

Sentential Specifiers in the Korean Clause Structure*

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Summary. The Korean double nominative construction exhibits various properties distinguished not only from ordinary subject-object clauses but also from nominative complement constructions. Particularly, the second NP, not the initial NP, triggers the honorific agreement with the verb. I argue that the first NP of the construction is identified as a sentential specifier which exists in addition to the subject (cf. Major subject in Yoon 2004). The sentential specifier can be justified as the characteristic of the topic-prominent language in the sense of Li and Thompson (1976). Specifically I claim that any elements that satisfy the *aboutness* condition can be the sentential specifier. Finally, I show that HPSG's valence value and an optional lexical rule provides an elegant treatment of the construction; SPR list in a sentence level can be utilized for the sentential specifier (cf. Kim et al. 2007).

Keywords: sentential specifier, *aboutness* condition. SPR list, DEPS list

1 Introduction

The Korean double nominative construction in (1) exhibits various properties distinguished from the typical clauses. For example, the first NPs in (1) do not necessarily have a selectional relation with the verbs in the clauses.

- (1)a. Ken-i ape.nim-i kyoswu-i-si-ta
Ken-NOM father(HON)-NOM Prof.-COPU-HON-DECL
'As for Ken, his father is a professor.'
- b. LA-ka hankwuk. salam-i manhi sa-n-ta
LA-NOM Korean people-NOM many live-PRES-DECL
'As for LA, many Korean people live there.'

This double nominative construction is distinguished not only from ordinary subject-object clauses but also from nominative complement constructions in (2) in that the subject in (2) triggers the honorific agreement with the verb in contrast to the first NPs in (1).

- (2) John-i ape.nim-i silh-(*usi)-ta
John-NOM father.HON-NOM hate-(*HON)-DECL
'John hates his father.'

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Two types of analyses have been proposed: (i) The focus analyses proposed by Kim (2000), Schütze (2001), and Kim et al. (2007): the first NP of the construction is the syntactic realization of the focus information. (ii) The movement analyses proposed by Kang (1986), J-Y Yoon (1989): the first NP is moved from the possessive NP of the subject.

2 Overview of the Proposed Analysis

I suggest that the previously suggested analyses cannot correctly catch the characteristics of the construction. Instead, I argue that the first NP of the construction is identified as a sentential specifier which exists in addition to the subject (cf. Major subject in Yoon 2004; Small subject in Shibatani 1999; Narrow/Thematic subject in Doron and Heycock 1999). The sentential specifier can be justified as the characteristic of the topic-prominent language in the sense of Li and Thompson (1976). Specifically I claim that any elements that satisfy the *aboutness* condition can be the sentential specifier; if an element is characterized by the subsequent phrase, it satisfies the *aboutness* condition (Kang 1988; O. Grady 1991, Hong 1997, Yoon 2004).

3 Review of the Previous Analyses

3.1 Movement Analyses

Kang (1986), Yoon (1989) and many other scholars suggest that the first NP of the double nominative construction is originated from the possessive NP of the subject. However, as shown in (1b) the first NP is not necessarily identified with the possessive NP of the subject. Furthermore, not all the possessive NPs of the subjects can move into the first NP position (Kim 2000).

- (3) Yangccok-*/i/-uy puls-in-i i sathay-lul cholayhayss-ta
 Both.sides-NOM/-GEN distrust-NOM this situation-ACC caused-DEC
 ‘The distrust between both sides caused this situation.’

3.2 Focus Analyses

Kim (2000), Schütze (2001), Kim et al. (2007) and many other scholars suggest that the first NP of the construction is the syntactic realization of the focus information which is independent of syntactic relation such as subject and object. According to Kim (2000), the sentence in (4) is ungrammatical because only the first NP of the construction has the focus function, hence able to be *wh*-questioned.

- (4) *Ken-i nwu-ka puca-i-si-ni?
 Ken-NOM who-NOM rich.man-COP-HON-Q
 ‘Who of Ken’s is rich?’

However, even assuming that the first NP is a focus phrase, it does not explain why the subject NP cannot be *wh*-questioned. This is because Korean allows multiple foci in a clause. Further, there are some cases in which the first NP should also be identified as a subject as in (5).

- (5) Kim_i-i [t_i cha-ka kocangna-ss-ko] [t_i ton-i up-ta]

Kim-NOM car-NOM break-PST-CONJ money-NOM have.no-DECL
'Kim's car broke down, and she has no money.'

In focus analyses, the NP *Kim* in (5) will be identified as the focus owing to the unsaturated element in the first conjunct. On the other hand, it should also be identified as the subject owing to the unsaturated element of the second conjunct. This dilemma will not be avoided as long as the first NP is considered as the focus distinguished from typical grammatical relations.

4 Evidence for the Proposal

4.1 First Evidence

Quite generally, any element that satisfies the *aboutness* condition can undergo the subject to object raising (Wechsler and Lee 1995).

