Multiple Argument Ellipsis in Japanese: A Case Study in Idiomatic Argument Ellipsis*

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1 Introduction

One of the long-standing and on-going research questions involving Argument Ellipsis (AE) in Japanese is: *How to derive AE in Japanese?* Following are the representative and competing analyses.

(1) a. LF-copying
(Oku 1998, et. seq., Saito 2007, Sakamoto 2014, et. seq., a.o.)
b. PF-deletion
(Fujiwara 2019, 2020, Takahashi 2020, a.o.)
c. Verb-stranding VP Ellipsis (VVPE)
(Otani and Whitman 1991, Funakoshi 2016, Abe 2019, a.o.)
d. pro
(Kuroda 1965, Hoji 1998, a.o.)
e. "semantics"
(Kurafuji 2019)
f. Question under Discussion (QuD)
(Tanabe and Hara 2021 and Tanabe and Kobayashi 2021)

This paper discusses a related question, but to the best my knowledge, one that has never been asked: *How to derive multiple AE in Japanese*? Extending the phonological/prosodic analysis of multiple scrambling in Japanese by Agbayani, Golston, and Ishii (AGI) 2015 (which is already extended to multiple right dislocation (Ishii 2019), multiple cleft (Ishii and Agbayani 2020, Agbayani and Ishii 2021a), and multiple sluicing (Agbayani and Ishii2021b, c)), I argue that multiple AE in Japanese *can* be derived via phonological operation – Phonological Deletion –, targeting a phonological constituent, which is referred to as a complex phonological phrase.[1], [2] I show this by showing the otherwise impossible AE involving idiomatic and figurative expressions becomes possible when it is executed as multiple AE.

The organization of this paper is as follows. First, in Section 2, I will introduce crucial sets of examples involving impossible idiomatic AE and its account by the LF-copying analysis entertained in Sato 2020. Then, in Section 3, I will introduce novel sets of examples involving otherwise impossible idiomatic AE becomes possible under multiple AE which shows that the existing analyses fails to account for and provide its account by proposing Phonological Deletion. In Section 4, I will discuss the clause-mate condition on multiple AE which is derived from Phonological Deletion. Section 5 is a conclusion.

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[1] A complex phonological phrase is equivalent to a Major Phrase (MaP) in the classic/traditional terminology, yet it is the one that contains two or more MaP which do not dominate each other.
[2] I do not exclude the possibility that multiple AE can undergo two (or more) applications of the same operation when idiomatic AE is not involved.

2 Idiomatic Arguments Cannot Undergo AE

2.1 Data

Sato (2020) observes that, although AE is in principle readily possible in Japanese, idiomatic and figurative expressions (hereafter, for the sake of exposition, I will simply call these as idioms, and use 'iXP' as 'idiomatic argument XP' when necessary) cannot undergo AE.[3] Two representative examples based on Sato 2020 are introduced here.[4, 5]

(2)   * [Kato-san-wa   ukkari   kooshoo-aite-ni
       K.-TIT-TOP   inadvertently negotiating-partner-to
       te-no-uchi-o   mise-te-shimatta]-shi,
       palm.of.hand-ACC show-TE-ended.up-and
       [Sato-kun-wa raibaru-tasha-ni e_{iDP} mise-te-shimatta].
       S.-TIT-TOP   competitor-company-to   show-TE-ended.up
       '[Ms. Kato inadvertently ended up showing his secret plan to his
       negotiating partner], and [Mr. Sato ended up showing her secret

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[3] Idiomatic argument is only one of the cases which fails to undergo AE. See, for example, Oku 2013, 2016 and references cited therein, for other arguments that resist AE in Japanese.

[4] All the Japanese examples are transcribed in the *Hepburn (Hebon)* system Romanization, except for long vowels where vowels are reduplicated when necessary. The translations in single quotes are not always meant to be the correct English translations and are sometimes intended to give the (rough) structure and/or meaning of the examples.

[5] Essentially the same observation can be found in Tanaka 2001: 575, fn.18, which is credited to an anonymous reviewer, although the intended idiomatic AE (notated here as an 'e_{iDP}') was referred to as a pro.

