

Fragments within Islands

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Kento Nagatsugu

1. Introduction

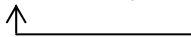
Sentence fragments, which are exemplified by (1B), have been regarded as a kind of ellipsis in the Generative syntax (Morgan 1973, Merchant 2004, Nishigauchi 2011, among others).

(1) A: Who did she see?

B: John.

Recently, Merchant (2004) claims that the derivational process of sentence fragment involves A'-movement to the left periphery. Accordingly, the derivational process of (1B) is illustrated as below. Here we call this kind of analysis *deletion analysis*.

(2) a. [_{FP} John_i [_{TP} Mary saw *t_i*]]



b. [_{FP} John_i [_{TP} ~~Mary saw *t_i*~~]]

Among various empirical discussions on the analysis, discussions on whether fragments are subject to Ross's island constraints has been more focused, probably because syntacticians cannot help thinking of islands when it comes to movement. Merchant (2004) argues that sentence fragments are sensitive to islands and that fact is predicted by his analysis. Nishigauchi (2010, 2011) makes a similar argument for Japanese sentence fragments.

In this paper, I will challenge the claim that sentence fragments are island-sensitive, on an empirical basis. If fragments are not sensitive to islands, not only Merchant's (2004) analysis will be disproved but also the logical conclusion will be that fragments are not derived from full sentences but are directly generated

exactly as they are. This analysis is called *direct generation analysis*, and has been argued for by various researchers (e.g. Yanofsky 1978, Culicover and Jackendoff 2005 and papers in Progovac et al. 2006). Direct generation analysis does not predict fragments to be island-sensitive, since it does not assume any syntactic derivation for fragments. Thus, whether fragments are sensitive to islands or not is an important empirical issue. Additionally, whether deletion analysis or direct generation analysis is correct is significant for linguistic theories, since deletion analysis is an inevitable theoretical consequence of the Chomskian Y-model (see Culicover and Jackendoff 2005 for a detailed discussion). In this article, I will show that fragments are not always sensitive to Ross's constraints.

The article is organized as follows: I examine English fragments in section 2 and Japanese fragments in section 3; in section 4, I give an informal account on apparent island-violating examples observed in the literature; section 5 is a conclusion.


2. English Fragments within Islands

In the earliest proposals for deletion analysis, e.g. Pope (1971) and Morgan (1973), movement of sentence fragments was not assumed. As Morgan (1973) himself notes, the problem is that deletion may be applied to a non-constituent in many cases of fragments. For example, (1B) could be derived as illustrated in (3). In this derivation, the deleted part does not form a constituent.

(3) [TP ~~she~~ [VP ~~saw~~ [NP John]]]

Merchant (2004) proposes a sophisticated implementation of deletion analysis which solves this problem. In his analysis, a fragment (A'-)moves to the left periphery and the TP containing its trace is deleted. This is illustrated in (4).

(4) [_{FocP} [_{DP} John]_i Foc [_{TP} ~~she saw *t_i*~~]]



This analysis is also based on an uncontroversial fact that fragments are focused. Assuming that foci are licensed in [Spec, Foc], focus movement of the fragment is necessary.

Morgan (1973) first reported that fragments are sensitive to island constraints. Though he states that the fact suggests that sentence fragments have sentential underlying structures, the reason is unclear under his analysis. Merchant (2004) shows his own data in parallel with Morgan's (1973) and argues that his analysis, where fragments A'-move to the left periphery, can predict the island-sensitivity of fragments.¹ Some of Merchant's examples for his analysis are cited below.

- (5) a. Does Abby speak the same Balkan language that Ben speaks?
 b. *No, Charlie.
 c. No, she speaks the same Balkan language Charlie speaks.
- (6) a. Did Ben leave the party because Abby wouldn't dance with him?
 b. *No, Beth.
 c. No, he left the party because Beth wouldn't dance with him.
- (7) a. Did Abby get 'The Cat in the Hat' and 'Goodnight Gorilla' for her nephew for his birthday?
 b. *No, 'The Lorax.'
 c. No, she got 'The Lorax' and 'Goodnight Gorilla' for her nephew for his birthday.

