

NOTES ON THE ‘ARGUMENT TRANSFER’ PROBLEM FOR CONFIGURATIONAL θ -THEORY *

Tomohiro Fujii
Yokohama National University

1. Introduction

‘Configurational’ argument structure has been popular in generative syntax since Hale & Keyser’s (1993) seminal work (see also Hale & Keyser 2002, Chomsky 1995, Baker 1997, Harley 2011). The grammatical process called Argument Transfer, which is found with a verbal noun construction in Japanese like (1) below, could pose an empirical problem for the *configurational* approach to argument structure.

- (1) Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara genkin-no goodatu-o kokoromita
Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from cash-GEN stealing-ACC attempted

‘Hiroshi attempted stealing of money in cash from the bank.’

The issue has been addressed by Hoshi (2002a, b). Calling this problem an ‘Argument Transfer’ problem for configurational θ -theory, the present paper attempts a further investigation into the issue that Hoshi addresses. The paper argues:

- (i) an approach that can most clearly be characterized as an alternative to the *configurational* approach is what we might call a *featural* approach;
- (ii) the major properties of Argument Transfer can be handled more straightforwardly under the F-approach (Saito & Hoshi 1998, 2000) than under the C-approach, and
- (iii) nevertheless, it is not impossible to work out a way out of the problem for the configurational approach.

The paper also demonstrates:

- (iv) an initial attempt to motivate the ‘configurational’ analysis of Argument Transfer on independent grounds (cf. Matsumoto 1996b) does not succeed at least when taken at face value.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 is devoted to classifying approaches to argument structure in terms of the configurational vs. featural distinction. Section 3 reviews

* I benefited from discussions with the participants in the Fall 2012 graduate syntax study group at Yokohama National University. I also thank Masaya Yoshida for helpful discussion.

the major properties of Argument Transfer (AT) based on Grimshaw & Mester (1988). Section 4 also reviews how the featural approach proposed in Hoshi (1995), Saito & Hoshi (1998, 2000) can nicely account for these properties. Then sections 5 and 6 develop and consider a configurational account of AT, showing that AT can be made compatible with the configurational approach by making a certain set of assumptions. Section 7 attempts to test the proposed configurational analysis on independent grounds, even though, as we will see, the results fail to support the analysis, if not against it. Section 8 concludes the paper by addressing one other issue about the ‘configurational vs. featural’ debate.

2. Two Approaches to Argument Structure: Configurational vs. Featural

This section is devoted to characterizing one alternative to the configurational approach to argument structure, namely a featural approach. In what follows, I dub the former the C-approach and the latter the F-approach.

One of the most popular instances of the C-approach is Hale & Keyser’s (1993, 2002) work. Their main proposal is that a particular thematic role is associated with a particular syntactic position defined in phrase-structure theoretic terms. For concreteness, let us ask ourselves why *John kissed Mary* does not mean what *Mary kissed John* means. If we take Chomsky’s (1995) familiar implementation of the C-approach, the question can be rephrased as follows. Why wouldn’t a structure like (2) obtain and yield the unwanted result?

(2) $[_{VP} \alpha \quad v \quad [_{VP} V \beta \quad]]$
 Patient Agent

Hale & Keyser (1993:68-69) remark:

Corresponding to this syntactic relation [where a verb phrase is immediately embedded under another verb phrase], there is a similarly asymmetric (semantic) relation between two events, a relation we will take to be that of *implication*. Accordingly, the matrix event "implicates" the subordinate event as in $[e_1 \rightarrow e_2]$, a relation that makes perfect sense if the syntactic embedding corresponds to a "semantic" composite in which the subordinate event is a proper part of the event denoted by the structure projected by the main verb.

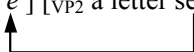
Crudely put, the ‘configurational’ answer is that (2) would violate principles of lexical meaning composition.

One direct consequence of the C-approach is that it explains why the UTAH (Uniformity of Thematic Assignment Hypothesis, Baker 1988) holds, as Hale & Keyser note.¹ Also, if we assume that there aren’t so many legitimate conceptual relations among events, then, there

¹ The hypothesis states that (i)dentical thematic relationships between items are represented by identical structural relationships between those items at the level of D-structure (Baker 1988:46).

will not be many different syntactic templates, accordingly; hence there are a few θ -roles.

Next turn to the F-approach. I take the following to be the most prominent characteristic of this approach. In this approach, argument structure is taken to be information that a lexical item bears as a feature of it. A consequence of this featural view of argument structure then is that it allows the thematic status of a syntactic position to change in principle in the course of derivation. Consider one concrete case. Jackendoff (1990) comments on Larson’s (1988) derivation of the dative construction given in (3).

- (3) [VP₁ NP [V *e*] [VP₂ a letter send to Mary]]
- 

Jackendoff (pp.450-51) observes:

... the subject lies outside the maximal projection of *send* in D-structure, namely the lower VP. Therefore *send* cannot θ -mark its subject until it has raised into the upper VP. In other words, θ -marking has suddenly become a derived structure property.

Jackendoff seems right that Spec,VP₁ becomes a θ -position only after *send* substituting for the empty verb, because Larson (1988) assumes that a predicate must θ -mark an argument of it within its maximal projection.² Thus the thematic status of Spec,VP₁ changes due to V-movement. The point here is that this manner of θ -role assignment is possible crucially because *send* moves around with its agent-licensing ability. In other words, such θ -role assignment in a derived position would be impossible if the agent-licensing ability of *send* were not a *feature* of the lexical head. It should be very clear that this featural view cannot be shared by the C-approach, because, under the latter approach, thematic roles are not properties of lexical heads per se, but those of a phrase structural configuration resulting from composition of lexical heads.

