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A Revisit of Direct Quotation Clauses in Japanese [†]

Yuya Noguchi

1. Introduction

In Japanese, a verb of saying and thinking (e.g. *i(-u)* ‘say’) can take a complement clause headed by a quotation marker *to*, which expresses what someone says or thinks, as exemplified in (1).

- (1) Makoto-wa [kon’nitiwa to] it-ta.
Makoto-Top hello to say-Past
‘Makoto said, “Hello.”’ (Fujita 2000: 3)

Within the framework of traditional Japanese linguistics (i.e. *nihongogaku*), Fujita (2000), Sunakawa (1989, 2003), among others, have argued that quotation clauses in Japanese can be distinguished into two types, namely indirect and direct quotation clauses, on the basis of grammatical criteria. In this paper, however, we point out that this simple dichotomy cannot cover all the empirical facts related to *to*-clauses. Based on this observation, we argue that what has been categorized as direct quotations can be further subdivided into two types. In addition, based on analyses of direct quotations in literature, we discuss how the two types of direct quotation clauses in Japanese are syntactically derived from the standpoint of generative grammar.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 lays out previous descriptive research on quotation clauses in Japanese. In Section 3, it is shown that syntactic asymmetries are observed in direct quotation clauses. Based on this observation, we propose the subdivision of *to*-clauses that have been traditionally defined as direct quotations. In Section 4, we discuss syntactic derivations of the two types of direct quotation clauses, taking into consideration proposals which have been presented in literature. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. Previous Research

One of the empirical facts which bolster the argument for the grammatical dichotomy of Japanese quotation clauses is that indexicals, such as pronominal expressions, in the *to*-clause can be ambiguously interpreted. Witness the following example, where the first person pronoun *watasi* ‘I’ is put in the quotation clause:

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- (2) Kare-wa [watasi-ga ik-u to] it-ta.
 he-Top I-Nom go-Pres to say-Past
 ‘He said that I would go. / He said, “I will go.” ’ (Sunakawa 1989: 358)

Of importance in (2) is that the pronominal element in the quotation clause is ambiguously interpreted, as implied in the translation. Specifically, it refers to either the speaker of the whole sentence or the speaker of the content of the *to*-clause (i.e. the matrix subject *kare* ‘he’). In the former case, *watasi* ‘I’ is interpreted from “the perspective of the speaker of the whole sentence (PSW, henceforth),” whereas, in the latter case, the pronoun is construed from “the perspective of the original speaker (POS, henceforth)” of the quoted content. In this sense, the *to*-clause in (2) is regarded as an indirect quotation clause when it is interpreted from PSW, while it is a direct quotation when it is viewed from POS.

With respect to this classification of quotation clauses, it has been pointed out that a certain element forces a *to*-clause to function as a direct quotation clause when it occurs in the clause (cf. Fujita 2000, Sunakawa 1989, 2003). In this paper, we refer to such elements as “direct quotation elements (DQ-elements, henceforth),” and, as a case study, deal with four of them¹: sentence final particles (SFPs, henceforth) (e.g. *yo*, *ne*, *sa*), politeness markers (i.e. *-desu* / *-masu*), interjections (e.g. *a*, *ee*, *hai*) and interjectory particles (e.g. *-ne*, *-sa*).² Relevant examples are shown below:

- (3) a. SFPs (cf. Saito & Haraguchi 2012)
 Hanako-wa [Taroo-wa kanozyo-o tasuke-tekure-ru yo to] it-ta.
 Hanako-Top Taro-Top she-Acc help-for.her-Pres SFP to say-Past
 *‘Hanako_i said that Taro would help her_{i(j)}.’ / ✓‘Hanako_i said, “Taro will help her_{i(j)}.” ’
 (cf. Saito & Haraguchi 2012: 114)
- b. Politeness Markers (cf. Miyagawa 2012, Yoshimoto 2016)
 Paul-wa [kare-ga sono sigoto-o si-mas-u to] it-ta.
 Paul-Top he-Nom that job-Acc do-Pol-Pres to say-Past
 *‘Paul_i said that he_{i(j)} would do that job.’ / ✓‘Paul_i said, “He_{i(j)} will do that job.” ’
 (cf. Yoshimoto 2016: 6)
- c. Interjections
 Hanako-wa [a, watasi-ga ik-u to] it-ta.
 Hanako-Top oh I-Nom go-Pres to say-Past

¹ For want of space, we will not deal with other DQ-elements, including “vocatives” and “inverted elements” (cf. Sunakawa 2003). Note that *to*-clauses where those elements are included are categorized into direct quotation clauses Type-B (see Section 3).