(Merchant 2004: 688-689)

However, Culicover and Jackendoff (2005) (henceforth, C&J) demonstrate that Merchant's prediction is not fulfilled. They report that Merchant's examples are actually acceptable with the proper intonation and provide original counterexamples against the prediction.

- (8) a. A: John met a guy who speaks a very unusual language.
 B: i. Which language?
 ii. Yes, Albanian.
- b. i. *Which language did John meet a guy who speaks *t*?
 ii. *Albanian, John met a guy who speaks *t*.
- (9) a. A: The administration has issued a statement that it is willing to meet with one of the student groups.
 B: Yeah, right—the Gay Rifle Club.

- b. *The Gay Rifle Club, the administration has issued a statement that it is willing to meet with *t*.
- (10) a. A: They persuaded Kennedy and some other senator to jointly sponsor the legislation.
B: Yeah, Hatch.
- b. *Hatch, they persuaded Kennedy and *t* to jointly sponsor the legislation.

(C&J: 245)

Morgan (1973) also showed two cases where island violation of sentence fragments are invalidated or weakened. One is where antecedent sentences are in-situ WH questions: echo questions or quiz questions (which he calls “pompous pedagogue questions”).²

- (11) Van Gogh and what other painter once lived together?
Gauguin.
- (12) Martha shackled up with who and Dickey?
Jedgar.

(Morgan 1973: 738)

In the other case, the correspondents to fragments are sentence final.

- (13) John and someone_i just left.
*Who?
- (14) Bill saw John and someone.
?Who?
- (15) Did the man who arrested Bill_i just leave?
*No, John.
- (16) Did the man just leave who arrested Bill_i?
?No, John.

(Morgan 1973: 738)

The data so far suggest that fragments do not always observe islands. This means that they are not island-sensitive, since syntactic islands are not avoidable. This conclusion indicates that the apparent island-violation effects cannot be

accounted for in syntax. In section 4, I argue that the effects can be accounted for in terms of “recovery of missing part.”

3. Japanese Sentence Fragments within Islands

If we extend Merchant’s deletion analysis to Japanese, it can be expected that fragments in Japanese are also sensitive to island constraints. Nishigauchi (2010, 2011) develops an argument along this line. Dividing fragments into “fragments as stripping,” such as (17B), and short answers, such as (18B), he argues that the former is sensitive to islands and the latter not.³

- (17) A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita] otoko-otaiho-sita.
police-Top Mari-Dat phony-phone-made man-Accarrest-Past
 ‘The police arrested the man who made obscene calls to Mari.’

B: *Hitomi-ni ø-mo-da.
Hitomi-Dat also-be
 ‘To Hitomi, too.’

- (18) A: Keisatsu-wa [dare-ni itazura-denwa-sita otoko]-o taiho-sita no?
police-Top who-Dat phony-phone-made man-Acc arrest-Q
 ‘Did the police arrest the man who made obscene calls to who?’

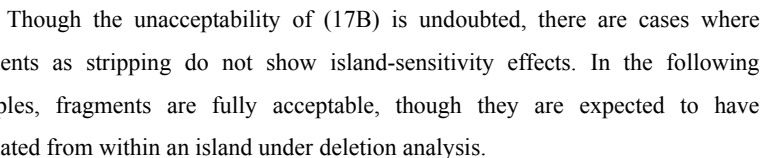
B: Hitomi-ni ø-desu.
Hitomi-Dat Cop
 ‘To Hitomi.’

(Nishigauchi 2010)

(17B), an instance of stripping, corresponds to “Mari-ni” in a Complex NP island and is judged as unacceptable. (18B), a short answer, also corresponds to the Wh-phrase “dare-ni” in a CNP island but is acceptable.⁴

In Nishigauchi’s analysis, fragments such as (17B) are excluded just for island violation. The reason why short answers can avoid island-violation is explained with two independent assumptions. First, Wh-constituents and their analogues are raised to the matrix TP by what he calls “Overt QR,” which is triggered by the interpretive nature of Wh-constituents and similar to scrambling.

