AGREE, MOVE, AND NOMINATIVE OBJECTS IN JAPANESE[*]

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1. Introduction

This paper investigates the Case alternation phenomenon between accusative and nominative that occurs in potential constructions in Japanese. Typical examples of this alternation are shown in (1), which contain a complex predicate consisting of a transitive verb and the stative verbal suffix *-(rar)e* 'can.' (1a) has the accusative object (AO) and (1b) the nominative object (NO).

(1) a. Taro-ga   koyubi-o   mage-rare-ru.
     Taro-NOM pinkie- ACC crook-can-Pres

   b. Taro-ga   koyubi-ga   mage-rare-ru.
      Taro-NOM pinkie-NOM crook-can-Pres

   'Taro can crook his pinkie.'

The syntactic property of the nominative object has been extensively discussed in the literature and a number of proposals have been made: overt movement analyses (Tada (1992), Koizumi (1995), Nomura (2005), Kasai (2018)), covert movement analyses (e.g., Saito's (2009) A'-movement analysis, Takahashi's (2010) quantifier raising analysis), Tanano's (2003) proleptic object analysis, and Saito's (2012) excorporation analysis, among others. Assuming that nominative Case in Japanese is licensed via AGREE (Chomsky 2001), we argue that two derivational possibilities exist for NOs; 1) NO may move to the domain of TP in overt syntax, or it may remain in the object position in overt syntax. We also argue that the surface position of NO determines its scope. In those respects, our view is in line with Nomura's (2005) analysis. As empirical evidence for our proposal, we present data involving (i) *v*P/VP-fronting, (ii) placement of a manner adverb before or after NO, and (iii) indeterminate pronouns that serve as negative polarity items (NPIs). We also show that the syntactic distribution of NOs and that of genitive subjects in Nominative-Genitive Conversion as articulated by Ochi (2001) show a certain degree of parallelism.

This paper is organized as follows. After presenting a brief sketch of the scope property of NOs in section 2, we discuss our main proposal in section 3, providing three arguments for it. In section 4, we show that our proposal allows us to establish an affinity between the distribution of NOs and that of genitive subjects in NGCs. In section 5, we compare our own proposal with some of the recent proposals in the literature. Section 6 offers concluding remarks.

2. Scope Property of Nominative Objects

As argued by Tada (1992), Koizumi (1998), Saito and Hoshi (1998), Takano (2003), among others, AOs and NOs show distinct scope properties. Consider (2). (2a) asserts that Taro has the ability to crook only his pinkie; he can crook other fingers but he has the ability to crook only his pinkie while leaving the other four fingers uncrooked. On the other hand, the most natural interpretation of (2b) is that it is only his pinkie that Taro can crook; he cannot crook any fingers but his pinkie.

(2) a. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-ru.   [can > only; ?*only > can]
       Taro-NOM pinkie-only-ACC crook-CAN-PRES

    'Taro can crook only his pinkie.'

   b. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-ru.   [(?)can > only; only > can]
       Taro-NOM pinkie-only-NOM crook-CAN-PRES

    'It is only his pinkie that Taro can crook.'

In addition, Koizimi (1998) pointed out that NOs may take scope not only over -*rare* 'can' but also over negation. For example, (3b) typically means 'Taro can crook other fingers but not his pinkie.'

(3) a. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-nai.   [not > only; ?*only > not]
       Taro-NOM pinkie-only-ACC crook-CAN-NEG

    'Taro cannot crook only his pinkie.'

   b. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-nai.   [(?)not > only; only > not]
       Taro-NOM pinkie-only-NOM crook-CAN-NEG

    'It is only his pinkie that Taro cannot crook.'

Many speakers find that NOs have a strong tendency to take wide scope over -*(rar)e* 'can'. However, as observed by Nomura (2005), NOs may take narrow scope. The example in (4), taken from Nomura (2005), is not a contradictory statement, indicating that NOs can have narrow scope with respect to -*(rar)e* 'can'.

(4) Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-ru   no-wa
     Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-NOM   crook-CAN-PRES   NMLZ-TOP
     shit-te-ita   ga kusuriyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-ru   no-ni-wa
     know-PROG-PAST   but ring.finger-only-NOM   crook-CAN-PRES   NMLZ-DAT-TOP
     odoroi-ta.
     be.surprised-PAST   [can > only; #only > can]

'I have known that Taro can crook only his pinkie but I am surprised to know that he can also crook only his ring finger.'

3. Proposal

The main proposal of this paper is that NO in principle has two possible derivational paths. It may overtly move to the spec of TP, or it may remain within VP in overt syntax. In either derivation, its Case is licensed by T (at a distance). The gist of our proposal is as follows.

(5) a. Nominative Case is licensed via AGREE with T.
     b. NO has two derivations; it may raise in overt syntax, or it may remain within VP.[1]
     c. In the former derivation, NO takes wide scope and in the latter it takes narrow scope.[2]

In our proposal, (1b) can have both of the derivations, (6a) and (6b).[3]

(6) a. [$_{TP}$ Taro-NOM$_i$ [$_{TP}$ pinkie-NOM $_j$ [$_{vP}$ t_i [$_{CanP}$ [$_{vP}$ [$_{VP}$ t_j crook]] can]] T]]
     b. [$_{TP}$ Taro-NOM$_i$ [$_{vP}$ t_i [$_{CanP}$ [$_{vP}$ [$_{VP}$ pinkie-NOM crook]] can]] T]

Our proposal is based on the observation in (7).

(7) When NO remains within VP in overt syntax, it does not take scope over -(rar)e 'can'.

Empirical support for (7) comes from data involving (i) *v*P/VP-fronting, (ii) placement of a VP-level manner adverb in the NO construction and its effects on the scope of NO, and (iii) indeterminate pronominal NOs acting as negative polarity items (NPI).

3.1. *v*P/VP-Fronting Data

As argued by Yatsushiro (1999), Kishimoto (2001), and Saito (2009), both AO and NO can occur within a fronted *v*P/VP, as shown in (8b).

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[1] We assume without discussion that the nominative subject always moves to the spec of TP in overt syntax. See Kishimoto (2001) for some discussion of this issue.

[2] A question arises as to whether or not overt movement of NO gives rise to scope reconstruction. Although we do not deny such possibility, we work with a view that the mapping from syntax to semantics is transparent in that the wide scope reading of NO is obtained with overt movement of NO and the narrow scope reading of NO arises when such movement does not take place.

[3] We label the projection of -*rare* 'can' as *Can* Phrase (or CanP) for expository purposes.

(8) a. Taro-ga   koyubi-{ga/o}   mage-rare-sae shi-nai   (koto)
       Taro-NOM pinkie-NOM/ACC   crook-can-even do-NEG   fact

   '(the fact that) Taro even cannot crook his pinkie.'

   b. [$_{VP}$ koyubi-{ga/o}   mage-rare-sae]$_i$ [Taro-ga t_i shi-nai]   (koto)
         pinkie-NOM/ACC   crook-can-even   Taro-NOM   do-NEG   fact

   '(the fact that) even able to crook his pinkie, Taro is not.'

