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# SAYing Appositive Clause and Its Relevance to Hearsay-ish Construction in Japanese

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## 1 Introduction

This paper will consider two constructions that have not been studied well in the Japanese syntax literature, which we will call the Complex NP (a kind of appositive clause) and the Hearsay-ish Construction. These two, as we will see, involve a grammaticalized verb that presumably originates from the lexical verb, *iw* 'say'. However, this verb shows several characteristics different from its lexical counterpart both syntactically and semantically, and I will argue that it is best analyzed as a grammaticalized verb. Although the literature on the Complex NP is not rich, Saito (2018) recently puts forth a perspective similar to the idea to be explored in this paper. Building on but a little bit departing from his analysis, I will contend that the verb under question is an unaccusative verb, and that the Complex NP and the Hearsay-ish Construction share the base structure.

This paper goes as follows. In Section 2, I will discuss the data that we will be concerned with throughout this paper. In Section 3, I will show how the relevant grammaticalized verb behave differently from lexical *iw* in the Complex NP and the Hearsay-ish Construction. Then, Section 4 will provide an analysis of the two constructions by using the same base structure, showing that they are derivationally kin to each other. Section 5 will conclude.

## 2 Core Data: SAY in the Complex NP and the Hearsay-ish Construction in Japanese

The constructions that we investigate in this paper are (1) and (2), and both of them have *iw* (glossed as SAY), which I argue is a grammaticalized verb that presumably stems from the lexical verb *iw* 'say'.

(1)  [[[Hanako-ga  kawaii to]  iw]      uwasa]
         Hanako-NOM cute.is COMP SAY.PRES rumor
      Lit. '(the) rumor (that says) that Hanako is cute'

(2)  [Hanako-ga  kawaii to]  iw        (no-da).
        Hanako-NOM cute.is COMP SAY.PRES  NMLZ-COP.PRES
      '(According to some rumor/I heard that) (it is that) Hanako is cute,'

As the translation indicates, *iw* in (1) functions like a connective introducing an appositive clause, so let us call it the Complex NP, following Saito (2018). In contrast, the pertinent verb in (2) seems like a main predicate, although it is optionally accompanied by a further embedding structure, so-called the *No-da* Construction (Hiraiwa and Ishihara, 2002, 2012); the construal of (2) is *prima facie* like hearsay evidentiality, but it is actually not, as we will see below. Therefore, I will call (2) the Hearsay-ish Construction.

Then, the primary goal of this paper is to propose an analysis that explains the syntactic/semantic properties of (1) and (2), and in so doing, I will maintain that these two are derivationally intertwined.

## 3 Grammaticalized SAY

Before going into the details of my analysis, let us see in what sense the purported grammaticalized status of *iw* in (1) and (2) should be understood. The criteria I will use as touchstones for the relevant grammaticalization are given in (3).

(3)  a.  *Iw* as SAY cannot take a dative argument.
     b.  *Iw* as SAY cannot be temporally interpreted as irrealis (future).

I assume that (3) results from the process of semantic bleaching in the sense of Bybee and Pagliuca (1985).

Then, starting from the Complex NP, *iw* as SAY is different from the lexical verb *iw* 'say' in the pertinent two respects. When *iw* is used lexically, it allows the dative argument to occur as in (4a), but it is excluded as in (4b). Also, as the contrast in (5) illustrates, while non-stative (stage-level) lexical verbs in Japanese such as lexical *iw* 'say' are temporally interpreted as irrealis (future) in the present form, hence compatible with *asita* 'tomorrow', grammaticalized *iw* as SAY is impossible with such a time adverb.