Thus, the F-approach has to answer the question of how *John kissed Mary* does not mean ‘Mary kissed John’ in a different way than the C-approach does. The UTAH needs to be relativized for the F-approach. Baker (1997:108) calls it the RUTAH and writes:

Baker’s [1988] original statement of the UTAH implies that particular thematic roles were associated with particular syntactic positions in an absolute sense. However, many other researchers assume that only the relative positions of the arguments are important. On this view, it does not matter exactly what syntactic position (say) a theme phrase is generated in, as long as it is higher than any goal phrase and lower than any agent phrase in the same clause. We may call a condition of this kind the Relativized UTAH, or RUTAH.

Analyzing *John put some beer in the cooler*, Larson (1990:598) argues that its base structure

² In his reply to Jackendoff, Larson doesn’t accept Jackendoff’s interpretation of his derivation given in (3).

given in (4) does not entail that *some beer* can be understood as an agent even though it is in the specifier of *send*. This is because the RUTAH dictates that the most prominent role, Agent, goes with a higher A-position, Spec,VP₁.

(4) [VP₁ John [V e] [VP₂ some beer [V' put in the cooler]]

Likewise, if *John kissed Mary* were understood to mean ‘Mary kissed John’ (i.e. the situation provided in (2)), that would result in violation of the RUTAH.

Given the stories told in the last two paragraphs, the following two can be noted as the key features of the F-approach to argument structure: (i) thematic information is represented as a feature of a lexical item; and (ii) the RUTAH-based thematic hierarchy is incorporated to explain why θ -roles are projected in structure in the way they actually are. In this light, the type of lexical representation that Grimshaw 1990 adopts (e.g., (5)) reflects these features of the F-approach rather clearly.

(5) kiss (x (y))
Agent Theme

Parentheses explicitly indicate that Agent is prominent over Theme, and that information is represented as a feature of the lexical item *kiss*.

Before we proceed, I would like to make one point about the relationship between the C-approach and the notion ‘ θ -feature’. Sometimes a proposal referring to ‘ θ -feature’ can be recast without appealing to it in the sense of the notion characterized above. For instance, take Hornstein’s (1999) well known analysis of Obligatory Control using θ -features to drive movement into θ -position. As Harley (2011) correctly notes, a movement theory of control is compatible at least with a version of the C-approach. Given that Move (= external Merge) and Merge (=internal Merge) are unified (e.g., Chomsky 2008), one seems to even need a stipulation to stop the system to internally merge an argument in a new θ -position (e.g. D-structure or Chomsky’s (2000) constraint on θ -positions and first merger of arguments) under the C-approach. In this respect, the Saito & Hoshi style analysis of Argument Transfer reflects the nature of the F-approach in a clearer manner, as we will see in section 3.

The next section lays out the major properties of AT that Grimshaw & Mester discovered and that Saito & Hoshi attempt to explain.

3. Argument Transfer

As alluded to in section 1, we focus on ‘Verbal Noun-ACC’ and related constructions in Japanese.³ The examples of VN-ACC constructions given in (6a-c) illustrate AT.⁴

³ Although I cannot afford to discuss the cross-linguistic status of this grammatical process in Japanese, let me make one comment on examples like *John gave Bill permission to buy a car*.

- (6) a. Hiroshi-wa [VNP sono ginkoo-kara-no genkin-no goodatu]-o
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from-GEN cash-GEN stealing-ACC
 kokoromita.
 attempted
 ‘Hiroshi attempted stealing of cash from the bank.’
- b. Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara [VNP genkin-no goodatu]-o kokoromita.
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from cash-GEN stealing-ACC attempted
- c. ?Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara genkin-o [VNP goodatu]-o kokoromita.
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from cash-ACC stealing-ACC attempted

In each of these cases, the complement is headed by the Verbal Noun (VN) *goodatu* ‘stealing’; the VN is directly followed by an accusative case marker, and the complement is obligatorily controlled; e.g., *Mary-mo kokoromita* ‘Mary also attempted’ only allows a sloppy interpretation when it follows any of these examples. They just differ from one another with regard to where internal arguments of the VN are located in surface structure. All the internal arguments are located inside the VNP in (6a); one of them is located outside it in (6b); all the two are located outside it in (6c). This way, an internal argument of the embedded predicate noun shows up as either a surface-structure dependent of that noun or a surface-structure dependent of the matrix verb in this construction. Grimshaw and Mester propose Argument Transfer (AT) to refer to this effect: In this view, (part of) the argument structure of a VN is *transferred* to the matrix verb in (6b, c).⁵ Throughout the paper, I use AT as a cover term to refer to this phenomenon or grammatical effect, and sometimes call a pattern like (6a), where AT does not apply at all, the *simple VN-ACC construction*, as opposed to its ATed counterparts [(6b, c)].

In addition to the basic paradigm in (6), let us note that these VN-ACC constructions have what we might call a VN-*suru koto*-ACC counterpart. One example is given in (7).

According to Baker (1996: 353ff), an example like this involves AT. He remarks that “[i]n general, lexical properties of the light verb determine the basic syntactic structure of the clause, while the predicate noun determines the semantic flavor of those arguments.” This characterization looks correct for the English construction. In the Japanese case under consideration, however, it looks like as many arguments add up in the matrix clause as undergo AT; e.g., the verb *kokoromiru* ‘attempt.Pres’ used in (6) ordinarily only takes one agent and one theme.

