

琉球大学学術リポジトリ

日本語における動詞句内主語仮説について

メタデータ	言語: 出版者: 琉球大学法文学部 公開日: 2008-01-15 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): VP-internal subject hypothesis, light verb phrase (vP), agreement phrase (AgrP), coordinate structures 作成者: Yoshimoto, Yasushi, 吉本, 靖 メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/2951

日本語における動詞句内主語仮説について

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On the VP-Internal Subject Hypothesis in Japanese

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The goal of this paper is to demonstrate that the so-called VP-internal subject hypothesis for Japanese must be reinterpreted as *v*P-internal subject hypothesis. I will first review Tateishi's (1994) arguments which convincingly show that the subject in Japanese must typically be generated outside VP. This conclusion is apparently at odds with the conclusion I reached in Yoshimoto (1998). However, I will argue that once we recognize the existence of *v*P, a maximal projection of a light verb that takes VP as its complement, the apparent conflict between Tateishi's conclusion and my conclusion disappears. I will also offer evidence that recognizing AgrP alone, without *v*P, will lead to a wrong prediction in regard to the appearance of the light verb *su* in a certain kind of coordinate structure.

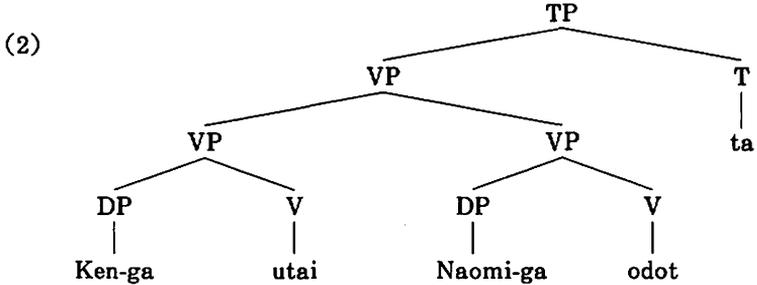
Key words: VP-internal subject hypothesis, light verb phrase (*v*P), agreement phrase (AgrP), coordinate structures

1. Introduction

In Yoshimoto (1998), I argued that subjects in Japanese must be VP-internal at the time of Spell-Out in the coordinate structures of the kind given in (1).

- (1) Ken-ga utai, Naomi-ga odot-ta.
 Ken-Nom sing Naomi-Nom dance-Past
 'Ken sang, and Naomi danced.'

My claim was based on the assumption that sentences like (1) have a structure like (2), where two VPs are coordinated.¹



In (2), there is only one Tense node.² Thus, if the subjects in (2) need to be in [Spec, TP], they should both move to the Specifier position(s) of the same T. Such movements will yield the string in (3).³

- (3) *Ken(-ga) Naomi-ga utai odot-ta.
 Ken-Nom Naomi-Nom sing dance-Past

Example (3) is both ungrammatical and inconsistent with the word order observed in (1). Thus, I concluded that in such sentences as (1), subjects must be within VP at the point of Spell-Out.⁴

Considering other sets of data, however, Tateishi (1991, 1994) argues that the VP-internal subject hypothesis cannot be correct for Japanese.⁵ Thus, there is a conflict between the two positions, with regard to the VP-internal subject hypothesis for Japanese.

My goal in this paper is to resolve this conflict. The conclusion I will reach is that the conflict is, in fact, only apparent; once we recognize that what has traditionally been called VP can have a

complex structure with a light verb *v*, the conflict disappears.

I will begin my discussion by highlighting what I consider to be the relevant arguments by Tateishi against the VP-internal subject hypothesis for Japanese.

2. Arguments against the strong VP-internal subject hypothesis

In this section, I will consider Tateishi's (1994) arguments against what he calls the "strong SPEC(VP) subject hypothesis." The term refers to the hypothesis that subjects originate in [Spec, VP], and remains there throughout the derivation.

Citing examples such as (4)-(5) discussed by Hoji, Miyagawa, and Tada (1989), Tateishi shows that VP-preposing exists in Japanese.