² “Interjectory particles” refer to what is often called “*kantoo-joshi*,” which is attached to certain elements in a sentence, as shown in (3d).

*‘Hanako said that I would go.’ / ✓ ‘Hanako said, “Oh, I will go.”’

d. Interjectory Particles

Hanako-wa [watasi-ga-ne Tookyoo-ni-ne ik-u (n da) to] it-ta.

Hanako-Top I-Nom-Prt Tokyo-to-Prt go-Pres C Cop to say-Past

*‘Hanako said that I would go.’ / ✓ ‘Hanako said “I will go to Tokyo.”’

Note that the *to*-clauses in the above examples, where a certain DQ-element occurs, cannot be construed from PSW but only from POS. This means that a quotation clause is regarded only as a direct quotation when it includes any of the four kinds of DQ-elements (see also fn.1).

3. Further Observation

In the previous section, the observation in literature was displayed that quotation clauses in Japanese can be classified into indirect and direct quotation clauses from grammatical perspectives. In this section, we present further observation on quotation clauses and point out that the simple dichotomy of quotation clauses cannot cover the whole range of relevant empirical data. Specifically, it is shown in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 that asymmetries are observed in direct quotation clauses with respect to scope interpretation of *wh*-phrases and long distance scrambling. Considering these observations, we argue in Section 3.3 that *to*-clauses which have been traditionally classified as direct quotation clauses are further subdivided into two classes on the basis of grammatical criteria.

3.1. Scope Interpretation of *Wh*-phrases

Let us first observe facts on scope interpretation of a *wh*-phrase which is put in a *to*-clause. To begin with, a *wh*-phrase can take a matrix scope when it occurs in a quotation clause without any DQ-element, which may be interpreted as an indirect quotation clause, as in (4).

- (4) Taroo-wa [Tookyoo-ni-wa dare-ga ik-u to] it-ta no ?
 Taro-Top Tokyo-to-Top who-Nom go-Pres to say-Past C
 ‘Who did Taro say would go to Tokyo?’

Consider, then, the examples below where quotation clauses include both a *wh*-phrase and a DQ-element, which compels the clause to function as a direct quotation:

- (5) a. Taroo-wa [Tookyoo-ni-wa dare-ga ik-u yo to] it-ta no ?
 Taro-Top Tokyo-to-Top who-Nom go-Pres SFP to say-Past C
 Intended Reading (IR): ‘Who did Taro say, “(t) will go to Tokyo.”?’

- b. Taroo-wa [Tookyoo-ni-wa dare-ga iki-mas-u to] it-ta no ?
 Taro-Top Tokyo-to-Top who-Nom go-Pol-Pres to say-Past C
 IR: ‘Who did Taro say, “(t) will go to Tokyo.”?’ (cf. Uchibori 2007: 314-315)
- c. *Taroo-wa [a, Tookyoo-ni-wa dare-ga ik-u (yo) to] it-ta no ?
 Taro-Top oh Tokyo-to-Top who-Nom go-Pres SFP to say-Past C
 IR: ‘Who did Taro say, “Oh, (t) will go to Tokyo.”?’ (cf. Uchibori 2007: 298)
- d. *Taroo-wa [Tookyoo-ni-wa-ne dare-ga(-ne) ik-u (n da) to] it-ta no ?
 Taro-Top Tokyo-to-Top-Prt who-Nom-Prt go-Pres C Cop to say-Past C
 IR: ‘Who did Taro say, “(t) will go to Tokyo.”?’

Noteworthy here is that the possibility of a *wh*-phrase taking matrix scope depends on what kind of DQ-element occurs in the quotation clause. More specifically, matrix scope interpretation of a *wh*-phrase is possible when an SFP or a politeness marker appears in the *to*-clause, as shown in (5a) and (5b) respectively, whereas it is not possible when an interjection or an interjectory particle is put in the quotation clause, as in (5c) and (5d) respectively. This fact indicates that grammatical asymmetries do exist in what has been defined as direct quotation clauses, casting doubt the simple dichotomy of quotation clauses.