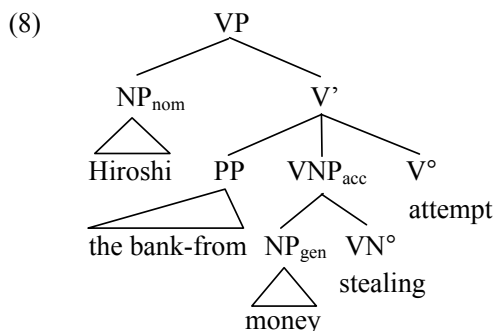
⁴ The “?” status of (6c) is due to the fact that, roughly, clause-mate multiple accusative NPs generally cause degradation, which has nothing to do with the applicability of AT per se; see Saito and Hoshi 2000 for full discussion.

⁵ Grimshaw & Mester (1988) only discussed cases involving *suru* ‘do’ as the matrix verb. I’m agnostic here about the potential differences that the *suru*-construction might exhibit; see Matsumoto 1996a.

- (7) Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara(*-no) genkin- $\{o, *no\}$ goodatu-suru-
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from-GEN cash-ACC GEN stealing-do.PRES-
 koto-o kokoromita.
 C-ACC attempted

The VN-*suru koto*-ACC construction contains the same VN, but the VN is followed by the morphologically tensed verb *suru* ‘do.PRES’ and the nominalizing complementizer *koto*. The case marking properties indicated in the above example show that the internal syntax of the *koto* complement is fully verbal. This construction will be important when the ‘configurational’ analysis of AT is tested against empirical data in section 7.⁶

As already seen above, what is peculiar about the VN-ACC construction is that in (6b, c), *sono ginkoo-kara* ‘from that bank’, case-wise, behaves as if it is a dependent of the matrix verb (If it were a dependent of the noun, it would be marked with genitive in Japanese; cf. (6a)). A surface phrase-structure like the one given in (8) encodes this case property, abstracting away from the exact surface position for the matrix subject and other details.



It is important to note that AT does not apply freely. One consensus that researchers have reached seems to be that the grammatical process in question must apply in the outside-in fashion that presupposes a certain thematic hierarchy (Grimshaw & Mester 1988; Matsumoto 1996; Saito & Hoshi 1998, 2000; cf. Ishii 2009). Observe first that the severe ungrammaticality of (9) suggests that the Theme of ‘stealing’ cannot undergo AT if the Source does not.

- (9) *Hiroshi-wa genkin-o [sono ginkoo-kara-no goodatu]-o kokoromita
 Hiroshi-TOP cash-ACC that bank-from-GEN stealing-ACC attempted

This way of describing the status of (9) is confirmed by the status of (6c). Although it is not a perfect sentence (cf. footnote 4), it is still acceptable if both the internal arguments are transferred. Based on these facts, Grimshaw & Mester conclude that AT applies to the argument structure of the embedded VN from outside in, respecting, say, a hierarchy like the

⁶ Kuroda 1965 proposes a deletion transformation to derive a VN-ACC construction from its VN-*suru koto*-ACC counterpart.

following (" $>$ " indicates "is more prominent than").⁷

(10) Agent $>$ Source $>$ Goal $>$ Theme

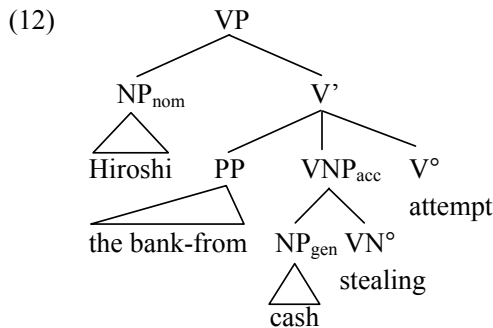
To be more precise, an argument with θ -role β cannot undergo AT if there is an argument with θ -role α that has not undergone AT, where $\alpha > \beta$ holds in the thematic hierarchy.

In sum, two descriptive properties serve as boundary conditions on an adequate analysis of AT.

- (11) a. AT applies optionally to (internal) arguments of the VN.
 b. AT applies in an outside-in fashion to preserve the thematic hierarchy.

4. A Covert Incorporation Analysis of AT

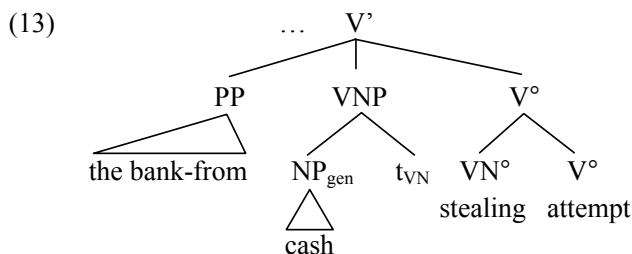
Saito & Hoshi 1998, 2000 propose an elegant covert incorporation analysis of AT.^{8,9} I review the gist of the analysis below. According to the analysis, the effect of AT is achieved by covert (or LF) adjunction of the VN to the matrix V via head movement. In this analysis, the surface structure that we have in (12) (=8)) undergoes a covert transformation to yield the structure given in (13).



⁷ There is an issue as to where theme role comes in the hierarchy. See section 8.

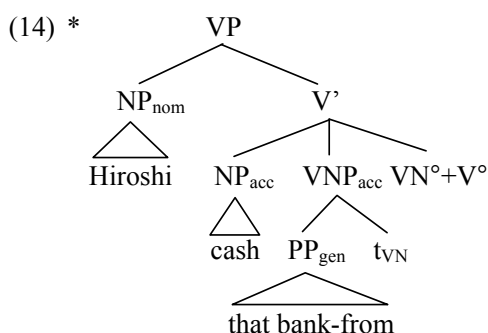
⁸ Baker (1996:353ff) independently suggests an idea of the same sort.

⁹ Saito & Hoshi (2000) focus on the Light Verb Construction with *suru*, not the one exemplified by (6b/c) that involves a fully lexical matrix verb.



