

Japanese syntax 1: "basic" word order

- (1) John-ga hon-o yon da
John-SUBJ book-DO read PAST
'John has read the book'/'John read the book'
- (2) John-ga Mary-ni kono hon-o age ta
John-SUBJ Mary-IO that book-DO give PAST
'John has given that book to Mary/John gave Mary that book'
- (3) Mary-ga [kono Nihon kara-no kagaku-no gakusei-o] korosi ta
Mary-SUBJ that Japan from chemistry of student-DO killed PAST
'Mary killed/has killed that student of chemistry from Japan'
- (4) Mary-ga totemo ii seiseki-ga hosii des u
Mary-SUBJ very good grade-DO covetous is PRESENT
'Mary is very covetous of a good grade' (i.e. she wants a good grade)
- (5) John-ga Paris kara New-York e it ta
John-SUBJ Paris from New-York to went PAST
'John went/has gone from Paris to New York'
- (6) Mary-ga John-ga hon-o yon da to omottei ru
Mary-SUBJ John-SUBJ book-DO read PAST that think PRESENT
'Mary thinks that John read the book'
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Japanese syntax 2: scrambling

- (7) a. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni piza-o age-ta.
Taro-SUB Hanako-to pizza-OBJ gave
b. piza-o Taroo-ga Hanako-ni age-ta.
c. Taroo-ga piza-o Hanako-ni age-ta
d. piza-o Hanako-ni Taroo-ga age-ta.
e. Hanako-ni piza-o Taroo-ga age-ta.
f. Hanako-ni Taroo-ga piza-o age-ta.
- (8) **Numerals must be next to their NP**
a. Gakusei-ga 2-ri piza-o kat-ta.
students-SUBJ 2-cl pizza-OBJ bought
'Two students bought pizza.'
b. *Gakusei-ga piza-o 2-ri kat-ta.
- (9) **Except...**
a. Gakusei-ga piza-o 2-tu kat-ta
student-SUB pizza-OBJ 2-cl bought
'The student bought two pizzas.'
b. Piza-o gakusei-ga 2-tu kat-ta [this is **acceptable!**]
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ABBREVIATIONS:

- SUBJ subject form (also called "nominative case")
IO indirect object form (also called "dative case")
DO direct object form (also called "accusative case")