

Spelling Out the Double-o Constraint

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This talk aims to elucidate the true nature of the so-called Double-o Constraint (DoC) in Japanese. The nature of the DoC has long been discussed in the literature since Harada's work back in the 1970's, but it has eluded a principled explanation and has caused much controversy and confusion both theoretically and empirically. The DoC has been known to apply to certain domains and a careful study presented in this article shows that these domains correspond to phases in the recent framework of the minimalist program. Thus, the DoC reduces to a PF constraint against realizing multiple occurrences of the accusative Case within a single Spell-Out domain. Specifically, I argue that the DoC applies cyclically phase-by-phase and thus that the Double-o Constraint provides solid evidence for the cyclic phase-based computation in the current minimalist theorizing (Chomsky 2001, 2004, 2008). The DoC, therefore, is considered to be a case in which an apparently language-particular and hence peripheral phenomenon provides empirical support for the core architecture of the computational system.