The authors mentioned above took such observations to mean that NOs remain within *v*P/VP in overt syntax. What has gone unnoticed, however, is that the NO remaining inside a fronted *v*P/VP does not take scope over the potential -*rare* regardless of Case values. This is shown by (9) and (10).[4]

(9) a. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-sae   suru (koto)
       Taro-NOM pinkie-only-ACC crook-can-even do   fact

   '(the fact that) Taro even can crook only his pinkie.'   [can > only; *only > can]

   b. Koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-sae Taro-ga   suru (koto)
      pinkie-only-ACC crook-can-even Taro-NOM do   fact

   '(the fact that) even able to crook only his pinkie, Taro is.' [can> only; *only > can]

(10) a. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-sae   suru (koto)
        Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-NOM crook-can-even do   fact

   '(the fact that) Taro even can crook only his pinkie.'   [can> only; only > can]

   b. Koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-sae Taro-ga   suru (koto)
      pinkie-only-NOM crook-can-even Taro-NOM do   fact

   '(the fact that) even able to crook only his pinkie, Taro is.'

                                                        [can> only; (*)only > can]

As (9) shows, AO takes narrow scope with respect to the potential -*rare* 'can,' whether the *v*P/VP containing it is fronted (9b) or not (9a), which is not surprising given what we saw in (3a). Let us turn to the distribution of NOs in (10). (10a) allows the wide scope reading of NO. In contrast to this, when the *v*P/VP containing the NO is fronted as in (10b), the NO does not scope over the potential morpheme -*rare* when there is no pause between NO and a verb, which indicates that when the NO stays within *v*P/VP in overt syntax, it does not take scope over the morpheme -*rare* (see (7)). When a pause comes after NO, wide scope becomes available, but we assume that the NO and the verb are not a constituent in such cases, with the NO having moved out of *v*P/VP, as (11) shows.

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[4] Note that we assume that when there is no pause between NO and a verb, they make up a constituent, which means that NO remains within a fronted *v*P/VP.

(11)   pinkie-only-NOM$_i$ [$_{vP}$ t_i crook-can]-even$_j$ Taro-NOM t_j do

A remark is in order regarding the scope judgment for (10a). Nomura (2005) states that NO in the 'VP+*sae*' construction allows only the narrow scope reading. We agree that the narrow scope reading of NO is strongly preferred in (10a), but we also find the wide scope reading to be available. In fact, as Funakoshi and Takahashi (2014: 106) observe, adding negation makes it rather easy for NO to have wide scope over the potential *-rare*. Notice that the preferred reading in this case is the one in which NO takes wide scope over negation as well as *-rare* 'can.'

(12)   Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-sae   shi-nai.
       Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-NOM   crook-can-even   do-NEG

       'Taro even cannot crook only his pinkie.'   [only > can]

We believe that the difference between (10a) and (12) regarding the preferred scope reading of NO is due to the interplay of the scalar presupposition introduced by *-sae* 'even' and the presence/absence of negation. Let us adopt Nakanishi's (2010) analysis of the focus particle -*mo* and extend it to *-sae* 'even:' (i) *-sae* introduces a scalar presupposition to the effect that the asserted proposition is the least likely among the set of alternative propositions generated by substituting what is focused by *-sae*, and that (ii) *-sae* always takes scope over negation.

(13) a.   only [the pinkie]$_i$ [even [not [Taro [can crook t_i]$_F$]]]
      b.   [even [not [Taro [can crook only the pinkie]$_F$]]]

The representation in (13a) is obtained when NO undergoes movement while we get (13b) from the derivation in which NO stays in the object position. In a situation where the likelihood of someone's failing to crook his or her finger is low on the relevant scale made salient by the context, and, conversely, the likelihood of someone's not being able to crook just the pinkie (i.e., crooking the pinkie while keeping the other fingers uncrooked) is high on the same scale, the most natural interpretation of (12) becomes the one obtained from (13a), where the quantified NO scopes over *-rare* and negation: it is only with respect to his pinkie that Taro even cannot crook. This reading does not conflict with the scalar presupposition induced by -*sae*, which in this case amounts to the following: the likelihood of someone's failing to crook his/her finger is low on the relevant scale. We thus conclude, pace Nomura (2005), that NO in the VP-*sae* construction may scope over the potential *-rare*.

3.2. Manner Adverbs and NOs

As another illustration of (7), we will show that the relative order between NO and a manner adverb affects the scope of a quantified NO. As shown in (14a) and (14b), AO takes scope under *-rare* regardless of the order between AO and a manner adverb such as *kanzen-ni* 'completely'.

(14) a. Taro-ga   kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-ru.
       Taro-NOM   completely   pinkie-only-ACC   crook-CAN-PRES

       'Taro can crook only his pinkie completely.'   [can > only; *only > can]

   b. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-o   kanzen-ni   mage-rare-ru.
       Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-ACC   completely   crook-CAN-PRES

       'Taro can crook only his pinkie completely.'   [can > only; *only > can]

On the other hand, the relative position of such low adverbs in the NO construction does affect the scope of a quantified NO (i.e., -*dake* phrase). In (15a), where *kanzen-ni* 'completely' precedes NO, NO takes only narrow scope, while in (15b), where the word order is reversed, NO has a strong tendency to take wide scope.

(15) a. Taro-ga   kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-ru.
       Taro-NOM   completely   pinkie-only-NOM   crook-CAN-PRES

       'Taro can crook only his pinkie completely.'   [can > only; *only > can]

   b. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   kanzen-ni   mage-rare-ru.
       Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-NOM   completely   crook-CAN-PRES

       'Taro can crook only his pinkie completely.'   [??can > only; only > can]

Here, we assume that manner adverbs such as *kanzen-ni* 'completely' mark the left edge of *v*P/VP. (14a) and (14b) only allow the narrow scope reading of AO as it stays in *v*P/VP in overt syntax.[5] Now, how about (15)? We suggest that the NO following the manner adverb is located in *v*P/VP, which is why it takes scope under -*rare*. We obtain the wide scope reading of NO in (15b) because NO has moved to TP in overt syntax. Note that to the extent that the narrow scope reading of NO is difficult to come by in this example, it suggests that there is no scrambling of NO within *v*P/VP in a manner analogous to what we saw in (14b) with AO.[6]

Let us now turn to the VP+*sae* construction that contains a manner adverb. As shown in (16), AO takes scope under -*rare*, irrespective of the order between the manner adverb and AO. This is expected if AO stays withing *v*P/VP in overt syntax. On the other hand, in the case of NO, the relative order with the adverb indeed affects the scope of NO. As (17a) shows, the NO

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[5] When AO precedes the manner adverb as in (14b), we assume that it is located in the edge of *v*P/VP. This raises a question. If the movement of AO targets the edge of the *v*P that occurs on top of the projection of the potential -*rare* 'can,' it should be able to take scope over -*rare*, as pointed out by an anonymous reviewer for Ochi and Saruwatari (2020). We must leave the issue open, proceeding with the assumption that the crucial factor determining the wide or narrow scope of NO is whether its surface position is external or internal to *v*P/VP.

[6] This is contrary to Kasai's (2018) view, which will be taken up in section 5.2.

following the manner adverb fails to take wide scope over *-rare*, while the NO preceding the same adverb in (17b) clearly shows a preference for wide scope.

