

The Distribution of Multiple Subject Constructions in Korean*

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It has often been observed in the literature that multiple subject constructions(MSCs) are acceptable only with stative predicates. While the notion of stativity can play a role in accounting for the distribution of MSCs, the analysis based on verbal aspect sometimes leads to incorrect predictions. In this paper, it is argued that in order to explain the acceptability of MSCs consistently, sentential aspect rather than verbal aspect must be considered, and also contextual factors must be taken into account. It is also pointed out that those contextual factors can be subsumed by the notion of characterization in Jang (1998). Meanwhile, MSCs beginning with a subject associated with location need a special treatment since it can be regarded as a locative phrase as well as a subject, and hence a double subject construction can be licensed even if its predicate belongs to activity predicates or characterization relation does not hold.

Key words: multiple subject construction, stativity, verbal aspect, sentential aspect, contextual factor, characterization

1. Introduction

So-called multiple subject constructions(MSCs) in Korean-type languages have raised interesting syntactic and semantic questions. From the syntactic perspective, the immediate questions are how multiple subjects are grammatically licensed in a clause and what the clausal structure should be like. From the semantic perspective, the core question will be how we can specify the semantic factor(s) affecting the acceptability of MSCs. This is not an easy task in the respect that the distribution of MSCs in Korean

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doesn't seem to be governed by any simple semantic factor. While it has often been observed in the literature that MSCs are acceptable or natural only with stative predicates¹⁾, such a condition cannot account for the whole range of data. Consider the following examples.²⁾

- (1) Inho-nun hyeng-i pwuca-ta
 -Top brother-Nom is rich-Decl
 'As for Inho, his elder brother is rich.'
- (2) *?Inho-nun hyeng-i TV-lul poko iss-ta
 -Top brother-Nom TV-Acc is watching-Decl
 'As for Inho, his elder brother is watching TV.'
- (3) Inho-nun apeci-kkeyse tolaka-si-ess-ta
 -Top father-Nom passed away-Hon-Pst-Decl
 'As for Inho, his father passed away.'
- (4) Inho-nun chayk-i manh-ta
 -Top book-Nom is abundant-Decl
 'As for Inho, he has lots of books.'
- (5) ?*Inho-nun chayk-i pissa-ta
 -Top book-Nom is expensive-Decl
 'As for Inho, his book is expensive.'

The contrast between (1) and (2) can be accounted for by the constraint that MSCs are fully acceptable only with stative predicates. Meanwhile, such a constraint cannot deal with (3)-(5); (3) doesn't seem to involve a stative predicate, but the sentence is fully acceptable. Both (4) and (5) contain a stative predicate, but a sharp contrast of acceptability is observed between them. It seems obvious that the notion of stativity is not enough

1) See Yoon (1989) and Suh (1992), among others, for such an observation.

2) In this paper, Yale romanization is adopted for transcription, and the following abbreviations are used.

Nom: Nominative	Top: Topic	Gen: Genitive
Acc: Accusative	Dat: Dative	Loc: Locative
Pst: Past tense	Decl: Declarative	Hon: Honorific
Pl: Plural		

for handling the whole range of data.

In this paper, we argue that in addition to aspectual notions such as stativity, contextual factors must be considered in order to explain the acceptability of MSCs, and a notion such as ‘characterization’ in Jang (1998) can be employed for drawing a line between acceptable and unacceptable MSCs. Meanwhile, MSCs beginning with a subject-marked NP associated with location need a special treatment in the respect that MSCs are possible in that case even though their predicates are not stative or ‘characterization’ relation does not hold between the sentence-initial noun phrase and the rest of the sentence. Such a flexibility appears to result from the dual function of the sentence-initial noun phrase, i.e., a locative phrase as well as a subject of the sentence.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 includes a summary of the basic properties of MSCs and the comparison between nominative- and topic-marked subjects. In section 3, we overview the basics of verbal aspectual classification and how aspectual factors affect the acceptability of MSCs. In section 4, we analyze the MSCs whose acceptability should be accounted for not by aspectual factors or any other grammatical conditions, but by pragmatics. In section 5, we examine MSCs whose subject is associated with location. Section 6 wraps up our discussion.

2. Properties of Multiple Subject Construction and Topic Marking for the Subject

2.1. Defining Multiple Subject Construction

In Korean, one predicate with more than one subject-marked noun can make up a single clause, as shown in (6) below.