3.2. Long Distance Scrambling

The second fact we observe has to do with long distance scrambling of an element in a *to*-clause. First of all, notice that an element can be scrambled from its original site in a *to*-clause to a position in the matrix clause when the quotation clause does not include any DQ-element, as in (6).

- (6) Tookyoo-ni_i Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga *t_i* ik-u to] it-ta.
 Tokyo-to Taro-Top Hanako-Nom go-Pres to say-Past
 ‘Lit. To Tokyo, Taro said that Hanako would go (t).’

In contrast, however, asymmetries are detected with respect to the same syntactic operation when a *to*-clause includes a particular DQ-element. Witness relevant data in (7).

- (7) a. Tookyoo-ni_i Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga *t_i* ik-u yo to] it-ta.
 Tokyo-to Taro-Top Hanako-Nom go-Pres SFP to say-Past
 ‘Lit. To Tokyo, Taro said, “Hanako will go (t).”’
- b. Tookyoo-ni_i Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga *t_i* iki-mas-u to] it-ta.
 Tokyo-to Taro-Top Hanako-Nom go-Pol-Pres to say-Past
 ‘Lit. To Tokyo, Taro said, “Hanako will go (t).”’ (cf. Uchibori 2007: 315)

- c. *Tookyoo-ni_i Taroo-wa [_a Hanako-ga _{t_i} ik-u (yo) to] it-ta.
Tokyo-to Taro-Top oh Hanako-Nom go-Pres SFP to say-Past
‘*Lit.* To Tokyo, Taro said, “Oh, Hanako will go (*t*).” ’ (cf. Uchibori 2007: 298)
- d. *Tookyoo-ni(-ne)_i Taroo-wa [Hanako-ga-ne _{t_i} ik-u (n da) to] it-ta.
Tokyo-to-Prt Taro-Top Hanako-Nom-Prt go-Pres C Cop to say-Past
‘*Lit.* To Tokyo, Taro said, “Hanako will go (*t*).” ’

Specifically, long distance scrambling can apply to an element in a *to*-clause which includes an SFP or a politeness marker, as shown in (7a) and (7b) respectively, while it cannot apply to one in a quotation clause with an interjection or an interjectory particle, as in (7c) and (7d) respectively. In addition to the observation in (5), the data set in (7) also buttresses the view that it is necessary to modify the traditional classification of quotation clauses in Japanese.

3.3. Subdivision of Direct Quotation Clauses

We have observed so far that *to*-clauses which have been traditionally grouped as direct quotation clauses exhibit different grammatical properties depending on what type of DQ-element occurs in the clause. These asymmetries are organized into Table 1.

Table 1: Asymmetries in direct quotation clauses

	SFPs	Politeness Markers	Interjections	Interjectory Particles
Interpretation of Indexicals	POS	POS	POS	POS
Matrix Scope of a <i>wh</i> -phrase in a <i>to</i> -clause	✓	✓	*	*
Long Distance Scrambling	✓	✓	*	*

More specifically, direct quotation clauses which have an SFP or a politeness marker allow their internal element to be syntactically active, while those with an interjection or an interjectory particle do not. This is demonstrated by the difference in the possibility of matrix scope interpretation of a *wh*-phrase and long distance scrambling. Notice here that the simple dichotomy of Japanese quotation clauses presented in traditional Japanese linguistics is not sufficient for covering those asymmetries observed in Sections 3.1 and 3.2. Considering this backdrop, we argue that the traditional class of direct quotation clauses is further subdivided into two groups, which we refer to as direct quotation clauses “Type-A” and “Type-B.” Details of these subclasses are shown in (8).

(8) Subdivision of direct quotation clauses in Japanese

a. Direct quotation clauses Type-A:

- They are capable of taking in only limited range of DQ-elements, including SFPs and politeness markers but excluding at least interjections and interjectory particles.
- An element in those clauses can be subject to syntactic operations.

b. Direct quotation clauses Type-B:

- They are capable of taking in any kind of DQ-elements (see also fn.1).
- An element in those clauses cannot be subject to syntactic operations.

In a nutshell, this section has proposed the new categorization of Japanese direct quotation clauses in (8), which covers a wider range of empirical data than the traditional classification.

4. Derivations of Direct Quotation Clauses

Based on the descriptive considerations on direct quotation clauses in the previous section, we now discuss how the two types of direct quotation clauses are syntactically derived, on the basis of syntactic analyses of direct quotations provided in previous research. Particularly, I point out that direct quotation clauses Type-A and Type-B are derived in different manners.

