



snippets

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3.

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Complementizer deletion in Kansai Japanese revisited: a prosodic account

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Saito 1987 observes that Kansai dialect of Japanese allows C-deletion (1).

- (1) John-ga [CP Koobe-ni iku (te)] yuuta.
John-NOM Kobe-to go C said
'John said (that) he was going to Kobe.' (Saito 1987: 313)

Now, consider (2a-d).

- (2) a. John-ga Koobe-ni iku te, soide Mary-ga Tookyo-ni iku te, yuuta.
John-NOM Kobe-to go C and Mary-NOM Tokyo-to go C said
'John said that he was going to Kobe, and Mary said that she was going to Tokyo.'
b. * John-ga Koobe-ni iku te, soide Mary-ga Tookyo-ni iku [C e], yuuta
c. * John-ga Koobe-ni iku [C e], soide Mary-ga Tookyo-ni iku te, yuuta.
d. * John-ga Koobe-ni iku [C e], soide Mary-ga Tookyo-ni iku [C e], yuuta.
(Saito 1987: 317)

Saito adopts Stowell's 1981 government analysis of null Cs. If (2b) resulted from eliding the verb in the first conjunct, its unacceptability would be mysterious because the null C would be governed by the final verb (1a). However, the unacceptability follows if (2b) results from Right Node Raising since the trace of Right Node Raising cannot be a proper governor (Torrego 1984).

This snippet proposes another way of looking at these data. There is a simple generalization that can be made regarding these data, and it is prosodic: a null C cannot precede an intonational boundary. In general, in gapping sentences, intonational boundaries occur, on the one hand, between the first conjunct and the second conjunct, and, on the other hand, between the "shared material" concluding the second conjunct (the string-final verb in (3)) and the remaining material in the second conjunct. That gapping sentences are associated with this prosodic structure was observed by Kuno 1973, and Kuno's observation is supported by examples (4, 5) from An 2007. The two readings in (4) correlate with the position of a pause surrounding the adjunct: if the adjunct is parsed with the subject, it yields the high reading; if the adjunct phrase is parsed with the object, it yields the low reading. Since the gapping sentence in (5) only allows the high reading, this indicates that *okorinagara* is not grouped together with the object and the verb.

- (3) a. Takesi-ga zassi-o, Kaori-ga hon-o katta.
 Takesi-NOM magazine-ACC Kaori-NOM book-ACC bought
 ‘Takesi (bought) a magazine, Kaori bought a book.’
 b. [IntPh Takesi-ga zassi-o] [IntPh Kaori-ga hon-o] [IntPh katta].
- (4) Mary-wa *warainagara* situmonsiteiru gakusei-o nagutta.
 Mary-TOP with.a.smile ask.a.question student-ACC hit
 ‘With a smile on her face, Mary hit the student who asked a question.’
 ‘Mary hit the student who asked a question with a smile on his face.’
 (An 2007: 174)
- (5) Mary-wa *warainagara*, (sosite) Jane-wa *okorinagara*,
 Mary-TOP with.a.smile and Jane-TOP angrily
 situmonsiteiru gakusei-o nagutta.
 ask.a.question student-ACC hit
 ‘With a smile, Mary (hit the student who was asking a question) and with a frown,
 Jane hit the student who was asking a question.’ (An 2007: 175)

Given that Minimalist research has avoided the notion of government, which Saito’s analysis crucially uses, a new analysis of the paradigm seems welcome. The fact that the generalization is prosodic suggests that a notion like government isn’t crucial. For example, if as Bošković and Lasnik 2003 propose, a null C must undergo PF-Merger to an adjacent [+V] element, one can maintain that (2b) is excluded because intonational boundaries block PF-merger (Bošković 2001). As for the null C in the first conjunct of (2c-d), if a [+V] element does follow it, then it isn’t pronounced, and one might speculate that this causes a problem with PF-Merger.

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