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Abstract

Japanese is widely known as a WH-in-situ language, where WH-phrases stay in their original positions. This paper shows that obligatory overt movement of WH-phrases is involved in mono ka rhetorical questions (MRQs), which are examined in Oguro 2018. After observing the behavior of MRQs suggesting that they should be regarded as negative assertions rather than questions, this paper reveals that WH-phrases in MRQs need to be obligatorily fronted to sentence initial position, by investigating the scopal interaction between WH-phrases and the particle *dake* 'only'. It is suggested that WH-phrases in MRQs should be treated on a par with negative phrases in negative preposing cases.

Obligatory Overt Movement of WH-phrases in Japanese

Takeshi Oguro

1 Introduction

Unlike English, Japanese is a WH-in-situ language, where WH-phrases stay in their original positions.

- (1) a. Kimi-wa nani-o tabe-mas-ita ka?
you-TOP what-ACC eat-POLITE-PAST Q
'What did you eat?'
- b. Kimi-wa [John-ga nani-o tabe-ta to] omoi-mas-u ka?
you-TOP John-NOM what-ACC eat-PAST C think-POLITE-PRES Q
'What do you think John ate?'

In (1a), the WH-phrase is in sentence internal position and in (1b), it is in the subordinate clause and takes matrix scope.

Despite the above examples, there are views according to which Japanese involves some kind of WH-related movement. Lasnik and Saito (1992) assume that WH-phrases undergo obligatory WH-movement in covert syntax. Watanabe (1992) proposes that Japanese WH-phrases contain a phonetically null WH-operator, which is obligatorily raised in overt syntax. Takahashi (1993) suggests that in certain cases, optional scrambling of WH-phrases counts as syntactic WH-movement.

In this paper, I would like to show some rare cases in which WH-phrases are obligatorily raised in overt syntax. The kind of movement that I deal with here is found in *mono ka* rhetorical questions (MRQs), which have very distinctive properties, as observed by Oguro (2018).

2 Two Types of Rhetorical Questions

In this section, I briefly sketch some syntactic and interpretative properties of MRQs that distinguish them from other rhetorical questions. For the sake of comparison, I employ *to iu no* rhetorical questions (TRQs), initially examined by Sprouse (2007), and then by Fujii (2015) and Inada and Imanishi (2016) in some more detail, which behave like ordinary questions in many respects. The followings are the relevant examples.

- (3) [_{CP} Dare-ga kur-u to] iu no?
who-NOM come-PRES C say C
'Who would you say will come?' ('No one will come.')
- (4) Dare-ga kur-u mono ka!
who-NOM come-PRES C Q
'No one will come!'

The above examples are similar to each other in the sense that they both express something negative, but that is where their similarity stops. Below I outline some characteristic properties of MRQs that make them different from other rhetorical questions such as TRQs.

2.1 Negative Interpretation

Both (3) and (4) convey some kind of information that has to do with negative interpretation, but they differ from each other with respect to the degree of negativity. In (3), it is possible that the speaker is sure that no one will come but it is also possible that he or she just cannot imagine who will come. In the case of (4), on the other hand, the speaker is completely sure that no one will come.

2.2 Answerability

Another thing that separates the two types of rhetorical questions has to do with answerability. While TRQs can expect an answer in (5), MRQs do not tolerate such a response.

- (5) Iya, daremo ko-nai yo.
 no anyone come-NEG SFP
 'No, no one will come.'

The speaker can utter a TRQ like (3), expecting an answer like (5) from the hearer, which has the effect of reminding the hearer or making the hearer realize that no will come. In the case of MRQs like (4), however, the speaker does not expect such a response from the hearer.

2.3 Intonation

An audibly noticeable aspect that highlights MRQs concerns intonation. As observed in the following, TRQs can either end with rising intonation or falling intonation on a par with ordinary questions, but MRQs cannot end with rising intonation, falling intonation being obligatory.

- (3) [CP Dare-ga kur-u to] iu no? ↑ / ↓
 who-NOM come-PRES C say C
 'Who would you say will come?' ('No one will come.')
- (4) Dare-ga kur-u mono ka! * ↑ / ↓
 who-NOM come-PRES C Q
 'No one will come!'

