
OBITUARY: Yuki Ito (1987-2015)

Tomoe Arai, Mioko Miyama

Yuki Ito, Ph.D student at the University of Maryland, right before he was to be awarded the degree of Ph.D., died of a heart attack on July 18, 2015 at the age of 28. This sad news came as a terrible shock to us.

Yuki was born in Matsudo, Chiba in 1987. He graduated from high school and entered the University of Tokyo. When he became a junior, he chose to belong to the Department of English, where he majored in English Linguistics and studied Generative Grammar. He earned a Bachelor's degree in 2009 and went on to the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology and continued to study linguistics. He took a master's degree in March 2011 and stayed in the Doctor's program until August of the same year. From September 2011 onward, he was enrolled at the Department of Linguistics of the University of Maryland. He was awarded the degree of Ph.D. in August 2015. The title of his dissertation is *English ECM at the Interfaces*.

Yuki's academic life was an active one from the very start. During his undergraduate days, his main interest was in degree expressions of English and Japanese, and his BA thesis was "DegP Projection in Japanese: An Analysis of Excessiveness Expressions," which was followed by the presentation at the 138th Meeting of the Linguistic Society of Japan and the paper "DegP Projection in Japanese: An Analysis of Excessiveness Expressions" (*Linguistic Research* 25; 2009). He devoted his years as a Master's student to studying long-distance reflexives and logophors, wrote "Move versus Non-Move: Minimalist Analysis of Long-Distance Reflexives and Logophoric Pronouns" (*Linguistic Research* 26; 2010) and presented "Syntax-Semantics Mapping of Logophoric Pronouns and Long-Distance Reflexives, and Its Consequences for the Syntax of Subject-Control" at the 140th Meeting of the Linguistic Society of Japan. He completed his MA thesis titled "Syntax and Semantics of Long-Distance Reflexives: An Overt Movement Analysis", based on part of which he presented "Movement Analysis of Long-Distance Reflexives and its Consequences on the Semantics of Propositional Attitudes" at the 142nd Meeting of the Linguistic Society of Japan and wrote "The Movement Derivation of Long-Distance Reflexives" (*Linguistic Research* 27; 2011).

Syntax was always at the center of Yuki's research and he endeavored to uncover the syntactic structure of ECM sentences at the Department of Linguistics of the University of Maryland. He presented "Asymmetric A-movement within vP: A Case from Coordinated ECMs" at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society in 2013, which resulted in the article "Raising to Object in *Wager/Assure*-Class Verbs: a PF Account of the Defective Paradigm." This subsequently appeared in *Studia Linguistica* 68 in 2014, a prestigious international journal in linguistics. He also presented "A Unified Treatment of the Exceptions to the Agent/ECM Correlation" at the 89th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in 2015.

Yuki was an ideal student, being cool and not talkative but having a genuine enthusiasm for linguistics and always presenting well-organized thoughts. His energy was extraordinary; we vividly remember him saying, at the orientation meeting of the Department of English when we became juniors, that he entered the University of Tokyo and came to the Department of English with the clear intention to study theoretical linguistics. True to his words, he was a hard-working person, always carrying under his arm different articles and books every time we saw him, just like his supervisor Prof. Akira Watanabe in his graduate student days. All of his academic accomplishments, from those in his undergraduate days to those in the U.S. where he was a graduate student in the Ph.D. program, were solidly backed by a rich and vast knowledge about the recent theoretical developments of Generative Grammar and his topic of choice.

Yuki as a person cannot be captured just by talking about his commitment to linguistics; he was even more passionate about music. We were once invited to the performance of "Pagliacci" by Ruggero Leoncavallo in December 2009. Yuki played the part of Silvio, the heroine's lover. He sang in a deep baritone voice, and we realized how much he had practiced to sing like that and how much he loves opera. In addition, it was very interesting to see him playing the part of a man who is the lover of a woman cheating on her husband, a part that is the exact opposite of his real personality. We remembered him smiling happily when we told him how much we enjoyed his splendid performance.

Yuki was always a great person to be friends with, even though after he went to the University of Maryland we were in Japan and he was studying in the U.S. He showed up at our department each summer when he returned to Japan. He presented his research every time and we were astonished by the extreme elegance of his arguments for his new analysis. Having dinner together after the presentation was stimulating for us, and although the places that we were studying were far apart we all felt that we were better friends because of these reunions. Since he was about to complete his Ph.D. dissertation in 2015, everyone in our department was looking forward to his coming back to Japan and studying with us again. The news of his death came out of the blue and it is still hard to accept. This is a great loss to us all and he will be missed very much.