

**Seminar Series  
for Joint East-West Early Language Project**  
アジア欧米言語獲得研究プロジェクト セミナーシリーズ

## **Seminar Series #5**

### *Constituent Order in Language and Thought*



# **Masatoshi Koizumi**

Tohoku University

Host: Reiko Mazuka

RIKEN CBS

JEWEL Project Principal Investigator

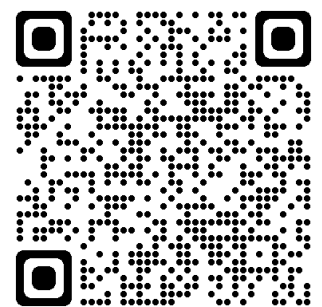
**14 Mar. 2022**

**16:00-17:30 (JST)**

**Zoom Webinar**

Admission: Free

Registration site ↓



This work was supported by JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research  
“Compensatory contribution of linguistic and social factors for early language  
acquisition: Cross linguistic study between European and Asian languages”

Grant number JP20H05617

## **JEWEL seminar series #5**

### **Constituent Order in Language and Thought**

Masatoshi Koizumi (Tohoku University)

In many flexible word order languages, sentences with a transitive verb (V) in which the subject (S) precedes the object (O) (SO word order = SOV, SVO, VSO) are reported to be "preferred" over those in which the opposite occurs (OS word order= OSV, OVS, VOS). For example, SO sentences are easier to process and are produced more frequently than OS sentences in Finnish, Japanese, Sinhalese, and others. This empirical evidence of the preference for SO word order, however, is not conclusive, because it comes exclusively from SO languages (i.e., languages in which SO is the syntactically simplest word order). It is therefore necessary to study OS languages (i.e., languages in which OS is the syntactically simplest word order) to investigate whether the same preference holds. In this talk, I will report on several experiments my colleagues and I have conducted, to this end, on Kaqchikel (Mayan, Guatemala) and Seediq (Austronesian, Taiwan), whose syntactically basic word order is VOS.