

## Highs and Lows of the Syntax of Agent-Oriented Adverbs in Japanese

**1. Introduction** In Japanese, adverbials suffixed by *mo* such as *orokani-mo* ‘stupidly’ and *tadasiku-mo* ‘correctly’ (abbreviated ‘Adv-*mo*’ henceforth) are forced to have a clausal reading even if they allow manner readings when they occur without the suffix (Sawada 1978, Nakau 1980, Kubota 2015). Neither (1a) nor (1b) is ambiguous between the two readings.

- (1) Taro-wa {a. **tadasiku-mo** / b. *tadasiku*} oturi-o kazoeta.  
 Taro-TOP correctly-MO correctly change-ACC counted.  
 a. ‘Correctly, Taro counted the change.’ (Clausal only; e.g., Taro is right that he chose to count the change, rather than choosing to steal the change, etc.)  
 b. ‘Taro counted the change correctly.’ (Manner only; e.g., Taro chose a right way of counting the change among a number of ways of doing it.)

This fact is explained rather nicely by Kubota (2015), who proposes a semantics of *mo* that derives that the comparison class relevant to the gradable adjective underlying Adv-*mo* (e.g., ‘correct’ in (1)) is a set of various events including counting the change, receiving the change without counting it, and so on and so forth (Ernst 2002).

The present paper is interested in some aspects of the syntax of Adv-*mo*. We argue that evidence suggests that Adv-*mo* can be attached to *v*’, being licensed by T under a locality condition that can be cashed out in terms of the notion of Transfer domain (Chomsky 2000, 2001).

**2. Apparently Conflicting Properties** There is ample evidence that Adv-*mo* must be attached high in clause structure, as Kubota (2015) claims. (2) cited from Ernst (2015) shows that it is difficult for an Adv-*mo* to follow a manner adverbial. Furthermore, Adv-*mo* clearly cannot modify certain embedded clauses. Causative *v*P complements (Murasugi and Hashimoto 2004, Harley 2008) are one of those complements, as shown in (3). (As Ernst (2015) observes, the proposed semantics of *mo* do not prevent it from modifying *v*P or VP.)

(2) **High Behavior 1** (Ernst 2015)

- Taro-wa (✓**orokani-mo**) riroseizen-to situmon-ni (\*/??**orokani-mo**) kotaeta.  
 Taro-TOP stupidly-MO articulately answers-to stupidly-MO answered  
 ‘Taro stupidly answered the questions articulately.’

(3) **High Behavior 2**

- Tentyo-wa Taro-ni **tadasiku-mo** oturi-o kazoe-saseta.  
 manager-TOP Taro-DAT correctly-MO change-ACC count-CAUSE.PAST  
 a. ‘It was correct of the manager to have Taro count the change.’  
 b. \*‘The manager had Taro count the change and it was correct of Taro to do it.’

However, Adv-*mo* behaves as if it could be attached low. (4) shows that the agent for *orokani-mo* ‘stupidly’ can be the surface-subject as in (4a), or the *by*-phrase as (4b) shows. The influential assumption that agent-oriented adverbs are *controlled by* (or *oriented towards*) DP X only when it is c-commanded by X (Ernst 2002, Kubota 2015) leads us to the conclusion that *orokani-mo* in (4) can be attached as low as under D-structure subject position in passives. (Kubota 2015 argues that Adv-*mo* is surface-subject oriented, which is at odds with the observation in (4).)

(4) **Low Behavior**

- a. Seihu-wa **orokani-mo** atarasii eki-o inakamati-ni tukutta.  
 government-TOP stupidly-MO new station-ACC rural.town-in made

- ‘The government stupidly constructed a new station in the rural town.’
- b. Seihu-niyotte **orokani-mo** atarasii eki-ga inakamati-ni tukur-areta.  
 government-by stupidly-MO new station-NOM rural.town-in made  
 ‘A new station has been stupidly made in the rural town by the government.’

**3. A Solution** To understand this apparently contradictory state of affairs, we adopt the assumptions shown in (5a, b) below.

- (5) a. *Adv-mo* must be in the same Transfer domain as T.  
 b. The complement of a phase head undergoes Transfer (Chomsky 2000, 2001)

It is shown below that (5a, b) together explain the properties noted above straightforwardly.

**Low Behavior, (4)** (4a, b), put together, allow *Adv-mo* to be attached to *v'*, which in turn allows it to be c-commanded by the *by*-phrase in passives (i.e., Agent in (6)). The reason why *v'*-attachment is possible is because the *v'*-adjoined position and T are in the same Transfer domain. (The underscored portion of (6) constitutes a Transfer domain.) In the same vein, the Pass'-adjoined position is local enough from T in the proposed sense. It then follows that the surface subject DP as well can be understood as the agent of *Adv-mo*.

- (6) [<sub>CP</sub> C [<sub>TP</sub> Patient<sub>1</sub> T [<sub>PassP</sub> t<sub>1</sub> Adv-mo Pass [<sub>VP</sub> Agent<sub>2</sub> [<sub>v'</sub> Adv-mo v [<sub>VP</sub> ... t<sub>1</sub> ... ]]]]]]]

**High Behavior 1, (2)** Our analysis immediately predicts that *Adv-mo* is prevented from adjoining to VP as in (7). Since the VP is a transfer domain, *Adv-mo* within it cannot be accessible to T as required.

- (7) [<sub>TP</sub> Subj<sub>1</sub> T [<sub>VP</sub> Subj<sub>2</sub> v [<sub>VP</sub> Adv-mo ... ]]]

Assuming that manner adverbs are attached to VP, it follows that *Adv-mo* cannot be preceded by them.

**High Behavior 2, (3)** On the assumption that the causative head *-sase* takes a vP complement (Murasugi and Hashimoto 2004, Harley 2008), *Adv-mo* could be c-commanded by the causee by adjoining to the embedded vP, as in (8). This configuration, however, clearly violates the locality condition under discussion: T is outside the transfer domain for the matrix v, as indicated in (8).

- (8) [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> Spec v [<sub>VP</sub> CAUSE [<sub>VP</sub> Subj<sub>2</sub> Adv-mo v [<sub>VP</sub>... ]]]]]]]

**4. Conclusion** This study proposes that the syntactic distribution of *Adv-mo* is governed by a locality condition in regard with T. The proposal is designed to account for apparently conflicting properties concerning this class of adverbs' attachment site in clause structure.

**References** [1] Chomsky, N. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: The framework. *Step by step: essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, 89-155, MIT Press. [2] Kubota, I. 2015. Transforming manner adverbs into subject-oriented adverbs: evidence from Japanese. *NLLT* 33:1019-1046. [3] Ernst, T. 2015. Evidence for a proper treatment of the clausal/manner distinction: comments on Kubota, "Transforming manner adverbs into surface-subject-oriented adverbs: evidence from Japanese". *NLLT* 33:1047-1055. [4] Ernst, T. 2002. *The syntax of adjuncts*. Cambridge University Press. [5] Murasugi K. and Hashimoto, T. 2004. Three pieces of acquisition evidence for the v-VP frame. *Nanzan Linguistics* 1:1-19. [6] Harley, H. 2008. On the causative construction, *Oxford Handbook of Japanese Linguistics*, ed. by Shigeru M. and M. Saito, 20-53, Oxford University Press.