There are two basic assumptions about θ -role assignment underlying the analysis: (i) that a θ -role assigner assigns a θ -role to a phrase iff the former m-commands the latter (Locality); and (ii) that the m-command domain of X° is the domain that the first maximal projection that dominates it (Definition of m-command). Once these assumptions are made, it follows that in (13) above, the VN is able to license the PP as an argument of it.

The covert incorporation analysis of AT successfully captures the two facts summarized in (11): First, as Saito & Hoshi (2000) note, the very fact that AT is possible now follows from the combination of two independently attested properties of syntax, i.e. head movement and covert movement, without assuming a construction-specific rule. Second, the analysis explains the ungrammaticality of (9) by appealing to the RUTHA-based thematic hierarchy. (9), diagrammed as in (14), can successfully be excluded by saying that the position for the theme is higher than that of the source, given the hierarchy in (10). This account requires that the matrix clause have the theme θ -position. That is exactly what the covert incorporation analysis claims.



This is not trivial at all because an alternative analyzing this transferred theme as being θ -marked within the VNP would not be able to make recourse to the RUTAH or the thematic hierarchy to exclude the structure of (14).

In sum, Saito & Hoshi's (and Baker's, as alluded to in footnote 8) head movement-based view quite nicely satisfies the boundary conditions on an adequate analysis of AT (i.e., (11)a and b). The next two sections examine whether the covert incorporation analysis can be instantiated under the C-approach. We begin by proposing a configurational analysis of the simple VN-ACC construction as well as the VN-*suru-koto*-ACC construction.

5. A ‘Configurational’ Analysis of the Simple VN-ACC Construction

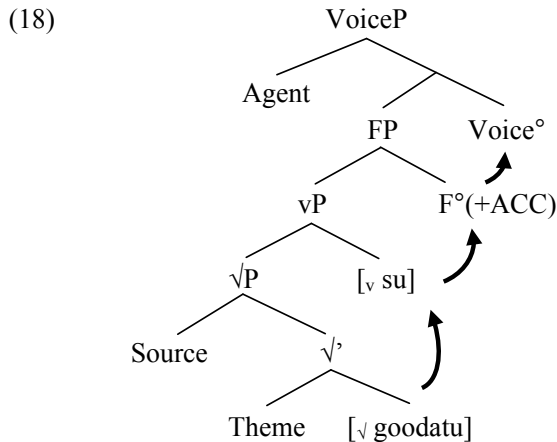
The key feature of the covert incorporation analysis of AT is head movement being able to make an initially non-thematic position thematic in the course of derivation. What would a configurational treatment of VN-ACC complement constructions look like? In order to be able to answer this target question, we need first to consider a configurational analysis of the most basic patterns, the VN-*suru koto* construction [(7)] and the simple VN-ACC construction [(6a)]. (6a-c) and (7) are repeated below.

- (15) a. Hiroshi-wa [_{VNP} sono ginkoo-kara-no genkin-no goodatu]-o
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from-GEN cash-GEN stealing-ACC
 kokoromita.
 attempted
 ‘Hiroshi attempted stealing of cash from the bank.’
- b. Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara [_{VNP} genkin-no goodatu]-o kokoromita.
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from cash-GEN stealing-ACC attempted
- c. ?Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara genkin-o [_{VNP} goodatu]-o kokoromita.
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from cash-ACC stealing-ACC attempted
- (16) Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara genkin-o goodatu-suru-koto-o
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from cash-ACC stealing-do.PRES-C-ACC
 kokoromita.
 attempted

One immediately conceivable way of dealing with (15a) is by borrowing a C-approach-based analysis of a similar type of nominalization. Let us adopt some ideas from a configurational analysis of English nominalizations suggested by Harley (2009) (see also Kratzer 1996, Harley & Noyer 1997). The major assumptions required to analyze (16) are listed below.

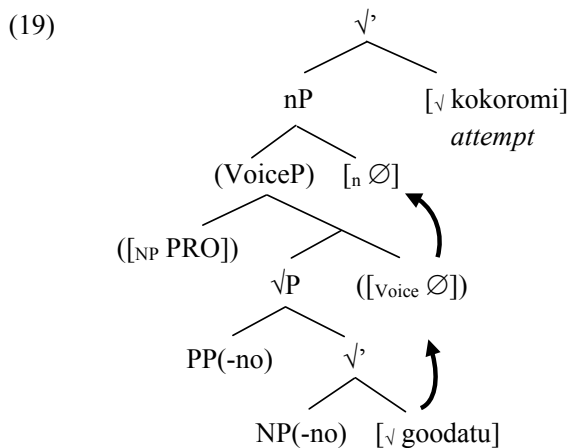
- (17) a. A clause’s ability of licensing accusative case, ability of licensing agents and ability of verbalizing roots are dissociated, rather than being treated as properties of one head, *v*. That is, Voice^o introduces an agent, F^o licenses accusative case, and *v*^o verbalizes roots.
- b. A series of overt head movements takes place (as indicated below), giving rise to the surface form of the verb, *goodatu su*.
- c. Spec, \sqrt{P} is associated with goal/location/source and Compl, \sqrt{P} with theme at least in Japanese.

Then the embedded clause of the VN-*suru koto* construction exemplified by (16) can be analyzed as involving a structure like (18) ($\sqrt{\quad}$ stands for a category-neutral root.)



One might point out that the positions for the source and the theme assumed in (17c) radically differ from those proposed in the Hale & Keyser style analysis of English argument structure (see Hale & Keyser 1993, 2002; Harley 2011). For the moment, it suffices to note that the assumption in (17c) is largely compatible with the observed facts about Japanese argument structure and that it clearly is a configurational analysis if not without a problem (see Takano 2008 for a comprehensive review). I come back to this issue in section 8.