(4) a. John-wa [_{VP} susi-o tabe]-wa si-ta.

John-Top sushi-Acc eat-Top do-Past

'John did eat the sushi.'

b. [_{VP} Susi-o tabe]_i-wa John-wa *t_i* si-ta.

'Eat the sushi, John did.'

(5) a. John-wa [_{VP} eigo-ga hanas-e]-wa su-ru.

John-Top English-Nom speak-can-Top do-Pres

'John CAN speak English.'

b. [_{VP} Eigo-ga hanas-e]_i-wa John-wa *t_i* su-ru.

In the (b) examples of (4)-(5), the bracketed constituent with the topic marker *-wa* is preposed to the sentence-initial position from the original position it occupies in the (a) examples. Adopting the standard assumption that only X^{\max} and X^{\min} can move, Tateishi claims that the moved constituent in (4b) and (5b) must be a maximal projection. Since this constituent contains the internal argument of the verb, but excludes its external argument, Tateishi concludes that it must be VP.

Citing Hoji et al. (1989), Tateishi also shows that the moving constituent cannot be either larger than VP or smaller than VP. The relevant examples are given in (6)-(7).

(6) a. *[Susi-o kinoo tabe]_i-wa John-wa *t_i* si-ta.
sushi-Acc yesterday eat-Top John-Top do-Past
'John did eat the sushi yesterday.'

b. *[Eigo-ga koounnimo hanas-e]_i-wa John-wa *t_i* su-ru.
English-Nom luckily speak-can-Top John-Top do-Pres
'John can speak English luckily.'

(7) a. *Tabe-wa John-wa [_{VP} susi-o *t_i*] si-ta.

b. *Hanase-wa John-wa [_{VP} eigo-ga *t_i*] su-ru.

In (6), what has supposedly moved contains a sentence adverb (*kinoo* and *koounnimo*). Thus, this putative constituent (if it can be a constituent at all) must be larger than VP. Preposing of this constituent results in ungrammaticality, as indicated in these examples. In (7), on the other hand, only the verb is preposed. Again, this kind of movement yields ungrammaticality. (See (4a) and (5a) for the corresponding sentence without movement.)

What about cases where there is more than one internal argument? Showing the examples in (8), Tateishi demonstrates that in such a case, all the internal arguments must be preposed.

(8) a. Taroo-wa [_{VP} Ziroo-ni Saburoo-o syookai-si]_i-ta.
Taro-Top Jiro-Dat Saburo-Acc introduce-do-Past
'Taro introduced Saburo to Jiro.'

b. [_{VP} Ziroo-ni Saburoo-o syookai-si]_i-wa Taroo-wa *t_i* si-ta.

c. *[Saburoo-o syookai-si]_i-wa Taroo-wa [_{VP} Ziroo-ni *t_i*] si-ta.

Similarly, Tateishi demonstrates that when a sentence contains a manner adverb, it too has to move:

- (9) a. Taroo-wa [_{VP} eigo-o issyookenmei benkyoo-si]-ta.
 Taro-Top English hard study-do-Past
 'Taro studied English hard.'
- b. [_{VP} Eigo-o issyookenmei benkyoo-si]_F-wa Taroo-wa *t_i* si-ta.
 c. * [Eigo-o benkyoo-si]_F-wa Taroo-wa [_{VP} issyookenmei *t_i*]
 si-ta.

In (9c), the manner adverb *issyookenmei* is left behind, and the sentence is ungrammatical. On the assumption that the manner adverb is within VP, the ungrammaticality of (9c) – in contrast to the grammaticality of (9b) – indicates that what moves must be the entire VP.

The conclusion that Tateishi (1994) draws from these observations is that the strong version of the VP-internal subject hypothesis is wrong in Japanese: i.e., it cannot be the case that the subject in Japanese is generated in [Spec, VP] and remains there throughout the derivation.