(6) Inho-nun apeci-kkeyse tolaka-si-ess-ta
 -Top father-Nom passed away-Hon-Pst-Decl
 ‘As for Inho, his father passed away.’

(6') Inho-uy apeci-kkeyse tolaka-si-ess-ta
 -Gen father-Nom passed away-Hon-Pst-Decl
 ‘Inho’s father passed away.’

Even though both *Inho* and *apeci* are subject-marked in (6), the first noun can be regarded as the matrix subject of the sentence since it is predicated of by the rest of the sentence. Notice that a kind of successive predication relation holds in (6): Initially the verb *tolaka-* enters into a predication relation with the second noun *apeci*, and then the verb plus the second noun predicates of the first noun *Inho*.

(6') appears to be somewhat analogous to (6), especially when we consider the truth value of them. That is, the propositional meaning of (6) and (6') is identical. Meanwhile, there is a crucial difference between (6) and (6') in terms of the topichood: (6) is a statement about *Inho* whereas (6') is about *Inho's* father. Such a difference seems to be responsible for the contrast of acceptability below.

(7) *?Inho-nun apeci-kkeyse TV-lul poko kyeysi-ta
 -Top father-Nom TV-Acc is(Hon) watching-Decl
 'As for Inho, his father is watching TV.'

(7') Inho-uy apeci-kkeyse TV-lul poko kyeysi-ta
 -Gen father-Nom TV-Acc is(Hon) watching-Decl
 'Inho's father is watching TV.'

(7'), which contains only one subject NP, is fully acceptable. On the other hand, its counterpart (7), a double subject construction, is not acceptable. It has already been observed that in Korean, a clause containing more than one subject can be fully grammatical, as in (6). Then, what is responsible for the contrast between (6) and (7)? Below, it will be shown that the unacceptable status of (7) is basically attributed to the type of the predicate. In other words, there is some constraint on what kind of verbs can be used as a predicate in a multiple subject construction.

2.2. Topic- vs. Nominative-marked Subject

Before we examine the grammatical constraint on MSCs, we should be able to clarify the syntactic status of topic-marked phrases in Korean, since a topic-marked NP as well as a nominative-marked NP appears to function as a subject of a sentence, including multiple subject constructions.

In the literature, there has often been a proposal that topic-marked NPs in Korean simply correspond to topicalized NPs or 'as for' phrases in

English and nominative-marked NPs correspond to subject NPs. As a result, a sentence containing a topic-marked phrase such as (8) has often been translated into (8').

(8) Inho-nun pwucilenha-ta
-Top is diligent-Decl

(8') As for Inho, he is diligent.

(8'') Inho_T-nun [e_i pwucilenhata]

The intuition behind the translation like (8') is that topic-marked NPs can function only as an adjunct occurring in the periphery of the clause, and what occupies the subject position in the above construction is an empty category coindexed with the topic, as shown in (8''). Such an analysis, however, cannot be maintained both empirically and conceptually, as we will see below.

Suppose that (8') is the exact counterpart of (8). Then, we are inclined to ask whether it is possible to represent the message expressed in (8) without using a topic NP. In other words, we would ask whether there exists a Korean sentence corresponding to English sentence "Inho is diligent." The answer to this question would be negative if we maintain the traditional view that only nominative NPs are the counterparts of English subject, since replacing the topic NP with a nominative NP in (8) fails in representing the intended meaning, as seen below.

(9) Inho-ka pwucilenha-ta
-Nom is diligent-Decl
'It is Inho who is diligent.'

Notice that (9) is not interpreted as "Inho is diligent." As pointed out by Ahn (1990) and Kim (1990), among others, when the predicate is individual-level,³⁾ a topic-marked subject produces a neutral reading and a nominative-marked subject creates a focus reading (or an exhaustive listing reading in the sense of Kuno (1973)). This means that in order to

3) See Diesing (1990) and references cited there for the distinction between individual-level predicate and stage-level predicate.

make (9) fully acceptable, there must be a specific context; that is, questions like “Who is diligent?” should precede (9).

Given this, we need to reconsider the syntactic status of the topic NP in (8). Obviously, if we adhere to the idea that topic NPs function only as *as for* phrase, we cannot but conclude that there is no (direct) Korean counterpart to the English sentence “Inho is diligent”, and in order to represent some meaning close to “Inho is diligent”, we must use an adjunct phrase corresponding to *as for* in Korean. This is certainly an odd conclusion. Of course, we can dismiss such a conclusion if we assume that the topic NP itself can occur in the subject position and hence (8) is the counterpart to the English sentence “Inho is diligent”.