(i) a. Mai-ga hara-o   tateta-no? (ii) a. Dare-ga hara-o   tateta-no?
        M.-NOM stomach-ACC set.up-Q   who-NOM stomach-ACC set.up-Q
        'Did Mai get angry?'   'Who got angry?'
    b. * Iie, Ken-ga e_{iDP} tateta(-n-desu)-yo. b. * Ken-ga e_{iDP} tateta(-n-desu)-yo.
       no K.-NOM   set.up-COP-POL-SFP   K.-NOM   set.up-COP-POL-SFP
       'No, Ken did.'   'Ken did.'
    c. * Iie, Mai-wa e_{iDP} tate-nakat-ta(-desu)-yo.
       no M.-TOP   set.up-NEG-TNS-COP-SFP
       'No, Mai didn't.'
    d. * Hai, Mai-ga e_{iDP} tateta(-n-desu)-yo.
       yes M.-NOM   set.up-COP-POL-SFP
       'Yes, Mai did.'
    (*hara-o tate-ru*; (literal, but gibberish) 'to set up one's stomach' /
    (idiom) 'to get angry.')
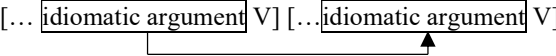   ((i)a–b are based on Tanaka 1998: 575, fn.18, (i), with a minor modification.)

These examples may be a potential challenge to the QuD-based analysis, given that it shows idiomatic AE is impossible in the Q&A context. I will leave a detailed discussion in this paper, but see footnote 6 for a related discussion.

plan to his competitor company].'
(*te-no-uchi-o mise-ru*; (literal) 'to show one's palm of hand' /
(idiom) 'to reveal one's strategy/true intention/secret.')
(Based on Sato 2020: 269, (19), with a minor modification.)

(3)　　* [Kato-kachoo-ni-wa buka-ni　　　hana-o　　　motaseru-dake
　　　　K.-TIT-DAT-TOP　　subordinate-to flower-ACC let.have-degree
　　　　-no doryoo-ga　　　　aru]-ga,　[Sato-kachoo-ni-wa
　　　　-GEN generosity-NOM exist-but　S.-TIT-DAT-TOP
　　　　buka-ni　e$_{iDP}$ motaseru-dake-no doryoo-ga nai].
　　　　sub.-to　　　let.have-deg.-GEN gene.-NOM not
　　　　'[Kato, the manager, have the generosity to let his subordinates take
　　　　the credit], but [Sato, the manager, does not have the generosity to
　　　　let his subordinates take the credit].'
　　　　(*hana-o mot-ase-ru*: (literal) 'to let (someone) have flowers' /
　　　　(idiom) 'to let someone take credit (for a success).')
　　　　(Based on Sato 2020: 275, (24), with modifications.)

2.2 Analysis

Sato (2020) argues in detail that impossibility of applying AE to idiomatic
argument supports the LF-copy analysis over the PF-deletion/VVPE/pro al-
ternatives. The gist of his analysis, which is extremely simplified and radi-
cally distorted here, is that there are semantic/compositional reasons that
makes it impossible the application of LF-copying to the idiomatic argument
to the exclusion of verb it selects to yield an idiomatic interpretation at LF.

(4)　Schematic LF-copying Derivation:
　　　[… idiomatic argument V] […idiomatic argument V]

　　　LF-copying is not possible due to semantic/compositional reasons.

3　Idiomatic Arguments Can Undergo Multiple AE

3.1 Data

What had gone unnoticed is that the otherwise impossible AE of idiomatic
argument becomes possible when it is executed as a multiple AE. Thus when

(2) and (3) are modified to involve multiple AE, idiomatic argument can undergo AE. In the following two examples, non-idiomatic PP and idiomatic DP undergo multiple AE.[6]

(5)   [Kato-san-wa ukkari   kooshoo-aite-ni
    K.-TIT-TOP   inadvertently negotiating-partner-to
    te-no-uchi-o   mise-te-shimatta]-shi,
    palm.of.hand-ACC show-TE-ended.up-and
    [Sato-kun-mo omowazu e_{PP} e_{iDP} mise-te-shimatta].
    S.-TIT-also unintentionally   show-TE-ended.up
    '[Ms. Kato inadvertently ended up showing his secret plan to his negotiating partner], and [Mr. Sato also unintentionally ended up showing her secret plan to his negotiating partner].'

