Topic Constructions in Korean*

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Lee, Hyeran. 2008. Topic Constructions in Korean. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal, 16*(4). 1-23. This paper aims to analyze topic constructions in Korean under the framework of the minimalist program. It is claimed that there exist two types of topicalization in Korean: one by overt syntactic movement like English, and the other by base-generation. For gapped constructions, the Edge Feature (EF) of the topic head derives the raising of Case-marked topic DPs while covert movement of the null pronominal topic operator licenses the base-generated *nun*-marked topic DPs. For non-gapped constructions, it is claimed that the semantic-pragmatic analysis must be made. Thus both the syntactic and semantic-pragmatic approach on the one hand and both the movement and base-generation analysis on the other hand are claimed to account for topic constructions in Korean.

Key Words: topic, topicalization, Edge Feature (EF), base-generation, articulated CP structure

1. Introduction

1.1. Issues in Topic Constructions

Topic constructions in Korean, Japanese, and Chinese have been analyzed with different approaches: the syntactic and semantic-pragmatic approach.

Within the syntactic approach, the movement analysis has competed with the base-generation approach. For languages like English, the movement analysis has been accepted since the topicalized element is subcategorized by the verb, leaving a trace in the VP area. For languages like Korean, Japanese, and Chinese, the movement and base-generation analysis coexist, depending on whether the gap is a trace left behind after movement or a null element without movement. For non-gapped topic constructions, the base-generation analysis has been generally suggested in the literature.

In Korean topic constructions, the syntactic movement analysis has been made by Choe (1995)[1] and Jung (2001)[2] while the base-generation analysis has been made by Moon (1989) and Hong (2005) among others. The semantic-pragmatic approach based on the aboutness relation has been made by Lee (1989, 1994, 2002). In this paper, I show that a uniform analysis cannot account for topic constructions in Korean. I claim that both the syntactic and semantic-pragmatic approach must be adopted for topic constructions in Korean. I also claim that both the movement and base-generation analysis must be made depending on whether the topicalized sentence has a gap or not.

In particular, the point I want to make in this paper is that topic constructions in Korean are not completely different from those in languages like English. I claim that there exist English type topic constructions in Korean in that topicalization involves a trace left behind. The preposed Case-marked DPs are such a case: the Case-marked DPs could be either focalized or topicalized under the appropriate context. The topicalized one can be analyzed as a topic construction resulting from overt syntactic movement like in English. On the other hand, there exist Korean-Japanese-Chinese type topic constructions which are represented by the *nun*-marked DPs in Korean. The *nun*-marked topic DPs are claimed to be analyzed as base-generated topics in the sentence initial position with an abstract

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1) Choe (1995) argues that a null pronominal topic operator moves with topics base-generated.

2) Jung (2001) argues that topics overtly move as a subtype of scrambling.

null element involving movement at the LF interface.

In case that the movement analysis applies to topic constructions by overtly raising a DP from the comment clause, questions are where the topic moves and what derives the movement. I propose that TopP exists in the left periphery of the clause and Spec-TopP is the position for a topic. Using the notion of the edge feature (EF) and feature inheritance in Chomsky (2005), I assume that ToP^{EF} inherited from C is the driving force, which raises the DP with [+topic]. On the other hand, in case that the base-generation analysis applies to the *nun*-marked topic DPs with a gap, movement still involves licensing topic DPs. The movement, however, is not overt but covert, raising the null topic operator to the adjacent position to the topic and thereby the null topic operator is valued by the topic by virtue of "strong binding" in Chomsky (1986, 1995). This process licenses the *nun*-marked topic. The covert movement that does not involve EF exists in grammar; quantifier raising to take scope is one of such examples.

In the following subsection, two types of topic constructions in Korean are shown. In section 2, the movement test is made to analyze gapped topic constructions. It is observed that the Subjacency effects are very weak or do not hold for gapped topic constructions in Korean. In spite of the weak Subjacency effects, movement is claimed to be still involved in these constructions as scrambling with the weak Subjacency effects involves movement. Section 3 shows the contrast in topicalization between Case-marked topic DPs and *nun*-marked topic DPs. It is demonstrated that Case-marked topic DPs result from the overt syntactic movement out of a theta-position while *nun*-marked topic DPs from the covert null pronominal operator movement. In section 4, topic-subject constructions are viewed as being base-generated. It is claimed that the semantic-pragmatic approach is needed to account for non-gapped topic constructions. Finally in section 5 it is concluded that the analysis of topic constructions is unified in the following way: the gapped topic constructions involve movement whether they are *nun*-marked or not while the *nun*-marked topic constructions are all base-generated regardless of the presence of a gap. The aboutness relation between the

topic and the comment clause underlies for both gapped constructions and non-gapped constructions as a semantic requirement.