(16) a. Taro-ga   kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-sae   suru   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   completely   pinkie-only-ACC   crook-can-even   do   fact

       '(the fact that) Taro crooks even his pinkie completely.'   [can > only; *only > can]

    b. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-o   kanzen-ni   mage-rare-sae   suru   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-ACC   completely   crook-can-even   do   fact

       '(the fact that) Taro crooks even his pinkie completely.'   [can > only; ??only > can]

(17) a. Taro-ga   kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-sae   suru   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   completely   pinkie-only-NOM   crook-can-even   do   fact

       '(the fact that) Taro crooks even his pinkie completely.'   [can > only; *only > can]

    b. Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   kanzen-ni   mage-rare-sae   suru   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-NOM   completely   crook-can-even   do   fact

       '(the fact that) Taro crooks even his pinkie completely.'   [??can > only; only > can]

These paradigms basically replicate the patterns in (14) and (15). In (17b), for instance, NO overtly moves out of *v*P/VP and takes wide scope, just as in (15b).

     Next, consider the *v*P/VP-fronting cases with a manner adverb. The examples in (18) have AOs and those in (19) have NOs. AO/NO follows a manner adverb in the (a)-examples and precedes a manner adverb in the (b)-examples.

(18) a. Kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-o   mage-rare-sae   Taro-ga   suru   (koto)
       completely   pinkie-only-ACC   crook-can-even   Taro-NOM   do   fact

       '(the fact that) even able to crook only his pinkie completely, Taro is.'

                                           [can > only; *only > can]

    b. Koyubi-dake-o   kanzen-ni   mage-rare-sae   Taro-ga   suru   (koto)
       pinkie-only-ACC   completely   crook-can-even   Taro-NOM   do   fact

       '(That) even able to crook only his pinkie completely, Taro is.'

                                           [can > only; *only > can]

(19) a. Kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-sae   Taro-ga   suru   (koto)
       completely   pinkie-only-NOM   crook-can-even   Taro-NOM   do   fact

       '(That) even able to crook only his pinkie completely, Taro is.'

                                           [can > only; *only > can]

b. Koyubi-dake-ga   kanzen-ni   mage-rare-sae   Taro-ga   suru (koto)
pinkie-only-NOM completely crook-can-even Taro-NOM do   fact

'(That) even able to crook only his pinkie completely, Taro is.'

[??can > only; only > can]

In the case of AO, like in the examples previously discussed, its scope is confined to narrow scope regardless of word order. But in the case of NO, the relative order with the manner adverb becomes significant, as expected. In (19a), like the AO in (18a), the scope of NO is limited to narrow scope, which indicates that it remains in the fronted *v*P/VP. In contrast to this, the NO in (19b) has a strong tendency to take scope over *-rare* (this judgement is obtained rather easily with a short pause immediately after NO). In this example, it is extremely difficult to have the narrow scope reading of NO, because NO is not scrambled within *v*P/VP just like in (17b). We thus surmise that when NO precedes a manner adverb, it has moved out of *v*P/VP.

Let us examine another type of example that bears on the issue of the word order between a manner adverb and NO. Even if a manner adverb is in the clause-initial position, the scope of NO seems to be limited to narrow scope.

(20) (?)Kanzen-ni Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-ru   (koto)
completely Taro-NOM pinkie-only-NOM crook-CAN-PRES fact

'(the fact that) Taro can crook only his pinkie completely.' [can > only; *only > can]

This raises an interesting question for our analysis. Assuming for the sake of discussion that the adverb in the clause-initial position is located in the CP region, imagine that NO undergoes movement to the spec of TP in overt syntax, as shown in (21). If this derivation was possible, we should expect the wide reading of NO to be available, contrary to fact. So our analysis needs to explain why this type of derivation is not available.

(21) [$_{CP}$ Completely$_i$ [$_{TP}$ Taro-NOM [$_{TP}$ pinkie-only-NOM$_j$ [$_{vP}$ t_i t_j crook-can] PRES]]]

In order to offer a possible explanation for the unavailability of this derivation, we adopt Saito's (2009) proposal that the movement of NO to the spec of TP is an instance of A-bar movement. Saito's proposal is based on the following considerations. Consider the following causative example in (22a) along with its passive counterparts in (22b) and (22c).

(22) a. Hanako-ga   daiku-ni   ie-o   tate-sase-ta.
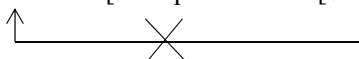Hanako-NOM carpenter-DAT house-ACC build-CAUSE-PAST

'Hanako made a/the carpenter build a house.'

b. Daiku-ga   (Hanako-niyotte) ie-o   tate-sase-rare-ta.
carpenter-Nom Hanako-by   house-ACC build-CAUSE-PASS-PAST

'A/The carpenter was made to build a house (by Hanako).'

   c. *Ie-ga   (Hanako-niyotte) daiku-ni   tate-sase-rare-ta.
       house-NOM   Hanako-by   carpenter-DAT build-CAUSE-PASS-PAST

     'Lit: A house was made a/the carpenter to build.'

Following Saito (2009) and others, suppose that the causative -*sase* takes *v*P as its complement, with the causee argument (*daiku* 'carpenter' in this case) sitting in the spec of this *v*P. On these assumptions, the examples in (22) would have the following schematic representations.

(23) a. [TP Hanako-NOM [*v*P carpenter-DAT [VP house-ACC build]] cause-PAST]

     b. [TP carpenter-NOM$_i$ [*v*P *t*$_i$ [VP house-ACC build]] cause-PASS-PAST]

     c. *[TP house-NOM$_i$ [*v*P carpenter-DAT [VP *t*$_i$ build]] cause-PASS-PAST]

In the passive cases, shown in (23b) and (23c), an argument other than *Hanako* is promoted to the subject position. We get a good result when the causee argument, *daiku* 'carpenter,' is preposed.

On the other hand, the direct object *ie* 'house' cannot be the target of passivization. As shown in (23c), this derivation is blocked as the causee *daiku* 'carpenter' intervenes between T, which licenses nominative, and the object *ie* 'house.' Keeping this point in mind, consider (24), which is constructed by adding the potential predicate -*rare* 'can' to (22a). As Saito (2009) and Takahashi (2010) independently observe, NO is fine in this construction, with a complex predicate made up of *tate(ru)* 'build,' the causative predicate -*sase*, and -*rare*.

(24) Hanako-ga   daiku-ni   (kagirareta yosan-de)   annani okina ie-ga
     Hanako-NOM carpenter-DAT limited   budget-with   such   big   house-NOM
     tate-sase-rare-ta.
     build-CAUSE-CAN-PAST

     'Hanako could make a/the carpenter build such a big house on a limited budget.'

Crucially, NO is allowed here despite the fact that we have, once again, the causee argument in the position that c-commands the base position of NO and is c-commanded by the T head that licenses nominative.

(25) [TP Hanako-NOM [[[*v*P carpenter-DAT [VP house-NOM build] *v*] cause] can] T]

In order to accommodate this distributional difference between the nominative subject in passives in (23) and NO in the causative-potential construction in (24), Saito (2009) proposes to view the nature of the dependencies in the two cases differently: The dependency between T and the passive subject is an A-dependency whereas the one between T and NO is an A-bar

dependency. The causee argument *daiku* 'carpenter,' sitting in the spec of the causative *v*P, which is an A-position, blocks the former dependency but not the latter dependency. Let us accept this. Furthermore, let us adopt Fujimaki's (2011) conjecture that the movement of an adverb to a clause-initial position is not scrambling (as is often tacitly assumed) but is a focus-driven movement, a species of A-bar movement. Combining Saito's (2009) overall analysis and Fujimaki's (2011) analysis, we can say that the derivation depicted in (21) is ruled out as an instance of defective intervention effects. As shown in (26), the focus movement of *kanzen-ni* 'completely' to the clause-initial position would have to cross *koyubi-dake-ga* 'pinkie-only-NOM' that has reached the spec of TP by A-bar movement.