Regarding the topic NP in (8) as the subject is also necessary for the analysis of the following sentence.

- (10) Inho-lo malhacamyen ku-nun pwucilenha-ta
 -about speaking he-Top is diligent-Decl
 ‘Speaking of Inho, he is diligent.’

lo malhacamyen in (10) corresponds to the English *as for* or *speaking of* phrase. Arguably, it is not (8) but (10) which is the counterpart of “As for Inho, he is diligent”. Notice that the subject *ku*(he) in (10) is topic-marked since the predicate is individual-level, and such subject marking constitutes another evidence against the traditional analysis of topic-marked NPs: Suppose that topic NPs function only as *as for* phrase. Then, we cannot but postulate the following odd structure for (10).

- (10') Inho_i-lo malhacamyen [ku_i-nun [e_i pwucilenha-ta]]
 -about speaking he-Top is diligent-Decl
 ‘Speaking of Inho, as for him, he is diligent.’

(10') includes more than one *as for/ speaking of* phrase which refers to the same entity. Such a redundant and odd structure, of course, results from identifying a topic NP blindly with an *as for* phrase. Obviously, the reasonable analysis of (10) is possible only when we consider that topic NPs can function as a subject.

Thus far, it has been shown that subject NPs in Korean can bear a topic marker as well as a nominative marker. As noted earlier, when the predicate is individual-level, the subject must take a topic marker. Sentences

involving individual-level predicate are typically depictive statements: (8), for instance, is a statement depicting a certain entity by referring to its property. Meanwhile, there is a situation where the subject must take a nominative marker. Consider the following.

- (11) han ai-ka kyosil an-ey iss-ta
 one child-Nom classroom inside-Loc is-Decl
 'There is a child in the classroom.'

(11) is not a statement describing some entity. Rather, it simply presents a situation where a boy came on the scene. Sentences like (11) are classified as presentational statements, and subject NPs in such statements must be nominative-marked.⁴⁾

The relation between subject marking and the sentence type observed thus far is summarized in (12).

- (12) The subject NP in Korean takes a topic marker in a depictive statement, and a nominative marker in a presentational statement.⁵⁾⁶⁾

3. Sentential Aspect and MSCs

Provided that aspectual notions such as stativity are relevant for explaining

4) The distinction between topic-marked and nominative-marked subject was initially addressed by Kuroda (1972). His observation that a topic-marked subject is associated with a categorial judgement and a nominative-marked subject is associated with a thetic judgement also holds in Korean. (Categorial judgements correspond to depictive statements and thetic judgements correspond to presentational statements.)

5) Some sentences are ambiguous between the two types of statements. Consider the following.

(i) Inho hit Mina.

(i) is ambiguous between a presentational and a depictive statement: It can be either a simple presentation of an event of hitting involving two persons, or a statement describing Inho as the person who did the action of hitting. As expected from the generalization in (12), when a sentence like (i) is translated into Korean, the subject NP can bear either a topic marker or a nominative marker, depending on whether a depictive meaning or a presentational meaning is intended.

6) By the arguments in this section, we do not mean that every topic-marked phrase in Korean functions as a subject. Rather, there are topic phrases amounting to true adjunct phrases like 'as for'/'speaking of'. Such topic phrases are syntactically and semantically distinguished from topic-marked subjects. See Suh (1992, 1994) for the details on the distinction between two types of topics.

the grammaticality of MSCs, it will be necessary to overview the overall system of verbal aspects. In the following, verbal aspectual classification in Dowty(1979) and its implications will be discussed.

3.1. Dowty's Tests for Aspectual Classification

In Dowty(1979), a four-way aspectual classification for verbs was established based on various syntactic and semantic tests: states, activities, achievements and accomplishments.⁷⁾ Let us briefly consider those four categories.

States are contrasted with the other categories in the respect that they are not 'dynamic'. They are in a sense unbounded situations and hence it is not possible to specify an interval for them. That is why so-called stative verbs are not compatible with progressive forms. A typical example of stative predicates will be *be* plus an adjective.