1.2. Two Types of Topic Constructions

The following English sentences show the typical topic constructions.

(1) John likes Mary.
(2) Mary, John likes e.
(3) Mary, John likes her.
(4) Mary, John likes the girl.

Sentence (2) with a gap is called topicalization in a narrow sense and sentence (3) with a pronoun is called left dislocation (Ross 1967). All sentences (2-3) including sentence (4) with a full lexical DP are analyzed as topic constructions in general. The movement naturally applies to (2) with a gap in the sentence, while it cannot apply to (3-4).[3] Korean, Japanese and Chinese have the same corresponding topic constructions. The difference is that Korean and Japanese make use of the topic marker -*nun* and -*wa* respectively while Chinese has no topic markers. See the following Korean topic constructions.

(5) John-un,   e Mary-lul   coaha-n-ta[4]
    John-TOP   Mary-ACC like-PRES-DEC
    'As for John, (he) likes Mary'
(6) Mary-nun,   John-i   e   coaha-n-ta
    Mary-TOP   John-NOM   like-PRES-DEC
    'As for Mary, John likes (her)'
(7) ? Mary-nun,   John-i   kunye-lul coaha-n-ta
    Mary-TOP   John-NOM   her-ACC like-PRES-DEC
    'As for Mary, John likes her'

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3) Ross (1967) analyzes (3) as an insertion of the pronoun after movement.

4) It is arguable whether a gap is followed by the topic or not. I assume that the topic is base-generated in Spec-TopP while a gap is present in the subject position.

(8) ? Mary-nun,   John-i   ku sonye-lul   coaha-n-ta
      Mary-TOP   John-NOM   the girl-ACC   like-PRES-DEC
      'As for Mary, John likes the girl'

All topic constructions above show the same paradigm with the English topic constructions in (1-4) except for the *nun*-marker. Without the *nun*-marker, the following sentences can also be analyzed as topic constructions in Korean.

(9) John-i   Mary-lul   coaha-n-ta
    John-NOM   Mary-ACC   like-PRES-DEC
    'As for John, (he) likes Mary'
(10) Mary-lul,   John-i   e   coaha-n-ta
     Mary-TOP   John-NOM   like-PRES-DEC
     'As for Mary, John likes (her)'
(11) ?* Mary-lul,   John-i   kunye-lul   coaha-n-ta
      Mary-TOP   John-NOM   her-ACC   like-PRES-DEC
      'As for Mary, John likes her'
(12) ?* Mary-lul, John-i   ku sonye-lul   coaha-n-ta
      Mary-TOP   John-NOM   the girl-ACC   like-PRES-DEC
      'As for Mary, John likes the girl'

Sentence (10) has been traditionally analyzed as scrambling. As argued in Lee (2008a), scrambling could bring three different interpretations: a neutral, focused, and topicalized interpretation. In case that it has no semantic import, it may be analyzed as a pure PF scrambling. On the other hand, in case that it brings some semantic import such as a focus or topic interpretation, it must be analyzed as focalization or topicalization. In this respect, (10) could be interpreted as neutral, focused or topicalized. Putting aside other interpretations, let us focus on the topic interpretation resulting from topicalization. Suppose that *Mary* has been introduced in the discourse as a smart and nice girl. New information such as *JOHN LIKES her* is introduced about the person, *Mary*, with the following sentence: *Mary-lul, John-i e coaha-n-ta (Mary, John likes)*. Then the

Case-marked DP *Mary-lul* is interpreted as a topic with old information. This is exactly like English topicalization; without any additional topic marker, the preposed DP is interpreted as a topic. The difference is that a resumptive pronoun or a full lexical DP is not allowed in these constructions as seen in (11-12). A resumptive pronoun or a lexical DP is allowed only with the *nun*-marked DPs. Based on our observation so far, we have two corresponding gapped topic constructions to the English topic construction: one with the *nun*-marker, another without the *nun*-marker.

