

Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages
語言學及現代語言系

Weak Heads in Labeling: Case Studies with Complex Predicates and Modification Structures

Prof. Mamoru SAITO
Nanzan University

Date: November 3, 2020 (Tuesday)

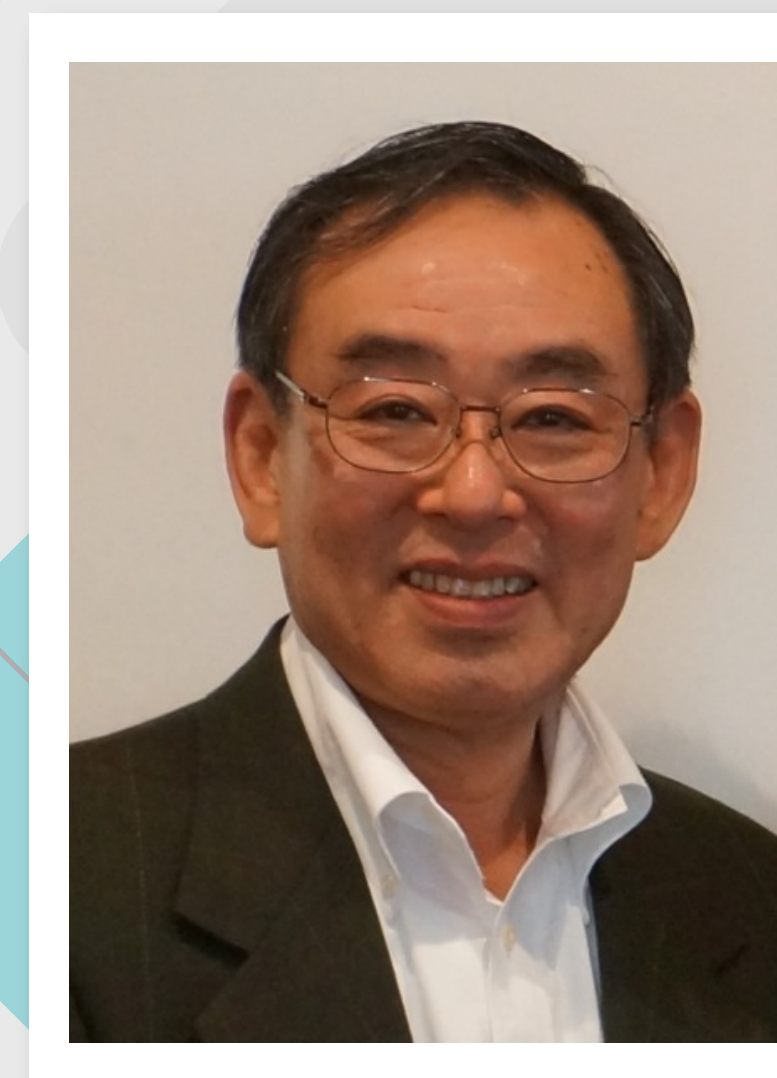
Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)

***Seminar will be conducted via ZOOM**

Registration Deadline:

12:00nn of 1 November 2020 (Sunday) – Hong Kong Time

The Zoom Meeting details will be provided on 2 November 2020



Prior registration is required

Abstract

One of the main goals of Minimalist Syntax is to eliminate stipulated syntactic principles. The labeling theory of Chomsky 2013 was a big step forward toward this goal as it explains the distribution of noun phrases as well as the nature of movement in place of several syntactic principles, including the Case Filter and the Last Resort Principle. It also opened up a new way to approach syntactic variation among languages.

I proposed in Saito 2017 that Case markers and predicate inflection serve as anti-labeling devices in Japanese and showed that the labeling theory then successfully explains several well-known typological properties of the language, including free word-order, multiple subjects, and argument ellipsis. In this presentation, I first make an attempt to explain why Case markers and predicate inflection serve as anti-labeling devices. The proposal is that they are weak heads in the sense of Chomsky 2015 and hence are unable to provide labels. Then, I extend the analysis to two more typologically significant properties of Japanese. One is the employment of compound verbs with unique properties and the other is productive sentential modification of nouns.

Speaker

Mamoru Saito was raised in Tokyo, Japan and moved to the U.S. for college education. He received B.A. in philosophy from Stanford University and Ph.D. in linguistics from MIT. He taught at USC (1984-86), University of Tsukuba (1986-88), and University of Connecticut (1988-95). He has been Professor of Linguistics at Nanzan University since 1995. Among his recent articles are "Selection and Incorporation in Complex Predicate Formation," *Chinese Syntax in a Cross-Linguistic Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2014: 251-269), "Cartography and Selection: Case Studies in Japanese," *Beyond Functional Sequence* (Oxford University Press, 2015: 255-274), "Remnant Movement, Radical Reconstruction, and Binding Relations," *Remnant Movement* (De Gruyter Mouton, 2015: 221-256), "(A) Case for Labeling: Labeling in Languages without ϕ -feature Agreement," *The Linguistic Review* 33.1 (Special Issue on Labeling, 2016: 129-175), "Japanese Wh-Phrases as Operators with Unspecified Quantificational Force" (Featured Article), *Language and Linguistics* 18.1 (2017: 1-25), "Notes on the Locality of Anaphor Binding and A-movement" (Invited Article), *English Linguistics* 34 (2017: 1-33), "Ellipsis," *Handbook of Japanese Syntax* (De Gruyter Mouton, 2017: 701-750), "Transformations in the Quest for a Simpler, More Elegant Theory," *Syntactic Structures after 60 Years: The Impact of Chomskyan Revolution in Linguistics* (De Gruyter Mouton, 2018: 255-282), and "On the Incompatibility of Wh and Focus" (with Giuliano Bocci and Luigi Rizzi), *Gengo Kenkyu* 154 (2018: 29-51).

All are Welcome

Enquiries

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, CUHK.

Tel: (852)3943 7911/7025 Fax: (852)2603 7755 E-mail: lin@cuhk.edu.hk