

The Structure and Derivation of the VP Focus Pseudocleft Sentences in Japanese*

Yuki Ishihara

Tokyo Institute of Technology/ University of Tokyo

ishihara@flc.titech.ac.jp

This paper considers the structure of the VP focus pseudocleft construction in Japanese and claims that the focus phrase constitutes nP headed by koto, which nominalizes such verbal phrases as VP, vP, VoiceP and Hon₂P. It will also be shown that the pseudocleft construction and the no da construction are derived from the same underlying structure containing VP-koto-o suru via focus movement, along the lines proposed by Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012).

Keywords: pseudocleft construction, no da construction, nominalizer koto

1. Introduction

This paper examines within the Minimalist Program proposed by Chomsky (1995) the structure of the VP focus pseudocleft construction in Japanese and how it is derived.

- (1) Taroo-ga si-ta no wa [hon-o yom-u koto] da.
Taro-Nom do-Past C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
'What Taro did was read a book.'

Ishihara (this volume) has investigated what forms of verbs can appear within the focus phrase of the construction, and concluded that elements that belong to the thematic domain can be included in the focus phrase in contrast to those that belong to the higher propositional domain. To be more precise, while such elements as causative *sase*, passive *rare*, light verbs *-(te) yar(u)*, *-(te) moraw(u)*, and honorific *o-* *-ninar(u)* can occur in the focus position, aspectual *-(te) ir(u)*, honorific *rare*, negative *nai*, past tense *ta*, and modals like *daroo* and *mai* cannot. It has also been shown that the presuppositional clause preceding *no* constitutes TP. However, the syntactic category of the focus phrase as a whole has been left unclear, since the status of a nominalizer, *koto*, has not been considered. Moreover, how the presuppositional clause and the focus phrase are connected structurally has not been addressed, which is related to the question of how the construction is derived.

In this paper, we will address these issues, taking Hiraiwa and Ishihara's (2012) analysis of the pseudocleft construction in Japanese as a starting point. They argue that the pseudocleft construction (2b) is derived from the *no da* construction (2a).

- (2) a. Taroo-ga kono hon-o yon-da no da. (no da construction)
Taro-Nom this book-Acc read-Past C Cop.Nonpast
'Taro read this book indeed.'
b. Taroo-ga yon-da no wa kono hon-o da. (pseudocleft construction)
Taro-Nom read-Past C Top this book-Acc Cop.Nonpast
'What Taro read was this book.'

Since they are concerned only with the sentences with Case-marked NPs and PPs as foci, and do not consider the

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- (5) Taroo-ga [Hanako-ga e_i si-ta-to] omot-te i-ru no wa [yoohuku-o kaikom-u
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Nom do-past-C think-TE Asp-Nonpast C Top clothes-Acc buy.up-U
 koto]_i da.
 KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro thinks Hanako did is buy a lot of clothes.’

As shown in (5), long distance dependency holds in the VP focus construction. This dependency is subject to island constraints.

- (6) *Taroo-ga [[$e_i e_j$ si-ta] hito_i-o] hihansi-ta no wa [booryoku-o huruw-u koto]_j
 Taro-Nom do-Past person-Acc criticize-Past C Top violence-Acc resort.to-U KOTO
 dat-ta.
 Cop-Past
 Lit. ‘What Taro criticized a person who did was resort to violence.’
- (7) *Taroo-ga [Yosiko-ga tabemono-o kaisime-te Hanako-ga e_i si-ta]-to omot-te
 Taro-Nom Yoshiko-Nom food-Acc buy.up-TE Hanako-Nom do-Past-C think-TE
 i-ru no wa [yoohuku-o kaikom-u koto]_i da.
 Asp-Nonpast C Top clothes-Acc buy.a.lot-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘What Taro thinks that Yoshiko bought up food and that Hanako did is buy a lot of clothes.’

The ungrammaticality of (6) and (7) can be attributed to the Complex NP Constraint and the Coordinate Structure Constraint respectively. This demonstrates that some sort of movement is involved in the derivation of the VP focus pseudocleft construction.

Interestingly, the absence of a Case marker on *koto* in the focus position of the VP focus construction does not affect island sensitivity in contrast to the NP focus construction. Hiraiwa and Ishihara, following Fukaya and Hoji (1999), distinguish between two types of constructions: those that focalize NPs marked by Case particles or postpositions, and those that focalize non-Case-marked NPs. They observe that only the former exhibit island sensitivity.

- (8) a. *[Naoya-ga [[$e_i e_j$ kai-ta] hito_i]-o] hihansi-ta no]-wa kono ronbun-o_j
 Naoya-Nom write-Past person-Acc criticize-Past C Top this paper-Acc
 da.
 Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘It was this paper_j that Naoya criticized the person who wrote e_j .’
- b. [Naoya-ga [[$e_i e_j$ kai-ta] hito_i]-o] hihansi-ta no]-wa kono ronbun_j
 Naoya-Nom write-Past person-Acc criticize-Past C Top this paper
 da.
 Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘It was this paper_j that Naoya criticized the person who wrote e_j .’

(Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012: 147))

The example (8a), in which the focus NP bears a Case marker, is subject to the Complex NP Constraint. On the other hand, the example (8b), with no Case particle on the focus NP, is not island sensitive. Hiraiwa and Ishihara argue that movement is involved only in the derivation of the sentences of the former type.

It is not clear why the VP focus pseudocleft construction is subject to the subjacency condition regardless of whether the Case marker on VP-*koto* is present or not, but whatever the reason, it seems reasonable to assume that movement is involved in its derivation.

2.2. The Case Property of VP-Koto

It is not easy to have a Case-marked *koto* in the focus position of the VP focus construction.

- (9) Taroo-ga si-ta no wa heya-o katazuke-ru koto (-??o) da.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top room-Acc tidy.up-RU KOTO-Acc Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did was tidy up the room.’

This is in contrast to the *koto-o suru* construction where accusative case marking on *koto* is obligatory. Note that every argument NP has to be Case-marked.

- (10) (?)Taroo-ga heya-o katazuke-ru koto-o si-ta.
 Taro-Nom room-Acc tidy.up-RU KOTO-Acc do-Past
 Lit. ‘Taro did the tidying up of the room.’

Though the example (10) is acceptable, it sounds rather like word-for-word translation from a foreign language, because the verb, *suru*, does not take an accusative-marked *koto* easily.¹ When we consider such verbs as *kimeru* ‘decide’ and *yakusokusuru* ‘promise,’ which select an accusative-marked *koto*, however, we see that the situation is not limited to the cases involving *suru*. They do not yield good pseudocleft sentences with a Case-marked *koto* phrase as a focus, either, as shown in (11b) and (12b).