(26) [CP [TP Taro-NOM [TP pinkie-only-NOM$_j$ [$_v$P completely t_j ...]]]]

Note in this connection that as Takahashi (2010) observes, the wide scope reading of NO over the potential *-rare* 'can' is possible in the configuration depicted in (24) although NO follows the causee argument of the causative *-sase*.

(27) Hanako-ga   sono saru-ni   migite-dake-ga   age-sase-rare-ta.
      Hanako-NOM that monkey-DAT   right.hand-only-NOM raise-CAUSE-CAN-PAST

      'Hanako could make the monkey raise only his right hand.'   [only > can; can > only]

We argue that the ambiguity of (27) comes from the fact that there are two derivational paths available. If *migite-dake-ga* 'right hand-only-NOM' remains in the object position as shown in (28a), we get the narrow scope reading of NO. We obtain the wide scope reading of NO if *migite-dake-ga* 'right hand-only-NOM' moves, via A-bar movement, to the spec of TP in overt syntax. This is shown in (28b). Note that we crucially assume that the causee argument *saru-ni* 'monkey-DAT' has also moved in the latter derivation, as it precedes NO. Unlike the movement of NO, which is tied to Case in the sense that NP moves to the domain of its Case licensor, the movement of the causee argument is taken to be scrambling.

(28) a.   [TP Hanako-NOM [$_v$P monkey-DAT [VP right hand-only-NOM raise]] cause-can-PAST]
     b.   [TP Hanako-NOM [TP monkey-DAT$_i$ [TP right hand-only-NOM$_j$ [$_v$P t_i [VP t_j raise]]
          cause-can-PAST]]]

We will revisit (27) in the next subsection.

3.3. Negative Polarity Items (NPIs)

According to Kishimoto (2001), indeterminate pronouns in Japanese may behave as negative polarity items (NPIs) when bound by the focus particle *-mo*. As Kishimoto observes, there is a subject vs. object asymmetry in this type of construction when *-mo* is attached to a verb. As shown in (29), the indeterminate NPI is allowed when it is in the object position but not when it is in the subject position.

(29) a. Taro-ga   dare-o   home-mo   shi-nakat-ta.
         Taro-NOM   who-ACC   praise-Q   do-NEG-PAST

         'Taro did not praise anyone.'

   b. *Dare-ga   Taro-o   home-mo   shi-nakat-ta.
         Who-NOM   Taro-ACC   praise-Q   do-NEG-PAST

         'Anyone did not praise Taro.'

As argued by Kishimoto, this contrast receives an explanation if we assume that the binding domain of -*mo* is *v*P/VP when it appears adjacent to the verb. As shown in (30), the object indeterminate pronoun is bound by -*mo* whereas the subject indeterminate is not, assuming that the latter moves out of *v*P.

(30) a. [TP Taro-NOMi [*v*P *t*i who-ACC praise]-mo do-neg-PAST
     b. *[TP Who-NOMi [*v*P *t*i Taro-ACC praise]-mo do-neg-PAST

   Keeping this in mind, let us now consider the distribution of NPI objects in the potential construction. (31) and (32), with the verb *tsutaeru* 'tell,' serve as the baseline data for the data to be discussed below. As (31) shows, AO takes narrow scope whether it precedes or follows the *ni*-object. Turning to (32), we find that NO clearly takes wide scope over -*rare* 'can' when it precedes the *ni*-object as in (32b). NO also takes wide scope even when it follows the *ni*-object as in (32a), although the judgment becomes more subtle. We will return to this point shortly.

(31) a. Taro-ga   Hanako-ni   sono jijitu-dake-o   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
         Taro-NOM   Hanako-DAT that   fact-only-ACC tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

         '(the fact that) Taro even cannot tell Hanako only that fact' [can > only; *only > can]

   b. Taro-ga   sono jijitu-dake-o   Hanako-ni   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
         Taro-NOM   that   fact-only-ACC Hanako-DAT tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

         '(the fact that) Taro even cannot tell Hanako only that fact' [can > only; *only > can]

(32) a. Taro-ga   Hanako-ni   sono jijitu-dake-ga   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
         Taro-NOM   Hanako-DAT that   fact-only-NOM tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

         '(the fact that) Taro cannot tell Hanako only the fact'   [can > only; (?)only > can]

   b. Taro-ga   sono jijitu-dake-ga   Hanako-ni   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
         Taro-NOM   that   fact-only-NOM Hanako-DAT tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

         '(the fact that) Taro cannot tell Hanako only that fact'   [?can > only; only > can]

As shown in (33), replacing *Hanako-ni* 'Hanako-DAT' with the indeterminate pronoun *dare* 'who' does not affect the scope property of AO, which takes narrow scope regardless of the

word order. This pattern is the same as what we had in (31).

(33) a. Taro-ga   dare-ni   sono jijitu-dake-o   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   anyone-DAT that fact-only-ACC tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

       '(the fact that) Taro cannot tell anyone only that fact'   [can > only; *only > can]

    b. Taro-ga   sono jijitu-dake-o   dare-ni   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai (koto)
        Taro-NOM   that fact-only-ACC anyone-DAT tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

        '(the fact that) Taro cannot tell anyone only the fact'   [can > only; *only > can]

A different judgment pattern emerges with NOs, however. This time, word order affects the scope of NO. In contrast to (32a), (34a) allows only the narrow scope reading of NO.

(34) a. Taro-ga   dare-ni   sono jijitu-dake-ga   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   anyone-DAT the   fact-only-NOM tell-can-Q   do-NEG   fact

       '(the fact that) Taro even cannot tell anyone only that fact'

                                                     [(?)can > only; *only > can]

    b. Taro-ga   sono jijitu-dake-ga   dare-ni   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
        Taro-NOM   that fact-only-NOM anyone-DAT tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

        '(the fact that) Taro even cannot tell anyone only that fact'

                                                    [??can > only; only > can]

We suggest that the lack of the wide scope reading of NO in (34a) comes from the requirement that the indeterminate pronoun *dare* 'who' must be bound by *-mo* in overt syntax. Since the binding domain of *-mo* is *v*P/VP in this case, *dare* 'who' in this example must be located inside *v*P/VP in overt syntax. This in turn indicates that the NO that follows *dare* is *v*P/VP-internal as well. Hence it takes narrow scope. When NO precedes the indeterminate pronoun as in (34b), we assume that NO has moved to the spec of TP. Consequently, it takes wide scope.

It is crucial for this line of analysis that binding of the indeterminate pronoun by *-mo* must be satisfied in overt syntax. As noted by Kishimoto (2001), dislocating the indeterminate pronoun out of the binding domain of *-mo* leads to degradation. Witness the contrast in (35).