(19) Stripping:



- (21) A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita otoko]-o taiho-sita-no?
police-Top Mari-Dat phony-phone-made man-Acc arrest-Past-Q
 ‘Did the police arrest a man who made obscene calls to Mari?’
 B: Iya, Hitomi-ni-da-yo.
No, Hitomi-Dat-be-SF
 ‘No, to Hitomi.’

(22) A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita otoko]-o

police-Top Mari-Dat phony-phone-made man-Acc

taiho-sita-tte.

arrest-Past-Quot

‘I heard the police arrested the man who made obscene calls to Mari.’

B: Hitomi-ni-desho?

Hitomi-Dat-Cop.Pol.Q

‘It was to Hitomi, wasn’t it?’

Even (17B) can be improved, if the additive particle “mo” is taken away.

(17') A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita] otoko-o

police-Top Mari-Dat phony-phone-made man-Acc

taiho-sita(-yo).

arrest-Past(-SF)

‘The police arrested the man who made obscene calls to Mari.’

B: Iya, Hitomi-ni da(-yo).

No, Hitomi-Dat be(-SF)

‘No, it was to Hitomi.’

Japanese fragments are also insensitive to other islands. Below is a data set showing that both types of fragment are insensitive to three kinds of islands: adjunct, sentential subject and coordination.

Adjunct Island:

(23) A: Hanako-wa Taro-ga dono-manga-o baka-ni si-ta-kara

Hanako-Top Taro-Nom which-comic-Accfool-Dat do-Past-because

okotta-no?

got.angry-Q

‘*Which did comic Hanako get angry because Taro sneered *t?*’

B: Naruto(-o) da-yo.

Naruto(-Acc) be-SF

‘Naruto.’

- (24) A: Hanako-wa Taro-ga “One Piece”-o baka-ni
Hanako-Top Taro-Nom “One Piece”-Acc fool-Dat
 si-ta-kara okotta-no?
do-Past-because got.angry-Q
 ‘Did Hanako get angry because Taro sneered One Piece?’
- B: Iya, Naruto(-o) da-yo.
No Naruto(-Acc) be-SF
 ‘No, it was Naruto.’

Sentential Subject Island:

- (25) A: Taro-ga nani-o katteni tabe-ta koto-ga Hanako-o
Taro-Nom what-Acc selfishly eat-Past thing-Nom Hanako-Acc
 okorase-ta-no?
make.angry-Past-Q
 ‘*What did that Taro ate *t* selfishly make Hanako angry?’
- B: Purin(-o) da-yo.
Pudding(-Acc) be-SF
 ‘Pudding.’
- (26) A: Taro-ga keeki-o katteni tabe-ta koto-ga Hanako-o
Taro-Nom cake-Acc selfishly eat-Past thing-Nom Hanako-Acc
 okorase-ta-no?
make.angry-Q
 ‘Did the fact that Taro ate the cake selfishly make Hanako angry?’
- B: Iya, purin-o da-yo.
No pudding-Acc be-SF
 ‘No, pudding.’

Coordination Structure Island:

- (27) A: Kondo-no reesu-ni-wa Taro-to dare-ga de-ru-no?
Next-Gen race-Dat-Top Taro-Com who-Nom appear-Pst-Q?

‘*Who will Taro and *t* join the next race?’

B: Hitomi-da-yo.

Hitomi-be-SF.

‘Hitomi.’

- (28) A: Kondo-no reesu-ni-wa Taro-to Hanako-ga de-ru-no?
Next-Gen race-Dat-Top Taro-Com Hanako-Nom appear-Pst-Q?

‘Will Taro and Hanako join the next race?’

B: Iya, Hitomi-da-yo.

No Hitomi-be-SF

‘No, it is just Hitomi.’

In each pair, the two examples are both acceptable; even if the stripping one is less acceptable, the contrast is less sharp than Nishigauchi expects.

Nishigauchi’s argument of (17B) is, in fact, incorrect: his analysis cannot predict the unacceptability of (17B). In his argument, he considers (29) to be the underlying structure of (17B).

