

Modal markers in the Japanese verbal complex – affix ordering and universal hierarchies of functional categories

Modern Japanese has a rich agglutinating verb morphology. Corresponding to the strict S-O-V word order, morphological marking mostly materializes in the form of inflectional and derivational suffixes to the verb stem and further suffixes (so-called particles) which can be added to the fully inflected verb. Functional categories which are realized in this manner or through further periphrastic marking in the verbal complex include those for voice (passive, causative), benefactive, aspect, tense, negation, modality and mood, referent honorifics, addressee honorifics, illocutionary force, and illocutionary force modulation. The order of affixes and periphrastic markers is generally thought to reflect, with a few well-known exceptions (i.e. irregularities with negation and addressee honorific marking) semantic and syntactic scope.

This presentation focusses on the modal categories in the verbal complex. Research on the position of modal categories in universal semanto-syntactic layerings of the clause suggests a differentiation between different modal categories (e. g. Cinque (1999); Dik (1997); VanValin & LaPolla (1997)) including deontic modality, epistemic modality, evidentiality and objective and subjective subtypes. However, there are substantial differences in the position of specific modal categories in the proposed layerings. In the study for this presentation I have analyzed a large corpus of Japanese, including both written and spoken data, for the mutual ordering among modal markers, and the ordering regularities between modal markers and other categories, most notably tense and negation. This ordering in fact reflects both morphological constraints and semantic scope. The results suggest that (1) none of the universal hierarchies proposed so far can be correct, at least as far as Japanese is concerned. For example, evidential markers do not have wider scope than other modal markers, as is usually posited, (2) in-depth analysis in an individual language shows that hierarchical layering and the interplay between categories is much more complex than presented in universalist theories.

Cinque, Guglielmo. 1999. *Adverbs and Functional Heads*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dik, Simon C. 1997. *The Theory of Functional Grammar – Part 1: The Structure of the Clause*, ed. by Kees Hengeveld. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Van Valin, Robert D. and Randy J. LaPolla. 1997. *Syntax: Structure, Meaning, and Function*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.