(35) a. Taro-ga   dare-ni   sono jijitu-o   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
       Taro-NOM   who-DAT   that fact-ACC tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

       '(the fact that) Taro cannot tell anyone that fact'

    b.?*Dare-ni$_i$ Taro-ga t_i sono jijitu-o   tutae-rare-mo shi-nai   (koto)
       who-DAT   Taro-NOM   that fact-ACC   tell-can-Q   do-NEG fact

       '(the fact that) Taro cannot tell anyone that fact'

Let us now return to (32a) and examine the wide scope reading of NO. According to our proposal, NO has moved to the spec of TP in overt syntax when taking wide scope. As shown in (36), we suggest that *Hanako-ni* 'Hanako-Dat,' which precedes NO, has also moved out of *v*P and is located in the domain of TP, though this movement is scrambling and has nothing to do with Case-licensing.

(36) [$_{TP}$ Taro-ga   [$_{TP}$ Hanako-ni$_i$ [$_{TP}$ sono jijitu-dake-ga $_j$ [$_{vP}$ t_i t_j tutae-rare-mo] shi-nai]]]
       Taro-NOM   Hanako-DAT   that fact-only-NOM   tell-CAN-Q   do-NEG

In contrast to (32a), this type of derivation is not available for (34a), since moving the indirect object *dare-ni* 'who-Dat' to the domain of TP, as shown in (37), would run afoul of the binding requirement for the indeterminate pronoun acting as an NPI.

(37) *[$_{TP}$ Taro-ga   [$_{TP}$ dare-ni$_i$ [$_{TP}$ sono jijitu-dake-ga $_j$ [$_{vP}$ t_i t_j tutae-rare-mo] shi-nai]]]
       Taro-NOM   who-DAT   that fact-only-NOM   tell-CAN-Q   do-NEG

A similar remark applies to (27), repeated below as (38). Recall that, as pointed out by Takahashi (2010), this example is ambiguous with respect to the scope of NO.

(38) Hanako-ga   sono saru-ni   migite-dake-ga   age-sase-rare-ta.
      Hanako-NOM   the   monkey-DAT right.hand-only-NOM raise-CAUSE-CAN-PAST

      'Hanako could make the monkey raise only his right hand.' [only > can; can > only]

We suggested in section 3.2 that this ambiguity arises because there are two derivational paths leading to this example. In particular, the wide scope reading of NO comes from the derivation shown in (28b), in which NO has moved to the matrix TP. As shown in (39), if we use an NPI as the causee argument of *-sase*, the wide scope reading of NO disappears. This is essentially for the same reason as the one that we provided for (34a).

(39) Hanako-ga   dare-ni   migite-dake-ga   age-sase-rare-mo   shi-nai.
      Hanako-NOM who-DAT   right.hand-only-Nom   raise-CAUSE-CAN-Q   do-NEG

      'Hanako cannot make anyone raise only his/her right hand.' [*only > can; (?)can > only]

On the other hand, when NO appears preceding the causee NPI *dare-ni* 'who-Dat,' the wide scope reading of NO becomes possible once again, as shown in (40a).

(40) a. Hanako-ga   migite-dake-ga   dare-ni   age-sase-rare-mo
         Hanako-NOM right.hand-only-NOM who-DAT   raise-CAUSE-CAN-Q
         shi-nai.
         do-NEG

         'Hanako cannot make anyone raise only his/her right hand.'

                          [only > can; (?)can > only]

b. [TP Hanako-NOM [TP right hand-only-NOM j [vP [CanP [VP [vP who-DAT [VP tj raise]] cause] can]-mo do-neg]]]

The wide scope reading of NO in this case is quite expected, assuming that NO has moved to the spec of TP in overt syntax, as shown in (40b).

4. 'Ga/No' Conversion and Optional Movement

In the previous section, we have provided three pieces of evidence for the claim that NO does not take scope over the potential -*rare* when it stays inside *v*P/VP in overt syntax. The idea is that the surface position of an argument determines its scope. In this section, we briefly discuss Ga/No Conversion (GNC), which occurs in the adnominal clause in Japanese, and point out that it exhibits the same kind of scope property as NOs.

(41) Taro-{ga/no}   yonda hon
       Taro-{NOM/GEN}   read   book

    'The book Taro read'

Instead of discussing a large body of works on this construction (see Maki and Uchibori (2008) and Ochi (2017) for comprehensive discussions of this construction), we would simply like to draw the reader's attention to Ochi (2001), who argues for the following points.

(42) a. Genitive Case is licensed via AGREE with D.
    b. The genitive subject (GS) may raise to the Spec of DP in overt syntax, or it may remain within an adnominal clause.
    c. In the former derivation, GS takes wide scope and in the latter it takes narrow scope.

Parallelism between (5) and (42) should be obvious. The proposals listed in (42) are based on the following points. First, as Miyagawa (1993) observes, the nominative subject (NS) and GS show distinct scope properties. Consider the following examples in a scenario in which 5 coins are tossed all at once, assuming that each coin has the 50% chances of landing on tails. If we compare the nominative subject constructions in (43a) and (43b), we notice that while (43b) is a plausible statement to make, (43a), though grammatical, sounds implausible. This shows that NS always takes scope below the head noun (*kanoosei* 'probability'). Turning to the genitive subject examples in (43c) and (43d), both examples are appropriate in the situation described above. This indicates that the genitive subject may take wide or narrow scope with respect to the head noun.

(43) a. Subete-no koin-ga   ura-ni-naru   kanoosei-wa   50%-da.
          all-GEN   coin-NOM tails-DAT-become probability-TOP 50%-COP

    'The probability that every coin lands on tails is 50%.'

b. Subete-no   koin-ga   ura-ni-naru   kanoosei-wa   oyoso 3%-da.
   all-GEN   coin-NOM tails-DAT-become probability-TOP about 3%-COP

'The probability that every coin lands on tails is about 3%.'

c. Subete-no   koin-no   ura-ni-naru   kanosei-wa   50%-da.
   all-GEN   coin-GEN   tails-DAT-become probability-TOP 50%-COP

'The probability that every coin lands on tails is 50%.'

d. Subete-no   koin-no   ura-ni-naru   kanosei-wa   oyoso 3%-da.
   all-GEN   coin-GEN tails-DAT-become probability-TOP about 3%-COP

'The probability that every coin lands on tail is about 3%.'

On the basis of such paradigms, Miyagawa (1993) concludes that while both NS and GS may take scope under the head noun, only GS may take wide scope over the head noun.

   And yet, as observed by Miyagawa (1993) and elaborated by Ochi (2001), GS fails to take wide scope when it is not clause-initial. The following examples have the adjunct phrase *tugi-no tosu-de* 'in the next toss up' preceding the nominative/genitive subject, and employ as the predicate *50% da* 'be 50%' to force the wide scope reading of the adnominal clause subject. Importantly, (44b), which has the genitive subject, as well as (44a) with the nominative subject sounds odd.

(44) a. #Tugi-no   tosu-de subete-no   koin-ga   ura-ni-naru
        next-GEN   toss-in all-GEN   coin-NOM   tails-DAT-become
        kanosei-wa   50%-da.
        probability-TOP 50%-COP

   'the probability that every coin lands on tails in the next toss up is 50%.'
                                    [probability > every; *every > probability]

   b. #Tugi-no   tosu-de subete-no   koin-no   ura-ni-naru
      next-GEN   toss-in all-GEN   coin-GEN   tails-DAT-become
      kanosei-wa   50%-da.
      possilibity-TOP 50%-COP

   'the probability that every coin lands on tails in the next toss up is 50%.'
                                    [probability > every; *every > probability]

   As for the distribution of NS, we continue to assume (5a). Since NS is Case-licensed by the T head of the adnominal clause, its scope does not extend beyond the adnominal clause, as shown in (45). GS is licensed by D as dictated by (42a), whether it moves to the spec of DP or not. The scope ambiguity of GS is due to the optionality of movement to the spec of DP, as stated in (42b) and (42c). GS takes wide scope when it has moved to the spec of DP in overt

syntax as shown in (46a), and it takes narrow scope when it remains within the adnominal clause in overt syntax as shown in (46b).