- (11) a. Taroo-ga daigaku-ni ik-u koto-o/ni kime-ta.
 Taro-Nom college-to go-U KOTO-Acc/Dat decide-Past
 ‘Taro decided to go to college.’
 b. Taroo-ga kime-ta no wa daigaku-ni ik-u koto(??-o/??-ni) da.
 Taro-Nom decide-Past C Top college-to go-U KOTO-Acc/Dat Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro decided to do was to go to college.’
- (12) a. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni 6-zi-ni ie-ni ik-u koto-o yakusokusi-ta.
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Dat 6 o’clock-at house-to go-U KOTO-Acc promise-Past
 ‘Taro promised Hanako to go to her house at six o’clock.’
 b. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni yakusokusi-ta no wa 6-zi-ni ie-ni ik-u
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Dat promise-Past C Top 6 o’clock-at house-to go-U
 koto(-??o) da.
 KOTO-Acc Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro promised Hanako to do was to go to her house at six o’clock.’

¹ It was not uncommon to use such translationese in the Meiji and Taisho period, and we still see this style in written texts today.

- (i) Boku-kara me-o hanasa-nai-de mamor-u koto-o seyo.
 me-from eyes-Acc turn.away-Neg-DE protect-U KOTO-Acc do.Imp
 ‘Don’t turn away, but keep watch over me.’
 (Kotaro Takamura (1914) “Dootee” (Journey), translated by Arthur Binard)

Note that the sentences become natural when we add such intensifiers as *sae* or *sura* after *koto*, leaving out the accusative case marker *-o*.

- (ii) Taroo-ga heya-o katazuke-ru koto sae/sura si-ta.
 Taro-Nom room-Acc tidy.up-RU KOTO even/even do-Past
 ‘Taro even tidied up the room.’

When VP-*koto* is not adjacent to the sentence-final copula, however, the accusative case marker is obligatory. In (13), VP-*koto* is separated from the copula by another focus phrase in the multiple-foci pseudocleft construction, and it has to appear with the case marker, *-o*.²

- (13) ?Byooki-o naosu tameni Taroo-ga si-ta no wa kusuri-o nom-u
 illness-Acc treat in.order.to Taro-Nom do-Past C Top medicine-Acc take-U
 koto*(-o) 1-niti-ni 3-kai da.
 KOTO-Acc 1-day-per 3-times Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did in order to treat illness is take medicine three times a day.’

There is a piece of evidence that indicates that VP-*koto* in the focus position is an accusative object even when *koto* is not accompanied by *-o* on the surface. In Japanese there are two *wh*-words that correspond to VP: *nani-o* ‘what’ and *doo* ‘how.’

- (14) a. Taroo-wa nani-o si-ta no.
 Taro-Top what-Acc do-Past Q
 ‘What did Taro do?’
 b. Taroo-wa doo si-ta no.
 Taro-Top how do-Past Q
 ‘What did Taro do?’/ ‘What is the matter with Taro?’

In contrast to (14a) in which *nani-o* is used, the agentive interpretation is not obligatory when *doo* is used, as in (14b). When we want to ask the content of V, we employ the same words as we use for VP, since no words are specialized for V alone.

- (15) A: Taroo-wa Saburoo-ni/*Saburoo-o/??hon-ni/*hon-o nani-o si-ta no.
 Taro-Top Saburo-Dat/Saburo-Acc/book-Dat/book-Acc what-Acc do-Past Q
 ‘What did Taro do to Saburo?’
 B: Nankai-mo nagut-ta yo.
 many.times-MO hit-Past Prt
 ‘He hit him many times.’
 (16) A: Taroo-wa ??Saburoo-o/*Saburoo-ni/hon-o/*hon-ni doo si-ta no.
 Taro-Top Saburo-Acc/Saburo-Dat/book-Acc/book-Dat how do-Past Q
 ‘What did Taro do with the book?’
 B: Tomodati-ni age-ta yo.
 friend-Dat give-Past Prt
 ‘He gave it to his friend.’

When we use an accusative-marked *nani-o* as in (15A), the other argument of V must be realized with a dative case, *Saburoo-ni*. This follows from the Double-*o* Constraint, which forbids two accusative NPs from occurring in the same vP. Since the dative argument acts as Patient, an inanimate noun like *hon* is not appropriate in (15A). On the other hand, when *doo* is used in (16A), the internal argument needs to be realized with an accusative case because *suru* selects an accusative object. The sentence has an interpretation in which the entity denoted by the external argument has strong control over another denoted by the internal argument. Hence the inanimate object,

² The example (13) sounds awkward because there is a more natural way of stating the same thing without invoking the multiple foci construction, as in *Byooki-o naosu tameni Taroo-ga sita no wa 1-niti-ni 3-kai kusuri-o nomu koto da*, where a single VP is focalized.

hon, which has no will of its own, makes a good internal argument, but the human being, Saburo, does not.

Now let us look at the VP focus pseudocleft construction in this light.

- (17) a. Taroo-ga Saburoo-ni si-ta no wa nankai-mo nagur-u koto da.
 Taro-Nom Saburo-Dat do-Past C Top many.times-MO hit-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did to Saburo was hit him many times.’
 b. ?? Taroo-ga hon-ni si-ta no wa tomodati-ni age-ru koto da.
 Taro-Nom book-Dat do-Past C Top friend-Dat give-RU KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did with a book was give it to his friend.’
- (18) a. *Taroo-ga hon-o si-ta no wa tomodati-ni age-ru koto da.
 Taro-Nom book-Acc do-Past C Top friend-Dat give-RU KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did with a book was give it to his friend.’
 b. *Taroo-ga Saburoo-o si-ta no wa nankai-mo nagur-u koto da.
 Taro-Nom Saburo-Acc do-Past C Top many.times-MO hit-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did to Saburo was hit him many times.’

The only pattern allowed in the presuppositional clause is for *suru* to take a dative Patient, as in (17a). (17b) is ruled out semantically, because a book cannot be a Patient, as shown in (15A). What is crucial is the ungrammaticality of (18a, b), which indicates the incompatibility of *doo* question with the VP focus pseudocleft construction. This follows from the Deep/Abstract Double-*o* Constraint, if VP-*koto* in the focus position bears an abstract accusative Case. The Deep/Abstract Double-*o* Constraint excludes two accusative NPs at an abstract level, even when one of them does not bear an accusative case on the surface, as in (19b). (cf. Harada (1973), Saito and Hoshi (2000), Poser (2002))

- (19) a. *Taroo-wa Hanako-o mesi-o tak-ase-ta.
 Taro-Top Hanako-Acc rice-Acc cook-Cause-Past
 ‘Taro made Hanako cook rice.’
 b. *Taroo-ga Hanako-o tak-ase-ta no wa mesi da.
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Acc cook-Cause-Past C Top rice Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro made Hanako cook was rice.’ (Poser (2002: 5))

There is nothing wrong with focusing adjuncts.