(13= (2)) Mary, John likes e.
(14= (6)) Mary-nun,   John-i   e   coaha-n-ta
        Mary-TOP   John-NOM   like-PRES-DEC
    'As for Mary, John likes (her)'
(15= (10)) Mary-lul,   John-i   e   coaha-n-ta
        Mary-TOP   John-NOM   like-PRES-DEC
    'As for Mary, John likes (her)'

To summarize, topicalization in Korean involves not only topic constructions that have been argued to be unique to languages like Korean, Japanese, and Chinese (the *nun*-marked topics) but also those that are equivalent to English topic constructions (the Case-marked topics). In what follows, the movement test is made to decide whether the topic constructions actually involve movement.

2. Movement Test for Gapped Topic Constructions

2.1. SCO/ WCO

Strong Crossover (SCO) and Weak Crossover (WCO) dictate that a *wh*-trace cannot be coindexed with a pronoun to its left.

(16) *Who_i does he_i think t_i left? (SCO)
(17) a. Who_i likes her_i mother?
    b. *Who_i does his_i mother love t_i? (WCO)

Let us consider the Korean examples. A′-movement in general shows the SCO effects.

(18) a. *John-un$_i$ [ku-ka$_i$ [e$_i$ ttena-ss-ta-ko]]
        John-TOP ku-NOM   leave-PAST-DEC-COMP
        sayngkakha-n-ta
        think-PRES-DEC
        ′As for John, he thinks that (John) left′
   b. *John-i$_i$ [ku-ka$_i$ [e$_i$ ttena-ss-ta-ko]]
        John-NOM ku-NOM   leave-PAST-DEC-COMP
        sayngkakha-n-ta
        think-PRES-DEC
        ′As for John, he thinks that (John) left′

As expected, the SCO effects are present in (18). The WCO is now examined.

(19) a. John-un$_i$ [ku-uy$_i$ emeni-ka   e$_i$ coaha-n-ta]
        John-TOP he-GEN   mother-NOM   like-PRES-DEC
        ′As for John, his mother lives (him)′
   b. John-ul$_i$ [ku-uy$_i$ emeni-ka   e$_i$ coaha-n-ta]
        John-ACC he-GEN   mother-NOM   like-PRES-DEC
        ′As for John, his mother lives (him)′

The WCO effects are not present in (19). From this, we know that if there is a movement, it is not like *wh*-movement in English. The *wh*-movement is supposed to observe both SCO and WCO. The empty element should be characterized as a pronominal, not as a variable, which will account for the lack of WCO effects in (19).

2.2. Subjacency

First of all, the typical complex sentence is illustrated as below.

(20) a. John-i   [Mary-ka   chocolate-ul   coaha-n-ta-ko]
         John-NOM Mary-NOM chocolate-ACC like-PRES-DEC-COMP
         sayngkakha-n-ta
         think-PRES-DEC
         'John thinks that Mary likes chocolates'
   b. Chocolate-nun/ chocolate-ul[5)] John-i   [Mary-ka   e
         chocolate-TOP   John-NOM   Mary-NOM
         coaha-n-ta-ko]   sayngkakha-n-ta
         like-PRES-DEC-COMP think-PRES-DEC
         'As for chocolates, John thinks that Mary likes (them)'
   c. Mary-nun/ ?Mary-ka John-i   [e chocolate-ul
         Mary-TOP   John-NOM   chocolate-ACC
         coaha-n-ta-ko]   think-PRES-DEC
         like-PRES-DEC-COMP   sayngkakha-n-ta
         'As for Mary, John thinks that (she) likes chocolates'

In (20), both the object and the subject extraction[6)] are grammatical with a gap. Now CNPC, Adjunct-Island, Wh-Island, and Relative clauses are examined.[7)]

CNPC
(21) a. John-i   [Mary-ka   chocolate-lul   coaha-n-ta-nun]
         John-NOM   Mary-NOM   chocolate-ACC like-PRES-DEC-COMP
         sasil-ul   al-ass-ta
         the fact-ACC   know-PAST-DEC
         'John knew the fact that Mary likes chocolates''

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5) As mentioned before, the preposed Case-marked DP could be interpreted as focalized or topicalized depending on context. Our discussion is on the topic interpretation only, putting aside the focus interpretation.

