SUBJECTS AND PREDICATION IN KOREAN AND JAPANESE*

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The assumption that nominative case is assigned by INFL has proved fruitful in explaining the distribution of nominative case in a number of languages, and in particular in accounting for the differences between the nominative and other cases. Korean and Japanese, however, provide evidence that this method of case-assignment to the subject is not universal. In this paper we argue that nominative case-assignment in Korean and Japanese is independent of INFL, and claim that -ka /-ga marks the syntactic subject of a predication structure independent of the argument structure of the clause. Among the advantages of this unified treatment of -ka /-ga marking is that it leads to an account of the multiple nominative construction found in both languages and to a principled explanation of the impossibility of this construction in the European languages. Further, we argue that the ability to license non-theta-marked lexical NPs by predication alone is not unique to Korean and Japanese: Non-argument non-expletive predication subjects can be found in English as well.

1. Introduction

The assumption that nominative case is assigned by INFL has proved fruitful in explaining the distribution of nominative case in a number of languages, and in particular in accounting for the differences between the nominative and other cases. Korean and Japanese, however, provide evidence that this method of case-assignment to the subject is not universal. In this paper we shall argue, following [Saito 82], [Kuroda 86], and [Fukui

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86] among others, but contra [Takezawa 87] and [Yim 85], that nominative case-assignment in Korean and Japanese is independent of INFL. Instead, we claim that -ka/-ga marks the syntactic subject of a predication structure which is independent of the argument structure of the clause. Among the advantages of this unified treatment of -ka/-ga marking is that it leads to an account of the multiple-subject construction found in both languages and to a principled explanation of the impossibility of this construction in the European languages. Further, we argue that the ability to license non-theta-marked lexical NPs by predication alone is not unique to Korean and Japanese: English also provides examples of non-theta-marked predication subjects.

2. The Independence of Nominative Case from INFL

2.1. The Independence of Nominative Case from AGR

In many well-researched languages nominative case has been shown to depend on the presence of verbal inflection. In languages such as English, however, tense and agreement never occur independently, so that there is no empirical basis for determining which is responsible for the assignment of nominative case. In Portuguese, however, agreement may occur independently of tense, and when it does the subject appears in the nominative case, as illustrated by the example from [Perini 87], where ganharem 'to earn' is an inflected infinitive agreeing with the nominative pronoun eles:

(1) Para eles ganharem muito, devem trabalhar muito
for they earn (3pl) much must (3pl) work much
‘In order for them to earn a lot, [they] have to work a lot’

The following abbreviations are used in the glosses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>NOM:</td>
<td>nominative</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAT:</td>
<td>dative</td>
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<td>NMZ:</td>
<td>nominalizer</td>
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<td>PRES:</td>
<td>present</td>
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<td>PASS:</td>
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<td>NEG:</td>
<td>negative</td>
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<td>HON:</td>
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<td>ACC:</td>
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<td>CE:</td>
<td>causative ending</td>
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<td>pl:</td>
<td>plural</td>
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From this we can see that in Portuguese it is AGR that is responsible for the assignment of nominative case, and since there is no counter-evidence in English, West Germanic, etc., considerations of economy dictate that we adopt the same analysis for these languages as well. In neither Korean nor Japanese is there any subject-verb agreement\(^2\), and hence no direct evidence for the existence of AGR. In fact it is argued in [Fiengo & Haruna 86] that there are no true pronouns of any kind in Japanese, which under current assumptions would entail the non-existence of AGR in this language. Further evidence that nominative case-assignment in Korean and Japanese does not involve AGR is provided by the "multiple nominative" construction, which will be discussed in more detail below. Since this argument has already been developed in [Kuroda 83], [Kuroda 86], [Saito 82], [Saito 83], [Saito 85], [Fukui 86], and elsewhere, we will not pursue it here.

2.2. The Independence of Nominative Case from TENSE

[Takezawa 87] argues that nominative case-marking in Japanese does not involve co-indexation with AGR, but instead depends on government by INFL[+Tense]\(^3\). He suggests that "a parametric difference is allowed between languages in which Tense is responsible for Nominative assignment (Japanese), on the one hand, and those in which AGR is responsible for it (Portuguese, Turkish), on the other" (p. 79). The 'multiple nominative' construction is taken care of by saying that Infl in Japanese has the potential to assign nominative case to more than one NP, provided that the government relationship holds.

An apparent counterexample to Takezawa's observation that the assignment of nominative case depends on government by Infl[+Tense] is the hosì construction. In this construction the matrix predicate hosì 'want' takes a clausal complement with what Takezawa assumes to be an untensed verb. The subject of this complement may be marked either with the postposition -ni or with -ga, as shown in the following example:

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\(^2\)Many linguists working on Korean including [Choe 85] claim that Korean has subject-verb agreement, namely, the honorific morpheme -si-, inserted between the stem of the verb and the tense morpheme when the person referred to by the subject NP is honored by the speaker. Here we are not denying that the honorific morpheme may be a type of subject-verb agreement, but we consider that honorific agreement is different from the person, number and gender agreement shown in Indo-European languages, where the agreement marker on the verb is assumed to have pronominal features and responsible for nominative case.