Turn to the structure of the simple VN-ACC construction. The structure given in (18) leads us to the hypothesis that the VN-ACC complement is diagramed as (19) (or perhaps its version without the Voice projection and PRO, which are put in parentheses in the diagram.)



The major assumptions underlying this structure are:

- (20) a. VNP is reanalyzed as nP. The head n is a nominalizer (cf. (18)).
 b. The verbalizer v and the case-assigning F are never present inside nP (cf. (18)).

- c. Head movement from $\sqrt{\text{V}}$ to Voice and one from Voice to n apply to give the surface form of the noun *goodatu*.
- d. XP gets spelled out with genitive marking or in its adnominal form iff it is governed by n at the point of Spell-Out (see Matsumoto 1996b:130 for a similar idea).
- e. Head movement gives rise to the effect of Baker’s (1988) Government Transparency Corollary.

(20a-c) are largely in lines with Harley’s work. The assumptions in (20d-e) are made to deal with the fact that arguments and modifiers that appear inside the (extended) projection of a nominal *at surface structure* receive adnominal morphology.

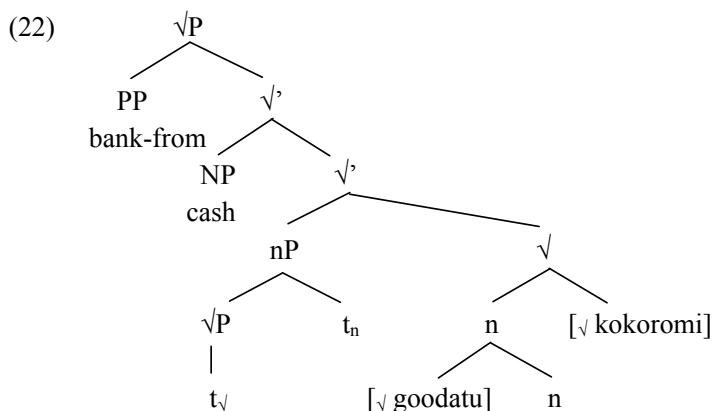
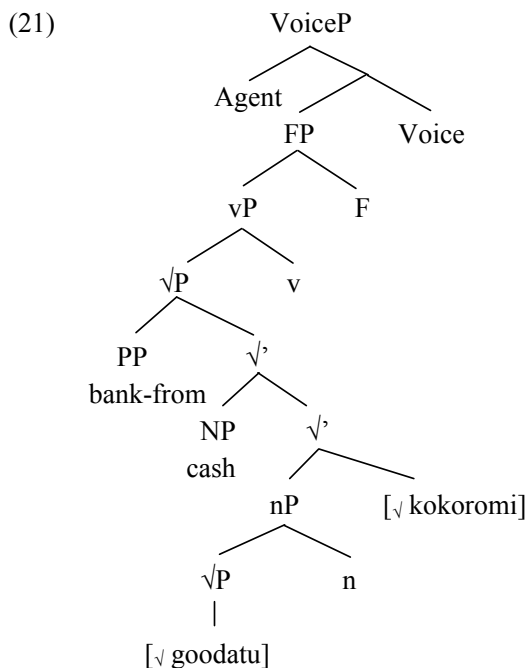
Given these assumptions, and the assumption about theme and source in (17c), one can successfully make it follow that the PP and the NP in (19) are *configurationally* assigned a source and a theme role, respectively. This way, a configurational analysis of the non-ATed VNP complement construction can be instantiated.

6. Incompatibility with the Covert Incorporation Analysis of AT

Having made available a ‘configurational’ analysis of the simple VN-ACC construction, we are now in a position to ask the target question of this paper. How would it be possible for the C-approach to account for the AT cases exemplified by (15b-c)? I demonstrate first that the covert incorporation analysis, if taken at face value, does not fit in with the configurational analysis of VN-ACC complements sketched in the previous subsection. Let us take (15c) and consider its derivation. The base structure would be as in (21), and the covert incorporation of the VN --- the syntactic object that is now reanalyzed as $\sqrt{\text{v+n}}$ --- to the matrix verb gives rise to the configuration give in (22).^{10, 11}

¹⁰ One might correctly wonder, regarding (22), whether the matrix verb root $\sqrt{\text{V}}$ has not moved up to a higher position at the point of LF derivation where the covert movement of the VN applies. This may imply that covert movement precedes overt movement, contrary to what’s expected under the Y model assumed in (20d). It seems, though, that the main idea can still be kept intact. Assume that covert n-to- $\sqrt{\text{V}}$ movement is an operation at the nP cycle, and a series of overt movements resulting in $\sqrt{\text{v+F+Voice}}$ count as operations at the next higher cycle. Assume also that Spell-Out applies cycle by cycle. That enables us to continue a Y-model derivation within each cycle.

¹¹ As was alluded to when (19) is presented, the VoiceP in the VNP may be absent from VN-ACC complements. Indeed, it is omitted in (21). This is to avoid being committed to the issue of whether PRO, an obligatorily controlled argument, undergoes AT. For the current purposes, one can assume, along the lines proposed by Chierchia (1984), Wurmbrand (2001), among others, that a controlled complement may lack a subject position.