6) I accept the idea that the subject scrambling is possible in languages like Korean. With a pause after the scrambled subject, the sentence sounds okay. If we change *John-i* to *John-un*, we get *Mary-ka_i, [John-un [t_i chocolate-ul coaha-n-ta-ko] syangkakha-n-ta]*, which sounds very natural.

7) A reviewer commented that (20b,c), (21b,c), (22b), (23b), (24b), and (25b) do not sound natural in normal context. I agree with the idea that the grammaticality judgment related with the Island Condition is subject to the speaker variation in Korean.

b. Chocolate-un/ chocolate-ul   John-i   [Mary-ka e
   chocolates-TOP   -ACC   John-NOM   Mary-NOM
   coaha-n-ta-nun]   sasil-ul   al-ass-ta
   like-PRES-DEC-COMP the fact-ACC know-PAST-DEC
   'As for chocolates, John knew the fact that Mary likes (them)'
c. Mary-nun/ ?Mary-ka   John-i   [e chocolate-ul
   Mary-TOP   -NOM   John-NOM   chocolate-ACC
   coaha-n-ta-nun]   sasil-ul   al-ass-ta
   like-PRES-DEC-COMP the fact-ACC   know-PAST-DEC
   'As for chocolates, John knew the fact that (she) likes chocolates'

Adjunct Island Condition
(22) a. John-i   [Mary-ka   ku chayk-ul   ilk-ese]
        John-NOM   Mary-NOM   the book-ACC   read-because
        sang-ul   cwu-ess-ta
        prize-ACC give-PAST-DEC
        'John gave a prize because Mary read the book'
     b. Mary-nun/ ?Mary-ka John-i   [e ku chayk-ul   ilk-ese]
        Mary-TOP   -NOM   John-NOM   the book-ACC read-because
        sang-ul   cwu-ess-ta
        prize-ACC   give-PAST-DEC
        'As for Mary, John gave a prize because (she) read the book'

Wh-Island Condition
(23) a. John-i   [encey Mary-ka   ku chayk-ul
        John-NOM   when Mary-NOM   the book-ACC
        ilk-ess-nunci]   alko sip-ta
        read-PAST-Q[+wh] know want
        'John wants to know when Mary read the book'
     b. Mary-nun/ ?Mary-ka   John-i   [encey   e ku chayk-ul
        Mary-TOP -NOM   John-NOM   when   the book-ACC
        ilk-ess-nunci]   alko sip-ta
        read-PAST-if   know want-DEC
        'As for Mary, John wants to know when (she) read the book'

Relative Clause
(24) a. John-i   [Mary-ka   tochakha-n] nalcca-lul al-ass-ta
        John-NOM Mary-NOM   arrive-REL date-ACC know-PAST-DEC
        'John read the book that Mary bought'
     b. Mary-nun/ ?Mary-ka   John-i   [e tachankha-n] nalcca-lul
        Mary-TOP   -NOM   John-NOM   arrive-REL date-ACC
        al-ass-ta
        know-PAST-DEC
        'As for Mary, John read the book (she) bought'
(25) a. John-i   [ku chayk-ul   sa-n]   sonye-lul   manna-ss-ta
        John-NOM the book-ACC buy-REL girl-ACC   meet-PAST-DEC
        'John met a girl who bought the book'
     b. Ku chayk-un/ ?ku chayk-ul John-i   [e sa-n]   sonye-lul
        the book-TOP   -ACC John-NOM   buy-REL girl-ACC
        manna-ss-ta
        meet-PAST-DEC
        'As for the book, John met the girl who bought it'

In general, Subjacency effects are the diagnostic of the presence of
movement. If we take a look at the above constructions, there seem to
be weak Subjacency effects for the Case-marked DPs. For the
nun-marked DPs, however, there seem no Subjacency effects. They are
freely extracted and they get better with the insertion of a resumptive
pronoun such as *kukes* ('the thing') or *kunye* ('she/her') or *ku*
('he/him') in the place of the null element.[8] Jung (2001) claims that
topicalization in Korean is a subtype of scrambling, showing no WCO
effects and island conditions. It means that topicalization in Korean
involves movement like scrambling, though it has no WCO effects and
island conditions. The weakness or absence of Subjacency effects should
not be used as evidence that there is no movement in Korean.[9] Unlike

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8) The resumptive pronoun is not inserted in the constructions in order not to cause
too much structural complication. If it is put in the place of the null element *e*, the
nun-marked DPs have the same grammaticality while the Case-marked DPs get worse.
The resumptive pronouns are good with the *nun*-marked DPs only.