- (20) Taroo-ga hon-o kat-ta no wa Kinokuniya-de da.
 Taro-Nom book-Acc buy-Past C Top Kinokuniya-at Cop.Nonpast
 ‘It was at Kinokuniya that Taro bought the book.’

So the exclusion of *doo* adjunct from the focus position in (18) has to do with the fact that VPs must be nominalized in order to precede the copula in the pseudocleft construction. If nominalized VPs have to be Case-licensed just as normal NPs, then the ungrammaticality of (18a, b) can be attributed to the Deep/Abstract Double-*o* Constraint. Thus, even though VP-*koto* in the focus position is not Case-marked on the surface, it is an accusative object of *suru*.

Why is it that VP-*koto* has to be accusative in the pseudocleft construction? This can be explained, if we assume that it is an object of *suru* in the underlying structure. Since the subject in the presuppositional clause is nominative, *koto* phrase cannot be nominative at the same time.³ In Ishihara (this volume) it is pointed out that

³ In Japanese the multiple nominative construction is allowed as in (i), but the focalized major subject must be interpreted as an adjunct in the pseudocleft construction in (ii). It seems that the (abstract) Case preserved in the pseudocleft construction has to be argument-related.

only indirect passives are allowed in the construction.

- (21) Taroo-ga s-are-ta no wa nagura-re-ru koto dat-ta.
 Taro-Nom do-Pass-Past C Top hit-Pass-RU KOTO Cop-Past
 Lit. ‘What was done to Taro was he was hit.’

Here again, since Taro has to appear in nominative in (21), the *koto* focus phrase has to be interpreted as an accusative object of *s-are-ta*.

In summary, we have shown that the focus phrase is the accusative object of the verb *suru* in the presuppositional clause. This can be accounted for, if the VP-*koto* phrase is the object of *suru* in the underlying structure. This is compatible with Hiraiwa and Ishihara’s analysis, which regards the *no da* construction as an underlying structure.

2.3. Connectivity

It has been pointed out by Akmajian (1970) and Higgins (1973) among many others that the pseudocleft sentences show connectivity: binding relation seems to hold between an element within the presuppositional clause and another within the focus phrase, though the former does not seem to c-command the latter. Kizu (2005) and Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012) observe the connectivity effect with NP/PP-focus pseudocleft sentences in Japanese. The same phenomenon is also seen with the VP-focus pseudocleft sentences.

- (22) a. Daremo_i-ga si-ta no wa zibun_i-no/sono_i hahaoya-ni tegami-o kak-u koto
 everyone-Nom do-Past C Top self-Gen/his mother-Dat letter-Acc write-U KOTO
 dat-ta.
 Cop-Past
 ‘What everyone did was write a letter to his own mother.’
- b. [Taroo to Hanako]_i-ga si-ta no wa otagai_i-no hahaoya-ni tegami-o kak-u
 Taro and Hanako-Nom do-Past C Top each.other-Gen mother-Dat letter-Acc write-U
 koto dat-ta.
 KOTO Cop-Past
 ‘What Taro and Hanako did was write a letter to each other’s mother.’

In (22a) bound variable reading of *zibun-no/sono* ‘self-Gen/his’ is available, even though *daremo* ‘everyone’ in the presuppositional clause does not c-command them. And in (22b) *otagai* ‘each other’ is interpreted to have Taro and Hanako as its antecedent in spite of the lack of a c-command relation between them. It is as though the subject of the presuppositional clause c-commanded the focus VP.

In order to account for the connectivity effect, it has been proposed by Akmajian (1970), Ross (1972), Bošković (1997), Den Dikken et al. (2000), Cho et al. (2008), Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012) among others that at one stage of the derivation the presuppositional clause and the focus phrase form a single clause of some sort.

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- (i) Huyu-ga raamen-ga uma-i.
 winter-Nom ramen-Nom delicious-Nonpast
 ‘Ramen tastes good in winter.’
- (ii) Raamen-ga uma-i no wa huyu da.
 ramen-Nom delicious-Nonpast C Top winter Cop.Nonpast
 ‘It is in winter that ramen tastes good.’

- (23) Daremo-ga zibun-no/sono hahaoya-ni tegami-o kak-u koto-o si-ta.
 everyone-Nom self-Gen/his mother-Dat letter-Acc write-U KOTO-Acc do-Past
 ‘Everyone wrote a letter to his own mother.’

Since this enables us to account for the connectivity effect without complicating the binding theory, we consider the postulation of an underlying structure as in (23) is plausible.⁴

2.4. *The Parallelism between the Pseudocleft Construction and the No da Construction*

The analysis proposed by Hiraiwa and Ishihara predicts that the same elements occur in the VP focus pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction. Let us test this prediction.

The parallelism between the VP focus pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction is complete with most of the elements considered in Ishihara (this volume). As an illustration, let us look at the behavior of the past tense *-ta* (24, 25) and the probability modal *-daroo* (26, 27).

- (24) a. *Taroo-ga si-ta no wa hon-o kat-ta koto da.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top book-Acc buy-Past KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘What Taro did is bought books.’
 b. Taroo-ga si-ta no wa hon-o kaw-u koto da.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top book-Acc buy-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did was buy books.’
 c. Taroo-ga su-ru no wa hon-o kaw-u koto dat-ta.
 Taro-Nom do-Nonpast C Top book-Acc buy-U KOTO Cop-Past
- (25) a. *Taroo-ga hon-o kat-ta koto-o si-ta no da.
 b. Taroo-ga hon-o kaw-u koto-o si-ta no da.
 c. Taroo-ga hon-o kaw-u koto-o su-ru no dat-ta.
- (26) a. *Taroo-ga su-ru no wa hon-o yom-u-daroo koto da.
 Taro-Nom do-Nonpast C Top book-Acc read-Nonpast-probably KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘What Taro does is probably read a book.’
 b. *Taroo-ga su-ru-daroo no wa hon-o yom-u koto da.
 Taro-Nom do-Nonpast-probably C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 c. Taroo-ga su-ru no wa hon-o yom-u koto daroo.
 Taro-Nom do-Nonpast C Top book-Acc read-Nonpast KOTO Cop.probably
- (27) a. *Taroo-ga hon-o yom-u-daroo koto-o su-ru no da.
 b. *Taroo-ga hon-o yom-u koto-o su-ru-daroo no da.

⁴ On the other hand, some phenomena have been reported to show anti-connectivity. For example, Williams (1994) observes that while both a wide scope reading and a narrow scope reading of *every dog* are available in (ia), (ib) only allows a reading in which *a chicken* takes a wide scope. This is not expected, if the sentence, *Every dog ate a chicken*, underlies (ib).