Activity predicates denote actions, which are either punctual or extended. Activities are distinguished from accomplishments and achievements in that they do not have a point of completion. The following are examples of punctual and extended activities.

(13a) John tapped on the window. (punctual activity)

(13b) John ran in the gym. (extended activity)

Achievement predicates usually mark the moment of change in a situation, and verbs such as *die*, *forget*, *win* belong to that category.

Accomplishment predicates can be understood in terms of two other aspectual types; they are combinations of an activity phase and an achievement phase. Consider the following example.

(14) John built a house.

(14) consists of an activity (the process of building a house) and an achievement (the completion of the house). Due to such complexity, an accomplishment predicate leads to more than one interpretation when it

⁷⁾ Vendler (1967) is the first to propose four-way aspectual classification, which is adopted by Dowty (1979).

is modified by an adverb such as *almost*, as in the following.

(15) John almost built a house.

(15a) He didn't quite finish the job.

(15b) He changed his mind before he started building a house.

The ambiguity in (15) arises precisely because *almost* can modify either phase of the complex predicate *build*.

3.2. The Derivation of Sentential Aspect

It is worth noting that the aspectual value of a sentence can be different from that of its predicate since combinations of verbal and other sentential components can change the initial aspectual property assigned to the verb. In other words, sentential aspect is ultimately determined by the operation of various components of the sentence. Consider the following.

(16) John built a house.

(16') John built houses.

(17) Mary painted the flower vase.

(17') Mary painted the flower vase for an hour.

(18) Bill is polite.

(18') Bill is being polite.

(16) exemplifies an accomplishment whereas (16') is an instance of simple activity. The only difference between the two sentences is whether the predicate *built* takes a singular or plural object, and obviously that difference is responsible for the aspectual change from accomplishment to activity.

The contrast between (17) and (17') also shows us that sentential aspect is compositional: An aspectual change from accomplishment to activity

results when a time adverbial *for an hour* is added.

While *be* plus an adjective typically makes up a stative predicate as in (18), it can create an activity reading when it is in the progressive form, as in (18').

The above data strongly suggest that the aspectual value of a sentence is determined by combining the verb with various sentential components such as verbal complements, adverbials, or tense/ aspect morphemes.⁸⁾

3.3. Aspectual Division and Licensing MSCs

Aspectual properties of the predicate seem to play a crucial role in licensing MSCs, as seen from the following data.

- (19) Inho-nun hyeng-i pwuca-i-ta
 -Top brother-Nom is rich-Decl
 'As for Inho, his elder brother is rich.'

- (20) *?Inho-nun hyeng-i maykcwu-lul yel pyeng masi-ess-ta
 -Top brother-Nom beer-Acc ten bottle drink-Pst-Decl
 'As for Inho, his elder brother drank ten bottles of beer.'

- (21) *?Inho-nun hyeng-i maykcwu-lul masi-ko iss-ta
 -Top brother-Nom beer-Acc is drinking-Decl
 'As for Inho, his elder brother is drinking beer.'

pwuca-i- in (19) is a stative predicate whereas *masi-* is used as an accomplishment predicate in (20) and as an activity predicate in (21). The contrast of acceptability between (19) and (20)/(21) appears to suggest that only a stative predicate is compatible with an MSC. However, the following example shows us that an MSC may tolerate a non-stative predicate.

- (22) Inho-nun hyeng-i cwuk-ess-ta
 -Top brother-Nom die-Pst-Decl
 'As for Inho, his elder brother died.'

8) See Lamiroy (1987) for more detailed explanation for the discrepancy between verbal aspect and sentential aspect.

cwuk- in (22) is an achievement verb. From (19) - (22), we can draw the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable MSCs in terms of verbal aspect: A stative and an achievement predicate are generally compatible with MSCs whereas an activity and an accomplishment predicate are not. Given this, we need to modify the proposal in the literature that MSCs are compatible only with stative predicates. Provided that accomplishment predicates are combinations of an activity phase and an achievement phase, the following generalization can be derived.

(23) Only non-activity predicates are compatible with MSCs.

In (23), non-activity predicates include stative predicates and achievement predicates, but not accomplishment predicates, since the latter always involve an activity phase.

Let us now turn to some tricky situation where the same predicate creates a sharp contrast of acceptability in MSCs. Consider the following.

(24a) *?Inho-nun hyeng-i cikum kongpwuhako iss-ta
 -Top brother-Nom now is studying-Decl
 ‘As for Inho, his elder brother is studying now.’

