1. Introduction

Subject-Object asymmetry of non-occurrence of Case markers in Korean

(1) a. 철수가 어제 영희(를) 만났어.
   b. 영희를 어제 철수*를 만났어.


   (1a): Accusative Case marker can be unpronounced when nominals are in complement positions.
   (1b): Nominative Case marker in a "canonical" subject position must be pronounced.

   Non-pronunciation of nominative Case marker is an instance of Left-Dislocation (LD) and the like.


   Ahn & Cho’s (2006ab, 2007, 2009) analysis is based on the following tripartite articulated structure of nominal projections in Korean.

   (2)  
   \[ \begin{array}{c}
   \text{DP} \\
   \Phi P
   \end{array} \right \downarrow \Phi \\
   \begin{array}{c}
   \text{D} \\
   \text{ka/lul}
   \end{array} \left \downarrow \Phi \\
   \begin{array}{c}
   \text{NP} \\
   \text{pro}
   \end{array} \]


   (3) a. 철수가 어제 [VP [NP 영희] 만났어].
   b. An object without a Case marker in its canonical position is a bare NP that is part of syntactic complex predicate. The syntactic complex predicate option is only available with bare NPs in Korean (but not DPs, ΦP, for example) and is not available if a bare NP takes place outside of V domain.


   (4) a. *영희를 어제 [TP [NP 철수] 만났어].
   b. The bare NP subject cannot form a syntactic complex predicate with a verb since it is not in a complement position. Bare NPs cannot check uninterpretable features of T, hence nominative Case must be pronounced in the canonical position Spec-T.

   Caseless subject/object in non-canonical positions: Hong (2011) raises non-trivial questions about (5b).

   (5) a. [NP 철수], 어제 pro 영희를 만났어.
   b. The Caseless subject/object is a left-dislocated bare NP (that undergoes SubMove out of ΦP, stranding a resumptive pronoun in Φ. The landing site of this NP is the Spec-Force position where it is assigned a generalized theta-role "aboutness".)
Some predictions under SubMove analysis of Caseless NPs in dislocated positions: D-Linked WH

(7) a. (이중에서) 누구, 어제 영희를 만났니?    a'. (이중에서) 누구, 철수가 어제 만났니?


Bak (2008) doubts whether all (clausal-internal) Caseless objects can be analyzed as part of a syntactic complex predicate as shown in (8).

(8) a. 철수가 어제 서점에서 소설책 샀어. → syntactic complex predicate
   b. 철수가 어제 소설책 서점에서 샀어. → ???
   c. 철수가 소설책 어제 서점에서 샀어. → ???
   d. 소설책 철수가 어제 서점에서 샀어. → LD

The syntactic complex predicate option is not available if a bare NP takes place outside of V domain (cf. Im 2007).

Under the analysis of Ahn & Cho (2009), the bare NP in (8c) undergoes left-dislocation (CLLD).

(9) 소설책, 철수가 어제 서점에서 \([\text{top t, pro}]\) 샀어.

The contrast in (10B-B') supports our claim.

(10) A: 철수가 어제 서점에서 뭐 샀니?
    B: 철수가 어제 서점에서 소설책 샀어.
    B': #소설책 철수가 어제 서점에서 샀어.

Unlike ‘소설책’ in (10B), ‘소설책’ in (10B') is a LDed topic, which cannot be part of focus.
Regarding (8b-c), we suggest that the bare NP '소설책' can also be analyzed as LD or CLLD in a clause-internal position (NB: CLLD can be embedded). Thus, (8b-c) can now be represented as (11).

(11) a. 철수가 어제 소설책 서점에서 \([s\_p t \_pro]\) 샀어. (=8b)
   b. 철수가 소설 책 어제 서점에서 \([s\_p t \_pro]\) 샀어. (=8c)

Evidence for the topichood of the 소설책 is observed in (12): They are marginal or degraded.

(12) A: 철수가 어제 서점에서 뭐 샀니?
    B: ??철수가 어제 소설책 서점에서 샀어.
    B’: ??철수가 소설책 어제 서점에서 샀어.


Lee (2012) shows that Nominative Case marker can be absent in OSV word order, as shown in (13).

(13) A: 어제 민수가 이 집을 사려 왔다. 하지만 나는 그 사람은 내 집 안 팔아.
    B: 이 집(을) 그 사람(이) 쉽게 포기 안 해.

