Syntactic Case and Frequency Adverbials in Korean

Seowon Kim & Joong Maling
SUNY at Albany & Brandeis University

This paper is part of our ongoing work on case marking of frequency adverbials in Korean. We focus here mainly on the case marking of frequency adverbials in the context of Korean, particularly in the analysis of lexical case. As noted by Kim & Maling (1990), abstract nouns are not marked with case in Korean. However, when abstract nouns are in nominal environments, they are marked with a case corresponding to the function of the noun. The standard view in current case theory is that adverbials fall under the domains of syntactic case, but adverbs, including non-finite adverbs, do not. This view is consistent with the observation that adverbals are marked with a case corresponding to the function of the noun. However, when adverbials are in nominal environments, they are marked with a case corresponding to the function of the noun. This view is consistent with the observation that adverbials are marked with a case corresponding to the function of the noun.

In particular, we are interested in the case patterns that frequency adverbials in Korean exhibit, which we now turn to.

1. Frequency Adverbials and Syntactic Case

Adverbials expressing frequency or duration are typically used to modify lexical items. In Korean, abstract nouns occur most naturally without any case markers, as illustrated in (1).

(1) a. Chel100ns-kk e=xompir1-saj meq 1-su1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM box-DAT 3 TIME give-PASS-IND 'Chel100n gave the box to the boy a present three times.'

b. Chel100ns-kk e=xompir1-saj meq 1-su1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM box-DAT 3 TIME give-PASS-IND 'Chel100n gave the box to the boy a present three times.'

However, when adverbials are forced to take case markers, the case they bear is either ACC or NOM rather than an oblique or lexical case. Of strong interest is the fact that frequency adverbials take ACC in active sentences but take NOM in passive sentences; in the case marker that frequency adverbials can appear to alternate depending on voices. Some representative examples that illustrate this point are given in (2) and (3):

(2) a. Chel100n-kk 1 chayk1-saj meq 1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM this book-ACC 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'Chel100n read this book three times.'

b. Chel100n-kk 1 haj-saj 1 haj-saj meq 1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM 3 TIME haj-NOM 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'Chel100n reviewed the book three times.'

(3) a. 1 chayk1-saj meq 1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM this book-NOM 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'This book was read three times.'

b. Chel100n-kk 1 haj-saj 1 haj-saj meq 1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM 3 TIME haj-NOM 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'The report was reviewed three times.'

2. 1 show that in active sentences, frequency adverbials may not take NOM. In the corresponding passive sentences in (3), however, the frequency adverbial may not occur in the accusative, and NOM is the only possible case for the subject. Notice that in passive examples of the sort illustrated in (3), the subject noun is for argument roles either, as can be seen from dialects and passive forms illustrated in (4).

(4) a. Chel100n-kk oxye chayk1-saj 1 cvw-c1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM/DAT book-ACC 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'Chel100n's book was given a book.'

b. Chel100n-kk oxye chayk1-saj 1 cvw-c1-saw-10-ta. Chel100n-NOM/DAT book-ACC 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'Chel100n's book was given.'

This NOM-ACC case alternation indicates that frequency adverbials indeed bear structural case just like argument NPs. In lexical passive, unlike ci-passives and to-passives, frequency adverbials show an interesting range of case alternations, and in certain cases, they must bear ACC rather than NOM. The following generalization seems to emerge: when the subject is an inanimate NP, frequency adverbials may not occur in ACC but when the subject is an animate NP, especially human, frequency adverbials must occur in the accusative. Relevant contrasts are provided in (5) and (6):

(5) a. Non-1 ron-ta 1 pan-1-saw-10 1 bal-1-saw-10-ta. Non-1 NOM mouse-ACC 3 TIME go-PASS-IND 'The door opened two times by itself.'

b. Tolu-1 pan-1-saw-10 1 pan-1-saw-10-ta. Tolu-NOM 3 TIME go-PASS-IND 'The road was blocked three times already.'