(45)   [DP [NP [TP every coin-NOM land on tails T] probability] D]

(46) a.   [DP every coin-GENi [NP [TP ti land on tails T] probability] D]

   b.   [DP [NP [TP every coin-GEN land on tails T]] probability] D]

Importantly, (44b) lacks the wide scope reading of GS because GS is linearly preceded by *tugi-no tosu-de* 'in the next toss,' which belongs to the adnominal clause, indicating that GS has not moved out of the adnominal clause in overt syntax. This is shown in the following schematic representation.

(47)   [DP [NP [TP [PP in the next toss up] every coin-GEN land on tails T] probability] D]

We can thus observe commonalities between NO and GS. They either move to the domain of their Case licensor or remain in the base position, and their surface position determines scope. This state of affairs gives additional credence to our proposal about the optional overt movement of NO, as this type of (optional) movement is found elsewhere in the grammar of Japanese.

5. Comparison with Previous Analyses

    The main proposal in this paper is that NO may move to the domain of T, which probes it and assigns Case to it, or it may stay within *v*P/VP. Our view is fully in line with Nomura (2005), who also argues for the optional application of overt movement of NO. There are other recent approaches to NOs in the literature. We have already introduced Saito's (2009) A-bar movement analysis of NOs, whose essence we adopted in this paper. We also introduced and discussed some of the core data from Takahashi (2010), who argues for a QR-based analysis of NO. More recently, Kasai (2018) has presented an interesting scrambling-based approach to NOs. We will discuss them in this section.

5.1. Nominative Objects and Quantifier Raising (Takahashi 2010)

    Here are two crucial ingredients of Takahashi's analysis. First, Case valuation determines phasehood. More concretely, *v*P will count as a phase domain only when the *v* head assigns/values Case. If *v* does not assign/value Case, as in the case of unaccusatives, *v*P will not constitute a phase. Second, QR is phase bound. It thus follows that *v*P will constitute a phase when the object is accusative. Accordingly, QR of AO is confined to this *v*P domain. As shown in (48a), *koyubi-dake-o* 'the pinkie-only-ACC' cannot undergo QR beyond the *v*P which occurs on top of the VP headed by *mage(ru)* 'crook,' resulting in the exclusion of the wide scope reading of AO. When the object is nominative, *v*P will not become a phase because there

is no Case assignment/valuation by *v*. Thus, TP (or CP, depending on how exactly nominative Case assignment/valuation is executed) will be a phase, with T assigning/valuing nominative. Therefore, NO may move via QR to the TP zone (see (48b)), and the wide scope of NO becomes possible. In the following representations, the box indicates the relevant phase domain.

(48) a.   Taro-ga [CanP [*v*P koyubi-dake-o i [VP *t*i mage] *v*] rare] ru

   b.   [TP koyubi-dake-gai [TP Taro-ga [CanP [*v*P [VP *t*i mage] v] rare] ru]]

It is interesting to note that GNC, which was discussed in the previous section, is also analyzed in terms of QR by Miyagawa (2011). Since we have seen a parallel distribution of NOs and GSs, it is worth considering whether a unified QR-based analysis is feasible for accommodating both NO and GNC.

We have two remarks for such an attempt. First, a QR-based approach to NO needs to accommodate the fact that NO does not take wide scope when preceded by a manner adverb. The relevant example (15a) is repeated below.

(49) Taro-ga   kanzen-ni   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-rare-ru.
      Taro-NOM   completely   pinkie-only-NOM   crook-CAN-PRES

      'Taro can crook only his pinkie completely.' [can > only; *only > can]

In particular, an explanation is needed as to why an adverb prevents a QP object from moving via QR to the domain of TP. In a similar vein, Miyagawa's (2011) QR-based approach to NGC would need a way to accommodate the fact that examples like (44b) lack the wide scope reading of GS. On the other hand, the observations about (44b) and (49) are accommodated rather naturally under our analysis, which does not posit any covert phrasal movement like QR. (44b) and (49) are unambiguous simply because the relevant QP argument (i.e., GS in (44b) and NO in (49)) has not moved to the domain of its Case licensor in overt syntax.

Second, consider the examples in (50) containing the nominative/genitive subject and NO. As discussed by Miyagawa (1993) among others, GNC allows the object as well as the subject to alternate between nominative and genitive when the predicate is stative. Note that the scope of NS and GS with respect to the head noun remains the same even when the object is nominative. NS only scopes below the head noun (*kanoosei* 'probability') whereas GS may scope over or below the head noun.

(50) a.   minna-ga   roshiago-ga   hanas-e-ru   kanoosei
           all-NOM   Russian-NOM   speak-Can-Pres probability

      'the probability that everyone can speak Russian'
                                              [*every > probability; probability > every]

b. minna-no roshiago-ga   hanas-e-ru   kanoosei
   all-GEN   Russian-NOM speak-Can-Pres probability

'the probability that everyone can speak Russian'

[every > probability; probability > every]

Suppose that we adopt Takahashi's (2010) idea about Case valuation and phasehood and apply it to (50). (50a) poses no problem for such an attempt. Since T is the sole Case assigner in this example, TP is the (minimal) phase. And because QR is phase bound, the fact that NS does not scope over the head noun is fully expected. But now consider (50b). Once again TP is a phase as T assigns/values nominative.

(51)   [DP [NP [TP all-GEN   Russian-NOM   speak-Can-Pres] probability] D]

There is no issue with NO as it is licensed by T in the TP phase. But what about GS? We have a situation in which D accesses the subject across a phase boundary. This may pose a problem, as Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC) may render the genitive subject inaccessible from D. But one could follow Fox and Pesetsky's (2005) and say that although PIC constrains dislocation (Move), it does not prevent a probe from penetrating into a previous phase domain because probing does not alter word order. Nevertheless, a QR-based analysis as entertained in the present context would face a challenge in accommodating the wide scope reading of GS. QR is taken to be phase bound but the spec of DP is outside the TP phase that contains GS.[7]

5.2. Nominative Objects and Scrambling (Kasai 2018)

Finally, let us consider another type of potential construction that also shows nominative-accusative alternations on the object. This is a construction discussed by Takano (2003) and more recently by Kasai (2018). Unlike the potential construction with a complex predicate that we have been discussing, this type of potential construction employs as the main predicate *dekir(u)* 'can,' which takes as its complement a phrase (or a clause) nominalized by the nominalizer *koto*.

(52)   Watashi-wa eigo-{o/ga}   hanas-u   koto-ga   deki-ru.
       I-TOP   English-ACC/NOM speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM   can-PRES

'I can speak English.'