- (6)a. na-nun Ken-ul [t ape.nim-i kyoswu-lako] sayngkakhassta
I-TOP Ken-ACC father(HON)-NOM Prof.-COMP believed
'I thought Ken's father is a professor.'
- b. na-nun LA-lul [t hankwuk.salam-i manhi santa-ko] sayngkakhassta
I-TOP LA-ACC Korean people-NOM a lot live -COMP believed
'I thought LA is where many Koreans live.'

The raised elements in (6) are identical to the first NPs in (1). This coincidence follows our assumption that what is raised in the Korean ECM construction is the sentential specifier. That is, the subject that does not satisfy the *aboutness* condition cannot undergo subject-to-object raising:

- (7)?na-nun Ken-ul [t pap-ul mekessta-ko] sayngkakhassta
I-TOP Ken-ACC meal-ACC ate.-COMP believed
'I thought Ken ate his meal.'

4.2 Second Evidence

The coordination dilemma shown in (5) will not take place in my approach. This is because nothing blocks the subject of a sentence from being realized as a sentential specifier as long as the following VP satisfies the *aboutness* condition for the subject NP.

4.3 Third Evidence

The ungrammaticality of the sentence (4) can be well explained in this approach. Specifically, when the subject becomes *wh*-questioned the resultant clause cannot characterize the sentential specifier. However, when the *wh*-questioned element does not significantly undermine the *aboutness* condition, the acceptability of the sentence remarkably improves:

- (8)Ken-i ape.nim-i muess-ha-si-ni?

Ken-NOM father(HON)-NOM what-do-HON-Q?
 ‘What does Ken’s father do?’

4.4 Fourth Evidence

The first NP of the construction can be referred to by the Korean reflexive *caki*(self).

(9) Ken_i-i apeci-ka caki_i-uy saup-ul taisin hanta
 Ken-NOM father-NOM self-GEN business-ACC substitute did
 ‘Ken’s father runs the business for Ken.’

In Korean, *caki* is known as a subject oriented reflexive. Therefore, (9) shows that the first NP should be considered as an ARG-ST list member that stands comparison with the subject.

5 Formalization

Please proofread, proofread, and proofread!

(10) SPR lexical rule (optional)

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{HEAD } verb \\ \text{DEPS } \langle \dots, \boxed{1}NP_i, \dots \rangle \\ \text{INDEX } s \\ \text{RELS } \langle \dots, \left[\begin{array}{ll} \text{PRED } aboutness \\ \text{ARG1 } i \\ \text{ARG2 } s \end{array} \right] \dots \rangle \end{array} \right] \\ \rightarrow \left[\text{VAL } \left[\begin{array}{l} verb \\ \text{SPR } \langle \boxed{1}NP[nom]i \rangle \end{array} \right] \right]$$

I have shown that the first NP in Korean double nominative constructions is identified as the sentential specifier which satisfies the *aboutness* condition. As shown in (10), HPSG’s valence value and an optional lexical rule provides an elegant treatment of the construction; SPR list in a sentence level can be utilized for the sentential specifier (on this point, the treatment is similar to Kim et al. (2007)).

The element that appears in the sentential specifier position is a subject, the specifier of a subject or adjuncts. Following Bouma et al. (2001), I assume that a subject and adjuncts appear in a DEPS list. In order to guarantee the specifier of a subject to be a member of the DEPS list, I further suggest that the unsaturated specifier of a subject can appear in the DEPS list through the following rule.

(11) DEPS list extension

verb \Rightarrow

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \text{VAL} \left[\text{SUBJ} \left\langle \text{NP}_i \left[\text{SPR} \left\langle \boxed{2} \text{NP}_j \right\rangle \right] \right\rangle \right] \\ \text{DEPS} \left[\boxed{1} \oplus \left\langle \boxed{2} \right\rangle \right] \\ \text{RELS} \left\langle \dots, \left[\begin{array}{ll} \text{PRED} & \textit{subordinate} \\ \text{ARG1} & i \\ \text{ARG2} & j \end{array} \right] \dots \right\rangle \end{array} \right]$$

Owing to the rule in (11), all the elements that can satisfy the *aboutness* condition become visible in the DEPS list. Now, the final step to accommodate this idea in the HPSG framework will be to posit the additional Head-specifier construction rule:

(12) Head-Specifier Rule

$$\left[\begin{array}{l} \textit{phrase} \\ \text{SPR} \langle \rangle \end{array} \right] \rightarrow \boxed{1} \text{NP} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{VAL} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{SPR} \langle \boxed{1} \rangle \\ \text{SUBJ} \langle \rangle \\ \text{COMPS} \langle \rangle \end{array} \right] \end{array} \right]$$

The rule in (12) allows the phrase whose SUBJ and COMPS lists are already saturated to combine with the sentential specifier. Under this analysis, the Korean double nominative construction is interpreted as the characteristic construction of the topic oriented language; the head specifier rule embodies the traditional idea of the sentential predicate (Park 1981, Yoon 2004). Keep grammatical mistakes and typos to a minimum (or better still, zero). Help us maintain the high quality of abstract collections for HPSG 2012 Conference/Ellipsis Workshop.

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