(6)   [Kato-kachoo-ni-wa buka-ni   hana-o   motaseru-dake
    K.-TIT-DAT-TOP   subordinate-to flower-ACC let.have-degree
    -no doryoo-ga   aru]-ga,
    -GEN generosity-NOM exist-but
    [Sato-kachoo-ni-wa e_{PP} e_{iDP} motaseru-dake-no doryoo-ga nai].
    S.-TIT-DAT-TOP   let.have-deg.-GEN gene.-NOM not
    '(Same as (3))'

I should hasten to note here that it is not the case that the presence of licit AE somehow saves the otherwise illicit AE of idiomatic argument, along the line of the Principle of Minimal Compliance (Richards 1998). This can be shown by a case involving two idiomatic arguments. When anteceded by (7)a, applying AE to only one of idiomatic arguments is totally ungrammatical as shown in (7)b and (7)c; however, multiple AE is grammatical as in (7)d.

(7) a. [Ken-wa itosezu   hi-ni abura-o sosoi-de-shimatta]
        K.-TOP   unintentionally fire-to oil-ACC pour-TE-ended.up
        -dake-da-ga,
        -only-COP-but

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[6] Recall footnote 5 where I introduced idiomatic AE is impossible in the Q&A context. The deviance is lifted when multiple AE is involved, as shown in (i)b–c below. This further confirms that multiple AE behaves differently than that of single AE.

(i) a. Mai-ga hara-o   tateta-no?
        M.-NOM stomach-ACC set.up-Q
        'Did Mai get angry?'
    b. Iie, e_{SUB} e_{iDP} tate-nakat-ta(-desu)-yo. c. Hai, e_{SUB} e_{iDP} tateta(-n-desu)-yo.
        no   set.up-NEG-TNS-POL-SFP yes   set.up-COP-POL-SFP
        'No, (Mai) didn't .'   'Yes, (Mai) did.'

b. * [Mai-wa itoteki-ni   e_{iPP}   abura-o sosogi-yagatta].
   M.-TOP intentionally   oil-ACC pour-'hell'ed
c. *[Mai-wa itoteki-ni   hi-ni   e_{iDP}   sosogi-yagatta].
   M.-TOP intentionally   fire-to   pour-'hell'ed
d. [Mai-wa itoteki-ni   e_{iPP}   e_{iDP}   sosogi-yagatta].
   M.-TOP intentionally   pour-'hell'ed
   '[Ken unintentionally ended up making a bad situation worse], but
   [Mai intentionally made a bad situation worse].'
   (*hi-ni abura-o sosog-u*; (literal) 'to pour oil into fire' /
   (idiom) 'to make bad situation worse.')

Note that this licit multiple AE targeting two idiomatic arguments indicates that two independent applications of AE, be it LF-copying or any other ways (recall the analyses introduced in (1)), to *hi-ni* and *abura-o* should not (if not, cannot) derive (7)d since AE of idiomatic argument is impossible to begin with. One exception is VVPE, which can target two internal idiomatic arguments with a single application, as shown in (8).

(8)   (Simplified) Derivation of (7)d under VVPE:
     ..., [... [_{VP} hi-ni abura-o t_V] sosogi-yagatta_V].

However, VVPE cannot cover cases like (9)c, (10)e, and (10)f where multiple AE targets subject and one of the internal idiomatic arguments but not the other internal argument.[7] First case, i.e., (9)c, shows that a moved idiomatic DP can undergo AE when (non-idiomatic) subject undergoes AE as well. This should be contrasted with the ungrammatical (9)b which involves impossible AE of idiomatic DP.

(9)   a. [Tanaka-buchoo-wa [jibun-no buka-ga   te-no-uchi-o_j
       T.-TIT-TOP   self-GEN sub.-NOM palm.of.hand-ACC
       kooshoo-aite-ni t_j mise-te-shimatta-koto-o]   nageita]-dake-da
       nego.partner-to   show-TE-ended.up-fact-ACC grieved-only-COP
       -ga,
       -while
   b. * [Nakata-buchoo-wa [jibun-no buka-ga   e_{iDPj}
       N.-TIT-TOP   self-GEN sub.-NOM
       kooshoo-aite-ni t_j mise-te-shimatta-koto-o]   (nagekazuni)
       nego.-partner-to   show-TE-ended.up-fact-ACC grieved.not
       sakate-ni   totta].
       backhand-DAT   got

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[7] Not all idiomatic argument can undergo movement, however. See Sakamoto 2014, 2016, 2017, Sato 2020, and references cited therein.