3. Arguments against the weak VP-internal subject hypothesis

Let us consider next Tateishi's (1994) claim that even the "weak SPEC(VP) subject hypothesis" cannot be correct. By "weak SPEC(VP) subject hypothesis," Tateishi means the hypothesis that the (θ -marked) subject occupies the [Spec, VP] position at the level where θ -marking takes place, but it may be in some other position at another level.⁵

Drawing from Hoji et al. (1989), Tateishi shows that VP movement is illicit in such structures as (10c).

- (10) a. Taroo-o Ziroo-wa [_{VP} *t_i* seme]-ta.
 Taro-Acc Jiro-Top blame-Past
 'Jiro blamed Taro.'

b. Taroo-o Ziroo-wa [_{VP} *t_i* seme]-wa si-ta.

c. * [_{VP} *t_i* seme]_F-wa Taroo-o Ziroo-wa *t_i* si-ta.

As Hoji et al. (1989) argue, (10c) is ungrammatical because the trace in the scrambled VP does not have a c-commanding antecedent.

Tateishi then shows that the same explanation can be applied to two other phenomena. One of them is concerned with the passive construction. Consider (11).

(11) a. Sono hon-wa [_{VP} minna-ni *t_i* yom-are]-ta.

that book-Top everyone-by read-Passive-Past

'That book was read by everyone.'

b. * [_{VP} Minna-ni *t_i* yom-are]_F-wa sono hon-wa *t_i* si-ta.

In (11a), the internal argument of the verb *yom* 'read' is moved out of VP for Case reasons. In (11b), the VP is preposed. The ungrammaticality of (11b) can be attributed to the lack of c-commanding antecedent for *t_i*, exactly as in the scrambled example (10c) above.

The other phenomenon Tateishi considers involves unaccusative predicates. Consider (12)-(13).

(12) a. Hanako-wa [_{VP} ki]-ta.

Hanako-Top come-Past

'Hanako came.'

b. * [_{VP} Ki]_F-wa Hanako-wa *t_i* si-ta.

(13) a. Ame-wa [_{VP} fut]-ta.

rain-Top fall-Past

'It rained.'

b. * [_{VP} Furi]_F-wa ame-wa *t_i* si-ta.

Since the verbs in (12)-(13) are unaccusative, the standard analysis holds that *Hanako* in (12a) and *ame* in (13a) are originally generated within VP, in the complement position of each verb. They then

undergo movement out of VP. If so, a more accurate structure of (12b), for example, should be (14):

(14)* $[_{VP} t_i \text{ Ki}]_F\text{-wa Hanako}_j\text{-wa } t_i \text{ si-ta.}$

(14) mirrors the structures in (10c) and (11b) in the relevant respects. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (12b) (and (13b)) receives an explanation parallel to those given for (10c) and (11b).

With this in mind, consider the examples in (15)-(16).

(15) a. Taroo-wa $[_{VP} \text{ hatarai}]_F\text{-ta.}$

Taro-Top work-Past

'Taro worked.'

b. $[_{VP} \text{ Hataraki}]_F\text{-wa Taroo-wa } t_i \text{ si-ta.}$

(16) a. Taroo-wa $[_{VP} \text{ saken}]_F\text{-da.}$

Taro-Top shout-Past

'Taro shouted.'

b. $[_{VP} \text{ Sakebi}]_F\text{-wa Taroo-wa } t_i \text{ si-ta.}$

Here, the predicates involved take external arguments in contrast to the unaccusative verbs in (12)-(13). Unlike examples (12b) and (13b), examples (15b) and (16b) are grammatical. This fact is surprising if the subjects in (15)-(16) are generated within VP and then move to [Spec, IP], or any other position outside of VP (=the weak VP-internal subject hypothesis). If that is the case, (15b) and (16b) should have a structure like (14) with an offending trace, and they should be ungrammatical. This observation leads Tateishi to conclude that even the weak version of the VP-internal subject hypothesis is wrong.