- (i) a. What every dog ate was a chicken.
 b. What ate a chicken was every dog.

In addition, Heycock and Kroch (2002) note the contrast between (iia) and (iib).

- (ii) a. What I don’t have is any bread.
 b. *Any bread is what I don’t have.

The unacceptability of (iib) needs to be explained, if the underlying structure is something like *I don’t have any bread*. See Reeve (2012) for discussion of these issues with *it*-clefts.

- c. Taroo-ga hon-o yom-u koto-o su-ru no daroo.

Just as the occurrence of *-ta* and *-daroo* is prohibited in the focus position of the VP focus pseudocleft construction as in (24a, 26a), they cannot precede *koto* in the corresponding *no da* construction, as in (25a, 27a). Likewise, the parallelism holds between the occurrence of these elements in the presuppositional clause in the pseudocleft construction (24b, 26b) and that preceding *no da* in the *no da* construction (25b, 27b). Besides, the same elements can appear in the post-copular position in both the pseudocleft construction (24c, 26c) and the *no da* construction (25c, 27c). The same holds true with the causative *-sase* (28, 29).

- (28) a. Taroo-ga si-ta no wa Hanako-ni heya-o katazuke-sase-ru koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom do-Past C Top Hanako-Dat room-Acc tidy.up-Cause-RU KOTO Cop-Past
'What Taro did was make Hanako tidy up the room.'
- b. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni s-ase-ta no wa heya-o katazuke-ru koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom Hanako-Dat do-Cause-Past C Top room-Acc tidy.up-RU KOTO Cop-Past
- c. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni s-ase-ta no wa heya-o katazuke-sase-ru koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom Hanako-Dat do-Cause-Past C Top room-Acc tidy.up-Cause-RU KOTO Cop-Past
- (29) a. Taroo-ga [Hanako-ni heya-o katazuke-sase-ru koto-o] si-ta no dat-ta.
b. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni [heya-o katazuke-ru koto-o] s-ase-ta no dat-ta.
c. Taroo-ga Hanako-ni [heya-o katazuke-sase-ru koto-o] s-ase-ta no dat-ta.

Other elements such as *-te yaru*, *-te morawu* with a causative meaning, the adnominal marker *-ru*, the aspectual *-te iru*, the negative marker *-nai*, the modal of improbability *mai*, and the honorific *rare/o-* *-ninaru* all bear out the prediction of Hiraiwa and Ishihara's analysis.

However, there are a few cases where the parallelism between the pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction breaks down. Consider the constructions related to the indirect passive sentence, *Taroo-ga musuko-o izimer-are-ta* 'Taro had his son bullied.'

- (30) a. *Taroo-ga si-ta no wa musuko-o izime-rare-ru koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom do-Past C Top son-Acc bully-Pass-RU KOTO Cop-Past
'What Taro did was have his son bullied.'
- b. *Taroo-ga s-are-ta no wa musuko-o izime-ru koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom do-Pass-Past C Top son-Acc bully-RU KOTO Cop-Past
- c. Taroo-ga s-are-ta no wa musuko-o izime-rare-ru koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom do-Pass-Past C Top son-Acc bully-Pass-RU KOTO Cop-Past
- (31) a. ??Taroo-ga musuko-o izime-rare-ru koto-o si-ta no dat-ta.
b. ?Taroo-ga musuko-o izime-ru koto-o s-are-ta no dat-ta.
c. ?Taroo-ga musuko-o izime-rare-ru koto-o s-are-ta no dat-ta.

The *no da* counterpart (31b) for an unacceptable pseudocleft (30b) is not so bad. The pairs related to the passive sentence, *Taroo-ga waraitobas-are-ta* 'Taro was laughed at' (32a, b) and the *-te morawu* construction with a passive meaning (33a, b) show the similar contrast.

- (32) a. *Taroo-ga s-are-ta no wa waraitobas-u koto dat-ta.
Taro-Nom do-Pass-Past C Top laugh.at-U KOTO Cop-Past
Lit. 'What was done to Taro was laugh at him.'
- b. ?Taroo-ga waraitobas-u koto-o s-are-ta no dat-ta.

- (33) a. *Taroo-ga sensee-ni si-te morat-ta no wa home-ru koto dat-ta.
 Taro-Nom teacher-by do-TE receive-Past C Top praise-RU KOTO Cop-Past
 Lit. ‘What Taro was done by the teacher was praise him.’
 b. ?Taroo-ga sensee-ni home-ru koto-o si-te morat-ta no dat-ta.

While the examples (32b, 33b) are not unacceptable, their pseudocleft counterparts (32a, 33a) have degraded acceptability.

The cases in which the parallelism between the pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction breaks down involve the passives and *-te morawu*, and they show the same pattern: the pseudocleft construction is not acceptable but the *no da* construction is. This can be accommodated, if there is some independent reason for which the pseudocleft construction involving these elements is excluded.

Ishihara (this volume) has shown that the VP focus pseudocleft construction is subject to the theta nondistinctness condition, given in (34).

- (34) The VP focus pseudocleft construction can be interpreted more easily when the subject of the presuppositional clause receives a thematic role nondistinct from the one assigned by the focus predicate to its subject within the focus phrase.

According to this condition, the pseudocleft sentences with voice mismatches as in (30a, b, 32a, 33a) are difficult to interpret, because the thematic role assigned to the PRO subject of the focus phrase and the one assigned to the subject of the presuppositional clause are different from each other. Since semantic interpretation of the pseudocleft construction involves reconstruction of the focus phrase, the burden of computation can be eased considerably by theta nondistinctness in the focus phrase and the presuppositional clause. On the other hand, the *no da* construction is not subject to this condition, as shown in (31b, 32b, 33b), probably because semantic interpretation of the *koto* phrase is straightforward, given that it is situated in the object position. If so, the apparent counterexamples to the parallelism between the pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction are taken care of. Since the parallelism holds between the VP focus pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction, it is plausible that they are related derivationally and that *no* that appears in the *no da* construction is the same element as the one that precedes *wa* in the pseudocleft construction, as claimed by Hiraiwa and Ishihara.

To summarize this section, we have examined the properties of the VP focus pseudocleft construction to determine its underlying structure and how it is derived. First, we have seen that the VP focus pseudocleft construction is subject to the island constraints, which indicates that movement is involved in its derivation. Secondly, we have observed that the *koto* focus phrase is an accusative object of *suru* in the presuppositional clause, which can be accounted for if an underlying structure is postulated in which the *koto*-phrase is the object of *suru*. Thirdly, connectivity effects have been shown to hold with bound variables and reciprocal pronouns. This also follows if the pseudocleft construction is derived from a structure where the presuppositional clause and the focus phrase form a clause. Finally, we have seen that the *no da* construction and the VP focus pseudocleft construction are closely related. The elements that occur in the VP focus pseudocleft construction also occur in the *no da* construction and that those that are not allowed in the *no da* construction do not occur in the pseudocleft construction. The data we have examined in this section indicate that the VP focus pseudocleft construction should be derived by movement from an underlying structure in which the presuppositional clause and the focus phrase forms a constituent, and that the close relationship between the VP focus pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction should be explained.