c. ? [Nakata-buchoo-wa [e$_{SUB}$ e$_{iDPj}$
   N.-TIT-TOP
   kooshoo-aite-ni t$_j$ mise-te-shimatta-koto-o]   (nagekazuni)
   nego.-partner-to   show-TE-ended.up-fact-ACC grieved.not
   sakate-ni   totta].
   backhand-DAT   got
   'While [Tanaka, the general manager, grieved [the fact that self's
   subordinate showed their secret plan to their negotiating partner]],
   [Nakata, the general manager, (didn't grieve but) exploited [the
   fact that self's subordinate showed their secret plan to their nego-
   tiating partner]].'

Second case, i.e., (10)e and (10)f, involves multiple idioms where one of id-
iomatic XP can undergo AE when non-idiomatic subject undergoes AE as
well but leaves the other idiomatic XP unelided under multiple AE. These
should be contrasted with the ungrammatical (10)b and (10)c which involves
impossible AE of one of the idiomatic XP.

(10) a.   [Itosezu   jibun-no kodomo-ga hi-ni   abura-o
      unintentionally self-GEN child-NOM   fire-to   oil-ACC
      sosoi-de-shimatta-to]$_j$ [Ken-wa t$_i$ nageita]-ga,
      pour-TE-ended.up-C   K.-TOP   grieved-but
      [{b./c./d./e./f.} sosogi-yagatta-to]$_i$ Mai(-ni)-wa t$_i$ wakatta].
                  pour-'hell'ed-C   M.(-DAT)-TOP   knew
   b. * itoteki-ni   jibun-no kodomo-ga e$_{iPP}$ abura-o
       intentionally   self-GEN child-NOM   oil-ACC
   c. * itoteki-ni   jibun-no kodomo-ga hi-ni   e$_{iDP}$
       intentionally   self-GEN child-NOM   fire-to
   d.   itoteki-ni   jibun-no kodomo-ga e$_{iPP}$ e$_{iDP}$
       intentionally   self-GEN child-NOM
   e. ? itoteki-ni   e$_{SUB}$ e$_{iPP}$ abura-o
       intentionally   oil-ACC
   f. ? itoteki-ni   e$_{SUB}$ hi-ni   e$_{iDP}$
       intentionally   fire-to
       '[Ken grieved [that his child unintentionally ended up making a
       bad situation worse]], but [Mai knew [that her child intentionally
       made a bad situation worse]].'

Under the VVPE, there is no way to form "vP/VP" that includes, for example,
only subject and scrambled idiomatic direct object yielding (9)c and it would
end up in a non-constituent deletion, as represented in (11).

(11) (Simplified) Derivation of (9)c under VVPE:
      ..., [... [$_{vP}$ ~~SUB~~ [$_{VP}$ ~~te-no-uchi-o$_j$~~ PP ~~t$_j$ t$_V$~~]] sosogi-yagatta$_V$].

To sum up so far, multiple AE involving idiomatic argument challenges essentially all the existing analyses listed in (1), including the LF-copying analysis which Sato (2020) argued to be responsible for why idiomatic AE is impossible.[8]

3.2 Analysis

In order to account for why the multiple AE involving idiomatic arguments is possible, I propose that such multiple AE in Japanese *can* be derived via phonological operation – Phonological Deletion –, targeting a phonological constituent, which is referred to as a complex phonological phrase (cΦ) in the phonological component/PF, extending the phonological/prosodic analysis for multiple scrambling (AGI 2015), multiple right dislocation (Ishii 2019a, b), multiple cleft (Ishii and Agbayani 2020, Agbayani and Ishii 2021a), multiple sluicing (Agbayani and Ishii 2021b, c), assuming a liberal phonological phrasing (Ishihara 2007) in addition to recursive phonological phrasing (Itô and Mester 2013). To be specific, I propose (12) and (13).[9, 10]

(12) a. Material for AE is targeted within syntax and is elided either in syntax or phonology.
      b. Material targeted for AE must be
          i. non-predicative, ii. maximal, and iii. contained in a single (syntactic or phonological/prosodic) constituent.

(13) a   If the targeted material is a syntactic XP, then it undergoes Syntactic AE (via LF-copying).
      b. If the targeted material is not a syntactic XP, then that material is packed into a prosodic constituent in the phonology resulting in a complex phonological phrase (cΦ) and undergoes Prosodic AE, i.e., Phonological Deletion.