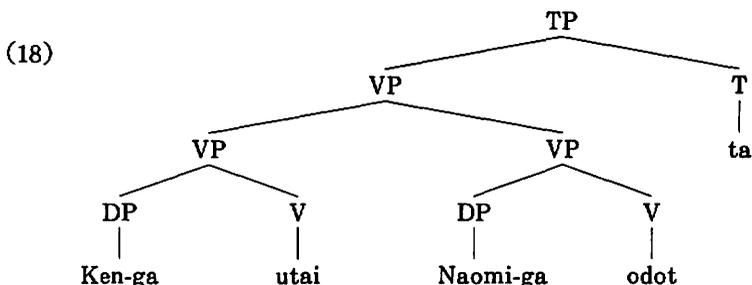
4. Resolution of the conflict

I take it that Tateishi's (1994) arguments presented in the previous sections are sound. Thus, I agree that Japanese has VP, and

that this projection typically excludes the subject.’ How, then, should we analyze the coordinate structure of the kind exemplified in (1), repeated here as (17)?

- (17) Ken-ga utai, Naomi-ga odot-ta.
 Ken-Nom sing Naomi-Nom dance-Past
 ‘Ken sang, and Naomi danced.’

Let us review the argument that I offered in support of the VP-internal subject hypothesis. I assumed that the structure underlying (17) was (18).

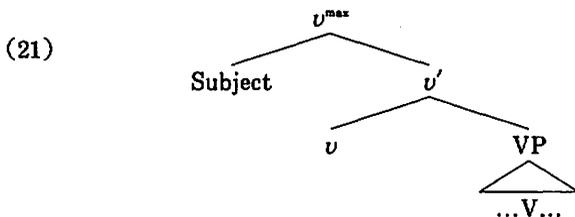


The crucial point of my argument was that the subject DPs in (18) cannot possibly be both in the [Spec, TP]. Since I assumed that the conjuncts in (18) are of the categorial type VP, I concluded that these subjects must be within VP at the time of Spell-Out. However, it should be clear that the point of my argument is not that the conjuncts should be VP; rather, the point is that the subjects must be *within the conjuncts*.

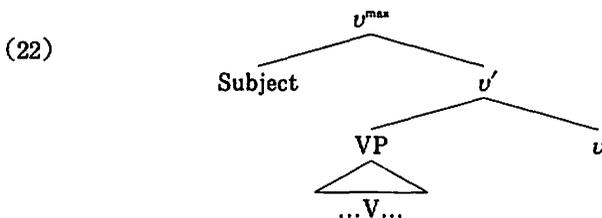
Given that, a solution to the puzzle suggests itself. Suppose that each conjunct in (18) is not VP, but some category dominating VP. This category immediately dominates a subject, but the subject is outside VP. Then, Tateishi’s claim that subjects reside outside VP can be kept, while maintaining that subjects cannot be in [Spec, TP]

evidence that the Japanese subject is generated outside VP, and the evidence that it occupies some position lower than [Spec, TP] in the coordinate structure under consideration.

Tateishi's [Spec, AgrP] subject hypothesis, then, is quite plausible. However, the recent approach to θ -theory incorporated in Chomsky's (1995) Minimalist Program suggests another possibility. Essentially following Hale and Keyser (1993), Chomsky (1995:315) assumes that an external argument occupies the Spec position of a light verb (v), which takes VP as its complement, as illustrated in the following diagram.

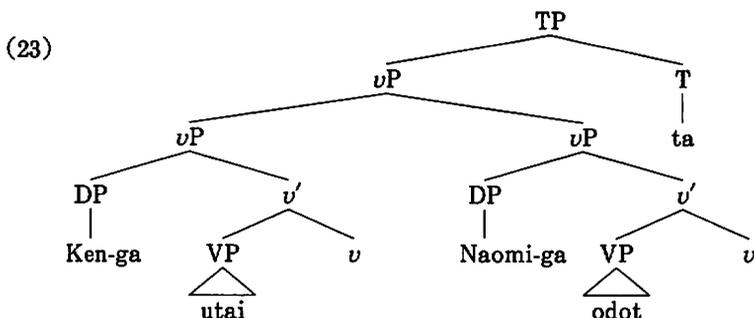


If [Spec, v P] is indeed the position in which external arguments are generated, then Japanese sentences should contain the following structure.