3. Proposal

In this section we will propose the structure and the derivation of the VP focus pseudocleft construction. We will revise Hiraiwa and Ishihara’s treatment of the construction-final copula, and argue that the VP focus

pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction share the same underlying structure containing VP-*koto-o suru no da*.

3.1. VP-*koto* in the Underlying Structure of the VP Focus Pseudocleft Construction

Ishihara (this volume) has observed that the elements that belong to the thematic domain can occur in the focus position, in contrast to those that belong to the propositional domain.

- (35) [ForceP [TopP [FocP [TopP [FinP [TP [NegP [Hon1P [AspP [Hon2P [VoiceP [vP [VP...V...]] v] Voice] Hon2] Asp] Hon1] Neg] T] Fin] Top] Foc] Top] Force]

The focus phrase can host a phrase as large as Hon₂P in (35) but not a larger constituent.

Now let us look into other properties of the focus phrase. First, lexical subjects are not allowed in the focus phrase.

- (36) *Taroo-ga si-ta no wa zibun-ga sono hon-o kaw-u koto da.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top self-Nom the book-Acc buy-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. 'Taro did his buying of the book.'

The example (36) is ruled out because there is no element like T that can license the nominative case of a lexical subject *zibun* in the focus phrase. Note that the sentence is fine, if *zibun-de* 'for oneself' is used in place of the nominative *zibun-ga*. Hence the subject of the *koto* focus phrase is always PRO.⁵

As for the syntactic category of *koto*, we assume it is n, a nominal analogue of v, which takes VP, vP, VoiceP, or Hon₂P as its complement. It is not C, because *koto*-phrase cannot be as large as CP. Nor is it an ordinary N. For one thing, it does not make any semantic contribution; there is no difference in cognitive meaning between (37a) and (37b). It only acts as a nominalizer.

- (37) a. Taroo-ga hon-o kat-ta.
 Taro-Nom book-Acc buy-Past
 'Taro bought a book.'
 b. Taroo-ga hon-o kaw-u koto-o si-ta.
 Taro-Nom book-Acc buy-U KOTO-Acc do-Past
 Lit. 'Taro did buying of a book.'

Moreover, it does not seem to form a complex NP island for extraction.⁶ Compare (38b) with (39b).

⁵ Notice that *koto* focus phrase is similar to VP-*ing* complements of verbs such as *try* and *avoid*, which Pires (2006) calls "TP-defective gerunds," in disallowing perfective morphology or lexical subjects. *Koto* and *-ing* both function as nominalizers, changing VPs into NPs.

- (i) a. *Mark tried [having convinced his friends]. (Pires (2006: 71))
 b. *Clark tried [Mary taking care of the finances]. (Pires (2006: 72))

⁶ The example (38b) sounds worse than (i), but it may be due to the unnaturalness of (38a).

- (i) Sono hon-o_i Taroo-ga [Hanako-ga *t_i* kat-ta to] it-ta to omot-te i-ru.
 the book-Acc Taro-Nom Hanako-Nom buy-Past C say-Past C think-te Asp-Nonpast
 'The book, Taro thinks Hanako bought.'

- (38) a. Taroo-ga [Hanako-ga sono hon-o kaw-u koto-o si-ta to] omot-te
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Nom the book-Acc buy-U KOTO-Acc do-Past C think-TE
 i-ru.
 Asp-Nonpast
 ‘Taro thinks that Hanako bought the book.’
- b. ?Sono hon-o_i Taroo-ga [Hanako-ga *t_i* kaw-u koto-o si-ta to] omot-te
 the book-Acc Taro-Nom Hanako-Nom buy-U KOTO-Acc do-Past C think-TE
 i-ru.
 Asp-Nonpast
 ‘The book, Taro thinks Hanako bought.’
- (39) a. Taroo-ga [Hanako-ga sono hon-o kat-ta hito-o sit-te i-ru to]
 Taro-Nom Hanako-Nom the book-Acc buy-Past person-Acc know-TE Asp-Nonpast C
 omot-te i-ru.
 think-TE Asp-Nonpast
 ‘Taro thinks Hanako knows a person who bought the book.’
- b. *Sono hon-o_i Taroo-ga [Hanako-ga *t_i* kat-ta hito-o sit-te i-ru to]
 the book-Acc Taro-Nom Hanako-Nom buy-Past person-Acc know-TE Asp-Nonpast C
 omot-te i-ru.
 think-TE Asp-Nonpast
 ‘The book, Taro thinks Hanako knows a person who bought.’

Hence we regard *koto* as n.

Nominalization of verbal phrases (VP, vP, VoiceP, Hon₂P) by *koto* is necessary because they cannot immediately precede a copula in the pseudocleft construction.⁷ The next question we consider is the following: Is the nominalizer, *koto*, present in the underlying structure of the VP focus pseudocleft sentences? We will claim that the sequence *koto-o suru* has to be present in the underlying structure.

Suppose *koto* is not present in the underlying structure and the pseudocleft sentence (40b) is derived from (40a), as schematized in (41).

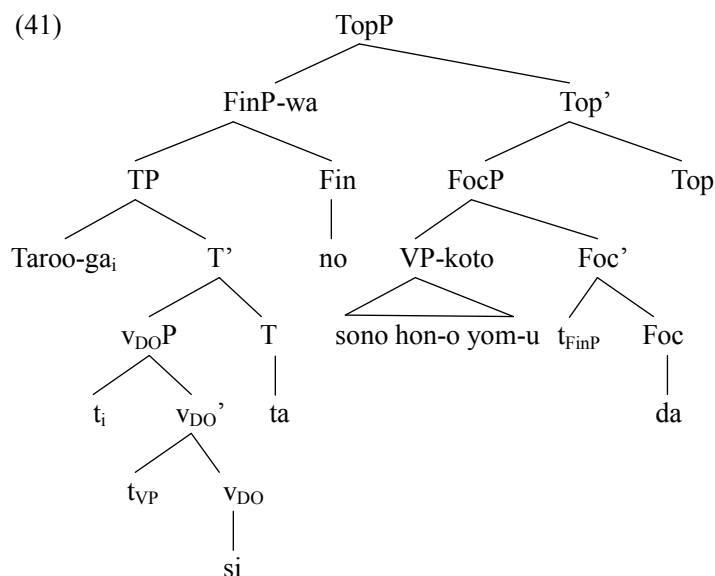
- (40) a. Taroo-ga sono hon-o yon-da no da.
 Taro-Nom that book-Acc read-Past C Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘It was that Taro read the book.’
- b. Taroo-ga si-ta no wa sono hon-o yom-u koto da.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top the book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did was buy the book.’

