is a construction in which a Wh/focus phrase agrees with a particular sentence-final verbal inflection or a particle (see Miyara 2000).

Significantly, Okinawan lacks a counterpart of nominalized in-situ focus constructions (1) and syntactic cleft constructions (2). (All the data come from my informant Chie Inamine, native speaker of Naha dialect, to whom I am very grateful.)

- (1) *[Taraa-ga Naha-nkai ?zya si] yan.
Taraa-Nom Naha-Dat go.Pst Nml Cop
'It is that Taraa went TO NAHA.' (Nominalized in-situ focus)
- (2) *[Taraa-ga ?zya syee] Naha-nkai yan.
Taraa-Nom go.Pst Nml.Top Naha-Dat Cop
'It is (to) Naha that Taraa went.' (Cleft)

Instead, my informant consistently employs Kakarimusubi for focusing (cf. 3).

- (3) Taraa-ga Naha-nkai-du ?zya-ru.
Taraa-Nom Naha-Dat-Foc go.Pst-Adn.
'It is (to) Naha that Taraa went.' (Kakarimusubi: Focus)

However, Okinawan does allow sluicing constructions, as Miyara (2007) observes (see Kurafuji to appear for truncated questions).

(4) Tāraa-ya maagana-nkai ?nzyoo-ru huuzi yasiga,
Tāraa-Top somewhere-Dat go.Pst-Adn. appearance but
'I heard that Tāraa went somewhere, but '

wanee maa-nkai ga wakaran.
1Sg.Top where-Dat Q know.Neg
'I don't know where to.' (Sluicing)

3. Conclusion

It is reasonable to think that the fact that Kakarimusubi is still active in the language has prevented a development of the counterpart of nominalized in-situ focus constructions. Then Okinawan lends empirical support for a strong syntactic connection between clefts and nominalized in-situ focus constructions. On the other hand, it suggests that syntactic sources for sluicing do not have to be clefts or nominalized in-situ focus constructions, and that a Wh-movement + TP-deletion analysis is an option permitted by UG even for Okinawan-type Wh -in-situ languages (see Ross 1969, Takahashi 1994 among others).

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