(4)     The (Im)possibility of Dative Argument

    a.    Taroo-wa Ziroo-ni [Hanako-ga   kawaii to]   iw.
          Taro-top  Jiro-dat   Hanako-nom cute.is comp say.pres
          'Taro will say to Jiro that Hanako is cute.'

    b.    *[[Ziroo-ni [Hanako-ga   kawaii to]   iw]       uwasa]
           Jiro-dat   Hanako-nom cute.is comp SAY.pres rumor
           Intended '(the) rumor that says to Jiro that Hanako is cute'

(5)     The (Im)possibility of Irrealis Construal

    a.    Taroo-wa asita       Hanako-ni   sore-o iw.
          Taro-top  tomorrow Hanako-dat it-acc  say.pres
          'Taro will say it to Hanako tomorrow.'

    b.    *[[asita      [Hanako-ga  kawaii to]   iw]       uwasa]
          tomorrow  Hanako-nom cute.is comp SAY.pres rumor
          Intended '(the) rumor that will say to Jiro tomorrow that Hanako is cute'

Besides the contrast given in (4) and (5), the lexical verb *iw* 'say' in (4a) and (5a) can be written with a Chinese character as 言う, whereas *iw* as SAY in (4b) and (5b) must be written as いう with only the mora-based *hiragana* writing possible. In this connection, all functional morphemes/words in Japanese must be orthographically rendered only in *hiragana*. This thus reinforces the current argument that SAY is a grammaticalized verb.

Turning to the Hearsay-ish Construction, we observe the same state of affairs regarding (3).

(6)     *Ziroo-ni [Hanako-ga  kawaii to]   iw      (no-da).
     Jiro-dat  Hanako-nom cute.is comp SAY.pres  nmlz-cop.pres
     Intended 'According to some rumor told to Jiro, (it is that) Hanako is cute,'

(7)     *Asita     [Hanako-ga  kawaii to]   iw      (no-da).
     tomorrow  Hanako-nom cute.is comp SAY.pres  nmlz-cop.pres
     Intended 'According to some rumor to be told to me tomorrow, (it is that) Hanako is cute,'

It is also the case that the Chinese character is excluded in the Hearsay-ish Construction, so this constitutes another piece of evidence for the grammaticalized status of *iw* in it.

## 4 Proposal and Analysis

### 4.1 The Syntax and Semantics of SAY

For the syntax and semantics of SAY, I propose that it is an unaccusative verb whose sole argument is the embedded clause. Semantically, I assume that SAY is void of lexical meaning, and that its semantic representation is (8).[1]

(8)  $[\![SAY]\!] = \lambda p.\lambda e.e$ in $w^* \wedge \forall w \in \text{con}(e) : p(w)$
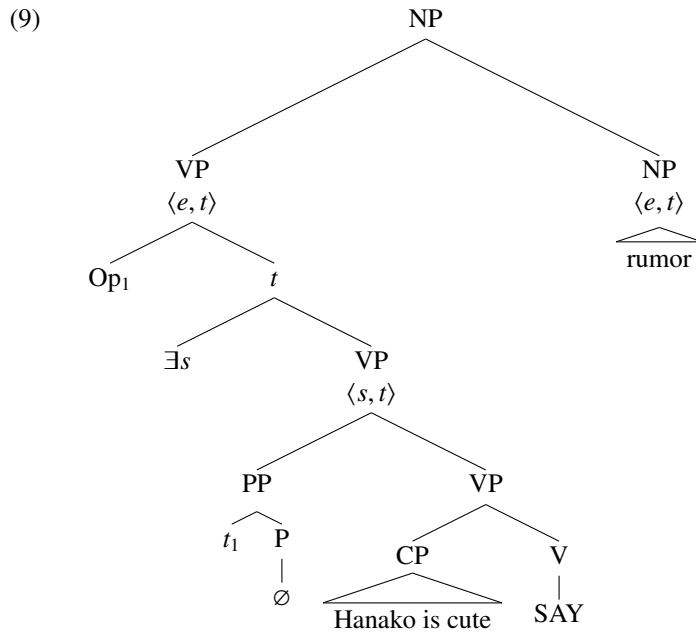     where $\text{con}(e) = \cap \wp = \{p \mid p$ is an utterance/a report given at $\tau(e)\}$

Under (8), the semantic role of SAY is to give some linguistic item introduced by *to* as an utterance or a report at a contextually provided time interval due to $\tau(e)$. Thus, SAY denotes a set of contentful events (cf. Hacquard, 2006). Then, I assume that the set of SAYing events will be closed at the level of VP by an $\exists$-operator. With this at hand, let us consider how the two constructions under discussion are derived.