Jung (2001) who uniformly analyze topicalization of the *nun*-marked DPs and the Case-marked DPs as involving overt syntactic movement, I will argue that the Case-marked DPs result from overt movement while the *nun*-marked DPs are base-generated with the covert movement of a null pronominal topic operator.

3. Syntactic Analysis for Gapped Topic Constructions

3.1. Topicalization and Focalization

Sentences without the *nun*-marker could have two different interpretations: the focus interpretation and the topic interpretation. (20b) without the *nun*-marker is repeated as below.

(26) Chocolate-ul   John-i   [Mary-ka   e   coaha-n-ta-ko]
     chocolate-TOP John-NOM Mary-NOM   like-PRES-DEC-COMP
     sayngkakha-n-ta
     think-PRES-DEC
     Topic Interpretation: 'As for chocolates, John thinks that Mary likes (them)'
     Focus Interpretation: '**Chocolates**, John thinks that Mary likes t'

The difference in interpretation is not noticed in the word order, but it is decided under the context. Under the context where chocolates are the topic of a conversation, *chocolate-ul* in (26) is interpreted as a topic. On the other hand, under the context where it is a surprise or new information that Mary likes chocolates, *chocolate-ul* in (26) is interpreted as a focus.

3.2. Case-marked DP Topicalization as Overt Syntactic Movement[10]

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9) Boeckx (2008:137-138) argues that islands should no longer be taken to be diagnostics for movement since even strong islands allow for some instances of extraction.

10) This proposal, EF as a driving force for topicalization, has been made in Lee (2008a).

Under the appropriate context, the Case-marked DP preposing should be treated as topicalization like English where the verb subcategorizes for the preposed topic. In this case, the preposed DPs are raised leaving a trace as in English topicalization. See the following structure.

(27) [CP [TopP *XP* [TP [vP... *XP(t)*

I posit the above structure for Korean topic constructions following Rizzi (1997) who argues for the articulated CP structure. XP in the VP area is raised to Spec-TopP, where it is interpreted as a topic. What motivates this raising? Based on Chomsky (2005), I propose that the edge feature on the Top head that is inherited from C can raise the DP with [+topic] to this position. Chomsky says that Internal Merge (IM) yields discourse-related properties such as old information and specificity along with scopal effects while External Merge (EM) yields generalized argument structure. He suggests that the topicalization process is IM by EF. It means that the EF of Top raises the DP with [+topic] to yield discourse-related properties.

The topic has discourse-related properties such as old information with definiteness and genericality.[11] An element that is first merged by EM in the VP area should be raised to the periphery position by IM for such discourse effects. If the element stays in the VP area, it cannot obtain discourse-related properties. For discourse effects to be manifested, the EF raises the appropriate DP to its Spec from which the topic interpretation is obtained.

3.3. *Nun*-marked DP Topicalization as being Base-generated

It has been illustrated that Korean topic constructions are possible without the *nun*-marker or with the *nun*-marker. The Case-marked topic constructions have been discussed as resulting from the overt syntactic movement leaving a trace. The overt movement analysis may

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11) Topics must be definite or generic. Indefinite DPs, interrogative DPs, or NPIs cannot be topics. Examples are illustrated in Moon (1989) and Jung (2001).

not apply to the *nun*-marked topic constructions. (21b) is repeated as below.

(28) Chocolate-un   John-i   [Mary-ka e   coaha-n-ta-nun]
     chocolates-TOP   John-NOM   Mary-NOM   like-PRES-DEC-COMP
     sasil-ul   al-ass-ta
     the fact-ACC   know-PAST-DEC
     'As for chocolates, John knew the fact that Mary likes (them)'

In (28), the accusative Case of *chocolate-ul* is checked in situ by Agree. If the DP with the accusative Case overtly moves to Spec-TopP to obtain discourse effects of the topic interpretation, the following resulting form is expected for the *nun*-marked topic DP.

(29) *Chocolate-ul-nun

The DP form in (29) is ungrammatical.[12] This leads us to conjecture that the *nun*-marked DPs are not moved from the Case position, but actually base-generated in Spec-TopP with the topic marker -*nun*.