If the verb has several arguments in (21)-(22), the VP will be assumed to be a Larsonian shell.

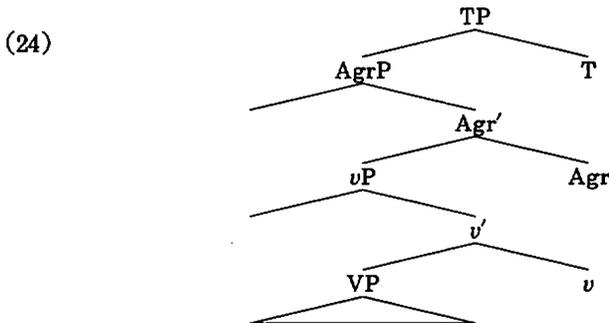
Assuming (22) for Japanese, example (17) above should have the structure in (23).



Clearly, this structure is also consistent with the two conclusions we drew: (i) the subject is generated outside VP; (ii) the subjects in the coordinate structure must be internal to the conjuncts. If (23) is the right structure, then we should reinterpret the so-called “VP-internal subject hypothesis” to be, in fact, the “vP-internal subject hypothesis.”

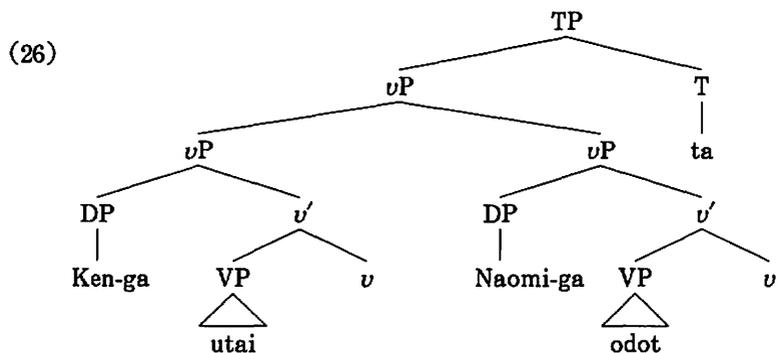
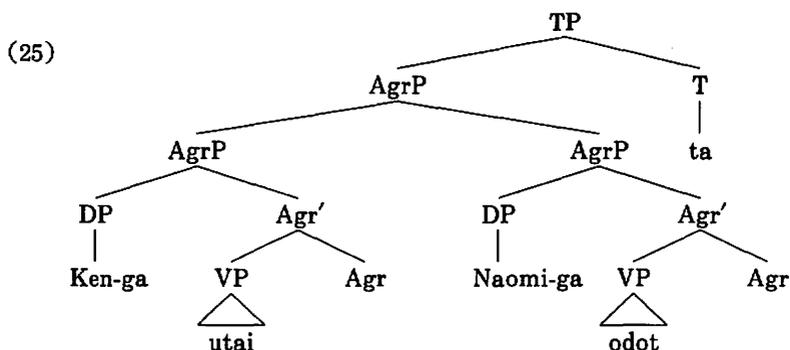
5. AgrP or vP?

Our next task is to find out which of the two analyses, represented in (20) and (23), is correct. Before tackling this problem, it should be noted that there is, in fact, a third possibility: it may be the case that both AgrP and vP coexist within the same clause, as shown in (24).



To simplify exposition, however, I will focus on the structures in (20) and (23) first, returning to the possibility of (24) later.

Compare the structures in (20) and (23), repeated here as (25) and (26), for convenience.



A crucial difference between (25) and (26) lies in the categorial status of the head of the conjuncts: Agr in (25), and v in (26). Neither head contains an overt element in (25)-(26). We would expect, however, that these empty heads manifest phonologically, at least in some cases.

