

**Implicit Comparison in English and Japanese**

Kennedy (2007) distinguishes between explicit comparison in (1a) that supplies the standard of comparison compositionally by using a comparative morpheme like *-er*, and implicit comparison in (1b) that supplies the standard contextually by using phrases like *compared to*. Kennedy claims that Japanese also has the two modes of comparison even though the language lacks overt comparative morphology.

- (1)    a. Al is smarter than Bill.  
 b. Compared to Bill, Al is smart.

In this talk, I examine semantic and pragmatic properties of a Japanese comparative construction that is not discussed in Kennedy (2007), namely, the *izyoo-ni* comparative in (2). By applying Kennedy's diagnostics, I demonstrate that the *izyoo-ni* comparative involves implicit comparison. However, it differs from other implicit comparison such as (1b) with respect to pragmatic implications; while (1b) has negative implications in (3) (Sawada 2009), the *izyoo-ni* comparative has positive implications in (4) (Hayashishita 2007). I argue that (3b) and (4b) are presuppositions, from which (3a) and (4a) can be derived. I further submit that there is a connection between the meaning of implicit comparison and the meaning of focus particles, namely, (3) and (4) are related to concessivity of *at least* and noteworthiness of *even*, respectively.

- (2)    Al-wa Bill-*izyoo-ni* kasikoi.  
 Al-TOP Bill-more-DAT smart
- (3)    a. Al is not (definitely) smart  
 b. Bill is not smart
- (4)    a. Al is (definitely) smart  
 b. Bill is smart

Lastly, the current analysis suggests that there is variation in implicit comparison depending on the kind of presuppositions introduced, which leads us to further crosslinguistic typological research of implicit comparison.

**References**

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