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[8] Also recall counterarguments for VVPE and pro offered by Sakamoto (2014, 2016, 2017), and Sato (2020). As for the "semantic" analysis (e.g., choice function), as far as I can tell, it cannot account for the single vs. multiple AE patterns shown in (7), which involves multiple idioms.
[9] One possibility I will not pursue here is whether Phonological Deletion always applies after the phonological/prosodic constituent has undergone phonological/prosodic movement.
[10] Note that under the proposed analysis, a single AE and a multiple AE can be derived in a completely different way. While the former always targets syntactic constituent in an antecedent clause and copies it onto an elliptical clause, the latter can target and delete phonological constituent in an elliptical clause.

Under the Phonological Deletion, the derivation of multiple AE, for example (7)d which involve two idiomatic arguments, proceeds as follows:

(14) Derivation of (7)d:
    a. Materials targeted for multiple AE (indicated by <u>double underline</u>):
       ..., [... [$_{PP}$ <u>hi-ni</u>] [$_{DP}$ <u>abura-o</u>]   sosoida]].
    b. Phonological phrasing (indicated by ($_\Phi$ xxx)):
       ..., (... ($_\Phi$ <u>hi-ni</u>)   ($_\Phi$ ($_\Phi$ <u>abura-o</u>)   ($_\Phi$ sosoida))).
    c. Phonological rephrasing (indicated by <u>single underline</u>) resulting in a complex phonological phrase (cΦ):
       ..., (... ($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ <u>hi-ni</u>) ($_\Phi$ <u>abura-o</u>))   ($_\Phi$ sosoida)).
    d. Phonological Deletion (indicated by ~~strikethrough~~) in the PF targeting cΦ:
       ..., (... ~~($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ hi-ni) ($_\Phi$ abura-o))~~   ($_\Phi$ sosoida)).

Multiple AE involving subject and idiomatic argument (9)c proceeds in a similar fashion:

(15) Derivation of (9)c:
    a. Materials targeted for multiple AE:
       ..., [[$_{DP}$ <u>SUB</u>] [$_{DP}$ <u>te-no-uchi-o</u>]$_j$ [$_{DP}$ kooshoo-aite-ni] t$_j$ V] ....
    b. Phonological phrasing:
       ..., (($_\Phi$ <u>SUB</u>)   ($_\Phi$ <u>te-no-uchi-o</u>)   ($_\Phi$ ($_\Phi$ kooshoo-aite-ni) ($_\Phi$ V)))
    c. Phonological rephrasing:
       ..., (($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ <u>SUB</u>)   ($_\Phi$ <u>te-no-uchi-o</u>)) ($_\Phi$ ($_\Phi$ kooshoo-aite-ni) ($_\Phi$ V)))
    d. Phonological Deletion in the PF targeting cΦ:
       ..., (~~($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ SUB)   ($_\Phi$ te-no-uchi-o))~~ ($_\Phi$ ($_\Phi$ kooshoo-aite-ni) ($_\Phi$ V)))

Multiple AE in (10)e and (10)f proceeds in an essentially similar fashion as well, yet the latter example involves more option depending on the movement involved before the application of multiple AE:

(16) (Simplified) Derivation of (10)e:
    a. Phonological (re-)phrasing:
       ..., (($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ <u>SUB</u>) ($_\Phi$ <u>hi-ni</u>)) ($_\Phi$ ($_\Phi$ abura-o) ($_\Phi$ sosoida))) …
    b. Phonological Deletion in the PF targeting cΦ:
       ..., (~~($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ SUB) ($_\Phi$ hi-ni))~~ ($_\Phi$ ($_\Phi$ abura-o) ($_\Phi$ sosoida))) …

(17) (Simplified) Derivation of (10)f (Possible Derivation 1):
    a. Phonological (re-)phrasing after single syntactic scrambling of idiomatic argument *hi-ni*:
       ..., (... ($_\Phi$ hi-ni) ($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ <u>SUB</u>) ($_\Phi$ <u>abura-o</u>)) ($_\Phi$ sosoida)) ….

b. Phonological Deletion in the PF targeting cΦ:
..., (… (Φ hi-ni) (cΦ (Φ SUB) (Φ abura-o)) (Φ sosoida)) ….

