Introducing Findings of Linguistics to Extensive Reading Classes*
- A Linguistic Approach to Extensive Reading -

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1. Introduction

Thanks to the increasing availability of reading material such as graded readers for Extensive Readings (ER), students are now becoming more exposed to readers written in English and English itself. While they have more opportunities to read English, however, they do not pay much attention to English grammar. Nevertheless, nowadays, a lot of linguists of cognitive grammar and generative grammar have been working to find a lot of empirical facts and clarify human competence of language, and consequently, their studies have been proposing more adequate grammar and explanations. In this paper, as some of the examples in the ER texts, focusing on the basic 5 types of sentences, Heavy Determiner Phrase Shift (HDPS[1]), Locative Inversion (LI), and so-called expletive constructions (EC), I claim that making effective use of studies and findings of linguistics would help students understand ER texts more correctly, making them more enjoyable, and that, as a consequent, it would get students to understand structures of English more accurately and realize what languages are like. In particular, I claim that word orders can be changed from the 5 types, depending on what information each element provides in terms of structures of new/old information, and that introducing some analyses to ER classes be important to help students learn structures of English.

This paper is organized as follows; in the next section, we will quickly see what Japanese students at low or low intermediate levels usually tend to learn as part of English grammar, and see what else they need to understand English as one of the natural languages. In the section 3, considering some examples of HDPS, LI, and EC found in ER texts, I will claim that introducing some linguistic findings will help students understand why each example or word order can be different than what they have learned at their junior and high school. The section 4 is for conclusion.

2. What Can the "5 Basic Types" Do?

Before introducing some studies and findings of English linguistics, let us see what college students at low or low intermediate levels have learned as part of English grammar. At most high schools or junior high schools in Japan, students usually learn the 5 basic types as in (1) and are taught that most English sentences can be read with recourse to these 5 types. See the basic structures and their corresponding examples.

(1)   Structure   Example

     Type 1   Determiner Phrase (DP) - V (erb):   John smiled.

     Type 2   DP - V - C (omplement):   John is a doctor.

     Type 3   DP - V- O (bject):   John ate apples.

     Type 4   DP - V - O - O: John gave Mary a book.

     Type 5   DP - V - O - C: John called Mary an idiot.

The complement (C) in (1) can be phases such as DPs, adjective phrases (AP), and Prepositional Phrases (PP). Most students at low or low intermediate levels who have been educated in Japanese high schools are likely to believe that they can read most English sentences with those 5 types of structures in (1). Thus, they do not pay much attention to other word orders than interrogatives with *wh*-words or consider so much their meanings provided by different word orders. This seems to be partly because they are usually shown in English classes that *wh*-words are moved to the forefront position in regular interrogatives as one of the rules of English grammar.

However, according to Chomsky (2000, 2001, 2007), it is claimed that natural languages have two semantic aspects. One is known as generalized argument structures, where thematic relations or thematic roles such as AGENT, THEME, or GOAL are determined by the word orders which are, in most cases, based on the structures in (1), namely, the unmarked word orders. However, these thematic relations based on (1) are not enough for human language. The other semantic aspect, which seems more discourse-related, is necessary to create surface semantic effects such as topicalization, focalization, scope relation, or other context-based semantics. In order to create these surface semantic effects, it has been proposed that syntactic elements undergo either overt or covert movement to another syntactic position. In other words, DPs or other phrases such as prepositional phrases should be shifted to another position

different from their base-generated position to provide a certain focused meaning. Here is one example of semantic duality.

(2) a. I don't even want to talk about that topic.
   b. [That topic]$_i$, I don't even want to talk about t_i.

The object DP is base-generated in the object position in (2a), where it receives the thematic role of THEME. However, the object is moved to the foremost position of the sentence to be marked in (2b). Pronouns, on the other hand, cannot be shifted to other positions unless they are phonetically stressed.

(3) a. You should read t_i with the greatest attention [*this/*them/THIS/THEM]$_i$.
   b. You should read [this/them/*?THIS/*?THEM] with the greatest attention.

                                        (See Hageman & Guéron (1999:222))

   c. **THAT** I don't want to talk about.
   d. *That I don't want to talk about.