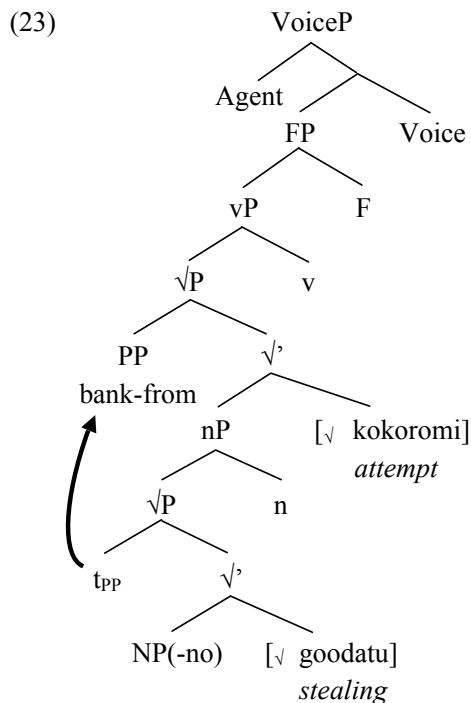


Recall that in (17c), we assumed that Spec,√P is associated with goal/location/source and Compl,√P with theme in order to get the configurational analysis of the construction off the ground. Now this assumption, obviously, prevents the ATed arguments from receiving the correct interpretations; in (22), the PP is not in the specifier of [√ *goodatu*], nor is the NP in the complement of it. (See Kuroda 2003 for a solution to this problem, which proposes reconstructing a configurational structure inside the lower √P.)

This section has demonstrated (i) that the VN-*suru koto*-ACC construction can be dealt with under the C-approach; (ii) that the VN-ACC construction without AT also can fall under it; and (iii) that the ‘covert incorporation’ solution to the AT problem is not compatible with the C-approach to argument structure. In the next section, we consider a ‘configurational’ way out of the problem, building on Matsumoto (1996b).

7. Discussion

One way of accounting for AT under the C-approach is by proposing that transferred arguments result from non-case-driven A-movement from within the VN-ACC clause into the matrix domain. Under the structural analysis of the construction proposed above, the movement in question will be movement out of the nP to the matrix \sqrt{P} . The diagram in (23) presents how the source PP is transferred to the matrix domain in examples like (15b).



As for the construction exemplified by (15c), where the source and the theme are transferred, it can be handled by assuming that they would move into multiple specifiers as in (24).

(24) ... $[\sqrt{P}$ PP_{Source} $[\sqrt{'}$ NP_{Theme} $[\sqrt{'}$ $[\text{nP}$ t_{Source} t_{Theme} goodatu] kokoromi]]

Note also that the movement in question can be non-case-driven, because, for example, the source PP receives no case from the matrix verb. A moved element, like the transferred theme in (23), can be assigned case by the matrix verb but it does not always have to be. The following assumptions seem to enable us to achieve the desired results.

- (25) a. The matrix verb (v°) optionally gains an ‘EPP’ feature, which derives overt A-movement to a specifier of the head bearing it, essentially along the lines presented in Chomsky 2008, Lasnik 2003.

- b. The EPP feature in question may derive movement more than one time to create multiple specifiers (Ura 1994). When multiple movements are triggered, multiple specifiers are created in a ‘Tacking in’ fashion proposed in Richards (2001), Hiraiwa (2001). Thus, when the two internal arguments move, the ‘base’ word order is preserved.
- c. nP does not count as an intervener for movement of the PP and the NP. More generally, when H° triggers movement, the complement of H° does not count as an intervener for minimality purposes (Funakoshi 2012).

It should be noted that the movement in (23) cannot be scrambling. If it were, the effect of the thematic hierarchy (cf. (9), repeated as (26)) would not be captured, given that scrambling does not obey minimality.

(26) *Hiroshi-wa genkin-o [sono ginkoo-kara-no goodatu]-o kokoromita
Hiroshi-TOP cash-ACC that bank-from-GEN stealing-ACC attempted

So this ‘EPP-driven movement’ analysis proposed above is not only compatible with the C-approach but also successfully captures the core effects of AT.

Now a question that arises is, is there any independent empirical argument that this ‘EPP-driven movement’ analysis is preferred over the covert incorporation analysis? In what follows, I first provide one putative argument in favor of the EPP-driven movement analysis, which is essentially one I reconstruct from Matsumoto’s (1996b) observations (see also Kuroda 2003). And then I show that this particular argument unfortunately turns out to lead to a wrong consequence.

The form of the argument for the EPP-driven movement analysis is as follows. Suppose that displacement of a complement dependent of the sort proposed in (23) is observed in some other construction. Suppose furthermore that the second construction cannot be accounted for in terms of covert incorporation. Then, all the facts would follow without appealing to the covert incorporation analysis. Hence the EPP-driven movement analysis is preferred.

An actual empirical argument is based on a clause-mate condition on NPI licensing. First, the contrast in (27) is an illustration of the standard generalization that a *sika*-marked phrase, being an NPI, requires a clause-mate negation at surface structure. The PP-*sika* in the embedded clause cannot be licensed by the matrix negation but can be by the embedded negation.

(27) a. *Yoko-wa [Hiroshi-ga sono ginkoo-kara-sika genkin-o
Yoko-TOP Hiroshi-NOM that bank-from-SIKA cash-ACC
goodatu-suru koto]-o soozoosi-nakat-ta.
stealing-do.PRES C-ACC imagine-NEG-PAST

- b. Yoko-wa [doroboo-ga sono ginkoo-kara-sika genkin-o
 Yoko-TOP robber-NOM that bank-from-SIKA cash-ACC
 goodatu-si-nai koto]-o soozoosita.
 stealing-do-NEG.PRES C-ACC imagined

‘Yoko imagined that robbers would steal cash only from that bank.’

As Matsumoto notes, it has been observed that a standard non-finite OC complement exhibits a clause-union effect: a dependent of the complement clause behaves as if it is in the matrix clause (Saito 1985, 1996; Nemoto 1993; Murasugi & Saito 1995). In (28a), the PP-*sika* is easily licensed by the matrix negation (Not surprisingly, when transferred elements are NPIs, they are licensed by the matrix negation, as in (28b)).