As for Agr, Tateishi (1994) claims that the honorific morphology is an overt realization of Agr. Although Japanese lacks the familiar

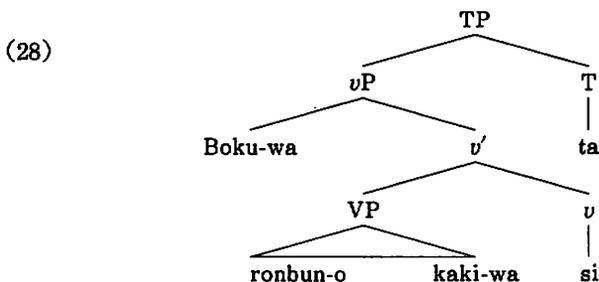
agreement phenomenon involving ϕ -features such as person, gender, and number, Tateishi argues that agreement need not be restricted to ϕ -features: since the choice of an honorific form is dependent on the subject, we may understand the honorific morphology to be a kind of agreement morphology. See Tateishi (1994: section 4.4) for the relevant discussion.

As for the head v , it is a light verb, by definition. Thus, we may assume that its overt manifestation appears in the form of *su-* 'do'. Given that, sentence (27) will have the structure in (28).¹⁰

(27) Boku-wa [ronbun-o kaki]-wa si-ta.

I-Top paper-Acc write-Top do-Past

'I did write a paper.'

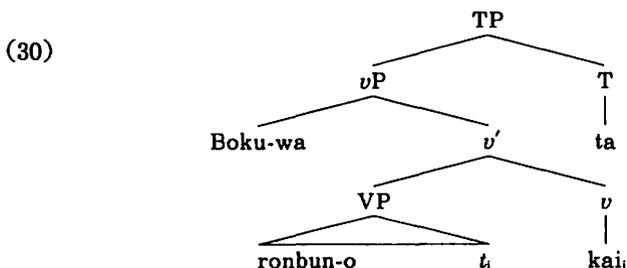


In sentences like (29) below, where the topic marker *-wa* is not attached to VP, I assume that V overtly moves to an empty head v , as illustrated in (30).

(29) Boku-wa ronbun-o kai-ta.

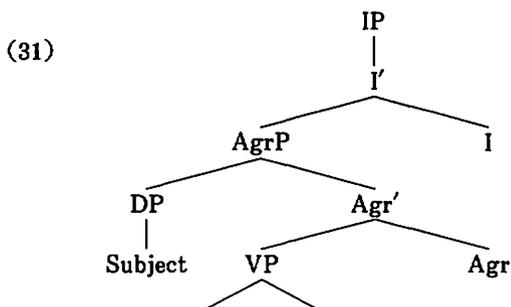
I-Top paper-Acc write-Past

'I wrote a paper.'



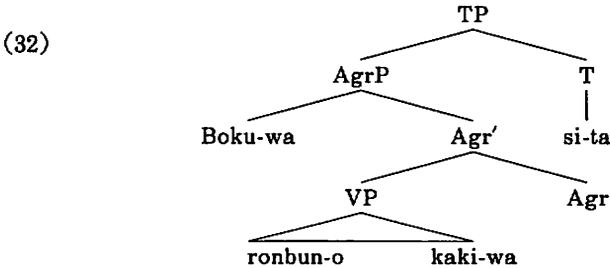
In this way, we can explain why the light verb *si* appears in structure (28), but not in (30). Since the topic marker *-wa* is attached to the verb *kak*, the verb cannot undergo head movement in (28). Assuming that the light verb *v* need be filled by a phonologically overt element, *si* has to be inserted in (28) for the derivation to converge. In (30), on the other hand, the verb can move to *v*, since no particle attaches to it. Hence, *si* does not appear in (30).

Let us now consider how a sentence like (27) with a light verb can be constructed under the [Spec, AgrP] subject hypothesis that takes the basic structure of Japanese sentences to be (19), repeated here as (31).