Under such an analysis, first, the focus VP, *sono hon-o yom-u*, moves to Spec of FocP from within FinP. Then the remnant FinP is topicalized to Spec of TopP. If we assume that v_{DO} hosting an agent in its specifier can be spelled

⁷ Ross (2000) studies which categories can make a pseudocleft focus more easily than others, and puts forth an implicational hierarchy of the pseudocleft foci which holds cross-linguistically: NP>complement clause>volitional VP>predicate nominal/AP>undeleted sentence. Since the NP-like foci make pseudoclefts most readily, it is not surprising that nominalization is utilized in the Japanese pseudocleft sentences. Note that the CP foci of the pseudocleft construction also have to be accompanied by a nominalizing C such as *koto* or *tokoro*, as in (i).

- (i) Taroo-ga mi-ta no wa Hanako-ga hon-o nusum-u tokoro da.
 Taro-Nomsee-Past C Top Hanako-Nom book-Acc steal-Nonpast TOKORO Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro saw was Hanako’s stealing of a book.’

out as *si/su* ‘do’ in the absence of its complement VP,⁸ then we can derive the presuppositional clause. The agentivity requirement of the VP focus pseudocleft construction can be attributed to the assumption that *si/su* is the spell-out of v_{DO} .



So far it seems to work fairly well. However, problems arise when it comes to the focus phrase. Firstly, the focus phrase is not limited to VP. It has to be able to host a phrase as large as Hon_2P , but then it would be difficult to maintain *si/su* is a spell-out of v . Moreover, we have to resort to brute force and insert *koto* during the derivations to nominalize verbal phrases. Ishihara (2010), who studies the predicate doubling construction exemplified in (42), claims that *koto* in the construction has no syntactic or semantic status and thus is inserted morphophonologically after Spell-Out.

- (42) Taroo-wa hon-o yom-u koto-wa yon-da.
 Taroo-Top book-Acc read-U KOTO-Top read-Past
 ‘Taro did read the book indeed.’

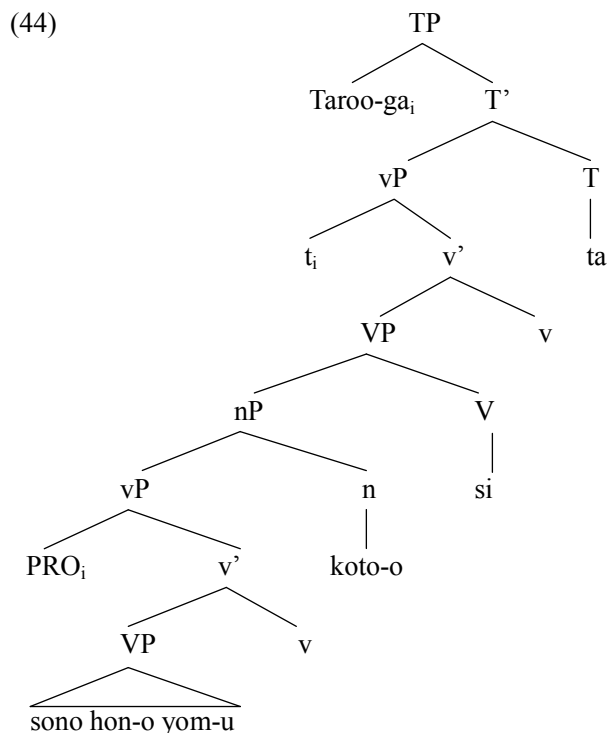
In contrast, *koto* in the pseudocleft construction functions syntactically as a nominalizer, changing a verbal phrase into NP. VP focus movement followed by *koto*-insertion, which would be necessary in the derivation in (40, 41), violates Chomsky’s (1995) inclusiveness condition, which forbids introduction of new materials beyond the input in the computational system. Moreover, we have observed in section 2.2 that the accusative case of the focus phrase *VP-koto* is licensed by *suru*. This is possible only if the verbal phrase is nominalized by *koto* before focus movement takes place. Hence what is moved in the derivation of the VP focus pseudocleft construction is not VP, but a nominalized phrase, which is present in the underlying structure.

The underlying structure we propose for the VP focus pseudocleft construction has nP object of *suru* headed by *koto*, as in (43). The focus of what we have been calling the “VP” focus pseudocleft construction is in fact nP.

- (43) Taroo-ga sono hon-o yom-u koto-o si-ta no da.
 Taroo-Nom the book-Acc read-U KOTO-Acc do-Past C Cop.Nonpast
 Lit. ‘Taro did buying of the book.’

⁸ See Folli and Harley (2007) for an argument to distinguish v_{DO} from v_{CAUSE} . See also Kotani (2010) for an analysis of *suru*-support where v -T formed by partial movement is realized as *suru/sita*.

Here *su(ru)* is not a spell-out of agentive v_{DO} but an ordinary V. Since *sono hon-o yom-u koto* acts as a nominal phrase just like *syukudai* ‘homework,’ the derivation does not violate the inclusiveness condition. The partial structure of (43) is shown in (44).



3.2. The Status of the Construction-Final *Da* in the VP Focus Pseudocleft Construction

Ishihara (this volume) has shown that elements such as tense, negation, the sequence *no da*, and modals of probability and improbability can co-occur with the construction-final copula.

- (45) a. Taroo-ga su-ru/si-ta no wa hon-o yom-u koto dat-ta/deat-ta.
 Taro-Nom do-Nonpast/do-Past C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop-Past/Cop-Past
 ‘What Taro did was read the book.’
- b. Taroo-ga si-ta no wa hon-o yom-u koto de(-wa)-nai.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop(-Top)-Neg
 ‘What Taro did was not read the book.’
- c. Taroo-ga si-ta no wa hon-o yom-u koto na no da.⁹
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop C Cop.Nonpast
 ‘What Taro did was buy the book indeed.’

⁹ Here the pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction occur together on the surface. If we are to derive this sentence by focus movement and remnant topicalization, we need something like (i) as an underlying structure, which is ungrammatical.

- (i) *Taroo-ga hon-o yom-u koto-o si-ta no na no da.
 Taro-Nombook-Acc read-U KOTO-Acc do-Past C Cop C Cop.Nonpast

Presumably (i) is ruled out by a surface filter forbidding the sequence *no na*.