(18) (Simplified) Sample Derivation of (10)f (Possible Derivation 2):
a. Phonological (re-)phrasing after multiple prosodic scrambling of idiomatic arguments:
..., (… (cΦ (Φ hi-ni) (Φ abura-o)) (Φ SUB) (Φ sosoida)) ….
b. Phonological (re-)phrasing:
..., (… (Φ hi-ni) (cΦ (Φ abura-o) (Φ SUB)) (Φ sosoida)) ….
c. Phonological Deletion in the PF targeting cΦ:
..., (… (Φ hi-ni) (cΦ (Φ abura-o) (Φ SUB)) (Φ sosoida)) ….

4 Multiple AE and the Clause-mate Condition

Before concluding, I would like to discuss an issue regarding the nature of multiple AE involving idiomatic argument, i.e., it is subject to a clause-mate condition.[11] As the following case, where the intended multiple AE applies to the matrix non-idiomatic argument *jooshi-ni* and the scrambled embedded idiomatic argument *te-no-uchi-o*, indicates, it is not possible to yield licit multiple AE via Phonological Deletion.

(19) a. [Tanaka-buchoo-wa jooshi-ni [te-no-uchi-o$_j$
    T.-TIT-TOP   boss-to   palm.of.hand-ACC
    jibun-no buka-ga   kooshoo-aite-ni t$_j$ mise-te-shimatta-koto
    self-GEN sub.-NOM   nego.-partner-to   show-TE-ended.up-fact
    -o]   tsutaeta]-shi,
    -ACC told-and
 b. *[Nakata-buchoo-mo e$_{PP}$ [e$_{iDPj}$
    N.-TIT-also
    jibun-no buka-ga   kooshoo-aite-ni t$_j$ mise-te-shimatta-koto
    self-GEN sub.-NOM   nego.-partner-to   show-TE-ended.up-fact
    -o]   tsutaeta].
    -ACC told
    '[Tanaka, the general manager, told the boss [the fact that self's subordinate showed their secret plan to their negotiating partner]], and [Nakata, the general manager, also told the boss [the fact that self's subordinate showed their secret plan to their negotiating partner].'

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[11] I would like to thank Koji Shimamura for reminding me this issue.

But this is what is expected under the Phonological Deletion analysis because it is not possible to form a complex phonological phrase consisting of ($_\Phi$ jooshi-ni) and ($_\Phi$ te-no-uchi-o) yielding ($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ jooshi-ni) ($_\Phi$ te-no-uchi-o)), since such phonological (re-)phrasing is blocked by a clause boundary (CP)/ intonation (ι) phrase boundary.[12] Because of this, multiple AE in (19)b is forced to involve two independent applications of AE via LF-copying, and the idiomatic AE of *te-no-uchi-o* yields the ungrammaticality along the line of Sato's (2020) analysis. This clause-mate condition on multiple AE is in fact shared with (20) multiple scrambling (Hiraiwa 2010), (21) multiple right dislocation, and (22) multiple cleft (see Koizumi 1995, 2000, Takano 2002, a.o.)[13, 14], and it can be attributed to whatever mechanism that prevents the formation of a complex phonological phrase that crosses a clause/intonation (ι) phrase boundary[15]:

(20) a. [$_{CP}$ ($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ Mai-ni$_{(i)}$) ($_\Phi$ mame-o$_{(j)}$)) [$_{CP}$ Yui-ga Gen-kara
        M.-DAT   bean-ACC   Y.-NOM G.-from
        [$_{CP}$ Ken-ga (t$_i$) (t$_j$) ageta-to] kiita]].
        K.-NOM   gave-C   heard
        '[To Mai a bean] [Yui heard from Gen [that Ken gave]].'
    b. * [$_{CP}$ ($_{c\Phi}$ ($_\Phi$ Gen-kara$_{(i)}$) ($_\Phi$ mame-o$_{(j)}$)) [$_{CP}$ Yui-ga (t$_i$)
        G.-from   bean-ACC   Y.-NOM
        [$_{CP}$ Ken-ga Mai-ni (t$_j$) ageta-to] kiita]].
        K.-NOM M.-DAT   gave-C   heard
        '[From Gen a bean] [Yui heard [that Ken gave to Mai]].'
        ((20)a is based on AGI 2015: 48, (3)a, with modifications)

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[12] One confounding issue here is, contrary to the standard assumption that clause boundary (i.e., CP), is mapped to the intonation (ι) phrase boundary, Ishihara (2021) has recently argued that such mapping is not guaranteed. But to the best of my knowledge, a cross-clausal phonological phrasing that packs the matrix and embedded XPs is in general not attested. So, it is not unreasonable to assume a mechanism that prohibits such phonological phrasing.

