Today's topics:

- **The configurationality debate: X' syntax as a universal?**

Background preparation:

- *Handout - "Syntax: Basics of X-bar (X') theory"*

0. Today's objectives

After today's class, you should be able to:

- Apply the X' schema confidently to Japanese sentences and identify its predictions about **constituency** and **c-command**
- Understand the **key arguments** about **scrambling** in Japanese and the **"configurationality" debate**

1. Warm-up and review

Quick discussion questions

- Why does linguistic theory need a **model** that **generates syntactic structure** for phrases and sentences?
- What is a **constituent**? How does the X' schema make **predictions** about constituency?
- How can we use the X' schema to **explain** why Japanese and English **word order** is so different?

1. Warm-up and review

- Why does linguistic theory need a **model** that **generates syntactic structure**?
  - Sentences can’t be memorized and stored!
    - We need a way to “build” them
  - The principles that determine valid phrases and sentences for a given language are systematic (predictable)
    - This is a job for the **mental grammar**

1. Warm-up and review

- What is a **constituent**? How does the X' schema make **predictions** about constituency?
  - **constituent** = group of words that behaves as a unit in the syntax (can move together, can be replaced together with something known to be a constituent, ...)
  - All the material inside a given XP is predicted to be a constituent
    - What about the X' level? Probably yes, but this is a more advanced topic

1. Warm-up and review

- How can we use the X' schema to **explain** why Japanese and English **word order** is so different?
  - Japanese is **head-final** (complement + head)
  - English is **head-initial** (head + complement)

Aya said that Ken ate apples

Aya-ga Ken-ga ringo-o tabeta to itta

1. Warm-up and review

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2. Flexible word order

- Data set - Word order variation
  - Which of the six word orders is compatible with our approach to Japanese syntax using the X' schema?
  - How would an X' approach account for the remaining word order options?
    - See the English sentences at the bottom for a clue

3. How universal is X' syntax?

- Handout - Word order: Configurationality and "scrambling"

  Key points to take from this discussion:

  - What are two key distinctions between a **configurational** vs. a **nonconfigurational** approach to sentence structure?
  - What evidence can we find to show which approach is better supported?

4. Other interesting topics in Japanese syntax

- Adjective syntax: Where does an AP go in the tree?

  $[_{IP}$ Ano sakana-ga oisi-i.]

  $[_{NP}$ ano oisi-i sakana]

- Suffixes vs. postpositions — One kind of evidence
  - Optional handout

5. Syntax check-in

Things we can do

- Draw syntax trees for simple sentences
- Predict constituency
- Identify c-command relationships

Things we can understand in a diagram

- Adding a modifier (extra phrase) inside an XP
- Embedded sentences as CPs
- *pro* as an “empty” NP position (pronoun)

6. For next time

Topic proposal workshop day

- Bring your laptop or device of choice\We will start class by checking in on current topic plans or open questions / goals for the session
- We will check in at the end and report on how things are going
- I will be available for consultation!