- d. Taroo-ga su-ru no wa hon-o yom-u koto daroo/dearoo.
 Taro-Nom do-Nonpast C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO probably/probably
 ‘Probably what Taro will do is read the book.’
- e. Taroo-ga si-ta no wa hon-o yom-u koto de(-wa)-aru mai.
 Taro-Nom do-Past C Top book-Acc read-U KOTO Cop(-Top)-Cop improbable
 ‘What Taro did cannot be read the book.’

These examples pose a problem for Hiraiwa and Ishihara’s analysis, which treats *da* as Foc^0 . As noted also by Ishihara (2011), it is not clear how a focus element generated in Foc^0 can bear tense as in (45a). The copula at the end of the pseudocleft construction can be either in past tense or in nonpast tense, regardless of the tense of *suru* in the presuppositional clause. It depends on whether or not the speaker thinks the state of affairs described by the pseudocleft sentence was held to be true in the past. Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2012: footnote 16) claim that *-ta* with a copula in the pseudocleft construction does not indicate tense, but that it acts more like a modal particle, citing (46).

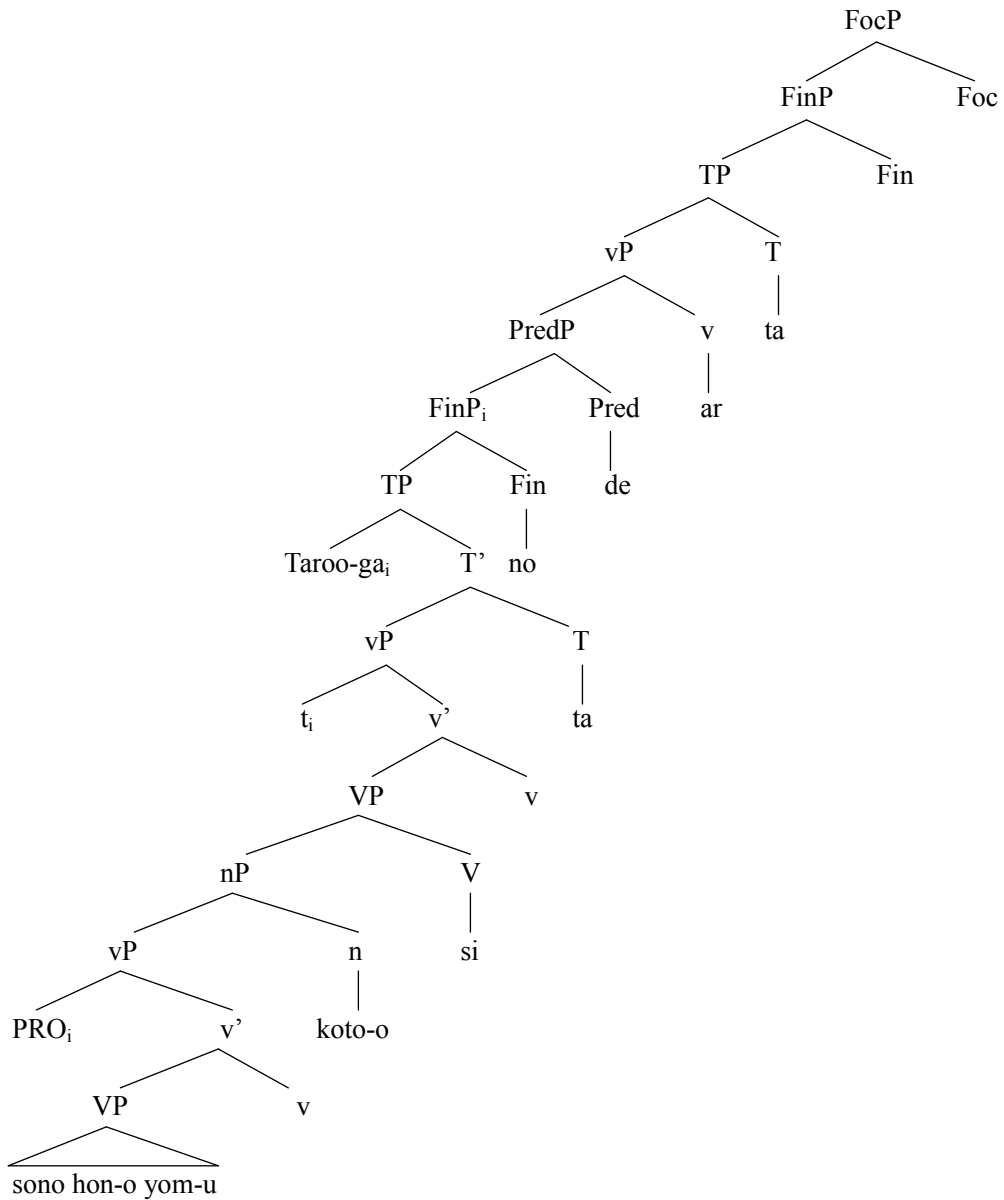
- (46) [Asu-no asa tabe-ru/*ta no]-wa ringo-o mit-tu da/datta.
 tomorrow morning eat-Nonpast/Past C Top apple-Acc 3-CL Cop
 ‘It is three apples that I will eat tomorrow morning.’

Datta in (46) indicates the speaker’s realization of the fact that he was supposed to eat three apples the next morning, and I agree that it has a modality flavor to the extent that it reflects the speaker’s attitude. In fact it is often claimed in the literature that Japanese lacks tense all together and that it only has aspect markers. However, even if *-ta* in (45a) does not indicate tense, as they claim, we still need to account for the occurrence of negation with the copula in (45b) because it is unclear why a TP-internal negative marker can follow Foc^0 in the CP domain. The example (45c) is also problematic for the focus theory of the copula. If we assume with Miyama (2011) that *na* is an adnominal form of the copula, it cannot be Foc^0 because constituents larger than TP cannot occur as a complement of *no*, as observed by Ishihara (this volume). As for modals of probability and improbability in (45d, e), they take a propositional complement. It might be possible to say that they head Modal Phrase and that they take $FocP$ as a complement, but more needs to be investigated on the structure of left periphery in Japanese.¹⁰

In order to circumvent this problem, we treat the sentence-final copula as an ordinary copula rather than a head of $FocP$. Following the structure of the copula *dearu* proposed by Nishiyama (1999) and modified by Watanabe (in press), we propose the following underlying structure for both the pseudocleft construction and the *no da* construction.

