INTRODUCTION

Background & Motivation

SRC (GM): Sikiyo-o-himenotamu

GM: Connective-as-italic stabbed phrase (The singer who criticized the conductor)

ORB: Sikiyo-o-ga (GM) himenotamu

GM: Connective-as-vocal stab (The singer who the conductor criticized)

In Japanese, subject relative clauses (SRCs) and object relative clauses (ORCs) are easier to process than objective relative clauses (ORCs).

Previous studies tried explain this fact by the accounts which presume the distance between filter and its gap size as the determining factor of processing difficulty.

Ishikawa (2001) pointed out that the sentence-initial-gappound subject in SRCs allows the parser to have RC reading rather than a main clause reading. (SRCs are easier to predict than ORCs)

Ishikawa et al. (2004) showed that ORCs are easier to process than SRCs, when discourse context increases expectation of RCs.

RESEARCH QUESTION & MAJOR FINDINGS

It is still not clear whether Ishikawa et al. (2006)’s result correlates with pragmatic/syntactic contents or expectation for syntactic structure. We will address this issue by examining what kind of impact a syntactic context shows on the processing of SRCs and ORCs.

Question 1 (sentences completely): PREFERENCE CHECKING

Does the preference of SRCs and ORCs differ in the different syntactic contexts as below?

Question 2 (self-paced reading): PROCESSING CHECKING

When the starting point of an embedded clause is obvious by a syntactic cue, are ORCs easier to process than SRCs as in Ishikawa et al. (2006)?

METHODOLGY

In order to answer Question 1 and 2, we utilized the idea of “local assignment of clause boundary” by Miyamoto (2002)

LACB: Assign the left boundary of a new clause at the point where it is first clear that this new clause is necessary for the interpretation of the sentence.

(A) Sikiyo-o-ga haken-tte yora-ya deskiiyo o yon-kiyo

Employee-management did not answer, so answered

(B) Sikiyo-o-ga haken-tte yora-ya deskiiyo o yon-kiyo

Employee-management did not answer, so answered

Two successive NCs can occur in the same clause.

When the parser encounters the second accusative NP, it inserts a clause boundary and classifies the starting point of embedded clauses.

Class-boundary insertion also indicates the possibility of upcoming RC structure.

SUMMARY OF EXPERIEMENTS & DISCUSSION

EXPERIMENT 1: Sentence fragment completion task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>To confirm SRCs/ORCs preferences in different syntactic environments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>32 native speakers of Japanese (university students in Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>2 x 2 = 4 conditions: LACB [–] / LACB [+]; AC/MOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>28 targets + 16 fillers = 64 incomplete sentences; 4 lists by Latin square design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Results show that preference of SRCs and ORCs differs in different syntactic environments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXPERIMENT 2: Self-paced reading task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>To confirm the processing difficulty of SRCs and ORCs differ in the different syntactic environments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>45 native speaker of Japanese (university students in Japan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>2 x 2 = 4 conditions: LACB [–] / LACB [+]; AC/MOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>24 targets + 60 fillers = 84 sentences; 4 lists by Latin square design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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