Considering the example in (2-3), it is obvious that the moved elements result in receiving a marked reading in the new position. In (2), the moved DP is focalized in the position. Therefore, these facts show that natural languages have two semantic relations, and the semantic duality can be summed up in (4).

(4) Semantic Duality in Language (Chomsky, 2000, 2001, 2007)
   Relation 1: Generalized Argument Structure <by 5 types in (1)>
   Relation 2: Discourse-Related (and scopal properties) <by shifting elements>

The existence of the semantic duality in language suggests that in order to get students to understand structures of English more accurately, it is important to get students to pay more attention to word orders and why they are reordered.

   In the following sections, we will consider some examples of word orders found in extensive readers which differ from the ones introduced in (1), and see that some findings of linguistics are helpful for students to understand ER readers and learn English more deeply.

3. Some Examples

3.1.1 Heavy DP Shift (HDPS)

In this section, let us first see examples of HDPS, which moves a DP to another different position, and consider why DPs are shifted in terms of syntax and semantics. When students read some ER texts or readers, they will easily find that some word orders are different from what they have expected out of the 5 types in (1). One example is given below.

(5) *Jumanji* (Longman Penguin Readers)

Crashing noises came from below. Judy ran out of the room, and Peter took the dice and followed her. They ran downstairs to the kitchen. They could hear breaking plates and strange screams. *Judy pushed open the kitchen door.* Inside were twelve brown monkeys. (Escott (1997: 10))

As shown above, the object DP is located in the end position, which is different from the base-generated object position in the 5 basic types in (1). Since this position has departed from the unmarked object position, it is expected, based on (4), that some discourse-related meanings would be included in the sentence.

Therefore, we have to get students to consider and see why the word order is different from the base-generated order. This approach is important because we expect that explaining these kinds of examples would help students understand ER readers more correctly and learn English itself more deeply. However, it is not easy to show, as a generalization, why elements are moved to other positions because it has been long discussed what kinds of elements count as heavy or why they are moved. In the next sub-section, I will show some generative studies of HDPS and see why movement is implemented.

3.1.2 Rochemont (1978) - Strong Stress: Focalization (Focus DP Shift) -

Rochemont (1978) claims that when DPs are semantically emphasized, they are moved to other positions, normally to the end positions. As shown below, even "short" DPs can be moved to the end position as long as they bear semantically outstanding meaning.

(6) a. The preacher sent off to war his only son.

b. Hitler persuaded to join forces with him, Mussolini.　(Rochemont (1978:33))

c. *John wants to give to Mary it.

As we have seen (3) in the previous section, pronouns cannot undergo HDPS. However, if pronouns have semantic emphasis, they are phonetically stressed and shifted to the different position just as long and heavy DPs.

(7) a. John called her up.

b. John called up *her/HER.

Looking at the facts in (6-7), we can see that if DPs and pronouns are emphasized in a sense, they can move to different positions, resulting in the word order changed from the unmarked.

However, this analysis on semantic emphasis is not exactly adequate enough. Other non-focus elements can also undergo movement. Consider other facts and the analysis proposed by Stowell (1981) in the next section.

3.1.3 Stowell (1981) - Indefinite Noun : New/Old Information -

Stowell (1981) argues that even if indefinite nouns are not heavy or semantically emphasized, they can still undergo movement to a different position when they function as new information to the hearer.

(8)　Brian brought back to American a priceless treasure. (Stowell (1981:107))

The facts in double object constructions in (9) and (10) also show that elements like indefinite DPs tend to be located in a latter position, namely the edge position of a sentence.

(9)　a.　Mary gave John a kiss.

b.　*Mary gave a kiss to John.　(Green (1974: 83))

(10) a.　Mary gave John a piece of her mind.

b.　*Mary gave a piece of her mind to John.　(Green (1974: 84))

As the facts above show, indefinite DPs which seem to serve as new information in contexts are likely to occur in a latter position in a sentence just as emphasized elements.