Takano (2003) presents a prolepsis analysis for this type of construction as well as for the more familiar type of potential constructions with complex predicates. On the other hand, Kasai (2018) (see also Kuno (2002)) proposes that the NO that occurs with the *koto*-phrase is base-generated inside the *koto*-phrase/clause and undergoes scrambling, which is obligatory in this construction. For Kasai, the example in (53) has the structure shown in (53a) when the object

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[7] To be fair, one could circumvent this potential issue by saying that the wide scope reading of GS comes from the derivation in which GS is base-generated in the spec of DP, as suggested by Hiraiwa (2005) and Maki and Uchibori (2008). See Ochi (2017) for a counter-reaction to this.

is accusative and (53b) when the object is nominative (i.e., NO). Crucially, the structure in (53c) is not available for NO, according to Kasai (2018).

(53) Watashi-wa eigo-{o/ga}   hanas-u   koto-ga   deki-ru.
      I-TOP   English-{ACC/NOM} speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM   can-PRES

      'I can speak English.'

    a. Watashi-wa [$_{NP}$ [$_{VP}$ eigo-o   hanas-u]   koto]-ga   deki-ru
        I-TOP   English-ACC speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

    b. Watashi-wa eigo-ga$_i$ [$_{NP}$ [$_{VP}$ e_i hanas-u]   koto]-ga   deki-ru]
        I-TOP   English-NOM   speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

    c. *Watashi-wa [$_{NP}$ [$_{VP}$ eigo-ga   hanas-u]   koto]-ga   deki-ru
        I-TOP   English-NOM speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

Kasai (2018) presents several arguments for this claim, one of which concerns coordination data. While *koto*-phrases may be coordinated when containing AOs (54a), such coordination is not possible with NOs as shown in (54b), which indicates that NO in this type of potential construction cannot remain within the *koto*-phrase.

(54) a. Watashi-wa eigo-o   ryuuchooni hanas-u   koto   to
         I-TOP   English-ACC fluently   speak-PRES NMLZ   and
         piano-o   ryoote-de   hik-u   koto-ga   deki-ru
         piano-ACC both.hands-with   play-PRES   NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

         'I can speak English fluently and play the piano with both hands.'

    b. *Watashi-wa eigo-ga   ryuuchooni hanas-u   koto   to
        I-TOP   English-NOM   fluently   speak-PRES NMLZ   and
        piano-ga   ryoote-de   hi-ku   koto-ga   deki-ru
        piano-NOM both.hands-with   play-PRES   NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

        'I can speak English fluently and play the piano with both hands.'

Kasai then argues that the nominative/accusative alternation in the potential construction is structurally determined in the following way. Adopting Zushi's (2016) configurational approach to Case assignment in Japanese, Kasai suggests that the object is accusative when it stays in the object position, and nominative if it moves, via scrambling, to the edge of the *v*P projecting on top of the potential verb *dekir(u)* 'can.' This is illustrated below.

(55) a. Watashi-wa [$_{vP}$ [[eigo-o   hana-su]   koto]-ga   deki-ru   *v*]
         I-TOP   English-ACC speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

    b. Watashi-wa [$_{vP}$ eigo$_i$-ga   [[t_i hana-su]   koto]-ga   deki-ru v]
        I-TOP   English-NOM   speak-PRES NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

The idea entertained by Zushi/Kasai is that a nominal argument is marked accusative when it is merged with a lexical head such as V (and continues to remain there), and nominative when it is merged with a phasal head, in this case *v*. We cannot do full justice to Kasai's proposal here, but his proposal that NO always undergoes scrambling to the edge of *v*P that occurs on top of the potential predicate and consequently c-commands the potential predicate is at odds with our view that NO remains in the object position when it scopes under the potential predicate. At the same time, we find Kasai's arguments, including the one based on the coordination fact that we saw in (54) above, quite compelling. So how can we reconcile our proposal with Kasai's observations?

    Notice that Kasai assumes that the potential construction employing a complex predicate and the one with *dekir(u)* 'can' selecting a *koto*-phrase should be treated on a par. But we would like to point out that that is not warranted. Take the narrow scope property of NO. Like us, Kasai follows Nomura (2005) (and contra Takano (2003)) that NO may scope under the potential predicate. Recall that (4) from Nomura illustrates this property. But when we put the potential construction that employs *dekir(u)* along with a *koto*-phrase into this kind of example that forces the narrow scope interpretation of NO, it results in an infelicitous statement.

(56) #Taro-ga   koyubi-dake-ga   mage-ru   koto-ga   deki-ru
       Taro-NOM   pinkie-only-NOM crook-PRES NMLZ-NOM   CAN-PRES
       no-wa   shit-te-ita   ga kusuriyubi-dake-ga   mage-ru
       NMLZ-TOP know-PROG-PAST but ring.finger-only-NOM   crook-PRES
       koto-ga   deki-ru   no-ni-wa   odoroi-ta
       NMLZ-NOM   can-PRES   NMLZ-DAT-TOP be.surprised-PAST

    'I have known that Taro can crook only his pinkie but I am surprised to know that he can also crook only his ring finger.'

This strongly indicates that NO in this type of potential construction simply cannot scope under the potential -*rare*.

    This point can be corroborated by examining data that contain idiomatic expressions. The following examples, modeled after Takano's (2003) examples, have the idiom *te-o nobasu* 'hand-ACC extend,' which roughly means 'get involved.' As can be seen in (57a) and (57b), the potential construction with a complex predicate allows both AO and NO while preserving the idiomatic interpretation. However, when it comes to the other type of potential construction (i.e., the one with a *koto*-phrase selected by *dekir(u)* 'can'), there is a clear contrast between AO and NO. While AO is fine as shown in (57c), using NO leads to degradation (57d). This, once again, suggests that the two types of potential constructions should not be viewed on an equal footing.

(57) Keiki-no   sakiyuki-ga   futoumei-na   node   wa-ga   sha-wa …
economy-GEN   future-NOM   uncertain   because   we-GEN   company-TOP

'Because of uncertainty over the economy, our company…

    a.   Hoteru-gyoo-ni   te-o   nobas-e-nai.
        hotel-business-DAT   hand-ACC   extend-Can-NEG

        '... cannot get involved in the hotel business.'

    b.   Hoteru-gyoo-ni   te-ga   nobas-e-nai.
        hotel business-DAT   hand-NOM   extend-Can-NEG

        '... cannot get involved in the hotel business.'

    c.   Hoteru-gyoo-ni   te-o   nobas-u   koto-ga   deki-nai.
        hotel business -DAT   hand-ACC   extend-PRES   NMLZ-NOM   can-NEG

        '... cannot get involved in the hotel business.'

    d.??Hoteru-gyoo-ni   te-ga   nobas-u   koto-ga   deki-nai.
        hotel.industry-DAT   hand-NOM   extend-PRES   NMLZ-NOM   can-NEG

        '... cannot get involved in the hotel business.'

But if the two types of potential constructions are not on a par, how should we analyze the potential construction with *dekir(u)* 'can'? We believe that this construction should be analyzed along the lines of Takano's (2003) prolepsis analysis, according to which NO is base-generated 'higher up' in the structure and binds a gap in the object position. To be concrete, (53) should be analyzed as (58), not as (53b), when it has NO. Importantly, the dependency between NO and the gap inside the *koto*-phrase is not mediated by movement.

(58) Watashi-wa eigo-ga$_i$ [$_{NP}$ [*pro*$_i$ hanas-u]   koto]-ga   deki-ru]
I-TOP   English-NOM   speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM   can-PRES

Takano's analysis would naturally accommodate (56) and (57). This type of potential construction does not have the narrow scope interpretation of NO nor does it allow NO to be an idiom chunk, because NO does not originate inside the *koto*-phrase.