(24b) (?)Inho-nun hyeng-i mikwuk-eyse kongpwuhako iss-ta
 -Top brother-Nom America-Loc is studying-Decl
 ‘As for Inho, his elder brother is studying in the United States.’

(24a) and (24b) contain the same predicate, which is an activity verb. The fact that (24b) is a possible MSC implies that licensing MSCs cannot be accounted for by the aspect of the predicate alone. Recall from (16)-(18) that sentential aspect is compositional in the respect that it is determined by the operation of various components of the sentence, and hence it can be different from the aspect of the predicate. We can apply the same logic to this case. When an adverbial phrase such as *mikwuk-eyse* combines with the predicate in (24b), the whole sentence is likely to be understood as a description of Inho's brother's status, i.e., a foreign student staying in the U.S., rather than as a description of Inho's brother's action at the present moment. Consequently, (24b) can be classified as a state rather than an activity, and hence an acceptable MSC.

Thus far, we have observed how sentential aspect is determined and

how it influences the acceptability of MSCs. When we consider examples such as (24b), it seems necessary to revise (23) as in the following.

(25) When the aspectual value of a sentence amounts to non-activity, an MSC is licensed.

(25) refers to sentential aspect rather than the aspect of a predicate, and that is a desirable and necessary result, as we have seen from (24a)/(24b).

4. Pragmatic Factors and Characterization

Thus far, we have examined how sentential aspect is derived and how it affects the acceptability of MSCs. Basically, MSCs are permitted if the aspectual value of the sentence amounts to non-activity. Meanwhile, there are instances where the consideration of sentential aspect leads to an incorrect prediction on the acceptability of MSCs. This section discusses such cases.

4.1. Pragmatics of MSCs

Consider the following pair.

(26a) (?) Kim ssi-ka chayk-i manh-ta
 Mr. Kim-Nom book-Nom is abundant-Decl
 ‘It is Mr. Kim who has many books.’

(26b) *? Kim ssi-ka chayk-i ssa-ta
 Mr. Kim-Nom book-Nom is cheap-Decl

Both (26a) and (26b) involve stative predicates. Nevertheless, there is a rather clear contrast in the acceptability of the sentences. It seems obvious that grammatical notions such as aspect cannot account for such a contrast.

Note that it is possible to improve the acceptability of (26b) if we postulate enough context such as the following: Suppose that people are comparing book stores and someone asks at which store books are cheap.

In that case, (26b) may be a proper answer, meaning 'Books are cheap at the store owned by Mr. Kim.'⁹⁾ Without such a context, however, (26b) can hardly be assigned an appropriate interpretation, and hence it sounds awkward.

Meanwhile, it is not problematic at all to assign an interpretation to (26a) without particular context probably because keeping many books can be a relatively common property of people. In other words, without detailed context, Mr. Kim can immediately be associated with a type of person who has many books.

A similar explanation holds for the following data.

(27a) (?) Kim ssi-ka ttang-i manh-ta
 Mr. Kim-Nom estate-Nom is abundant-Decl
 'It is Mr. Kim who owns plenty of estate.'

(27b) *? Kim ssi-ka ttang-i pissa-ta
 Mr. Kim-Nom estate-Nom is expensive-Decl

It is not problematic at all to assign an appropriate interpretation to (27a) without detailed contextual information since owning plenty of estate can be one typical property of rich people. On the other hand, having or dealing with expensive estate can hardly be a property easily associated with a person. Hence, for (27b) we need to postulate particular context where, for instance, Mr. Kim is a real estate agent and handles expensive items or sells estate at an expensive price. Without such details, (27b) is hardly considered to be acceptable.¹⁰⁾

9) An anonymous reviewer points out that (26b) still sounds awkward even if the above context is given. I agree with the reviewer on its awkwardness, but I still consider it to be marginally acceptable with the given context. What is worth noting here is that the acceptability of (26b) is clearly improved by providing the above context.

10) Somewhat similar explanation holds for achievement predicates. As an anonymous reviewer points out, MSCs are not allowed for some achievement verbs, such as the following.

- (i) *?Inho-nun hyeng-i cam tulessta
 -Top brother-Nom fell asleep
 'As for Inho, his brother fell asleep.'
- (ii) ??Inho-nun hyeng-i ku sasil-ul palkyenhayssta
 -Top brother-Nom the fact-Acc discovered
 'As for Inho, his brother discovered that fact.'