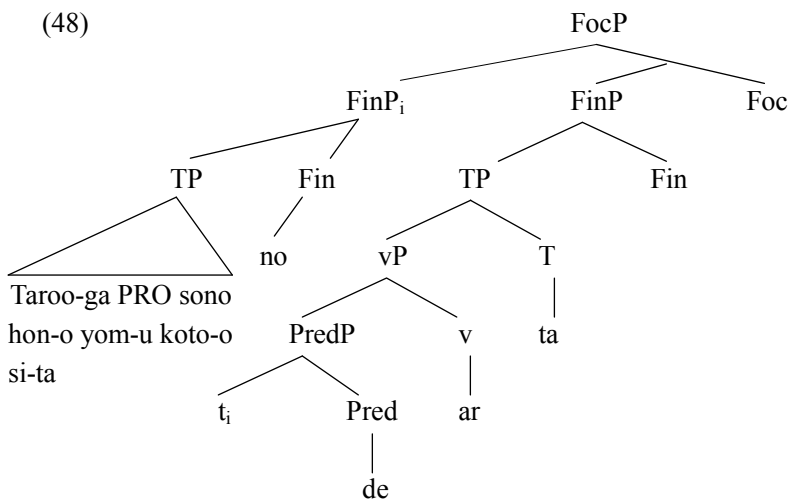
¹⁰ We follow Hiraiwa and Ishihara in assuming that *no* resides in Fin^0 . See Kizu (2005) for evidence for treating *no* as C. See also Roberts (2001) for the crosslinguistic comparison of where C is realized in the articulated CP structure.

(47)

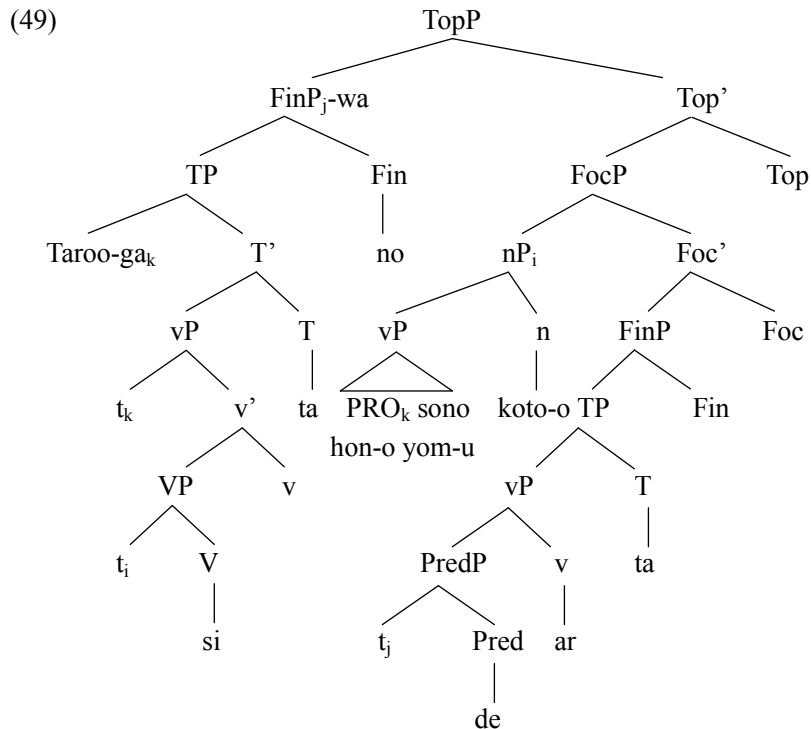


Since the *no da* construction is a focus construction, we suggest that the FinP_i complement of Pred in (47) undergoes string-vacuous focus movement to Spec of FocP as in (48), stopping by Spec of vP on its way.

(48)



The structure we would like to propose for the VP focus pseudocleft construction is as follows.



First the focus nP_i , *sono hon-o yom-u koto-o*, undergoes Focus movement to Spec of FocP from within $FinP_j$ via intermediate phase edge positions, i.e. Spec of vP and Spec of $FinP$.¹¹ Then the remnant $FinP_j$ moves to Spec of $TopP$, as proposed by Hiraiwa and Ishihara.

In our analysis focus movement is involved in the derivation of both the *no da* construction and the pseudocleft construction. In addition, application of topicalization is necessary in deriving the latter. The common properties of the two constructions we have seen in section 2.4 can be explained by postulating the same underlying structure for both of them. The fact that the pseudocleft construction shows island sensitivity follows from our analysis as well. The focus phrase of the pseudocleft construction is nP headed by *koto*, which nominalizes VP, vP , VoiceP or Hon_2P , and it is an underlying object of *suru*. The Case property of nP and the connectivity effect follow from the underlying structure in which the presuppositional clause and the focus phrase form a clause. With a revision of Hiraiwa and Ishihara's analysis regarding the construction-final copula, the properties of the VP focus pseudocleft construction can be successfully accounted for.

4. Concluding Remarks

In this paper we have examined the structure and the derivation of the VP focus pseudocleft construction in Japanese, based on the empirical findings of Ishihara (this volume). We have shown that the focus phrase is nP , headed by *koto*, which nominalizes verbal phrases such as VP, vP , VoiceP and Hon_2P . It has also been shown that the presuppositional clause is $FinP$ headed by *no*, which takes TP as its complement. The construction-final copula is treated as an ordinary copula rather than Foc^0 so that its cooccurrence with TP-internal elements as well as TP-external elements can be explained. Based on Hiraiwa and Ishihara's (2012) analysis, it has been proposed that the VP focus pseudocleft construction and the corresponding *no da* construction are derived from the same underlying

¹¹ Or it might be Spec of FocP, depending on the feature content that triggers successive cyclic movement. This FocP is not depicted in (49), but it can project above $FinP$ as the need arises to provide a phase edge for the focus nP .

structure containing VP *koto-o suru*.

To the extent that our approach is successful, it offers support for Rizzi's (1997) cartographic theory of left periphery, though how it can be implemented in Japanese needs further investigation. We need to see how topic and focus differ in terms of features, which might pave a way to treating them in a unified manner.

Nominalization of the focus phrase in Japanese is in accord with the universal tendency of foci to be nominal in the pseudocleft construction. However, we have seen that VP-*koto* focus phrases differ from other nominal phrases in showing island sensitivity even in the absence of an accusative case marker. It is not clear at the moment why it is not possible to base-generate the VP focus pseudocleft construction as an ordinary copular construction like *Taro-no yume-wa puro yakyuu sensyu-ni naru koto da* 'Taro's dream is to become a professional baseball player.' It may have something to do with licensing of *no*, but it awaits further research.

We have seen that the focus phrase cannot host phrases larger than those belonging to the thematic domain in Japanese, but this is not universal. Crosslinguistic investigation of the pseudocleft construction needs to be carried out to see what can and cannot be a focus in each language.

In addition to focus phrases, topic phrases also tend to be nominal universally. For example, nominalization of vP and TP is observed with the predicate doubling construction in Japanese. Nominalization is a strategy that is employed in Japanese to make predicative phrases into an appropriate focus or topic. It will be interesting to look into what strategies are available in other languages, and why nominals are preferred as a focus or topic.

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