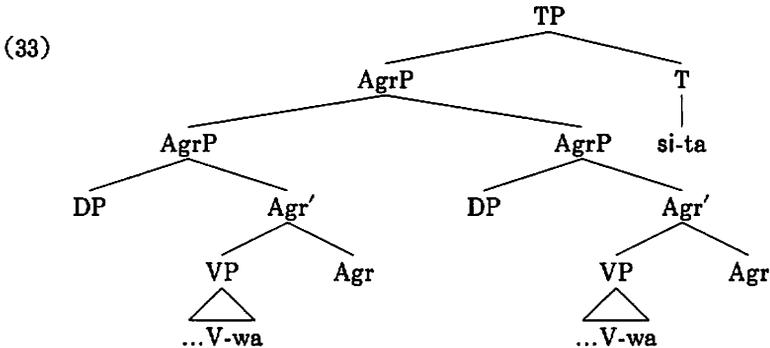
Tateishi (1994) assumes that an operation “*suru*-support” (=Japanese version of “*do*-support”) applies when I (=T) contains only a tense feature. Thus, the structure of sentence (27) should be

as in (32) under his approach.

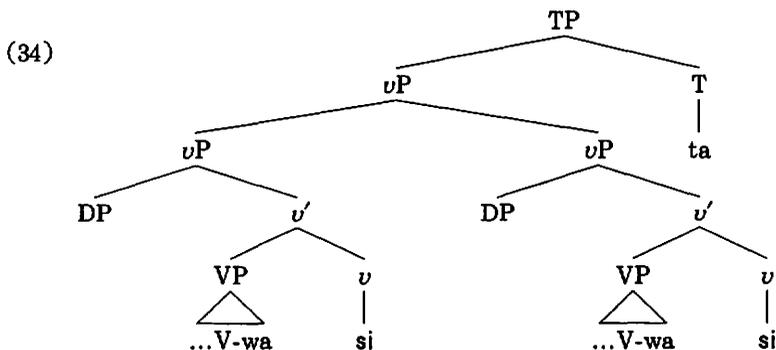


Given that the position of the light verb *si* is different between (28) and (32), we can construct a test to see whether the conjuncts of the coordinate structure under consideration are AgrP as in (25) or *v*P as in (26).

Here is the prediction. Suppose that the topic-marker *-wa* or some other particle is attached to the VPs in the conjuncts. This forces the appearance of the light verb *si* (or *su*). If (25) is the correct structure, we would expect only one *si* to appear in the sentence, as illustrated in (33).



If, on the other hand, (26) is the correct structure, we would expect that two instances of *si* (or *su*) to appear, as illustrated in (34).



The following examples demonstrate that indeed *si* must appear in both conjuncts.

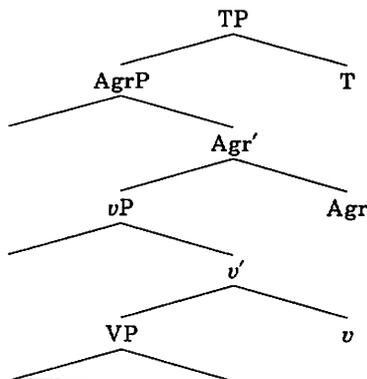
- (35) Ken-ga [_{vP} hataraki]-wa *(*si*), Naomi-ga [_{vP} sore-o arigataku
 Ken-Nom work-Top do Naomi-Nom it-Acc thankful
 omoi]-wa *si*-teiru (koto).
 think-Top do-Progressive fact
 ‘Ken does work, and Naomi IS thankful for it.’

- (36) [_{vP} Ronbun-o kaki]-wa *(*si*), [_{vP} sensei-ni mise]-mo *si*-ta.
 paper-Acc write-Top do teacher-Dat show-also do-Past
 ‘(I) did write a paper, and (I) also showed it to the teacher.’

As indicated, in both (35) and (36), the light verb *si* has to appear in the first conjunct, as well as in the second conjunct, for the sentence to be grammatical. Thus, we have evidence that the structure depicted in (33) is not correct.