- (29) Keisatu-wa Hitomi-ni-mo itazura-denwa-sita otoko-o taiho-sita.
Police-Top Hitomi-Dat-also phony-phone-did man-Acc arrest-did

‘The Police arrested a man who also did obscene calls to Hitomi.’

(29), however, does not have the intended meaning for (17B): ‘The arrested man also did obscene calls to Hitomi.’ See (30) below, where (30A) is (17A) and (30B) is (29) (the sentence-final particle “yo” is added for naturalness of dialogue).

- (30) A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita otoko]-o taiho-sita-yo.
Police-Top Mari-Dat phony-phone-did man-Acc arrest-did-SF

‘The Police arrested a man who made obscene calls to Mari.’

B: Keistsu-wa [Hitomi-ni-mo itazura-denwa-sita otoko]-o
Police-Top Hitomi-Dat-also phony-phone-did man-Acc
 taiho-sita-yo.
arrest-did-SF

‘The Police arrested a man who also made obscene calls to Hitomi.’

The man in (30B) cannot be identical to the man in (30A). (30B) means that the police arrested a man who made obscene calls to Mari and even to Hitomi, not a man who did so only to Mari, the man in (30A). This is the effect of the additive particle “mo.” Returning to the original intended meaning, the appropriate underlying structure for (17B) under that interpretation should be (31a) or (31b).

- (31) a. Sono-otoko-ga Hitomi-ni-mo itazura-denwa-sita.
the-man-Nom Hitomi-Dat-also phony-phone-did
 b. Sono-otoko-wa Hitomi-ni-mo itazura-denwa-sita.
the-man-Top Hitomi-Dat-also phony-phone-did

‘The man also did obscene calls to Hitomi.’

Since these sentences have no islands within them, deletion analysis must predict (17B) to be derived from them legitimately. Thus, the unacceptability of (17B) in the intended interpretation is not expected by Nishigauchi’s (2010, 2011) analysis, contrary to what he claims.

A reviewer points out that sentence (32) below can be an underlying structure for (17B).

- (32) Sore-wa [Hitomi-ni-mo itazura-denwa-sita] otoko-da.
It-Top Hitomi-Dat-also phony-phone-did man-be

‘That is the man who also did obscene calls to Hitomi.’

(32) can have an interpretation similar to the intended meaning for (17B) and deriving (17B) from (32) violates CNPC. Nevertheless Nishigauchi’s analysis should predict (17B) to be acceptable, because the structures in (31) are available as sources for (17B).

To sum up, fragments in Japanese are not sensitive to syntactic islands, as ones in English, whether they are short answers or strippings. As in the discussion

on English fragments, the observed island-violation effects should be reduced to some non-syntactic factor. An informal account will be provided in the next section.

4. Explaining Island-Violation Effects

We have seen above that fragments are not generally sensitive to islands. This means that observed island-violation effects previously observed are not triggered by island constraints as syntactic condition. As will be shown below, the effect is attributed to a failure to recover a missing part, which is due to the difficulty of finding an appropriate source for the presupposition for a fragment.

First, consider the apparently island-violating fragments in English, which were observed by Morgan (1973) and Merchant (2004). As mentioned above, Culicover and Jackendoff (2005) show examples which are similar to Merchant's data but acceptable. Comparing Merchant's data with C&J's, it can be noted that in most of the former, though not all, which constituent corresponds to a fragment is ambiguous. In (5), for example, the antecedent clause contains two potential correspondents for the sentence fragment, namely "Abby" and "Ben." The sentence fragment functions to deny a part of the antecedent clause and present an alternative for it, but which person is denied cannot be determined without contextual support or prosodic signaling. The same problems arise in (6) and (7) and some of Morgan's (1973) data he regards as evidence for the island-sensitivity of fragments. Thus, it is suggested that the island-violation effects are reduced to failures in identification of correspondents.