2.4 The Addition of *Ittai* 'the Hell'

Another peculiarity that is found with MRQs is concerned with *ittai*, which is an element used to intensify the WH-phrase in a question (Pesetsky 1987, Nishigauchi 1990, Lasnik and Saito 1992 among others), as exemplified in (6).

- (6) (Ittai) dare-ga kur-u no?
 the.hell who-NOM come-PRES C
 'Who (the hell) will come?'

Interestingly, *ittai* is possible only in WH-questions. It is disallowed in other WH-sentences including concessive clauses like (7) and exclamative clauses like (8).

- (7) (*Ittai) Dare-ga kite-mo, boku-wa ureshii.
 the.hell who-NOM come-ever I-TOP happy
 'No matter who comes, I will be happy.'
- (8) Kare-wa (*ittai) nanto kooun na no daroo ka!
 he-TOP the.hell how lucky COP C MOD Q
 'How lucky he is!'

With this in mind, let us observe the following contrast.

- (9) [CP (Ittai) dare-ga kur-u to] iu no?
 the.hell who-NOM come-PRES C say C
 'Who the hell would you say will come?' ('No one will come.')
- (10) (*Ittai) dare-ga kur-u mono ka!
 the.hell who-NOM come-PRES C Q
 'No one will come!'

The TRQ in (9) is fine with or without *ittai*, which patterns with ordinary WH-questions, but the MRQ in (10) is degraded by the addition of this element. This contrast indicates that TRQs behave like ordinary questions, but MRQs do not.

2.5 The Licensing of Strict Negative Polarity Items

One striking property that makes MRQs distinct from other sentences generally referred to as questions is that they allow strict negative polarity items (NPIs), which are allowed in more restricted contexts than not-so-strict NPIs like *any*. Kishimoto (2008) observes that the adverb *koreizyoo* ‘anymore’, used non-referentially in the same sense as English adverb *anymore*, behaves as an NPI. As (11) indicates, this adverb is allowed in negative sentences but not in affirmative sentences.

- (11) John-ga sono-koto-o koreizyoo {kangae-nakat-ta/?*kangae-ta}.
 John-NOM that-matter-ACC anymore think-NEG-PAST/think-PAST
 ‘John {did not think/*thought} about that matter anymore.’

As shown in (12), the NPI *any* can be found in non-negative contexts such as conditionals (12a), *before*-clauses (12b), *yes/no*-questions (12c), and comparative clauses (12d).

- (12) a. If Mary sees anyone, she will cry.
 b. Before going any further, let us discuss this problem.
 c. Did she read any book?
 d. I would walk, rather than wait for any bus.

The adverb *koreizyoo* ‘anymore’ behaves in the same way, as illustrated in (13).

- (13) a. [Sono-koto-o koreizyoo hanase-ba] Mary-wa kitto
 that-matter-ACC anymore talk-if Mary-TOP surely
 komar-u daroo.
 trouble-PRES will
 ‘If she talks about that matter anymore, Mary will surely be in trouble.’
 b. [Gohan-o koreizyoo taber-u mae-ni] undoo-o si-nasai.
 rice-ACC anymore eat-PRES before exercise-ACC do-IMP.POLITE
 ‘Before eating rice anymore, do some exercise.’
 c. Mary-wa sono-koto-nituite koreizyoo kangaer-u desyoo ka?
 Mary-TOP that-matter-about anymore think- PRES will-POLITE QU
 ‘Will Mary think about that matter anymore?’
 d. [Koreizyoo hasir-u yori-mo] yasumu beki-da.
 anymore run-PRES than-also rest should-COP
 ‘You should take a rest rather than run anymore.’

This adverb, which is a not-so-strict NPI, is allowed both in TRQs and MRQs, as in (14).

- (14) a. [Dare-ga gohan-o koreizyoo taber-u to] iu no?
 who-NOM rice-ACC anymore eat-PRES C say C
 ‘Who would you say will eat rice anymore?’ ‘No one./I cannot imagine who.’
 b. Dare-ga gohan-o koreizyoo taber-u mono ka!
 who-NOM rice-ACC anymore eat-PRES C Q
 ‘No one will eat rice anymore!’