(30) The *nun*-marked topic constructions are base-generated in Spec-TopP.

The base-generation analysis of the *nun*-marked topic DPs is advantageous in that it can extend to a large number of non-gapped topic constructions in Korean including such as (7-8). Then our proposal is revised as follows.

(31) The *nun*-marked topic constructions, whether they have a gap or not, are base-generated in Spec-TopP.

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12) To solve this problem, Jung (2001) assumes that the *nun*-marker is assigned at Morphological Form (Halle and Maranz 1993) at the phonological component as a result of competing for morphological realization between the Case features of -*ul/lul* and the contrastive features of -*nun*.

In such a way, the unified explanation of both the gapped and non-gapped topic constructions involving the *nun*-marker is possible: all *nun*-marked DP topics are base-generated.

The *nun*-marked DPs in gapped constructions shows a slightly different behavior from the Case-marked DPs in movement: they show no WCO effects and island conditions while the Case-marked counterparts show very weak WCO effects and island conditions. However, there is no clear contrast in island constraints for those two types of topic constructions so that we can say that one is subject to movement and the other is not. We can conjecture that movement may be involved in both Case-marked DP and *nun*-marked DP topic constructions as scrambling is analyzed as movement in spite of the lack of Subjacency effects and island constraints. A unified account can then be made with respect to movement: all gapped topic constructions, regardless of the presence of the *nun*-marker, undergoes movement. As discussed before, the Case-marked topic DPs are raised by the EF on the Top head. For the *nun*-marked DPs, following Chomsky (1977) and Choe (1995), an abstract element, the null pronominal topic operator, involves in movement at the LF interface. The detailed analysis of the null element will be made in the following section.

3.4. Nun-marked DP Topicalization and its Structure

Chomsky (1977: 91) proposes the following phrase structure rule for topic constructions.

(32) a. S′′ → TOP S′
     b. S′ → COMP S

Then topic constructions should look like as follows.

(33) [Top [COMP [IP(S)

According to Chomsky, when S′ in (32b) contains *wh*-phrase, the

phrase moves into COMP and is deleted. Island constraints apply to this movement (Ross 1967, Chomsky 1977). When S' contains a pronominal or nominal phrase co-indexed with TOP, no movement takes place. Sentences (2-4) are repeated below.

(34) a. Mary, [CP ~~who~~ John likes t]
     b. Mary, John likes her.
     c. Mary, John likes the girl.

As Choe (1995) noticed, this topic structure proposed by Chomsky is similar to relative clause constructions.

(35) a. John likes the girl.
     b. the girl [CP who$_i$ John likes t$_i$
     c. the girl [CP who$_i$ John likes her$_i$
     d. the girl [CP 0$_i$ that John likes t$_i$
     e. the girl [CP 0$_i$ John likes t$_i$

The above relative constructions are in parallel to topic constructions in (34). In (35), the *wh*-operator moves (35b) or the null operator moves (35d,e). Then it may be reasonable to assume that the *nun*-marked DP topic constructions may hold the same analysis. (21b) is repeated.

(36) [[Chocolate-un$_i$ 0$_i$ [John-i   [CP t$_i$ [Mary-ka   t$_i$
     chocolates-TOP   John-NOM   Mary-NOM
     coaha-n-ta]-nun]   sasil-ul   al-ass-ta
     like-PRES-DEC-COMP the fact-ACC   know-PAST-DEC
     'As for chocolates, John knew the fact that Mary likes (them)'

The null element as a topic operator moves to the position adjacent to TopP where it is bound to its antecedent, the topic DP. The value of the null element is determined by the topic DP (strong binding[13]) by

13) Strong binding states that every variable must have its range fixed by a restricted quantifier, or have its value determined by an antecedent.

Chomsky (1986)) or by the rule of predication[14] (Williams 1980) and the topic DP without a theta-role is dependent on the null operator to be licensed by Full Interpretation (FI). The null operator movement with the *nun*-marked topic constructions is different from the syntactic movement with the Case-marked topic constructions: the former is subject to covert movement while the latter, to overt movement. The EF, as a driving force for overt syntactic movement, is a requirement of an occurrence of an element so that it must raise something. On the other hand, the null operator movement is not derived by EF, but by semantic requirements as mentioned above.