4.1. Previous Analyses

To begin with, we display a concise overview of previous syntactic analyses of direct quotations, especially those in English, to establish the basis of the following discussion.³ Those analyses can be roughly distinguished into three types. The first one is presented by Collins (1997) among others. He argues that a direct quotation lies in the syntactic structure independently of the matrix clause and is associated with it by an operator, as shown in (9). What he presents as one piece of empirical evidence for the structure in (9) is that a matrix clause can be sandwiched by the two split pieces of a direct quotation (e.g. *“When on earth,” asked Harry, “will the fishing begin?”*)

(9) (Quote) [CP Op [TP ... [VP V t_{Op}]]] (Quote)

The second type of analysis of direct quotations is that by Wu (2008) among others. According to her proposal, a direct quotation is directly introduced as a complement of a verb, as in (10), unlike (9). She bases this proposal on the fact that an element in a direct quotation can be subject to some syntactic operations, such as “one replacement” (e.g. *When the surgeon said “Give me the scalpel,” she handed him the wrong one.*). (See, however, Partee (1973) for a different view on this fact.)

³ Detailed discussion of each previous analysis is not laid out here for want of space. We refer readers to the original papers for further discussion.

(10) [CP [TP ... [VP V Quote]]]

Finally, Partee (1973) argues that what is introduced into syntactic structures as a direct quotation is only its surface form, namely its phonological elements, as exemplified in (11). One of the motives which lead her to propose the structure in (11b) is the fact that the two sentences in (12) do not share the common meaning.

- (11) a. Tom said, “My grandfather was killed with a knife by a bachelor.”
 b. [TP Tom [VP said [NP [*mai grandfather wuz ...*]]]] (cf. Partee 1973: 412)
- (12) a. The other day Tom said to me, “A bachelor killed my grandfather with a knife.”
 b. The other day Tom said to me, “An unmarried man used a knife to cause the father of one of my parents to die.” (cf. *ibid*: 411)

4.2. Direct Quotation Clauses in Syntactic Structures

Now that we have taken a quick look at previous analyses of direct quotations in terms of generative grammar, we now consider on the basis of those analyses how direct quotation clauses in Japanese are syntactically derived. Let us initially consider whether or not they are independent of the matrix clause (cf. (9) vs. (10)). In this respect, syntactic diagnoses on constituency of VP, such as VP fronting and VP replacement, should be of great help. In the case of VP fronting, for example, a direct quotation clause should be able to be included in a fronted VP constituent but cannot be left in-situ, if it is generated as a complement of a verb as in (10). On the other hand, the opposite result should be obtained if the structure in (9) applies. Bearing these expectations in mind, observe the data in (13) (cf. Miyamoto 2016).

- (13) a. Taroo-wa Ziroo-ni [(a,) Hanako-wa tosyokan-ni it-ta yo to]
 Taro-Top Jiro-to oh Hanako-Top library-to go-Past SFP *to*
 ii-dake si-ta.
 say-only do-Past
 ‘Taro only said to Jiro, “(Oh,) Hanako went to the library.”’
- b. [Ziroo-ni [(a,) Hanako-wa tosyokan-ni it-ta yo to] ii-dake]_i
 Jiro-to oh Hanako-Top library-to go-Past SFP *to* say-only
 Taroo-wa *t_i* si-ta.
 Taro-Top do-Past
- c. *[Ziroo-ni ii-dake]_i Taroo-wa [(a,) Hanako-wa tosyokan-ni it-ta yo
 Jiro-to say-only Taro-Top oh Hanako-Top library-to go-Past SFP

to] t_i si-ta.
to do-Past

These data show that when VP fronting applies to a sentence including a direct quotation clause, the fronted constituent must include the quotation clause. This observation thus indicates that a direct quotation clause in Japanese is subordinated to the matrix clause as in (10), unlike in (9).

The same conclusion can also be obtained in the case of VP replacement by *soo-su* ‘do so’ (cf. Miyamoto 2016). Suppose that a speaker utters (14b) or (14b’) after voicing (14a) and attempts to replace the VP in (14a) with *soo-su*.

