

## LF-Incorporation is not Plausible: syntactic category, case marking and nonsententials

A recent study by Merchant (to appear) claims that fragmentary utterances are the result of A'-movement to a clause-peripheral position followed by ellipsis. Merchant explains that answer (1b) is derived from the processes (2). If Merchant is correct, the accusative case in Japanese Light Verb Constructions (LVCs) raises a question. According to Saito and Hoshi (2000), the Verbal Noun (VN) is incorporated into the light verb *su* 'do' in LF. The motivation of this incorporation is to assign theta-roles since the light verb supposedly does not have theta-roles. There are two LVCs (3). Examples (4a) and (4b) are LF-representations of (3a) and (3b), respectively. Saito and Hoshi claim that the accusative case on the VN is licensed at the time of incorporation in LF. If so, fragmentary answers (5c) and (5d) pose a problem. Only (5b), which does not contain the accusative case, is acceptable, and both (5c) and (5d) are not. If we assume Merchant's mechanism, the derivations for (5c) and (5d) will be (6a) and (6b), respectively. If the accusative case is licensed in LF, what is wrong with (5c) and (5d)? As a piece of evidence of LF-incorporation, Saito and Hoshi offer the cleft construction of (3b) (see 7). While *Akoodo* 'Accords' can be placed in a focus position as in (7a), *seisan* 'production' cannot as in (7b). According to Saito and Hoshi, the VN *seisan* 'production' incorporates into the verb *su* in LF for theta-role assignment. However, this LF-incorporation of the VN results in the lowering of VNs, and the light verb *su* does not c-command VN *seisan*. Thus, the ungrammaticality of (7b) results from the general ban on lowering. However, Saito and Hoshi do not consider the cleft construction of (3a), where *su* supposedly cannot c-command the VN, but, unexpectedly, the sentence is perfectly fine.

Unlike Saito and Hoshi, I claim that there is no LF-incorporation and case license in LF. Rather, I claim that VNs are verbs that are nominalized, and that a light verb does have an argument structure and theta-role. That is, a VN and a light verb do not form a complex predicate in LF, and each VN and light verb assigns theta-roles to their own arguments. Baker (2003) defines a verb as a category that can assign theta-roles. Since a VN can assign theta roles in LVCs, it is plausible to assume that a VN is a verb, not a noun as Saito and Hoshi claim. Second, assuming that Merchant's system is correct, I claim that the accusative case in Japanese LVCs is licensed in PF in the line of Embick and Noyer (2004), Kuroda (1978), Harada (2002), Nakamura (2004), and San Martin and Uriagereka (2002) among others. More specifically, case is assigned to DPs in PF, based on the syntactic structures that are formed at narrow syntax.

Consequently, the current observations support Poser (2002), who claims that the accusative case is licensed to a single theta-assigning predicate. Generally speaking, having two accusative cases in a single sentence in Japanese is not allowed. A typical example is a causative construction in Japanese (see 9). Although double accusative cases are not allowed in Japanese, they are possible in LVCs as in (3b). Poser's conclusion is that double accusative cases are fine as far as they do not occur within a single theta-assigning predicate. That is, the reason why double accusative constraint is not applied to the LVC is that the VN and light verb are independent of each other, not forming a complex predicate in the sense of Saito and Hoshi. Thus, the current conclusion will bring a more accurate description of LVCs in Japanese. Second, as (1b) shows, English nonsententials appear in the accusative form, while those in Japanese cannot. The current study claims that the timing of the structural case marking and ellipsis in PF will be parameterized. That is, while English case marking takes place prior to ellipsis in PF, Japanese case marking does not. If the timing of the structural case marking and ellipsis between English and Japanese is the same, (5c) and (5d) would be fine. This idea is compatible with Embick and Noyer whose claim is that a semantically uninterpretable feature such as case is assigned at PF. The timing difference in the case marking and ellipsis creates (1b) vs. (5c) and (5d). The result of the current study also supports Nakamura (2004), where he accounts for the cross linguistic difference of island repair due to the case marking system.

1. a. Who did she see?  
b. Him.  
c. She saw him.
2. [FP Him<sub>2</sub> [F' F [E]] [~~TP she saw t<sub>2</sub>]]]~~
3. a. Honda-ga Amerika-de [NP Akoodo-no seisan]-o site-iru.  
Honda-Nom U.S.-in Accord-Gen production-Acc doing-is  
'Honda is producing Accords in the U.S.'  
b. ??Honda-ga Amerika-de Akoodo-o [NP seisan]-o site-iru.  
Honda-Nom U.S.-in Accord-Acc production-Acc doing-is  
'Honda is producing Accords in the U.S.' (3a, b from Saito and Hoshi 2000)
4. a. Honda-ga Amerika-de [NP Akoodo-no ti] seisan-i + site-iru.  
b. Honda-ga Amerika-de Akoodo-o [NP ti] seisan-i + site-iru.
5. a. Honda-wa Amerika-de nani-o site-iru no?  
Honda-Top the U.S.-in what-Acc doing-is Q  
'What is Honda doing in the U.S.?'  
b. Akoodo-no seisan  
Accord-Gen production  
c. \*Akoodo-no seisan-o  
Accord-Gen production-Acc  
d. \*Akoodo-o seisan-o  
Accord-Acc production-Acc
6. a. [~~FP Akoodo-no seisan-o [F' F [E]][TP Honda-ga Amerika-de [NP Akoodo-no seisan]-o site-iru]]].  
b. [~~FP Akoodo-o seisan-o [F' F [E]][TP Honda-ga Amerika-de Akoodo-o [NP seisan]-o site-iru]]].~~~~
7. a. Honda-ga Amerika-de ti seisan-o site-iru no wa Akoodo-oi da.  
Honda-Nom U.S.-in production-Acc doing is Comp Top Accord-Acc is  
'It is Accords that Honda is producing in the U.S.'  
b. \*Honda-ga Amerika-de Akoodo-o tj site-iru no wa seisan-oi da.  
Honda-Nom U.S.-in Accord-Acc doing-is Comp Top production-Acc is  
'(lit.) It is a production that Honda is doing Accord in the U.S.'
8. Honda-ga Amerika-de tm site-iru no wa [NP Akoodo-no seisan]-om da.  
Honda-Nom U.S.-in doing-is Comp Top Accord-Gen production-Acc is  
'It is the production of Accords that Honda is doing in the U.S.'
9. \*Taroo-ga Hanako-o keeki-o tukur-ase-ta.  
Taroo-Nom Hanako-Acc cake-Acc make-cause-past  
'Taroo made Hanako make a cake.'

References:

- Baker, M. 2003. *Lexical categories: verbs, nouns, and adjectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Embick, D. and R. Noyer. to appear. Distributed morphology and the syntax/morphology interface. In G. Ramchand and C. Reiss (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Interfaces*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Merchant, J. to appear. Fragments and ellipsis. *Linguistics and Philosophy*.
- Nakamura, M. (2004). Island repair and case. Shnshu University. Ms.
- Poser, W. 2002. The double-o constraint in Japanese. University of Pennsylvania, ms.
- Saito, M., and H. Hoshi. 2000. Japanese light verb constructions and the minimalist program. ed. by R. Martin, D. Michaels, and J. Uriagereka, step by step: essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 261-295.