In (13B), nominative Case marker on ‘그 사람’ can be absent. The contrast between (1b) and (13B) raises a crucial question: In what environment can nominative Case markers be absent?

When ‘그 사람’ is replaced by ‘민수’, the sentence is still well-formed.

(14) A: 어제 민수가 이 집을 사려 왔다. 하지만 나는 민수한테 내 집 안 팔아.
    B: 이 집(을) 민수(가) 쉽게 포기 안 해.

Compare (1b), repeated here as (15) with (16B).

(15) *영희를 어제 철수 만났어.
(16) A: 어제 철수가 영화를 만나러 왔어. 하지만 내가 철수가 영화를 만나지 못하게 했어.
    B: 아니야. 영화를 어제 철수 만났어.

In out of blue contexts, non-occurrence of nominative Case markers makes the sentence unacceptable, as shown in (15). However, when a relevant context is given, as shown in (13), (14), and (16), non-occurrence of nominative Case markers is allowed.

We propose that these Caseless NPs can also be analyzed as embedded LD.

We further suggest that 영화를 in (16B) is a topic that can occupy higher than LDed 철수. Thus, functionally (16B) is in fact an instance of multiple topic constructions.

Evidence for a topichood of 철수: Bare 철수 cannot occur as a reply to a question, which indicates that 철수 indeed occupies an LDed topic position, but not a subject position.

(17) A: 어제 철수가 영화를 만나러 왔어. 그런데 철수가 영화를 잘 만났냐?
    B: 아니야. 영화를 어제 철수 #(가) 못 만났어.
Lee (2012) further indicates that the well-formedness of (18) cannot be captured under Ahn & Cho's (2006a,b, 2009) analysis since nonspecific subject ‘어떤 학생’ can be Caseless.

(18) 이따 어떤 학생 오기로 했다면서 지금 나가?

Ahn & Cho (2007, 2009) claim that subjects modified by nonspecific modifiers like ‘한/어떤’ cannot be Caseless, as shown in (19).

(19) (오래전에) 한/어떤 날자*(가) 살았다. (Ahn & Cho 2007:54)

Caseless subject, which is treated as an instance of LD isn't compatible with nonspecific modifiers due to semantic incompatibility; i.e., LDed phrases are inherently specific.

However, note that the Caseless subject in (18), ‘어떤 학생’ is not necessarily analyzed as an instance of LD. The well-formedness of (18) is related to the argument structure of the verb ‘오-’. Given the fact the verb 오- is unaccusative, the non-Case-marked nominal ‘어떤 날자’ is base-generated inside VP, and hence it can be part of complex predicate with the verb.

5. A Reply to Hong (2011)

Hong (2011) points out that the following resumption examples are problematic under Ahn & Cho's SubMove analysis. In (20), the remnant of SubMove is a noun “phrase” that cannot head ΦP.

(20) a. 철수, 그 착한 아이가, 이 것을 했을리가 없다.
   b. 내가 여제 만난 여자, 그 옆에 여자가, 철수를 좋아해.
   c. 철수, 영화가 그 착한 아이를 의심하고 있어.

Ahn & Cho (2009) propose that Korean has two types of LDs: Hanging Topic LD (HTLD) and Clitic LD (CLLD) which are found in many other languages such as German, Greek, and Spanish. HTLD is a base-generated topic while CLLD involves SubMove.

Further, for CLLD in Korean, Φ must not be pronounced (hence Φ is equivalent to pro). For HTLD in Korean, the construction involves overt resumption. Thus, (21a) is CLLD, while (21b) is HTLD.

(21) a. 철수, 영화가 pro, 의심하고 있어. CLLD
   b. 철수, 영화가 그 착한 아이를, 의심하고 있어. HTLD

Evidence for CLLD vs. HTLD: Only HTLD resists WH-LD.

(22) a. (이중에서) 누구, 영화가 pro, 의심하고 있나? CLLD
   b. *(이중에서) 누구, 영화가 그 착한 아이를, 의심하고 있나? HTLD

The apparent counterexamples pointed out by Hong (2011) are all base-generated topics, namely HTLD. Thus, they are not problematic for the SubMove analysis of Ahn & Cho (2006ab, 2009).
References