4. Base-Generation Analysis for Non-gapped Topic Constructions

4.1. Topic-Subject Constructions

Topic-subject constructions can be analyzed as being base-generated. See the following.

(37) Mary-nun emeni-ka   yeppu-ta
     Mary-ka mother-NOM pretty-DEC
     'As for Mary, (her) mother is pretty'
(38) Mary-nun nwun-i   khu-ta
     Mary-TOP eyes-NOM   big-DEC
     'As for Mary, (her) eyes are big'
(39) Pihayngki-nun 747-i   khu-ta
     airplane-TOP 747-NOM big-DEC
     'As for airplanes, the 747 is big'
(40) Kwail-nun Mary-ka   sakwa-lul coaha-n-ta
     fruit-TOP Mary-NOM apple-ACC like-PRES-DEC
     'As for fruit, Mary likes apples'

Sentences (37-40) have the corresponding double subject and double

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14) The predication relation is defined in terms of thematic relation which can be regulated by configurational c-command relation.

object constructions as follows.

(41) Mary-ka emeni-ka yeppu-ta   (Possessive relation)
(42) Mary-ka   nwun-i khu-ta   (Possessive relation)
(43) Pihayngki-ka 747-i khu-ta (Inclusive relation)
(44) Mary-ka kwail-ul sakwa-lul coaha-n-ta (Inclusive relation)

These constructions could be analyzed as a possessor raising as in Choe (1995). However, the relation between DP1 and DP2 is not always the possessive relation as seen above. Lee (2008b) proposes that the multiple subjects are base-generated in Spec-vP and the leftmost one raises to Spec-TP to check the [+aboutness] feature on T, based on Rizzi (2006).[15] If we adopt this proposal keeping the assumption that the *nun*-marked DPs are base-generated in Spec-TopP, the following structure will be possible for topic-subject constructions in (37-39) that have the corresponding double subject construction in (41-43).

(45) [CP [TopP DP1 [TP DP2 [vP (DP2) [VP

The *nun*-marked DP1 is base-generated in Spec-TopP and DP2 is raised to Spec-TP to check the [+aboutness] feature on T. Thus there is no need to posit a null element in double subject constructions so that   topic-subject   constructions   are   analyzed   as   non-gapped constructions. See the double object construction and the topic-subject construction, repeated from (44) and (40).

(46) a. Mary-ka kwail-ul sakwa-lul coaha-n-ta
        [CP [TopP [TP Mary-ka [vP (Mary-ka) [VP kwail-ul   sakwa-lul coaha-n-ta]]]]]
    b. Kwail-un Mary-ka sakwa-lul coaha-n-ta
        [CP [TopP Kwail-un [TP Mary-ka [vP (Mary-ka) [VP sakwa-lul coaha-n-ta]]]]]

The topic in (46b) is base-generated in Spec-TopP while the subject is

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15) This proposal is not expanded in detail in this paper. The [+aboutness] feature checking can be replaced with the usual EPP that raises a DP to Spec-TP.

raised to Spec-TP. (46b) has a different structure which is not derived from (46a). The topic-subject constructions, whether they have the corresponding double subject constructions or double object constructions, are thus analyzed as non-gapped constructions.

4.2. Other Non-gapped Topic Constructions

There are topic constructions that have no gap. (49) is provided with (47-48) repeated from (7-8) as below.

  (47) ?Mary-nun,   John-i   kunye-lul coaha-n-ta
      Mary-TOP   John-NOM her-ACC like-PRES-DEC
      'As for Mary, John likes her'
  (48) ?Mary-nun,   John-i   ku sonye-lul   coaha-n-ta
      Mary-TOP John-NOM the girl-ACC   like-PRES-DEC
      'As for Mary, John likes the girl'
  (49) Hwankyeong   mwuncey-nun cayeon poho-ka   cwungyoha-ta
      environmental issues-TOP   nature protection-NOM important-DEC
      'As for the environmental issues, the protection of nature is important'

Topics are base-generated in the left dislocation construction with the pronoun in the comment clause in (47) and with the full lexical DP in the comment clause in (48). These topics are associated with those elements in the comment clause. (49), however, shows that the topic has no associated element in the comment clause, but the sentence is still grammatical by the so-called aboutness relation. The relation between the topic and the rest of the sentence is basically characterized as the aboutness relation (Chomsky 1977: 81, Chomsky 1986: 116). If the aboutness relation is not satisfied, the topic constructions cannot converge.