(6) a. Soni-1 haj-saj 1 haj-saj 1-1-saw-10-ta. Soni-NOM 3 TIME haj-NOM 3 TIME read-PASS-IND 'Soni was knocked on the head three times.'

b. Soni-1 soni-1-NOM 3 TIME haj-saw-saw-10-ta. Soni-NOM box-DAT 3 TIME haj-NOM kick-PASS-IND 'Soni was kicked on the head three times.'
(12) *Tuteben* two pen-1/4l cap-i-1-sae-ta.
  Nihon 2 times-NIV/AOC accord-pass-fut-ind
  a. ACC adversative: the (same) thief was arrested twice.
  b. NOM adversative: two (different) thieves were arrested.

The sentences (11) (adapted from Young-joon Kim 1990:295 and (12) have two different interpretations. When the frequency adversative is marked ACC, it is quantified over the predicate. So (12a) can mean that the same thief was arrested twice. On the other hand, when the frequency adversative is marked NOM, it is quantified over the entire event. This yields an interpretation similar to a floating quantifier over which the frequency adversative is associated with the subject NP, since it is highly likely that different events may involve different objects. On this interpretation, (12b) may mean two different thieves rolled down the hill (perhaps each at a different time), and (12b) can mean that two (different) thieves were arrested.

This property of quantification may find a natural explanation if the sentences at hand are structurally ambiguous, as we argue here. A frequency adversative NP actually quantifies over VP since it occurs within VP. However, when there is no external argument at S-structure, VP quantification yields the effect of event quantification (i.e., quantification over the entire sentence), since in that case, the VP can be construed as the sentence.

Given that intrasentential or even unaccusative sentences are also accusative arguments in Korean, as recently argued by Hahn-sook Han (1991) and Eun-chun Hong (1993), it is not surprising to see that the frequency adversative in (11) bears accusative, when it quantifies over the predicate. This is so because in that case, the frequency adversative acts as a VP modifier, and occurs within VP, which is the case domain of the verb. On the other hand, when the frequency adversative quantifies over the event and is subsequently associated with the NP, a Q-float interpretation is obtained since it would act as an NP modifier. In many languages, including Korean, floaters are often case-marked via case agreement. From this, it then follows that the frequency adverbal in (11) and (12) can also bear nominative, hence the observed case alternation.

Further evidence can be provided in support of this analysis. First, the ambiguity of quantification can be removed by replacing the subject NP in (11) and (12) with a proper name or a definite singular NP, as illustrated in (13): (13a, b)

(13a) *Chul-soon* saw two pen-1/4l *o-sae-ta.*
  Nihon 2 times-NIV/AOC house-ASP
  'Chul-soon came to my house two times.'

(13b) *I tol-i* saw two pen-1/4l *kou-1-sae-ta.*
  *Nihon* 2 times-NIV/AOC house-ASP
  'This stone rolled down the hill two times.'

As expected, NOM is not possible for the frequency adversarial. In (13a, b), the frequency adversarial cannot be associated with the definite NP for an obvious semantic reason, hence a Q-float interpretation is inherently blocked. As a result, the frequency adversarial must bear ACC, as it only quantifies over the predicate.

Secondly, when the frequency adversarial undergoes movement (for scrambling) to sentence-initial position preceding the subject NP, then the frequency adversarial must be ACC, and NOM turns out to be impossible. This is illustrated in (14) and (15):

(14) *Two men-1/4l tol-i* saw two pen-1/4l *kou-1-sae-ta.*
  Nihon 2 times-NIV/AOC house-ASP
  a. ACC adversative: the (same) stone rolled down the hill twice.
  b. NOM adversative: it happened that two stones rolled down the hill.

(15) *Two men-1/4l tol-i* saw two pen-1/4l Nihon 2 times-NIV/AOC house-ASP
  a. ACC adversative: the (same) stone rolled down the hill twice.
  b. NOM adversative: two different thieves were arrested.