### 4.2 The Complex NP

Starting from the Complex NP, I assume with Saito (2018) that it involves relativization. Saito argues that SAY is further selected by *v* that introduces an external argument corresponding to the report source, and that this report source argument undergoes relativization. However, since SAY is an unaccusative verb under the proposed analysis, I assume that the report source is introduced by a null P whose meaning is like 'according to' in English. This much said, (1) is syntactically organized as in (9) (*s* is of event type).

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[1] Note that this semantics is only for an expository purpose. In fact, the reporting particle *to* can introduce various kinds of elements such imperatives, questions and even onomatopoeias. Thus, since (8) only cares about the propositional argument, it does not work for those items; see Shimamura (2018) for this issue.

(9)

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                              NP
              ┌───────────────┴───────────────┐
            VP                                NP
           ⟨e,t⟩                             ⟨e,t⟩
        ┌────┴────┐                            △
      Op₁          t                         rumor
              ┌─────┴─────┐
             ∃s           VP
                         ⟨s,t⟩
                    ┌──────┴──────┐
                   PP             VP
               ┌────┴────┐     ┌───┴───┐
              t₁    P         CP       V
                    │          △       │
                    ∅   Hanako is cute SAY
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At this point, one may ask why SAY must be given as an independent verb, not grammaticalized and fused to the reporting particle. This view is advocated by Kuno (1973), and under this view, *to* and *iw* in the Complex NP comprises a single morphological unit: *toiw*. However, Saito (2018) convincingly shows that this is not the right option. He provides two pieces of evidence to support his argument. One is concerned with the fact that *iw* can be conjugated as past as in (10), and the other is based on the droppability of the reporting particle in Kansai Japanese as in (11).[2]

(10)    [[[Hanako-ga   kawaii to]   it-ta]        uwasa]
            Hanako-NOM cute.is COMP SAY-PAST rumor
        Lit. '(the) rumor (that said) that Hanako is cute'

(11)    [[[Hanako-ga   kawaii (te)]   yuu]        uwasa]
            Hanako-NOM cute.is   COMP SAY.PRES rumor
        Lit. '(the) rumor (that says) that Hanako is cute'

Concerning (10), Saito proposes that the past morpheme is located in T, but I argue that it resides in the verbal domain. To be specific, I propose that it is not a past morpheme but a participial head in the sense of Kusumoto (2001). According to her, the participial *-ta*, i.e. nonpast *-ta*, intensionalizes

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[2] Note that *te* and *yuu* are the Kansai Japanese variants of *to* and *iw*, respectively.

events denoted by verbs. That is, such events do not have to happen in the actual world. In this connection, it is worth mentioning that Saito provides an interesting fact with respect to the present vs. past contrast in the Complex NP. Witness:

(12)   a.   [aitu-ga          daitooryoo-ni na-ru-to]              iw
             that.guy-NOM president-DAT  become-PRES-COMP SAY.PRES
             uwasa
             rumor
             'the rumor that that guy will become a president'
       b.   [aitu-ga          daitooryoo-ni na-ru-to]              it-ta
             that.guy-NOM president-DAT  become-PRES-COMP SAY-PAST
             uwasa
             rumor
             'the rumor that that guy will become a president'

                                                                  (Saito, 2018, 9)

He observes that (12a) is a neutral description whereas (12b) indicates that the speaker does not commit to the truth of it, whence it is typically followed by utterances like 'you shouldn't believe such a rumor.' In a sense, this means that the speaker does not commit himself to the truth of the SAYing event. In fact, this is a typical behavior of nonpast *-ta*. However, there are two constraints on the availability of nonpast *-ta*: one is that verbs must be unaccusative, and the other is that only relative clauses allow it. Since the proposed analysis has SAY as unaccusative, to the extent that *-ta* in (10) and (12b) is nonpast, it is another piece of evidence for the current analysis.