Although the analyses given here are somewhat different from each other, what these analyses have in common is that semantically prominent elements for hearers are moved from the base-generated position. That is, these facts and the analyses enable us to assume that not only semantically emphasized elements but also ones with new information can be candidates to be moved to different positions, namely, the edge position. In other words, elements which count as focus (prominent) and new information should be moved to the edge position of a sentence, departing from the 5 basic types.[2]

Given the discussion above, we can tentatively conclude that the basic 5 types are not enough, but introducing this analysis to ER classes is important and helpful for students to understand ER readers more correctly and learn structures of English more deeply because other similar phenomena are also found in other ER readers. In the following section, we will see how this analysis explains other facts which differ from the basic 5 types.

3.2. Locative Inversion

In the same ER text, *Jumanji*, another example which does not match the 5 types in (1) is found right after the sentence which we have just discussed. See the italicized sentences in (11) and another example in (12) from another ER text, *Apollo* 13.

(11)　*Jumanji* (Longman Penguin Readers)
Crashing noises came from below. Judy ran out of the room, and Peter took the dice and followed her. They ran downstairs to the kitchen. They could hear breaking plates and strange screams. Judy pushed open the kitchen door. *Inside were twelve brown monkeys.*　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Escott (1997: 10))

(12)　*Apollo 13* (Longman Penguin Readers)
The three astronauts went up to the top of the rocket. Then, they got into the command module Odyssey. After the months in the simulator, they knew the command module well. Jim's chair was on the left. Jack's chair was in the middle and Fred's was on the right. *In front of them were the controls —— more than five*

hundred of them.   (Fumas (2001: 7))

In both cases above, locative phrases of PPs occur in the subject position, and each thematic subject exists in the position for a complement. Although this type should be classified as type 2, it does not exactly match type 2 in (1) repeated as (14). These kinds of sentences are called locative inversion. See the examples in (13-14).

(13)   a. Inside were twelve brown monkeys.

b. In front of them were the controls --- more than five hundred of them.

(14)   Type 2 — DP - V - C (omplement):   John is a doctor.

Note that there are two types of prepositional phrase subjects in English.

(15)   a. Under the bridge is a good place for my cat to hide, isn't it? (subject = PP)

b. Under the bridge were the men you were searching for, weren't they?

(subject = DP)

As the facts of the tag questions and agreement on the verbs show, (15a) is not an example of locative inversion, which I do not discuss in this paper. The case we are interested in here is (15b). Although there have been a lot of analyses regarding how this is yielded, let us see one of the analyses within the generative grammar as follows.

(16)   a. $[_{TP}$ $[_{DP}$ the men you are looking for] $[_{VP}$ were $[_{PP}$ under the bridge]]]]

b. $[_{FP}$ $[_{PP}$ under the bridge]$_j$ [were]$_i$ $[_{TP}$ $[_{DP}$ the men you are looking for] $[_{VP}$ t_i t_j]]]

After the Tense Phrase (TP) is completed in (16a), a new phrase, Focus Phrase (FP), is yielded above the TP. Then both the prepositional phrase (PP) and the tense element, *were*, are moved to FP-spec and F-head respectively, namely, the edge position, where the former is focused and receives a certain specific reading. As a result, the thematic subject results in being located in the end position, which is also the other edge position. The subject DP in this position is not focused, but this structure, in turn, matches the structure of new/old information which we have just seen as for double

object constructions.

As long as ER texts have contexts which attract readers, this construction is rather natural for ER texts. Thus, by showing students these word orders, teachers should let them know the structures of these kinds and understand readings and English study more deeply. In the next section, we will see another example of expletive constructions with regular verbs, which are not so familiar to beginners or intermediate learners.

3.3 Expletive Constructions (EC)

Another interesting construction is expletive construction with regular verbs, which is often found in ER texts, but not so known to students although they know so-called existential expletive constructions such as in (17).

(17) *Jurassic Park III* (Longman Penguin Readers)

The mother Pteranodon flew above Eric and Billy.

"Fall to the river," Billy shouted to Eric. "It's the only way." Eric looked down.

He opened his hands and fell into the water. *There was a hole in the parasail.*

(Maule (2002: 29))

Even beginner-level students learn to know that only indefinite nouns can occur after *be*-verbs in expletive constructions, and that neither specific DPs nor definite nouns can occur in the position.

(18) There is a/*the man in the room.