    Admittedly, pursuing this line of investigation opens up many questions. For example, does this mean that NO in the complex predicate construction may also be a proleptic object? Also, what would rule out the structure shown in (53c), repeated below as (59)?

(59) * Watashi-wa [$_{NP}$ [$_{VP}$ eigo-ga   hanas-u]   koto]-ga   deki-ru
I-TOP   English-NOM   speak-PRES   NMLZ-NOM   can-PRES

Kasai's answer is that if the object stays in this position, it should be marked as accusative, not nominative. Our view is different, as we have been suggesting all along that NO may remain in the object position. So let us examine this question below.

Suppose that the unique source of nominative Case in this configuration is the T head that occurs on top of the projection of the potential predicate *deki(ru)*, which probes and marks the *koto*-phrase with nominative. One could wonder whether the same T can probe and find *eigo* 'English' within the *koto*-phrase. In principle, this should be possible, since Japanese is known to allow multiple assignments/valuations of nominative Case.

(60) Taro-ga   musume-ga   totemo kashikoi.
      Taro-NOM daughter-NOM   very   smart

      'Taro is such that his daughter is very smart.'

But the issue is not really about multiple nominative Case assignment. As (61) shows, the predicate *dekir(u)* (marginally) allows AO. Importantly, Kasai's observation about the coordination asymmetry that we saw in (54a, b) remains intact even if the coordinated *koto*-phrases are marked with accusative instead of nominative. In particular, as shown in (62b), having NO along with the coordinated *koto*-phrases results in ungrammaticality.

(61) Watashi-wa   eigo-{ga/?-o}   dekiru yoo-ni   nari-tai.
      I-TOP   English-NOM/ACC can   SUBJ-DAT   become-want

      'I want to be able to use English.'

(62) a. ?Watashi-wa eigo-o   ryuuchooni hanas-u   koto   to
        I-TOP   English-ACC fluently   speak-PRES   NMLZ   and
        piano-o   ryoote-de   hik-u   koto-o
        piano-ACC   both.hands-with   play-PRES   NMLZ-ACC
        deki-ru   yoo-ni   nari-tai.
        can-PRES SUBJ-DAT become-want

        'I want to be able to speak English fluently and play the piano with both hands.'

    b. *Watashi-wa eigo-ga   ryuuchooni hanas-u   koto   to
        I-TOP   English-NOM   fluently   speak-PRES   NMLZ and
        piano-ga   ryoote-de   hi-ku   koto-o
        piano-NOM both.hands-with   play-PRES   NMLZ-ACC
        deki-ru   yoo-ni   nari-tai.
        can-PRES SUBJ-DAT   become-want

        'I want to be able to speak English fluently and play the piano with both hands.'

In short, NO cannot be located inside a *koto*-phrase in the potential construction regardless of the Case value assigned to the *koto*-phrase.

Now this may not be surprising after all. Let us reconsider (60). In this type of example, *Taro* may be marked with nominative or genitive.

(63) Taro-{ga/no}   musume-ga   totemo kashikoi.
      Taro-NOM/GEN daughter-NOM very   smart

      'Taro is such that his daughter is very smart.'

But this Case alternation is structurally conditioned. As shown in (64), *Taro* is genitive when it is contained inside the noun phrase (or DP) headed by *musume* 'daughter' and nominative when it is external to this noun phrase. We can confirm this point by adding an adnominal modifier in front of *Taro*. As (65) shows, nominative is not allowed when Taro is clearly inside the noun phrase.

(64) a. [DP Taro-GEN daughter]-NOM very clever.
      b. Taro-NOM$_i$ [DP e_i daughter]-NOM very clever.

(65) soko-ni   iru Taro-{*ga/no}   musume-ga   totemo kashikoi.
      there-DAT be Taro-NOM/GEN daughter-NOM very   smart

      'Taro's daughter who is over there is very smart.'

We can observe a similarity between (53) and (64). In both cases, nominative Case assignment to a nominal phrase is possible when that phrase is external to a larger phrase to which Case is assigned but is impossible otherwise. Although the investigation of the precise nature of this constraint needs to be kept for another occasion, we believe that this restriction on Case assignment can be given a principled explanation in terms of locality on probing. For example, T cannot probe into a domain where another probe is available for licensing Case (i.e., *v* in (53) and D in (64)).

But we still need an answer to a more fundamental question. Why is it that NO cannot move out of the *koto*-phrase and get nominative Case? That is, what would go wrong with the following structure for the example in (53), which is precisely what Kasai (2018) proposes?

(66) Watashi-wa   eigo-ga$_i$ [NP [VP t_i hanas-u]   koto]-ga   deki-ru.
      I-TOP   English-NOM   speak-PRES NMLZ-NOM can-PRES

As we discussed above, if this were possible, we would lose an account of the oddness of (56) and the degraded status of (57d).

Although we do not have a definitive answer to this question, another look at (53) and (64) may give us a clue. Let us start with (64). Imagine that in the derivation for (64b), *Taro* needs to pass through the edge of DP on its way out of this DP. Furthermore, suppose that in order for this to happen, *Taro* needs to enter into a syntactic relation with D. This would typically result in the genitive Case assignment to *Taro*, as we can see in (64a). In effect, the derivational stage depicted in (64a), or more precisely (67) below, is a prerequisite for obtaining (64b).

(67)   [$_{DP}$ Taro-GEN$_i$ [$_{NP}$ t_i daughter]]-NOM very clever

The derivation may halt at this point, resulting in (64a), or the derivation may continue with the additional movement of *Taro*, which places it in a position eligible to receive nominative Case. Keeping this point in mind, let us revisit (53). As noted by Kasai (2018), the *koto*-phrase in the potential construction does not allow nominative/genitive alternation on NOs.

(68)   Watashi-wa eigo-{o/ga/*no}   hanas-u   koto-ga   deki-ru.
       I-TOP   English-{ACC/NOM/GEN} speak-PRES   NMLZ   can-PRES

       'I can speak English.'

This indicates that the object inside the *koto*-phrase cannot move to the edge of the nominalized clause in a manner analogous to what happens in (67). We speculate that the lack of the "intermediate stage" leading to the extraction of the object out of the *koto*-phrase is the reason for the absence of the structure in (66). Note that to the extent that the discussion in this subsection is on the right track, it shows that a nominal phrase, including NO, cannot freely scramble before it is Case-marked, contrary to Kasai's (2018) proposal.[8]

6. Conclusion

Working with the assumption that nominative Case is uniformly licensed by T whether it is assigned to the subject or the object, this paper has argued that there are in principle two derivational scenarios for nominative object (NO) constructions. NO may remain in the object position throughout the derivation or it may move to the domain of T, its Case licensor, in overt syntax. Crucially, our analysis posits no covert (phrasal) movement. We have also seen that this optional character of the overt movement of NO finds a close analogue in Nominative/Genitive Conversion (NGC) paradigms. Crucially, in both NO constructions and NGC, the surface position of the Case-marked argument determines its scope. To the extent that our proposal is on the right track, it has an implication that the mapping from syntax to semantics is rather transparent as far as the grammar of Japanese is concerned.

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[8] When the object under discussion is marked accusative, it has no reason to move to the edge of the nominalized clause, since accusative is assigned by *v*, not by D.

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