Finally, let us consider the third possibility mentioned above. Namely, the structure involved is one which contains both AgrP and *vP*:

(37)



Clearly, this structure is compatible with the fact illustrated in (35)-(36). Given (37), it is possible to construct a structure similar to (34); hence, *si* can appear in both conjuncts in (35)-(36).

Thus, our discussion in this section has nothing to say about the existence of AgrP in Japanese, so long as the existence of *vP* is assumed. Whether or not AgrP is also needed must be determined on independent grounds. It should also be mentioned that the hierarchical order between AgrP and *vP* assumed in (37) is just one possibility. It is also possible that *vP* dominates AgrP, contrary to (37). Thus, we are left with the following questions: (i) does AgrP exist in Japanese? (ii) if it does, what is its hierarchical relation with respect to *vP*? I leave these questions open for further study.

6. Summary

This study was inspired by the observation that the conclusion I drew from my previous work with respect to the VP-internal subject hypothesis was apparently at odds with the conclusion that Tateishi (1994) draws on the same hypothesis. In order to resolve the seeming contradiction, I first reviewed Tateishi's arguments against both

the strong and weak VP-internal subject hypotheses. I concluded that his arguments convincingly show that the subject in Japanese is typically generated outside VP. I then reviewed my argument for the VP-internal subject hypothesis, and noted that my argument was really against the claim that the subject in Japanese is generated in [Spec, TP]. I showed that once this is recognized, there is no conflict between the two positions. I then offered an alternative analysis to Tateishi's [Spec, AgrP] subject hypothesis. I argued that we must recognize *v*P, and suggested that the correct interpretation of the so-called "VP-internal subject hypothesis" should, in fact, be the "*v*P-internal subject hypothesis." I offered evidence that without assuming *v*P, the appearance of more than one light verb in coordinate structures cannot be explained.

NOTES

¹ For ease of exposition, I assume here a simple coordinate structure where two VPs merge to form another VP. Recent works indicate that conjuncts in coordinate structures are in an asymmetric c-command relation. (See Munn 1992, Kayne 1994, and Johannessen 1998, among others.) The essential claim I will make in this paper will not be affected by assuming such a hierarchical structure for coordination.

² Strictly speaking, there are no nodes, bars, primes, and so on, within the bare phrase structure theory developed by Chomsky (1995). However, these informal notions are still useful for the purpose of exposition. For this reason, I will continue to use them throughout this paper.

³ Whether or not the nominative particle *-ga* appears after the first subject *Ken* in (3) depends on the theory of Case marking in Japanese and on how these two subjects occupy the [Spec, TP] position(s).

⁴ See Kuroda 1988 for the original claim of the VP-internal subject hypothesis that is most akin to the conception adopted in this paper. Although the VP-internal subject hypothesis for Japanese is also frequently attributed to Fukui (1986) and Kitagawa (1986) in the literature, their conceptions of VP-internal subject hypothesis are quite different from the one expressed by Kuroda (1988). Thus, Fukui (1986) assumes that Japanese does not have VP, and *V'* in Japanese plays the role of VP in languages like English. Kitagawa (1986), on the other hand, argues that Japanese subjects originate in [Spec, IP], but ends up in [Spec, VP] at LF. In contrast, Kuroda (1988) assumes that Japanese have VP, just like English, and subjects in Japanese are generated in [Spec, VP] (=his "Ext(V)") and can remain there throughout the derivation.

⁵ Whitman (1998) summarizes Tateishi's (1991) arguments against the VP-Internal subject hypothesis and concludes that subjects in Japanese must be outside VP.

⁶ Tateishi has in mind the versions of VP-internal subject hypothesis expressed in Kitagawa 1986 and Kuroda 1988.

⁷ The untypical case involves unaccusative verbs, discussed in section 3.

⁸ See chapter 2 of Tateishi (1994).

⁹ I assume that Tateishi's I in (19) is equivalent to T.

¹⁰ Strictly speaking, *Boku-wa* in (28) should presumably occupy some higher position that accommodates a topic phrase. Since the exact position of this topic phrase is irrelevant for the point I make here, I will place it in the external argument position.

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