This condition is widely-known as Definiteness Effect. However, a lot of analyses and studies of this construction have been presented and it has been pointed out that this is not exactly satisfactory generalization.

According to their studies, they found out that even definite DPs can occur in the post verbal position when they function as new information in the contexts (Belletti (1988), Milsark (1974) among others). More specifically, definite nouns can occur with some regular intransitive verbs with *there* in the subject position. It has been assumed that intransitive verbs are divided largely into two types: unergative verbs such as *walk*

and *run*, whose subject counts as AGENT occupying the subject position, and unaccusative verbs such as *arise, exist, fall*, and *happen*, which would take their objects in the base structure. It has also been assumed that unlike the existential constructions above, definite nouns can co-occur with the former type of verbs as given in (19).

(19)   Thereupon, there ambled into the room my neighbor's frog. (Milsark (1974: 246))

Notice that this construction also departs from the 5 basic types in (1) although this sentence can be paraphrased as in (20).

(20)   Thereupon, my neighbor's frog ambled into the room.

However, it is obvious that the sentence in (19) is preferred in a certain context. Since the semantic subject functions as new information, it is quite natural for it to occur in the edge position of the sentence, resulting in serving as a focus element. The sentence in (19) is analyzed as below.

(21)   a. [$_{VP}$ [$_{DP}$ my neighbor's frog] [$_{VP}$ ambled into the room]]
       b. [$_{VP}$ t_i [$_{VP}$ ambled into the room] [$_{DP}$ my neighbor's frog]$_i$]
       c. [$_{TP}$ there T [$_{VP}$ t_i [$_{VP}$ ambled into the room] [$_{DP}$ my neighbor's frog]$_i$]

(21a) is the base-generated structure.[3] The subject DP is moved to the higher (end) position to be focused as in (21b). After the movement of the subject, the expletive *there* is inserted in TP-spec, the subject position in (21c), instead of moving the object DP. The insertion of the expletive *there* comes from the requirement of Extended Projection Principle, which requires every clause to have either an overt or cover subject. In the case of English, an overt subject must hold the subject position phonetically, and hence (21c). This is another example of the marked word orders, some of which we have discussed above. Similarly, by putting the subject DP in the edge position of the sentence, it can attract readers' attention.

Unfortunately, however, most low or low-intermediate students do not know so much about these constructions. Thus, it is necessary to introduce these linguistic findings to ER classes, which should help students learn structures of English more

deeply and read ER texts with contexts more enjoyably.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, focusing on word orders created by HDPS, LI, and EC from the view point of the 5 basic types of structures, I have pointed out that some sentences often found in ER texts can be different from what students at low or low intermediate levels would have learned at their junior or high schools. Then, by considering some findings of linguistic studies, we have seen that marked word orders provide context-/discourse-related meanings. Therefore, I have claimed that introducing some linguistic findings on different word orders is necessary and thus, helpful to get students to understand why word orders are changed and to learn what structures of English are really like. More specifically, it has been shown that although there are many kinds of analyses of movement of elements, their consistent arguments are that there is semantic duality in language, and some constituents which function as new information, thus focus elements, may undergo movement to either edge position of a sentence from their base-generated positions. We have also seen that this argument can widely explain a number of marked word orders which differ from the 5 types. Although the examples we have seen in this paper are only fractions of phenomena found in ER texts, it can be concluded that explaining different word orders by bringing some linguistic findings like the one we have seen in this paper to ER classes can help students understand English more deeply and read their ER texts more correctly and enjoyably.

Notes

1   In Rochmont (1978), Noun Phrase (NP) is used instead of DP. I use DP in this paper to discuss within the current minimalist framework. No further meaning is included.

2. As one of the reviewers points out, there are two types of movement: focalization and topicalization, which should be distinguished in a precise sense and requires discussing in details. However, I regard both kinds of movement as the same in that elements undergoing these movements seem to be prominent for hearers. I leave the details for further study.

3. Within the current minimalist approach, as for intransitive verbs, the vP is assumed to be projected above the VP, like the v^*P for transitive verbs. Since it is not important for the discussion here, I ignore the vP projection here and assume tentatively that the subject DP is adjoined to the VP in (21b).

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Extensive Reading Texts

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