(i) is not acceptable and (ii) seems marginal at best, even though both contain an

4.2. Jang's (1998) Proposal

It has been shown that grammatical notions such as aspect alone cannot account for the whole range of data involving MSCs, and sometimes pragmatics must be taken into account for an appropriate explanation of MSCs. Interestingly, Jang (1998) refined such an insight by proposing the following:

- (28) Multiple subjects and characterization: Multiple subjectivization is possible only when the first NP of an MSC is 'characterized' by the rest of the clause. The first NP is 'characterized' in the sense that its properties and/ or characteristics are defined by the rest of the string. (Jang 1998, pp. 100-101)

According to Jang (1988), the acceptability of MSCs involving (in)alienable possession relation or family member relation can be accounted for consistently by (28). He also claims that the availability of literal and idiomatic interpretation in MSCs involving idiomatic expressions can be explained well in terms of the notion of characterization.

In fact, the notion of characterization can also deal with the contrast between (27a) and (27b) in the previous section: A man can easily be characterized as a rich person by owning plenty of estate. Meanwhile, dealing with expensive estate as in (27b) is not a property easily associated with ordinary people, and hence may not be a good instance of characterization.¹¹⁾

achievement predicate. The above data suggest that not every achievement verb is compatible with MSCs. Rather, MSCs are possible only when what the achievement verb is describing can be considered as the property or characteristics of the subject. In a nutshell, having a stative predicate or an achievement predicate is not a sufficient condition but a necessary condition for forming an acceptable MSC.

- 11) An anonymous reviewer notes that MSCs are sometimes allowed even if characterization relation does not hold between the initial NP and the rest of the sentence, as shown below.

- (i) (?)Inho-ka/-nun onul swukce-ka manhta
 -Nom/-Top today homework-Nom is plentiful
 'Inho has lots of homework today.'

As the reviewer points out, 'having lots of homework today' cannot be the characterizational property of *Inho*, and yet MSC is possible in this case. Interestingly, (i) becomes very marginal without the temporal adverb *onul*, and such degradation is rather surprising, since deleting temporal adverbs such as *onul* should make the situation more general and hence the predicate should become better for characterization. At this time, I do not have an explanation for the acceptability of MSCs such as (i) and the degradation caused by deleting a temporal adverb.

It seems to be an open question whether the notion of characterization can cover everything on MSCs. Overall, the idea of characterization can capture subtle differences in the acceptability of various MSCs. For instance, among stative predicates, we may observe different degrees of acceptability, and whether the predicate is dealing with heavy issues or typical properties of the subject is directly related to the differences in the acceptability. The notion of characterization can surely be employed in that case. Also, the basic distinction between stative and activity predicates may be subsumed by the idea of characterization in the respect that activity predicates are less appropriate than stative predicates in characterizing the subject due to the fact that they are in general about temporary actions or events.

However, it seems to be necessary to keep the system of aspectual distinction for analyzing MSCs for the following reasons: First of all, the notion of characterization doesn't yet seem to be specific enough to replace the system of aspectual division. Also, even if different degrees of acceptability are observed among the same or similar types of predicates, the very basic distinction between non-activity and activity predicates still holds: In general, non-activity predicates are much better than activity predicates in terms of their compatibility with MSCs.

5. Locative Subjects

Some MSCs containing a locative subject show us an interesting paradigm. Consider the following.

(29a) ku hakkyo-nun inmwuntayhak-i yehaksayng-i
 the school-Top liberal arts-Nom female student-Nom
 chwuycik-i cal toyn-ta
 getting a job-Nom well is done-Decl
 'The school is such that most female students from the college of liberal arts get a job.'

(29b) ??ku hakkyo-nun inmwuntayhak-i yehaksayng-tul-i
 the school-Top liberal arts-Nom female student-Pl-Nom
 teymohako iss-ta
 is demonstrating-Decl
 'The school is such that female students from the college of liberal arts are demonstrating.'

- (29c) *ku hakkyo-nun cikum yehaksayng-tul-i teymohako iss-ta*
 the school-Top now female student-Pl-Nom is demonstrating-Decl
 'Female students are demonstrating at the school.'