The Q-float interpretation is blocked when the frequency adversarial is moved to sentence-initial position. On this interpretation, (15b) can mean reason may be that a structural condition is imposed on quantifying floating such that the floating quantifier is restricted to the NP with which it is associated. This condition is violated in (14) and (15) when the adversarial got moved to a position that is not c-commanded by the subject NP. This means that the source for the cumulative quantification is now removed, and ACC is the only possible case for the frequency adversarial in (14) and (15), as expected. Examples such as (18a) can be further contrasted with those like (19), in which ACC becomes unavailable.

(16) *Phyanci-ka cip-ny* two pen-1/4l o-sae-ta.
  Nihon 2 times-NIV/AOC house-ASP
  'Letters arrived at my house two times.'

(17a) is odd with ACC on the adversarial for pragmatic reasons: the same letter cannot arrive more than once. Hence, the reading in which the predicate is quantified is naturally out, and this is why ACC is not possible in (17).

Similar facts also obtain in English, as illustrated below:

(17a) I saw a movie twice last month. (ambiguous)
  b. I saw a movie twice. (preferred: the same student)
  c. I bought a book twice. (preferred: not the same book)

(17a) is ambiguous as the frequency adversarial quantifies over either the event or the object NP. (17b, c) are however not ambiguous in the same way as (17a), and each has a [different] preferred reading as indicated above. This suggests that the ACC requires a more sophisticated semantic analysis, but the intuition seem clear enough.

Regarding the overtness of case-markers mentioned in fn 6, it is worth noting a recent proposal by Hwang (1997) in an attempt to explain some important typological differences in case-marking between Korean and Korean. Hwang suggests that all kinds of case assigner take place at S-structure in Korean, including the assignment of locative cases; this proposal has several interesting consequences and will explain, among other things, the following facts. First, it explains why LOCs are not preserved under NP-movement in Korean unlike Dutch. It will also explain why certain properties in constructions with an external argument, as sketched in (18b):

(18b)
transmission fails, as can be shown by the ungrammaticality of (2a'), (cf. (16) above) and the grammaticality of (2b) (will in to 6).

   Chalico has been given a book.
   *A stone rolled on itself
   *A stone rolled on itself

This distinction seems to indicate that the Case Filter (Chomsky 1981:178) applies only to "ungrammatical" results, an important implication that merits further investigation.

3. Further evidence for the ambiguity of lexical passives

We have argued that the lexical passive morpheme is structurally ambiguous between a transitivized and an intransitivized, active construction, as sketched in (4a,b). It is worth noting in this regard that active and passive show a crucial difference in terms of control properties. In active voice sentences, the agent can control participial adjuncts, but in the passive voice (understood) agent cannot. This contrast is illustrated in (22).

(22) a. *Unak-ul tula-yw ephem-ul lik-eats-3sg-3sg music-ACC listen-PASS-PST-Ind
   *They read books listening to the music.
   b. *Unak-ul tula-yw ephem-ul lik-eats-3sg-3sg music-ACC listen-PASS-PASSIVE
   *Books were read listening to the music.

Of particular interest here is the fact that a similar contrast also shows up in intransitive passive. An intransitivity passive eliminates the same sort of control property as an active sentence, whereas the part-PST occurs in the active. This is illustrated in (23a).

But when the part-PST occurs in the nominative, as in (23b), an agent may not control participial adjuncts.

(23) a. *Ahk-ku khol-ku yel-g-download-3sg-3sg music-ACC music-ACC put-PASS-PST-Ind
   *She got his music cut sharing himself.
   b. *Ahk-ku khol-ku yel-g-download-3sg-3sg
   *Semantically passive
   *Ahk-ku khol-ku music-ACC put-PASS-PST-Ind
   *This woman was cut sharing himself.

