

The emergence of a phase

Epstein and Seely (2002) argue that there are no inherent syntactic categories as a phase, contrary to Chomsky's (2000) proposal that CP and ν P are phases. Rather, they claim that each rule application itself constitutes a phase. In this paper, I make a similar proposal to Epstein and Seely, based on the interaction between a negative polarity item (NPI) and a wh-phrase in Japanese. Specifically, I propose that a phase is created when a noun phrase is assigned by Case with recourse to Agree.


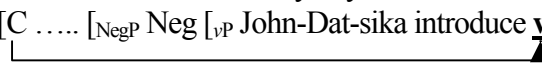
Japanese has a particle which means *only* under negation. As shown in (1), *sika* is such a particle. A *sika*-phrase is a NPI in that it needs negation. Without negation, the example is ungrammatical in (2). As discussed in Takahashi (1990) and Tanaka (1997), among others, a *sika*-phrase cannot precede a wh-phrase, which is a crucial property in this paper in (3a). If the latter precedes the former by scrambling, the example is grammatical in (3b). An object *sika*-phrase behaves the same property, as shown in (3c,d). It has been unnoticed, however, that a *sika*-phrase can precede a wh-phrase if the former is marked with Dative Case in (4). In (4a,b), *sika* is attached to an indirect object and a subject, respectively. It has been noticed that there is another asymmetry between Dative Case and Nominative/Accusative Case. The existence of *sika* suppresses Nominative and Accusative Case in (5). In this paper, I attempt to capture these asymmetries in a unified way.

I propose that agreement between a *sika*-NP and negation licenses structural Case of the former. That negation is involved in licensing of Case is supported cross-linguistically. In Russian, the presence of negation allows Genitive Case to occur in (6). Following Chomsky (2000), I assume that Case is a reflex of Φ -feature agreement. I propose that Neg in this construction has uninterpretable Φ -features, in a similar way to T and ν in English. A *sika*-phrase has also Φ -features, which is interpretable, and an uninterpretable Case. In (1), Agree is triggered between negation and the *sika*-phrase, as illustrated in (7). I propose that Case licensed by negation through Agree is morphologically realized as "zero", neither as Nominative Case *ga* nor as Accusative Case *o* at PF. This gives an explanation for (5). Let us turn to cases where a *sika*-phrase has Dative Case. As shown in (8), a phrase which bears Dative Case fails to trigger agreement with a finite verb in Icelandic. Given that Dative Case in Japanese is also inactive for Agree, Agree does not take place between Neg and a *sika*-phrase, and thus Neg does not assign Case to the *sika*-phrase. Thus, Dative Case is morphologically realized with a *sika*-phrase, in (4). Next, let us turn to the issue on the NPI/wh interaction. My proposal is given in (9). The derivation of (3a) is illustrated in (10), where negation undergoes Agree with *John-sika*. According to (9), ν P is counted as a phase and the following computation between C and the wh-phrase is blocked by the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC), given in (11). In cases which do not involve a *sika*-phrase, such as (12), C is able to have a long distance dependency with a wh-phrase freely. I assume that neither T nor ν undergoes agreement in Japanese, along the line of Fukui (1986) and Kuroda (1988). Instead, structural Case of a noun phrase is licensed by a Case particle (Kuroda (1988) and Fukui and Takano (1998)). Thus, in (12), no phase boundary is created between the matrix C and the wh-phrase. If CP and ν P were inherently phases, then (12) would be excluded by the PIC. (12) shows that neither ν P nor CP is inherently a phase. In (4), where a *sika*-phrase has Dative Case, Agree is not triggered and no phase boundary is created, which allows C to have a dependency with a wh-phrase freely, as illustrated in (13). The present analysis also explains the grammaticality of (3b) if the wh-phrase undergoes scrambling to the edge of ν P. In (3b), the subject undergoes Agree with Neg and thus ν P is a phase on a par with (3a). However, according to the PIC, the edge of the phase is visible to the following computation and the wh-phrase at the edge is accessible to C. It is also predicted that an adjunct *sika*-phrase could also precede a wh-phrase because adjuncts have nothing to do with Case and never trigger Agree, in a similar way to a Dative Case-marked phrase. This prediction is born out in (14).

In summary, I have provided empirical evidence that a phase is not inherently determined but rather it is determined in the course of the derivation. Relativization of a phase is relevant to the presence or absence of agreement. Furthermore, I suggest that the availability of wh-in-situ in Japanese

is reduced to the absence of agreement of T/v.

Examples

- (1) John-sika LGB-o yoma-nak-atta. (2) *John-sika LGB-o yomu.
 John-SIKA LGB-Acc read-Neg-Past John-SIKA LGB-Acc read
 ‘Only John reads LGB.’ ‘Only John reads LGB.’
- (3) a. ?*John-sika nani-o tabe-nak-atta-no.
 John-SIKA what-Acc eat-Neg-Past-Q
 ‘What did only John eat?’
 b. Nani-o John-sika tabe-nak-atta-no. (Takahashi 1990:140)
 c. Dare-ga LGB-sika yoma-nak-atta-no
 who-Nom LGB-SIKA read-Neg-read-Past-Q
 ‘Who read only LGB?’
 d. ?*LGB-sika dare-ga yoma-nak-atta-no. (Watanabe 2000:284)
- (4) a. Mary-wa John-ni-sika dare-o syookaisi-nak-atta-no.
 Mary-Top John-Dat-SIKA what-Acc introduce- Neg-Past-Q
 ‘What did Mary introduce only to John?’
 b. John-ni-sika nani-ga yom-e-nak-atta-no
 John-Dat-SIKA what-Nom read-can-Neg-Past-Q
 ‘What was only John able to read?’
- (5) a. *John-sika-ga/John-ga-sika ko-nak-atta.
 John- SIKA -Nom/ John-Nom- SIKA come-Neg-Past
 ‘Only John came.’
 b. *John-ga ringo-sika-o/ringo-o-sika tabe-nak-atta.
 John-Nom apple- SIKA-Acc/apple-Acc- SIKA eat-Neg-Past
 ‘John ate only apples.’
- (6) Ja ne polcal pisem.
 I not received letters(gen.pl)
 ‘I received letters.’ (Pesetsky 1982:40)
- (7) [_{NegP} Neg [_{VP} **John-sika** read LGB-Acc]] (order irrelevant)
 [Φ] < --Agree-- > [Φ]/[uninterpretable Case]
- (8) Stelpunum var hjálpað
 The girls.Dat.Pl.fem was.3sg helped.Neuter.sg
 ‘The girls were helped.’ (Sigurðsson 1992:3)
- (9) The first XP which dominates a DP which is assigned Case by Agree is counted as a phase.
- (10) [C [_{NegP} Neg [_{VP} John-sika read **what-Acc**]]] (order irrelevant)

- (11) In a phase α with head H, the domain of H is not accessible to operations outside α, only H and its edge are accessible to such operations. (Chomsky 2000:108)
- (12) John-ga [Mary-ga **nani-o** ka-tta to] omo-tta-no.
 John-Nom Mary-Nom what-Acc buy-Past Comp think-Past-Q
 ‘What did John think Mary buy?’
- (13) [C [_{NegP} Neg [_{VP} John-Dat-sika introduce **who-Acc**]]] (order irrelevant)

- (14) Ikkai-sika dare-ga oyoga-naka-tta no
 Once-SIKA who-Nom swim-Neg-Past-Q
 ‘Who swam only once?’