[13] Although multiple cleft is indeed known to exhibit the clause-mate condition (Koizumi 1995, 2000, Takano 2002, a.o.), there are some exceptions (Hiraiwa and Ishihara 2002, 2012, Takano 2002, et. seq., a.o.). I note two cases here. First case is where the multiple cleft bears focus prosody, as observed by Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2002: Sec. 4, 2012: Sec. 6). Second case is where the multiple cleft involves more than two elements and when phonological/prosodic phrasing is taken into consideration, as observed by Takano (2020: Sec. 4.3.). It is beyond the scope of this paper to deal with these exceptional cases, and I will leave it for future research.

[14] The clause-mate condition involving multiple sluicing is subject to obvious speaker variations; for example, while Takahashi (1994) and Abe (2015) find the effect, Nishigauchi (1998) and Hiraiwa and Ishihara (2002, 2012) do not. Due to this reason, I refrain from discussing it.

[15] The segment of interest is indicated by box.

(21) a. [_CP_ Yui-ga Gen-kara [_CP_ Ken-ga (t_i) (t_j) ageta-to]
          Y.-NOM G.-from   K.-NOM   gave-C
       kiita-yo], (_cΦ_(_Φ_ Mai-ni_(i)) (_Φ_ mame-o_(j))).
       heard-SFP   M.-DAT   bean-ACC
       '[Yui heard from Gen [that Ken gave]], [to Mai a bean].'
   b. * [_CP_ Yui-ga (t_i) [_CP_ Ken-ga Mai-ni (t_j) ageta-to]
            Y.-NOM   K.-NOM M.-DAT   gave-C
       kiita-yo], (_cΦ_(_Φ_ Gen-kara_(i)) (_Φ_ mame-o_(j))).
       heard-SFP   G.-from   bean-ACC
       '[Yui heard [that Ken gave to Mai]], [from Gen a bean].'

(22) a. [_CP_ Yui-ga Gen-kara [_CP_ Ken-ga (t_i) (t_j) ageta-to]
          Y.-NOM G.-from   K.-NOM   gave-C
       kiita-no-wa] (_cΦ_(_Φ_ Mai-ni_(i)) (_Φ_ mame-o_(j)))-da.
       heard-C-TOP   M.-DAT   bean-ACC-COP
       'It is [to Mai a bean] [that Yui heard from Gen [that Ken gave]].'
   b. * [_CP_ Yui-ga (t_i) [_CP_ Ken-ga Mai-ni (t_j) ageta-to)]
            Y.-NOM   K.-NOM M.-DAT   gave-C
       kiita-no-wa] (_cΦ_(_Φ_ Gen-kara_(i)) (_Φ_ mame-o_(j)))-da.
       heard-C-TOP   G.-from   bean-ACC-COP
       'It is [from Gen a bean] [that Yui heard [that Ken gave to Mai]].'

5   Conclusion

In this paper, I presented a hitherto unnoticed observation that the otherwise impossible argument ellipsis (AE) of idiomatic argument becomes possible when it is executed as multiple AE. Based on this observation, I proposed that multiple AE in Japanese *can* be derived via phonological operation – Phonological Deletion –, targeting a phonological constituent, which is referred to as a complex phonological phrase (cΦ) in the phonological component/PF, extending the phonological/prosodic analysis for multiple scrambling (AGI 2015), multiple right dislocation (Ishii 2019a, b), multiple cleft (Ishii and Agbayani 2020, Agbayani and Ishii 2021a), multiple sluicing (Agbayani and Ishii 2021b, c), assuming a liberal phonological phrasing (Ishihara 2007) in addition to recursive phonological phrasing (Itô and Mester 2013). Although there are remaining questions regarding multiple AE,[16] I hope to have shown that investigations into multiple AE may shed new light on the nature of AE.

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[16] For example, not every AE-resistant XPs (e.g., Wh-phrase) can be rescued by multiple AE.

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