Recall that C&J note that Merchant's examples are acceptable if the correspondents are intonationally focus-marked; additionally, Morgan reports that fragments ignore island constraints if they correspond to in-situ Wh-constituents, which are inherently focused (see (11) and (12)). These facts support the idea suggested immediately above. Focus-marking of the correspondent solves the problem in identifying it which is caused by an island.⁵

This is also supported by others of Morgan's (1973) data, i.e. (13) to (16), which show island violation effects are mitigated when correspondents to fragments

are sentence-final. This can be attributed to a relationship between focus interpretation and sentence stress assignment. In English, main sentence stress, in unmarked cases, is assigned to the most deeply embedded constituent and the constituent with main stress can be a focus (Cinque 1993 and Reinhart 2006, among others). Possibly, the deepest constituent is the primary candidate for focus. In (13) and (15), the sentence-final constituents are most deeply embedded and this might make them more “focus-like.”

To sum up, a fragment is low in acceptability if it is unclear which its correspondent is. This is because identification of the correspondent is necessary for interpretation of a fragment. The meaning of a fragment involves a set including a focus and a presupposition. The focus is the fragment itself. The presupposition, which is necessary to recover the omitted part, is a proposition with an open variable which is to be fulfilled with the fragment as a focus. In a simple, “sentence-fragment” dialogue like the example (1) (“Who did she see?” “John.”), it is only the preceding sentence that can be the source of the presupposition of the fragment. In such a case, the meaning of the fragment is obtained by replacing the correspondent with it; for (1), “She saw John.” That is, the required presupposition is a proposition obtainable by substituting a free variable with the correspondent; “She saw x.”

That a correspondent must be focused is not independent of this. An open proposition with a free variable is also generated in the interpretation of a focus. In Roothian “alternative semantics” of focus, the semantic value of a focus is the set of alternative propositions which are obtained by substituting the focused element; for example, the focus value of “[**Mary**]_F likes Sue.” is the set of propositions in the form of “x likes Sue” (e.g. Rooth 1992). Therefore, a sentence with a focus entails an open proposition with a free variable. For this reason, to recover the missing part of a fragment, focusing of its correspondent is necessary.

Next, consider Nishigauchi’s example of an island-violating fragment in Japanese, (17), which is repeated as (33). To recapitulate, (33B) is unacceptable in the interpretations of both (34a) and (34b).

(33) A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita] otoko-o taiho-sita.

‘The police arrested the man who made obscene calls to Mari.’

B: *Hitomi-ni o-mo-da.

‘To Hitomi, too.’

(34) a. “The police arrested a man who made obscene calls to Mari and Hitomi (not the man who did obscene calls only to Mari).”

b. “That man also made obscene calls to Hitomi.”

Nishigauchi’s analysis wrongly expects that (33B) can have the interpretation of (34b). Why then, can (33B) be acceptable in neither interpretation?

The reason why (33B) cannot have the interpretation of (34a) is simple. If (33B) has this interpretation, it introduces another man, who is not presupposed in the discourse. This man, thus, cannot be omitted. In the interpretation of (34b), on the other hand, “that man” is identical to the man introduced in (33A) and, then, presupposed. As expected, “that man” can be omitted in the same discourse as (33), as shown by (35).

(35) A: Keisatsu-wa [Mari-ni itazura-denwa-sita] otoko-o taiho-sita-yo.

(=(33A))

B: Hitomi-ni-mo itazura-denwa-si-tei-ru-yo.

Hitomi-Dat-also phony-phone-do-Prf-Prs-SF

‘(He) also made obscene calls to Hitomi.’

Comparing (35) to (33), it is suggested that what is illegitimately omitted in (33B) is not “sono-otoko (that man),” but rather “itazura-denwa-sita (made obscene calls).” The latter expression appears to be presupposed in (33A). Note, however, that what should be presupposed when a verbal predicate is omitted is an (open) proposition which includes it as its predicate. Thus, what should be presupposed for “itazura-denwa-sita” to be omitted is an open proposition that “the man made obscene calls to X, $X \neq \text{Mari}$,” but this is not implied by the preceding sentence (33A).

More formally, (33A) supplies an open proposition like (36a), when “Mari-ni” is focused, while (33B) requires presuppositions (36b) and (36c) in the

interpretations in (34a) and (34b), respectively.