- (28) a. Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara-sika genkin-o goodatu-suru-koto-o
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from-SIKA cash-ACC stealing-do.PRES-C-ACC
 kokorominakatta.
 did.not.attempt

‘Hiroshi attempted to steal cash only from that bank.’

- b. Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara-sika [_{VNP} genkin-no goodatu]-o
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from-SIKA cash-GEN stealing-ACC
 kokoromi-nakat-ta.
 attempt-NEG-PAST

Matsumoto’s observation suggests that EPP-driven movement is independently needed to account for the clause-mate effect and hence the covert incorporation can be dispensed with. This way, an argument in favor of the EPP-driven movement analysis can be made.

However, it turns out that the unification of AT and the ill-understood clause-union effect under OC gains little empirical support. To see how, we introduce another instance of the clause-union effect, which has to do with the clause-mate condition on multiple clefting. In (29a), the matrix subject and the source PP are not in the same clause and they resist multiple clefting. As Takano (2010) observes, the effect goes away when the complement subject is OCed, as in (29b). (29c) shows that in the VN-ACC construction as well, a transferred element behaves like a clause mate of the matrix subject. This is expected since OC is involved (Foci are underscored in translations in (29)).

- (29) a. *[e₁ [doroboo-ga e₂ genkin-o goodatu-suru-koto]-o soozoosita-no]-wa
 robber-NOM cash-ACC stealing-do-C-ACC imagined-C-TOP
 Hiroshi-ga₁ sono ginkoo-kara₂ da.
 Hiroshi-NOM that bank-from COP

‘Hiroshi imagined the robbers would steal cash from that bank.’

- b. [e₁ e₂ genkin-o goodatu-suru koto-o kokoromita-no]-wa
 cash-ACC stealing-do C-ACC attempted-C-TOP
 Hiroshi-ga₁ sono ginkoo-kara₂ da.
 Hiroshi-NOM that bank-from COP

‘Hiroshi attempted to steal cash from that bank.’

- c. [e₁ e₂ [VNP genkin-no goodatu]-o kokoromita-no]-wa
 cash-GEN stealing-ACC attempted-C-TOP
 Hiroshi-ga₁ sono ginkoo-kara₂ da.
 Hiroshi-NOM that bank-from COP

With this much background, consider a pair of examples like (30a,b). In (30a), the source PP must be in the embedded CP because of the *sika*-Neg association within the clause. It is predicted then that the theme NP *genkin* ‘cash’ cannot be displaced to the matrix clause in this environment, because the source PP would have to undergo EPP-driven movement if the theme NP does, obeying minimality (cf. the ungrammaticality of (26)). Now the prediction for multiple clefting applying to (30a) is that the theme NP would not undergo clefting with the matrix agent; i.e. that (30b) be ungrammatical. But the example is acceptable.¹²

- (30) a. Hiroshi-wa sono ginkoo-kara-sika genkin-o
 Hiroshi-TOP that bank-from-SIKA cash-ACC
 goodatu-si-nai-koto-o yakusokusita.
 stealing-do-NEG.PRES-C-ACC promised

‘Hiroshi promised to steal cash only from that bank.’

- b. [e₁ sono ginkoo-kara-sika e₂ goodatu-si-nai-koto-o
 that bank-from-SIKA stealing-do-NEG.PRES-C-ACC
 yakusokusita]-no-wa Hiroshi-ga₁ genkin-o₂ da
 promised-C-TOP Hiroshi-NOM cash-ACC COP

‘Hiroshi promised to steal cash only from that bank.’

Based on these considerations, I conclude that AT and the clause-union effect under OC should not be unified. That means that we could not extend the EPP-driven movement analysis of AT to the clause-union effect. The latter phenomenon is just left unexplained under both analyses. The EPP-driven movement analysis of AT may be correct, but the

¹² The VN-ACC counterpart of (30b) is no good. This, however, does not tell us anything because clefting fails to apply to genitive-marked elements to begin with.

- (i) *[Hiroshi-ga sono ginkoo-kara [VNP e_i goodatu]-o kokoromita-no]-wa genkin-no da
 cash-GEN

The ungrammaticality of (i) is expected if the condition on genitive marking in (20d) is correct.

argument for it over the incorporation analysis is gone.

In sum, it is possible to instantiate a ‘configurational’ analysis of AT by proposing that AT is non-case-driven A-movement out of the VNP. An initial attempt to give it independent support, however, does not seem to succeed at least when taken at a face value.

8. Conclusions

I have argued that the Saito & Hoshi style account of AT is successful crucially because it is a variant of the featural approach to argument structure. I develop a configurational account of the same phenomenon though I have not been able to find independent support for it at this point.

One final point. One general conceptual merit of the C-approach over the F-approach is that the former arguably derives the effect of the thematic hierarchy while the latter directly encodes it into the system as a principle. This conceptual argument may be in favor of the configurational analysis of AT over the covert incorporation analysis. Quite ironically, however, the standard treatment of theme with respect to other internal arguments under the C-approach (Hale & Keyser 1993, 2002; Baker 1997) is exactly opposite to the one we need to assume in accounting for the Japanese data. Baker (1997:123) remarks:

... if [the C-approach, T.F.] is correct, then the agent has prominence over the theme not by the extrinsic stipulation of some kind of thematic hierarchy, but by semantic compositionality: the agent is the argument of one predicate, the theme is the argument of another predicate, and the second predicate is an argument of the first.

As Baker notes (p.106), the theme needs to be lower than other internal arguments in accounting for the thematic hierarchy effect (cf. (9)). The configurational analysis presented in section 7 remains to be fully worked out in this respect, as well.