   At this juncture, let us consider what PP in (9) is, and why it is morphologically null. The latter question will be answered by a general property of P, which is that it cannot be stranded in Japanese. That is, relativization needs a null P as in the following:

(13)   a.   Taroo-wa Hanako-ni kono basyo-de at-ta.
             Taro-TOP  Hanko-DAT this   place-in  meet-PAST
             'Taro met Hanako in this place.'
       b.   *[NP [RC OP$_1$ Taroo-ga Hanako-ni  $t_1$-de at-ta]      basyo]
                        Taro-NOM Hanako-DAT   -in  meet-PAST place
             Intended '(the) place' which Taro met Hanako in'
       c.   [NP [RC OP$_1$ Taroo-ga Hanako-ni  $t_1$-∅ at-ta]       basyo]
                        Taro-NOM Hanako-DAT        meet-PAST place
             '(the) place' (where) Taro met Hanako'

For the former question, we will consider it by discussing the Hearsay-ish

Construction in the next section.

## 4.3   The Hearsay-ish Construction

I contend that the structure of the Heasay-ish Construction is the non-relativized version of (9) with nominalization, so (2) is syntactically (14); following Moulton (2014), I assume that the nominalizing head *n* ∃-closes the event of VP.

(14)
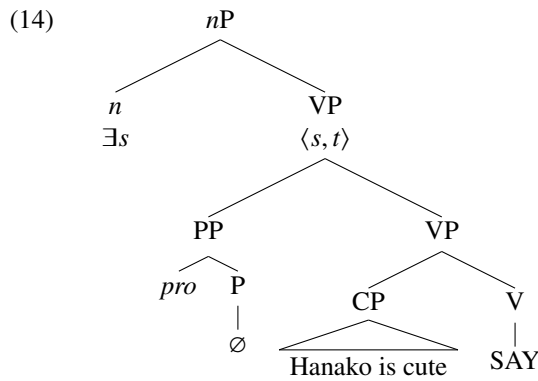


A piece of evidence for SAY in the Hearsay-ish Construction being not a usual verb comes from suffixation of a *bona fide* hearsay evidential marker in Japanese, *-rasii*.

(15)   a.   Aisita     ame-ga  fu-ru(*-koto)-rasii.
             tomorrow rain-NOM fall-PRES-thing-EVID
             'I heard that it would rain tomorrow.'
       b.   [Aisita     ame-ga  fu-ru     to]  iw*(-koto)-rasii.
             tomorrow rain-NOM fall-PRES COMP SAY.PRES-thing-EVID
             'I heard that it would rain tomorrow.'

As shown in (15a), usual matrix verbs must be suffixed by *-rasii* without a support by the formal noun *koto* 'thing', while the Hearsay-ish Construction needs it. This can be considered to indicate that SAY in the Hearsay-ish Construction is not in a usual conclusive form. Then, if (14) is on the right track, it is a case of matrix nominalization observed in some languages (cf. Hiraiwa, 2005, 154).

For PP, it can be overt as in (16). Also, since the report source can be a *pro*, it refers to any entity if a given context allows it. Thus, the speaker can be the report source as in (17), which is impossible for the genuine hearsay

evidentiality.[3]

(16)  Tenkiyohoo-niyoreba,           [aisita     ame-ga fu-ru    to]
      weather-forecast-according.to  tomorrow rain-NOM fall-PRES COMP
      iw.
      SAY.PRES
      'According to the weather forecast, it will rain tomorrow.'