The contrast between (29a) and (29b) is rather expected: While (29a) contains a stative predicate, (29b) includes an activity predicate and its sentential aspect amounts to activity. Consequently, the latter is at best marginal as an MSC. Meanwhile, the contrast between (29b) and (29c) is not straightforward: The sentential aspect of (29c) amounts to activity, and yet it seems to be an acceptable MSC. Note that it is not a decisive factor for the acceptability of MSCs how many subjects are in a clause. In that respect, it is rather mysterious why only one is unacceptable between two sentences having analogous structure.

We suspect that (29c) is not a genuine MSC in the respect that the initial topic NP can be regarded as a locative phrase and hence there is only one true subject in the sentence. Note that in Korean, locative phrases are often topic-marked, and locative markers such as *ey* or *eyse* can be deleted in the presence of a topic marker without creating substantial meaning difference. Such a topic-marked phrase performs a dual function: It functions as a locative phrase as well as a topic. Suppose that *ku hakkyo-nun* in (29c) is interpreted as a locative phrase. Then, the next NP *yehaksayng-tul-i* should be regarded as the subject of the sentence. With this line of argument, we can account for the contrast between (29b) and (29c): Disregarding the initial topic phrase, we still have two nominative-marked phrases in (29b) and hence the sentence is subject to the constraint on the sentential aspect of MSCs. On the other hand, since (29c) can be considered to have only one subject, the constraint on MSCs is not relevant for (29c).

There seems to be a potential argument against the above reasoning. Consider the following.

- (30) *ku hakkyo-nun ponpwu kenmwul-i namccok-i*
 the school-Top administration building-Nom south-Nom
pwulthako iss-ta
 is burning-Decl
 'The south side of the school's administration building is burning.'

The sentential aspect of (30) amounts to activity, and there are two subject-

marked phrases even if the initial topic phrase is ignored. Nevertheless, the sentence seems to be an acceptable MSC.

In order to resolve this dilemma, we should pay attention to the relation between the nominative-marked phrases. Notice that in (30), the two nominative phrases exhibit strict part-whole relation.¹²⁾ We suspect that when there exists a part-whole relation between two subject NPs, they can somehow behave as one unit, and hence (30) may not be an instance of a true MSC. The contrast in the following pair suggests that such a conjecture is not unreasonable.

(31a) Kim ssi-ka olun son-i sonmok-i pwue oluko iss-ta
 Mr. Kim-Nom right arm-Nom wrist-nom is swelling-Decl
 'Mr. Kim is such that his right wrist is swelling.'

(31b) *?Kim ssi-ka kun atul-i olun son-i pwue oluko iss-ta
 Mr. Kim-Nom eldest son-Nom right arm-Nom is swelling-Decl
 'Mr. Kim is such that his eldest son's right arm is swelling.'

Both (31a) and (31b) contain three subject NPs and an activity predicate, and yet (31a) is an acceptable MSC. That the three subject NPs can behave as one unit due to their strict part-whole relation seems to be responsible for the grammatical status of (31a). Meanwhile, the first and the second subject NPs in (31b) are not in part-whole relation, and nothing prevents (31b) from being subject to the constraint on sentential aspect requirement.

At this moment, however, what part-whole relationship can and can't do in licensing MSCs hasn't been fully explored, and we leave this issue for future research.

6. Concluding Remarks

We have seen that even though stative/ activity distinction of the verb plays a role in deciding the acceptability of MSCs, employing that distinction alone can lead to incorrect predictions. In order to overcome

12) Here, the term 'part-whole relation' is used in a very strict sense, and hence it may cover only physical part-whole relation, such as body-part cases.

such shortcomings, we should first distinguish the aspect of the verb from the aspect of the sentence. Such a distinction enables us to account for the cases where even if the aspect of the verb amounts to activity, the aspect of the sentence amounts to non-activity and hence an MSC is allowed.

As Jang (1998) argues, whether the subject is characterized by the rest of the sentence is crucial in drawing a line between acceptable and unacceptable MSCs. In other words, we need to consider contextual factors as well as grammatical factors such as stativity. We have seen that even if the predicate of the sentence is stative and hence the grammatical condition is met for licensing an MSC, the sentence can be unacceptable if the subject is not properly characterized by the rest of the sentence.

Finally, it has been pointed out that the topic phrase associated with location is special in the respect that it can be regarded as a locative phrase as well as a topic, and hence some seeming double subject construction can be licensed even if the aspect of the sentence amounts to activity.

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