  (50) *Mary-nun,   John-i   kutul-lul   coaha-n-ta
      Mary-TOP   John-NOM them-ACC like-PRES-DEC
      'As for Mary, John likes her'

(51) *Mary-nun, John-i   Younghee-lul   coaha-n-ta
     Mary-TOP John-NOM Younghee-ACC like-PRES-DEC
     'As for Mary, John likes the girl'
(52) *Hwankyeong mwuncey-nun ai-ka   tolao-ss-ta
     environmental issues-TOP child-NOM come back-PAST-DEC
     'As for the environmental issues, the child came back'

All above sentences are ungrammatical since the aboutness relation
between the topic and the comment clause is not satisfied. Hence, the
non-gapped topic constructions must be analyzed by the
semantic-pragmatic approach, not by the syntactic approach. In what
follows, the semantic-pragmatic approach is introduced.

4.3. Analysis of non-gapped topic constructions

Lee (2002) suggests the coherence condition where the topic is
coherently related to the topic's comment: it is required that the topic
phrase in Spec-TopP must have the dependency relation with the
element in the comment clause such as anaphoric binding, conditional,
possessive, whole-part and set-member relationship, necessarily with the
LARGER in the TopP preceding the SMALLER in the complement
phrase. Pan and Hu (2008) suggest that a topic is licensed under the
condition that the intersection between the topic set and the one
generated by the variable in the comment should produce a non-empty
set. If we examine (37-40) and (47-49), the coherence condition or the
set intersection can account for the grammaticality, while the same
mechanism can account for the ungrammaticality of (50-52).
    In   particular,   *Mary-nun/emeni-ka,   Mary-nun/nwun-i,*
pihayngki-nun/747-i kwail-un/sakwa-lul in (37-40) constitute some
dependency relation with the LARGER in the TopP and the SMALLER
in the comment clause. In terms of the set intersection, they produce
non-empty sets. In (47-48), the dependency relation between *Mary-nun*
and *kunye-lul* and *Mary-nun* and *ku sonye-lul* by the anaphoric binding
is present as suggested by Lee (2002). In (49), there is no element in

the comment clause to constitute the dependency relation with the topic, but the comment as a whole is coherently related with the topic phrase as observed by Xu and Langendoen (1985) for Chinese topics. On the other hand, in (50-51), the topic is not associated with the pronoun or the full lexical DP in the comment clause as seen in *Mary-nun/kutul-ul, Mary-nun/Younghee-lul*. In (52), the topic is not characterized as an entity that is described by the comment clause as seen in *Hwankyeong mwuncey/ai-ka tolao-ta*. (50-52) does not constitute any type of relations by the coherence condition or the set intersection. From this we know that the basic aboutness relation must be satisfied between the topic and the comment clause for non-gapped constructions. This aboutness relation can extend to the gapped constructions as well since the topic in these constructions is always associated with an element in the comment clause with regard to theta-role.

5. Conclusion

I have demonstrated that there exist two types of topic constructions in Korean: one is English type topic constructions expressed with the Case-marked topics and the other is the so-called Korean, Japanese and Chinese type topic constructions expressed with the *nun*-marked topics. Both types do not keep Subjacency. It has been claimed that the Case-marked topics result from overt syntactic movement driven by the Edge Feature on Top in spite of the lack of Subjacency effects and island constraints since the so-called scrambling in Korean do not show Subjacency effects and island constraints either. The Case-marked DP topicalization shows exactly the same behavior with scrambling, having differences in interpretation only: the former produces the topic interpretation while the latter, the focus interpretation. It has been argued that the *nun*-marked topics with a gap are base-generated in Spec-TopP due to the conflict between the Case marker and the topic marker. They are subject to movement since the null pronominal topic operator is moved to obtain the semantic value from the topic. I have also shown

that the *nun*-marked topic constructions without a gap are all base-generated licensed by the semantic-pragmatic condition. Thus it is unified that the gapped topic constructions involve movement whether they are *nun*-marked or not while the *nun*-marked topic constructions are all base-generated regardless of the presence of a gap. The gapped topic constructions can be syntactically analyzed while the non-gapped topic constructions must be analyzed by the semantic-pragmatic approach. Both the gapped and non-gapped topic constructions should satisfy the aboutness relation between the topic and the comment clause.

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