Let us then turn to strict NPIs such as *daremo* ‘anyone’, *kesshite* ‘ever’, and *nidoto* ‘again’. These expressions are allowed in negative contexts but not in affirmative contexts, as in (15).

- (15) John-wa/Daremo kesshite/nidoto {ko-nai/*kur-u}.
 John-TOP/anyone ever/again come-NEG/come-PRES
 ‘John/No one will ever/again come.’

Unlike not-so-strict NPIs, these items are disallowed in non-negative contexts, as in (16).

- (16) a. *[John-ga/daremo kesshite/nidoto kure-ba] boku-wa komar-u daroo
 John-NOM/anyone ever/again come-if I-TOP trouble-PRES will
 ‘If John/anyone ever/again comes, I will be in trouble.’
- b. *[John-ga/daremo kesshite/nidoto kur-u mae-ni] kaer-e
 John-NOM/anyone ever/again come-PRES before go.home-IMP
 ‘Go home before John/anyone ever/again comes.’
- c. *John-ga/daremo kesshite/nidoto kur-u desyoo ka?
 John-NOM/anyone ever/again come-PRES will-POLITE Q
 ‘Will John/anyone ever/again come?’
- d. *[John-o/daremo kesshite/nidoto semer-u yori-mo] kansya si-yoo
 John-ACC/anyone ever/again blame than-also thank do-EXH
 ‘Rather than ever/again blame John/anyone, let’s thank him.’

We are now in a position to ask how these items behave in the two kinds of rhetorical questions that we have been considering. Observe (17).

- (17) a. *[Daremo kesshite/nidoto kur-u to] iu no?
 anyone never/again come-PRES C say C
 ‘Would you say anyone will (ever) come (again)?’
- b. Daremo kesshite/nidoto kur-u mono ka!
 anyone never/again come-PRES C Q
 ‘No one will (ever) come (again)!’

(17a), a TRQ, does not license strict NPIs, but (17b), an MRQ, succeeds in licensing them. It seems fair to say that MRQs are negative sentences.

What we have seen concerning the two types of rhetorical questions in this section can be summarized in the following manner.

- (18) a. TRQs behave as negatively biased questions.
 b. MRQs behave as negative assertions.

Rough structures of TRQs and MRQs are given in (19a) and (19b), respectively.

- (19) a. TRQs [CP Op_[Nonveridical] ... C_[+Q]]
 b. MRQs [CP Op_[Negative] ... C_[-Q]]

(19a) contains the complementizer with the [+Q] feature, which makes the clause interrogative, and the nonveridical operator, which licenses not-so-strict NPIs. (19b) involves the complementizer with the [-Q] feature, which is responsible for the non-interrogative status of the clause, and the negative operator, which licenses both strict and not-so-strict NPIs.

With this background, I show the behavior of WH-phrases in MRQs in the next section.

3 WH-Phrases in MRQs

Having clarified the properties of MRQs, let us now focus on the characteristic that is the main topic of this paper. As observed by Oguro (2018), WH-phrases in MRQs need to be in sentence initial position, in contrast to those found in TRQs.

- (20) a. [CP John-ga nani-o ka-u to] iu no?
 John-NOM what-ACC buy-PRES C say Q
 ‘What would you say John will buy?’ ‘John will buy nothing.’
- b. *Mary-ga nani-o ka-u mono ka!
 Mary-NOM what-ACC buy-PRES C Q
 ‘Mary will buy nothing!’

- c. ?Nani-o Mary-ga ka-u mono ka!
 what-ACC Mary-NOM buy-PRES C Q
 ‘Mary will buy nothing!’

As we have already seen in (3), TRQs can have a subject WH-phrase inside the subordinate clause. It is therefore not surprising that the object WH-phrase is allowed in (20a). What is remarkable is the contrast between (20b) and (20c), which shows that in MRQs, WH-phrases originating in sentence internal position cannot remain there but need to be raised to sentence initial position.

This contrast leads to the question as to the structural position occupied by the subject WH-phrase in MRQs, that is to say, whether the subject has to occupy some specific position or it just suffices to appear in sentence initial position in terms of linear ordering. In order to answer this question, an argument by Kishimoto (2009) is helpful. He utilizes the focus particle *dake* ‘only’ to determine the syntactic position of several kinds of subjects. Here, let us restrict our attention to two types: nominative subjects and ones marked with *kara* ‘from’, exemplified in (21).