- (36) a. The police arrested the man_i who made obscene calls to X.
- b. The police arrested the man_j who made obscene calls to Mari and X
(not the man_i who made obscene calls only to Mari).
- c. That man_i also made obscene calls to X.

The presuppositions in (36b) and (36c) are not identical to (36a). Therefore, (33B) cannot receive an appropriate presupposition.

Recall that (33B) is much better without “mo,” as shown by (17'). In (17'), the fragment “Hitomi-ni” is just contrasted to “Mari-ni” in the antecedent clause: the latter replaces with the former. It is not true in (33). In the intended interpretation, the fragment “Hitomi-ni-mo-da” is not semantically contrasted to “Mari-ni.” (33A) just presupposes that the man made obscene calls to X, while (33B) means that the man made obscene calls to Mari and Hitomi.” Then (33B) has to add a piece of information, “the man made obscene calls to X; $X \neq \text{Mari}$.” However, the fragment utterance “Hitomi-ni-mo-da” cannot bring this information by itself.

To sum up, sentence fragments are sensitive to islands *in a sense*. It is evident, however, this is not because of *syntactic* islands and no syntactic account is necessary. The unacceptable examples we have argued about have troubles in recovery of missing parts. More precisely, the antecedent sentences cannot supply appropriate presuppositions for the fragments. An island somehow makes it difficult to identify a correspondent but focus-marking erases the effect. Why an island cause such an effect is unclear now. What I can suggest here is that a sentence containing an island is relatively complicated and an element in an island is more deeply embedded. This might make it more difficult to recover the missing part of a fragment from the antecedent sentence without rich context or intonational support. This argument heads toward a performance-based approach to island constraints, though I do not explore this idea further here.

5. Conclusion

We have examined sentence fragments in English and Japanese with respect to island constraints. It has been shown that fragments do not always show island-violation effects, contrary to Merchant's prediction, and that even stripping-type fragments are insensitive to islands, contrary to Nishigauchi's analysis. My analysis sustains a direct generation analysis, on the other hand, because the analysis cannot predict fragments to be island-sensitive.

As mentioned in the beginning of this article, the conclusion supports direct generation analysis, which assumes fragments to have no sentential syntactic structures, because the analysis predicts fragments to be insensitive to syntactic islands. The analysis is compatible with our performance-based account on the apparent island-violation effects, because the account has no reference to syntax.

Notes

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1. Merchant's (2004) analysis leads to a more general prediction: what cannot be moved does not appear as a sentence fragment. Merchant argues that what cannot be Left-dislocated or Topicalized cannot be sentence fragments. See Culicover and Jackendoff (2005) for counterevidence against this prediction.
 2. These two types of question are distinguished by intonation. The former has rising intonation, the latter falling intonation.
 3. The following abbreviations are used here: ACC = accusative, COM = comitative, DAT = dative, NOM = nominative, PAST = past tense, POL = politeness, PRF = perfect, PRS = present tense, PRO = pronoun, Q = question, QUOT = quotation, SF = sentence-final particle, TOP = topic.
 4. Since Nishigauchi (2010, 2011) assumes that short answers undergo the same movement process as Wh-elements, his analysis should also predict that Wh-constituents as fragments, which Hasegawa (2006) calls *truncated Wh-questions* (TWQs), such as (i), are island-insensitive, though Nishigauchi himself does not note that.
 - (i) Dare -ga?
 Who-Nom
 'Who?'
 Hasegawa (2006) shows that TWQs in Japanese are insensitive to islands. Though Hasegawa herself assimilates TWQ in Japanese to sluicing in English, TWQ can be regarded as a kind of fragment (cf. Morgan 1973).
 5. Merchant (2004), contrary to Morgan, reports that multiple fragment answers to a multiple Wh-question where one of the Wh-constituents is embedded in an island is impossible. In his example ((92) in Merchant 2004), however, the antecedent clause contains two Wh-constituents, which might make identification of the correspondent harder. Therefore, Merchant's examples rather support the present argument.

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