

# Passive configurations into adjunct control: reconsidering non-obligatory controllers being non-human

Zi-chun Lin & Jen Ting

(National Taiwan Normal University)

Adjunct control has been extensively explored in generative syntax (Williams 1980, 1992, Kortmann 1991, and Kawasaki 1993). Recently, two competing approaches have emerged: the Movement Theory of Control (MTC) (Hornstein 1999, 2001, and Boeckx, Hornstein & Nunes 2010) and the Two-tiered Theory of Control (TTC) (Landau 2015, 2017, 2021). MTC posits obligatory control (OC) results from sideward movement, while non-obligatory control (NOC) arises through pronominalization. Conversely, TTC claims OC and NOC stem from adjuncts with predicative and logophoric structures, respectively. The claim that NOC requires a human controller for PRO (Clark 1990, Landau 2013, Green 2018, 2019, Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019, and Fischer & Høyem 2021) is attributed to the logophoric nature of NOC (Landau 2017). This presentation aims to reexamine adjunct control by English and Chinese passive logical subjects, overt or covert, challenging the requirement of a human controller for NOC.

We first demonstrate that adjunct control by passive logical subjects is NOC, illustrated by the unavailability of a sloppy reading of PRO in the elided phrase in (1). Crucially, for some native speakers, the PRO in an English telic clause introduced by *only to* may be controlled by an inanimate logical subject of a passive (2), contradicting the claim that NOC requires a human controller. Please note Landau's (2021) concept of topicality, allowing an inanimate controller, does not apply here.

(1) The worksheets were made by **the pretty lady**<sub>1</sub> before **PRO**<sub>1</sub> leaving, and the books were, too.  
(2) The wall is eroded (by **heavy rain**<sub>1</sub>), only **PRO**<sub>1</sub> to leave vague ruins on the mountain ridge.

Cross-linguistically, we observed that subject-gap purpose clauses in Mandarin Chinese (Liao & Lin 2019) allow an embedded PRO referring to the implicit passive logical subject as in (3). This NOC instance, where PRO is controlled by “split antecedents” (contrary to Green's and Landau's strict OC claims for such English purpose clauses), demonstrates that NOC controllers need not be human.

(3) **Citi**<sub>1</sub> keyi bei (**bingxiang**<sub>2</sub>) xiyan [lai **PRO**<sub>1+2</sub> yiqi nian-zhu zhaopian].  
magnet can BEI refrigerator attract LAI together stick photo  
'The magnet can be attracted (by the refrigerator) to stick the photo together.'

Our finding has implications for classification of different types of control constructions. It means that we should not use the alleged requirement to distinguish OC from NOC constructions either under the MTC (e.g., Green 2018, 2019) or the TTC (e.g., Landau 2021).

**Keywords:** Adjunct control; Non-obligatory control; Passive construction; Movement Theory of Control; Two-tiered Theory of Control

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