On the Syntax of Plural Elements in Japanese: A Labeling Approach
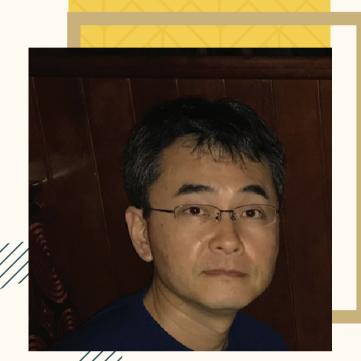
Prof. Masao OCHI
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Date: September 26, 2023 (Tuesday)
Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)
Venue: Lecture Theatre 4, Lee Shau Kee Building,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Abstract

In this presentation, I attempt to elucidate the nominal structure in Japanese. Special attention is paid to plural markers (PLs) of this language, which are known to have some intriguing properties, both syntactically and semantically. I will argue that additive and associative readings involve different merging sites of PLs within the nominal structure: the additive reading is obtained when PL is merged low in the nominal structure and the associative reading is obtained when PL occurs much higher, merged with the entire nominal phrase. Further, adopting the idea that PLs in Japanese are modifying plurals (and not head plurals) in the sense of Wiltschko (2008), I will pursue the idea that Japanese PLs are anti-labeling devices (Saito 2016, 2018) and discuss how this hypothesis helps us analyze a wide range of data in which PLs interact with other elements in the nominal domain, especially numeral classifiers and nominal pro-forms. Time permitting, I will also compare Japanese PLs and Chinese PLs.

Speaker

Masao Ochi received his PhD in Linguistics from the University of Connecticut and is now a professor at the Graduate School of Humanities, Osaka University, Japan. His research has focused on various aspects of theoretical syntax, including case alternation phenomena, noun phrase structure, and *wh*-dependencies. His publications include articles in journals such as *English Linguistics, Iberia, Journal of East Asian Linguistics, Lingua, Studia Linguistica*, and *Syntax*.

All Are Welcome

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