References

- Baker, M. (1988) *Incorporation: A theory of grammatical function changing*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Baker, M. (1997) “Thematic roles and syntactic structure.” In L. Haegeman ed., *Elements of grammar*, 73–137. Kluwer, Dordrecht.
- Chierchia, G. (1984) *Topics in the syntax and semantics of infinitives and gerunds*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Chomsky, N. (1995) *The minimalist program*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Chomsky, N. (2000) “Minimalist inquiries: the framework.” In R. Martin, et al. eds., *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 89–155.
- Chomsky, N. (2008) “On phrases.” In R. Freidin, et al. eds., *Foundational issues in linguistic theory: Essays in honor of Jean-Roger Vergnaud*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 133–166.

- Funakoshi, K. (2012) "On headless XP-movement/ellipsis," *Linguistic Inquiry* 43, 519–562.
- Grimshaw, J. (1990) *Argument structure*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Grimshaw, J. & A. Mester (1988) "Light verbs and θ -marking," *Linguistic Inquiry* 19, 205–232.
- Hale, K. & S. J. Keyser (1993) "Argument structure and the lexical expression of syntactic relations." In K. Hale and S.J. Keyser eds., *The view from Building 20. Essays in Linguistics in honor of Sylvain Bromberger*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 53–109.
- Hale, K. & S. J. Keyser (2002) *Prolegomenon to a theory of argument structure*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Harley, H. (2009) "The morphology of nominalizations and the syntax of vP." In A. Giannakidou and M. Rathert eds., *Quantification, definiteness, and nominalization*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 321–343.
- Harley, H. (2011) "A minimalist approach to argument structure." In C. Boeckx ed., *The Oxford handbook of linguistic minimalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 427–448.
- Harley, H. & R. Noyer (1997) "Mixed nominalizations, short verb movement and object shift in English." In K. Kusumoto and P. Tamanji eds., *Proceedings of NELS 28*, University of Massachusetts, GLSA, Amherst, 143–157.
- Hiraiwa, K. (2001) "Multiple Agree and the Defective Intervention Constraint in Japanese." In O. Matushansky ed., *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics* 40. *HUMIT 2000.*, MITWPL, Cambridge, Mass., 67–80.
- Hornstein, N. (1999) "Movement and control," *Linguistic Inquiry* 30, 69–96.
- Hoshi, H. (2002a) "Domains for Theta Marking," *Proceedings of the 2002 Linguistics Society of Korea International Summer Conference*, Kyung Hee University, 59–70.
- Hoshi, H. (2002b) "(Non)configurational theta marking," paper read at *Linguistics and Phonetics 2002*, Charles University and Meikai University.
- Ishii, T. (2009) "Non-simultaneous transfer, case domain fusion and the light verb construction." In R. Shibagaki and R. Vermeulen eds., *Proceedings of the 5th Workshop on Altaic Formal Linguistics (WAFL 5)*, MITWPL, Cambridge, Mass., 181–195.
- Jackendoff, R. (1990) "On Larson's treatment of the double object construction," *Linguistic Inquiry* 21, 427–456.
- Kratzer, A. (1996) "Severing the external argument from its verb." In J. Rooryck and L. Zaring eds., *Phrase structure and the lexicon*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 109–137.
- Kuroda, S.-Y. (1965) *Generative grammatical studies in the Japanese language*, Ph.D. dissertation, MIT.
- Kuroda, S.-Y. (2003) "Complex predicates and predicate raising," *Lingua* 113, 447–480.
- Larson, R. (1988) "On the double object construction," *Linguistic Inquiry* 19, 335–391.
- Larson, R. (1990) "Double object revisited: Reply to Jackendoff," *Linguistic Inquiry* 21, 589–632.
- Lasnik, H. (2003) *Minimalist investigations in linguistic theory*, Routledge, London/New York.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1996a) *Complex predicates in Japanese: A syntactic and semantic study of the notion 'Word'*, CSLI and Kuroshio, Stanford and Tokyo.
- Matsumoto, Y. (1996b) "A syntactic account of light verb phenomena in Japanese," *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 5, 107–149.
- Murasugi, K. & M. Saito (1995) "Adjunction and cyclicity." In R. Aronovich, et al. eds., *WCCFL 13*, CSLI, Stanford, 302–317.
- Nemoto, N. (1993) *Chains and Case positions: A study from scrambling in Japanese*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut.
- Richards, N. (2001) *Movement in language*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/ New York.
- Saito, M. (1985) *Some asymmetries in Japanese and their theoretical implications*, Ph.D. dissertation, MIT.

- Saito, M. (1996) “Barriers for A-adjunction.” In N. Akatsuka, et al. eds., *Japanese/Korean Linguistics* 5, CSLI, Stanford, 1–36.
- Saito, M. & H. Hoshi (1998) “Control in complex predicates.” In *Tsukuba daigaku, Tôzai gengo bunka no ruikeiron (University of Tsukuba, Typological investigations of languages and cultures of the East and West)*, University of Tsukuba, 15–46.
- Saito, M. & H. Hoshi (2000) “The Japanese light verb construction and the minimalist program.” In R. Martin, et al. eds., *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 261–295.
- Takano, Y. (2008) “Ditransitive constructions.” In S. Miyagawa and M. Saito eds., *The Oxford handbook of Japanese linguistics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 423–455.
- Takano, Y. (2010) “Scrambling and control,” *Linguistic Inquiry* 41, 83–110.
- Ura, H. (1994) *Varieties of raising and the feature-based bare phrase structure theory*, MITWPL, Cambridge, Mass.
- Wurmbrand, S. (2001) *Infinitives: Restructuring and clause structure*, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin/New York.