- (21) a. John-ga odot-ta. b. John-kara odot-ta.
 John-NOM dance-PAST John-from dance-PAST
 ‘John danced.’ ‘John danced first.’

(21a) involves a nominative subject, and (21b) has a case of *kara*-marked subject. *Kara*-subjects can be used if they are regarded as the first individuals initiating the action described by the verb. When the particle *dake* ‘only’ is attached to the verb phrase in these examples, we get different interpretations depending on which kind of subject is employed, as shown in (22).

- (22) a. John-ga odori-dake si-ta b. John-kara odori-dake si-ta
 John-NOM dance-only do-PAST John-from dance-only do-PAST
 ‘John only danced.’ ‘Only John danced first.’

In (22a), the subject, being nominative, is outside the scope of *dake* ‘only’, which suggests that it is raised out of the verbal projection to [Spec, TP]. In (22b), the interpretation is reversed, with the subject being inside the scope of *dake* ‘only’. Since *dake* is attached to the verbal projection, it must be that the *kara*-marked subject remains in vP. The structural positions of the two subjects are given in (23).

- (23) [TP subject-ga [[vP subject-kara v] dake] T]

The behavior of these subjects provides a partial answer to the question concerning the WH-subject in MRQs. Observe (24).

- (24) a. [CP Dare-ga/Dare-kara odor-u to] iu no?
 who-NOM/who-from dance-PRES C say C
 ‘Who would you say will dance (first)? (No one will dance (first).)’
 b. Dare-ga/*Dare-kara odor-u mono ka!
 who-NOM/who-from dance-PRES C Q
 ‘No one will dance (first)!’

As shown in (24a), TRQs allow both types of subjects, which is expected because they allow object WH-phrases in-situ. What is important here is that as shown in (24b), MRQs do not allow the *kara*-subject, which indicates that WH-phrases in MRQs fail to remain in vP.

At this point, it is still not clear where *dare-ga* in (24b) is located. It could be in [Spec, TP], but it is also possible that it occupies an even higher position. The scopal property of *dake* provides a further clue as to where the WH-phrase is raised to in MRQs. It is important in this connection that *dake* can be attached to TP. Consider (25).

- (25) John-ga odot-ta-dake da
 John-NOM dance-PAST-only COP
 ‘Only John danced.’ (No one else did.)
 ‘John only danced.’ (He did nothing else.)

This example is at least two-way ambiguous with respect to the scope of *dake*, though Kishimoto (2009) is not much concerned with this ambiguity. One interpretation is that the subject is within the scope of *dake*. The other available interpretation is the one where John is outside its scope. The latter interpretation is possible when the subject is read with heavy stress, a sign of focus. This ambiguity suggests that there are two possible positions for the subject to be located, which are structurally represented in (26) (irrelevant details omitted).

- (26) a. [_{TP} Subject ...]*dake*
 b. [_{FocP} Subject [_{TP} *t* ...]*dake*]

The structure in (26a) is for the first interpretation, where the subject is in [Spec, TP], within the scope of *dake*, and the one in (26b) captures the second interpretation, where Subject, being assigned heavy stress, is raised to a focus-related position, vacating TP, hence outside the scope of *dake*.

Let us now ask how the WH-subject behaves in TRQs and MRQs.

- (27) a. [_{CP} Dare-ga odot-ta-dake da to] iu no?
 who-NOM dance-PAST-only COP C say C
 ‘Only who would you say danced?’
 (It is not the case that only one person danced. More than one person danced.)
 ‘Who would you say only danced?’
 (No one just danced; they did other things.)
 b. Dare-ga odot-ta-dake na mono ka!
 who-NOM dance-PAST-only COP C Q
 # ‘It is only the case that no one danced!’
 ‘No one only danced!’ (They did something else, too.)

As shown in (27a), TRQs allow both interpretations, indicating that the subject can remain in [Spec, TP] but it can also be raised to [Spec, FocP]. MRQs, on the other hand, only allow the second interpretation, which means that the WH-subject in an MRQ needs to be raised to [Spec, FocP].