(17)  A:  Hanako-ga   5-ji-ni  ku-ru-yo.
          Hanako-NOM 5-CL-at come-PRES-SFP
          'Hanako will come at 5.'
      B:  Nani?
          what
          'What?'
      A:  Dakara, [Hanako-ga   5-ji-ni  ku-ru       to]   iw
          so.listen  Hanako-NOM 5-CL-at come-PRES COMP SAY.PRES
          no-da.
          NMLZ COP.PRES
          'I'm telling you that Hanako will come at 5.'

In (17), SAY appears with *No-da* Construction, and I maintain that *no* is an
overt manifestation of *n*, and that its function is to support morphology. For
instance, when the Hearsay-ish Construction occurs in the subject position, it
bears a nominative case:

(18)  [Taroo-niyoreba  [asita      ame-ga fu-ru     to]
       Taro-according.to  tomorrow rain-NOM fall-PRES COMP
      iw-no]-ga          sinzi-rare-nai.      Aitu-wa      itumo
      SAY.PRES-NMLZ-NOM believe-can-NEG.PRES that.guy-TOP always
      uso-o  tuk-u.
      lie-ACC tell-PRES
      'Taro's report that it will rain tomorrow cannot be believed. He al-
      ways tells a lie.'

Thus, in the *No-da* Construction, *no* supports the suffixial copula, *-da*. Func-
tionally speaking, the *No-da* Construction introduces a sentence as all-focused
(Hiraiwa and Ishihara, 2002, 2012). Therefore, Hiraiwa and Ishihara propose
that the copula heads FocusP. However, I do not follow them and I simply as-
sume that the *No-da* Construction is simply a combination of *n* and a copula,
and that the all-focused reading is obtained via information structure mapping
after syntax.[4]

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[3] See Etxepare (2010) for a similar phenomenon in Spanish.

[4] The copula can be conjugated as past in the *No-da* Construction, so this may be problematic

## 5   Conclusion

In this paper, we have investigated two constructions that involve a grammaticalized verb, SAY, i.e. the Complex NP and the Hearsay-ish Construction, and they are derivationally related. The proposed analysis not only provides a simple and unified picture of those two grammatical constructions but captures various kinds of empirical properties they exhibit. Also, the Complex NP formed by a grammaticalized 'say' verb is observed in various languages; e.g. let us consider a case from Turkish (Özyıldız, 2019):

(19)     [ ben geldim *(diye) ] {sanı/deyimi}
              I    came    DIYE    belief/saying
         Lit. 'a belief/saying that I came.' (Özyıldız, 2019, 15)

In (19), *diye* is used to introduce an appositive clause, and it is a combination of the verb *de-* 'say' and the linker -(*y*)*A*, according to Özyıldız et al. (2019) and Özyıldız (2019).[5] Therefore, the present study contributes to the study of (one type of) clausal embedding in Japanese from the crosslinguistic perspective.

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for Hiraiwa and Ishihara's analysis. In fact, Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012) are aware of this issue, and they state that the past marker is not a tense marker, but its function is more like a modal particle. For instance:

(i)     Asita     Taroo-ga ku-ru-no   da-ta.
        tomorrow Taro-NOM come-PRES COP-PAST
        'It is that Taro will come tomorrow.'

Here, even if the copula is in the past form, *asita* 'tomorrow' is possible, and (i) sounds as if the speaker recalls the arranged future event of Taro's coming. I concur with this observation, but I am still not so convinced by their argument based on (i), pointing out another important fact that the copular part of the *No-da* Construction can be negated as in (ii), which may indicate that the copula in the *No-da* Construction is just a usual verb.

(ii)    Asita     Taroo-ga ku-ru-no   de-wa-nakatta.      Kyoo-da-ta.
        tomorrow Taro-NOM come-PRES COP-TOP-NEG.COP.PAST today-COP-PAST
        'It is not that Taro will come tomorrow. It is today (that he will come).'

[5] According to Özyıldız et al. (2019), the capital *A* represents a vowel that undergoes vowel harmony.

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