Structure and inference in Japanese right dislocation

Kaori Furuya
University of North Texas

This paper explores the syntactic nature of Japanese Right Dislocation Constructions (RDCs) by illuminating the ellipsis sites in the postverbal domains of the constructions via pragmatic inference. Although the most prevailing bi-clausal analysis of RDCs adopts the perspective that the repetition of the antecedent clause occurs in collocation, this paper shows that the same surface strings are potentially ambiguous since right dislocation is a heterogeneous phenomenon. It proposes additional types of a bi-clausal structure and discusses evidence that suggests that even when the surface strings are the same the recovery of the ellipsis site is possibly derived in multiple ways through the use of distinct linguistic strategies.

Keywords: right dislocation, bi-clausal analyses, preposing, (pseudo-)clefts, coordination