Recall that the WH-object in an MRQ needs to be fronted. Assuming that WH-phrases in MRQs move to the same designated position, it is expected that the WH-object in MRQs is also raised to [Spec, FocP]. This expectation is confirmed. Consider (28).

- (28) a. Nani-o John-ga ka-u-dake da to iu no?
 what-ACC John-NOM buy-PRES-only COP C say C
 ‘Only what would you say John will buy?’
 (Not just one thing. He will buy others, too.)
 ‘What would you say John will only buy?’
 (He will not just buy anything. Probably he will resell it to others.)
 b. Nani-o John-ga ka-u-dake na mono ka!
 what-ACC John-NOM buy-PRES-only COP C Q
 # ‘Only John will buy nothing!’
 ‘There is nothing that only John will buy!’

(28a), a TRQ, allows both types of interpretations, which means that when the WH-phrase in a TRQ is raised, it can be focus-related movement but it does not necessarily have to be, given that the raised phrase can be scopally reconstructed. (28b), an MRQ, only has the interpretation where the WH-phrase is outside the scope of *dake*, being raised to [Spec, FocP].

Rough structures of WH-TRQs and WH-MRQs are given in (29).

- (29) a. WH-TRQS [CP Op_[Nonveridical] [TP [CP [TP ...WH...]]] C_[+Q]]
 a'. WH-TRQS [CP Op_[Nonveridical] [FocP WH [TP [CP [TP ...t...]]]] C_[+Q]]
 b. WH-MRQS [CP Op_[Negative] [FocP WH [TP ...t...]]... C_[-Q]]

WH-TRQs have two structures, depending on whether FocP is present or not, whereas WH-MRQs invariably have FocP.

4 The Nature of Obligatory Movement in MRQs

As we have seen, MRQs do not pattern with ordinary questions but behave like negative assertions. A natural question has to do with the nature of movement of the WH-phrases in MRQs. It cannot be the kind of the interrogative WH-movement found in English because Japanese lacks overt WH-movement. The answer must come from MRQs being negative assertions.

Han and Siegel (1997), dealing with English examples such as (30), argue that rhetorical WH-question formation is similar to negative-preposing.

- (30) a. With what employee would John ever be happy? (RQ)
 b. With no employee would John be happy (negative preposing)

According to Han and Siegel, (30a) is only rhetorically interpreted and its meaning is the same as (30b), which involves negative preposing. Given this, I propose the following:

- (31) a. WH-MRQs are instances of negative preposing.
 b. WH-phrases in MRQs are negative expressions rather than interrogative expressions.

WH-TRQs have two structures, depending on whether FocP is present or not, whereas WH-MRQs invariably have FocP.

5 Concluding Remark

In this paper, I have shown that Japanese, despite being a WH-in-situ language, has cases of obligatory overt movement of WH-phrases. They are found in MRQs, which should be regarded as negative assertions rather than true questions. I suggested that WH-phrases in MRQs are negative phrases, which undergo focus movement, on a par with negative preposing in English.

In this paper I only dealt with MRQs in Japanese, but obligatory overt WH-phrasal movement is observed in other cases as well. Sakamoto and Ikarashi (2014, 2015) show that this type of movement is required in certain types of rhetorical questions in Japanese, which the speaker utters not for seeking information but for accusing the hearer or others regarding the event or situation that he perceives. This seems to call for a unified treatment.

The movement-related property of rhetorical questions is not just limited to Japanese, but it is a more general thing. According to Obenauer and Poletto (2000), in the Northern Veneto dialect of Italian known as Bellunese, WH-phrases in rhetorical questions behave differently from those in true questions. For instance, in this dialect, bare WH-phrases like 'who' and 'what' must be in sentence internal position in true questions but must be fronted in rhetorical questions. Based on this and other observations, they argue that WH-phrases in rhetorical questions target a position in the left periphery different from the position targeted in true WH-questions. Then, the present study can be taken to lend indirect support to their analysis. This paper is originally intended to report a rare exception found in a less studied construction in a certain language, but in a broad perspective, what we have seen is not just one peculiarity in one particular language, but it might well be a reflection of a general property of natural languages.

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