- (14) a. Taroo-wa Ziroo-ni [(hora,) basu-ga ki-ta yo to] it-ta.
Taro-Top Jiro-to hey bus-Nom come-Past SFP to say-Past
‘Taro said to Jiro, “(Hey,) The bus has come.” ’
- b. Hanako-mo soo-si-ta.
Hanako-also so-do-Past
‘Hanako did so, too.’
- b’. *Hanako-mo [(hora,) basu-ga ki-ta yo to] soo-si-ta.
Hanako-also hey bus-Nom come-Past SFP to so-do-Past
‘*Lit.* Hanako did so, “(Hey,) The bus has come,” too.’

The result is that (14b) is regarded as acceptable while (14b’) sounds odd. Note that the only difference between (14b) and (14b’) is whether the direct quotation clause still remains after the application of VP replacement. Hence, the data in (14) indicate that a direct quotation clause must be included in the VP constituent, which can be substituted by *soo-su*. This observation thus leads us to argue that (10), rather than (9), applies to sentences including a direct quotation clause in Japanese.

Notice here that the acceptability in (13b), (13c), (14b) and (14b’) remains constant regardless of the existence of the interjection *a* ‘oh’ or *hora* ‘hey’ in the *to*-clause. This fact indicates that the structure of (10) holds true whether the *to*-clause is a direct quotation clause Type-A or Type-B.

Our next concern is the internal structure of Japanese direct quotation clauses. In particular, we will show that direct quotation clauses Type-A and Type-B have different internal structures. Let us first consider direct quotation clauses Type-A. In the previous section, we confirmed that an element in this type of quotation clause is syntactically active, as indicated by the possibility of the matrix scope interpretation of a *wh*-phrase and long distance scrambling. This suggests that direct quotation clauses Type-A have their own internal structure. Given that, we contend that this type of quotation clause has the cartographic structure shown in (15) (cf. Noguchi 2016).⁴

⁴ Noguchi (2016) argues that ReportP, which forms an indirect quotation clause (cf. Saito & Haraguchi

(15) [QuoteP [SAP [ForceP [FinP [TP ...] (*no*)] (*ka*)] (*yo/ne/...*)] (*to*)] (cf. Noguchi 2016: 82)

In (15), QuoteP, which is headed by the quotation particle *to*, forms a direct quotation clause and takes as its complement S(peech)A(ct)P (cf. Speas & Tenny 2003), which can be headed by an SFP (cf. Saito & Haraguchi 2012) and can license a politeness marker (cf. Miyagawa 2012). Possessing such an internal structure, direct quotation clauses Type-A make elements included in them syntactically active, enabling those elements to be affected by syntactic operations.

In contrast with Type-A, however, direct quotation clauses Type-B do not allow their internal elements to be syntactically active, as observed in Section 3. This suggests that direct quotation clauses Type-B do not have their own internal syntactic structure as in (15). Instead, we claim that they have only their surface form, namely only their phonological elements, as proposed by Partee (1973) (cf. (11)). Thus, the structure of the sentence in (16a) is that in (16b).⁵

- (16) a. Taroo-wa [a, basu-ga ki-ta to] it-ta.
 Taro-Top oh bus-Nom come-Past to say-Past
 ‘Taro said, “Oh, the bus has come.”’
 b. [TopP Taroo-wa [TP [VP [a, basu-ga ki-ta] to it]-ta]]

Since direct quotation clauses Type-B do not accommodate any element that can function as a syntactic unit but solely consist of their phonological features as indicated in (16b), no syntactic operation can affect their internal domain, as observed in Section 3.

5. Conclusion

This paper revisited the classification of quotation clauses in Japanese and pointed out that the traditional simple dichotomy between “direct” and “indirect” quotation clauses face empirical difficulties. Particularly, we observed that asymmetries exist in *to*-clauses which have been classified as direct quotation clauses, with respect to whether elements in the clauses are syntactically active. With this backdrop, we argued that the traditional class of direct quotation clauses in Japanese is further subdivided into two groups, namely direct quotation clauses Type-A and Type-B. Furthermore, we considered how the two types of direct quotation clauses are syntactically derived. In particular, it was demonstrated that these two types of *to*-clauses are derived in different manners. This paper, however, does not explain what property makes different direct quotation clauses Type-A and Type-B. We now leave open this issue and will pursue it as another research question.

2012), is located between SAP and ForceP. This layer is excluded from the structure in (15) to simplify the present discussion.

⁵ We leave open here what the category of *to* in (16b) is.

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