The contrast between (23a) and (23b) is precisely what is expected if the adversity passive has an external agent. If correct, then the control property appears to be a syntactic one, as suggested by the present analysis that lexical passives are indeed structurally ambiguous, as sketched in (4a,b) above.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown that the case marker that frequency adverbials in the kernel bear is syntactic case, and as expected under this analysis, they show case alternations in lexical passives result from a structural change. In adversity passive, either as active counterpart, or in adversity passive reading, or as ordinary syntactic passive.
Notes

(1) It is interesting to note that case-spreading extends to an even larger class of NPs in child language. Synonyms Chang (p. 7) reports a stage at which Korean children mark instrumental NPs with accusative case on even larger class of NPs in child language. Synonyms Chang (p. 7) reports a stage at which Korean children mark instrumental NPs with accusative case on even larger class of NPs in child language. Synonyms Chang (p. 7) reports a stage at which Korean children mark instrumental NPs with accusative case on even larger class of NPs in child language. Synonyms Chang (p. 7) reports a stage at which Korean children mark instrumental NPs with accusative case on even larger class of NPs in child language. Synonyms Chang (p. 7) reports a stage at which Korean children mark instrumental NPs with accusative case on even larger class of NPs in child language. Synonyms Chang (p. 7) reports a stage at which Korean children mark instrumental NPs with accusative case.

(1) Haewung-ka mokch-l-0 yur-re-1 mental-se-ss-yo. (Adult) monkey-nom hammer-FMT chile-Acc name-PST-3s-MNOM

(1) Haewung-ka mokch-l-0 yur-re-1 mental-se-ss-yo. (Child) monkey-nom hammer-FMT chile-Acc name-PST-3s-MNOM

2. We leave the case-marking on durational adverbs for further research. Kang (1993) claims that "'ACC' is licensed for durational adverbial nominals in V3, i.e. accusative is the marked case for durational adverbials. While this generalization is largely true (at least on the surface), the full picture is certainly more complicated. Although judgments may vary from speaker to speaker, there are sentences where the case marking on durational adverbs alternates between nom and ACC (Kang 1993), and even examples where accusative is simply impossible (Kelling 1989:525, ex. 14; Bratt 1973, ex. (18). See Kim 1970, Ch. 5.4; Hong 1971, Ch. 5.6; and Bratt 1973 for relevant discussion.

3. Some speakers allow ACC on frequency adverbials in certain lexical passive sentences even when the subject NP is intransitive.

4. (a) chay-k l-sey pen-rl ill-nse-tea.

   "Bookcase 1 speak-PST-3s-MNOM read-PST-IND"

   'The book was read three times.'

   It appears that some speakers also allow ACC on part-NPs in part-whole sentences of the sort illustrated in (11).

(11) Hae-inv-ka sas-nil cal-l-ea-tea.

   'Tree-NOM branch-PAT tree-PAT-PST-IND'

   'The branch of the tree was cut.'

   We put aside much (individual) variation here, noting that the breaking of the correlation between accusative on the subject NP and case marking on part-NP or frequency is certainly limited to some individual sentences.

4. In (a,b) above, the frequency adverbial seems to resist NON, despite the expectation that when the subject is in an intransitive NP, both NON and ACC should be possible for frequency adverbials in lexical position. As a 'relevant' factor for this, we suspect that speakers tend to construe lexical passives as passive passive (i.e. an intransitive sentence with a passive subject) rather than the more analytic passive, especially when the subject NP is intransitive. While the fact is appropriately contrastable, as in the sentence in (9) and (10), the action is borne out.

5. This fact is also observed by Young-joo Kim (1990:293-294).

6. Suwol Kono (p. c) points out that when a nominal quantifier receives a focus (by taking a deletion such as man 'only'), it can be moved to a position that is not c-commanded by the NP with which it is associated, and provides the following contrast as evidence:

   (1) Haewung-ka mokch-l-0 yur-re-1 mental-se-ss-yo. (Adult) monkey-nom hammer-FMT chile-Acc name-PST-3s-MNOM

   'I drank only one bottle of wine.'
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Sowon Kim
Department of Linguistics, University of New York at Albany
Albany, NY 12222

Joan Halling
Program in Linguistics & Cognitive Science
University of New York at Albany
Albany, NY 12222

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Edited by

Soojun Kono
Ik-Hwan Lee
John H. Wildman
Jean H. Maling
Young-So Kang
Young-Joo Kim

Department of Linguistics
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts
U.S.A.

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