\(^3\)[Yim 85] makes a similar claim for Korean.
(2) watasi-wa otooto -ga/-ni uti -e kaette-kite hosī-i
   I -TOP brother-NOM/-DAT home-to return want-PRES
   'I want my brother to go back home.'

The grammaticality of -ga-marking of the embedded subject is unexpected under Takezawa's analysis, given the absence of tense in the complement clause.

Takezawa's account of this construction is as follows. He assumes that Japanese allows lowering of Infl into VP, so that it governs any complements of the verb. The subject, which no longer governed by Infl, can then be rescued from the case-filter by the insertion of the postposition -ni, according to a general rule comparable to of-insertion in English. Alternatively, the subject also may be assigned nominative case by the Infl in VP, possibly due to the transparency of VP when Infl adjoins to its head. These assumptions form the basis for his account of the "ergative" case array found in examples such as the following:

(3) John-ni /-ga nihongo -ga wakar -u (koto)
    John-DAT /-NOM Japanese -NOM understand -PRES (fact)
    '(the fact that) John understands Japanese'

Takezawa then proposes that hosī is an optionally S'-deleting verb. Thus, if S' is deleted, and the matrix Infl moves down into the matrix VP and adjoins to hosī, it will govern the complement subject, and hence may assign it nominative case. If, on the other hand, S' is not deleted, the complement subject will be ungoverned, and the postposition -ni will be inserted to rescue it from the case-filter. So according to this analysis the subject of the complement to hosī is assigned nominative case not by the (tenseless) Infl in its own clause but by the matrix Infl.

There is, however, evidence that this analysis cannot be maintained. "Ergative" verbs such as wakaru 'to understand' given in (3) above may occur in the complement to hosī. Consider the following example:

(4) watasi-wa John-ni kore-ga wakatte hosī-i
    I -TOP -DAT this -NOM understand want-PRES
    'I want John to understand this.'

The crucial point of this example is that the complement subject is marked with -ni and the complement object with -ga. Under Takezawa's assumption about the dependence of nominative case-marking on Infl [+ Tense], the
only way that the complement object could have been assigned nominative case would be under government by the matrix Infl. This is, however, impossible. Even if we were to allow the matrix Infl to move down into the complement VP, this example would still be predicted to be ungrammatical: government by Infl would have to extend up to the matrix clause, in order for the matrix subject to receive nominative case, but then the complement subject should not appear with -ni. Thus the *hosi* construction does show that nominative case-marking in Japanese is not dependent on Infl [+Tense].

Japanese and Korean exhibit striking similarities in the distribution of nominative case, and we would therefore like to be able to give a single account of nominative case-marking for both languages. An analysis based on government by Infl [+Tense] could not, however, be extended to Korean, since in this language nominative-marked NPs occur in tenseless clauses in a number of constructions, as illustrated in the examples in (5), where the verbs *ka-*(to go) and *mek-*(to eat) are clearly untensed:

   I -TOP -NOM party-LOC go -as to persuade-PST -DEC
   ‘I persuaded John to go to the party.’
   
   mother -TOP baby-NOM steamed-rice-ACC eat -CE do-PST-DEC.
   ‘The mother caused the baby to eat steamed rice.’

Since nominative case in Korean is assigned neither by co-indexation with AGR nor under government by Tense, if Takezawa’s analysis were adopted for Japanese it would be necessary to propose a third mechanism for nominative case-assignment in Korean. The analysis that we give in this paper, on the other hand, applies to both Japanese and Korean, and is thus favored by the same considerations of economy that lead us to assume that AGR, rather than Tense, is responsible for nominative case-marking in English as well as in Portuguese.

3. The Default Case-Marker hypothesis

We conclude from the evidence presented above that nominative case-marking in both Korean and Japanese is independent of INFL. The same
conclusion is drawn for Japanese in [Fukui 86], who presents an analysis of 
-ga as a default case-marker. Fukui draws a parallel between the "multiple 
subject" construction and the possibility for multiple -no-phrases in NPs—or 
rather Ņs. The following example is grammatical in Japanese, in contrast to 
the corresponding English phrase ([Fukui 86, p. 227]):

(6) Tokyo-daigaku (-de) -no sensyuu -no 
    university(at) -POSS last week -POSS
    Yamada-sensei -no so -no koogi 
    teacher -POSS that -POSS lecture

Lit: ‘Tokyo University’s last week’s 
  Professor Yamada’s that/the lecture’

Fukui argues that Japanese has no functional categories—or only extremely 
“deficient” ones—and consequently no specifier positions, since he proposes 
that specifiers close off projections at the double bar level, and that only 
functional categories may project to this level. In English the subject of a 
sentence and the phrase that occurs before the ’s possessive marker in an 
NP are both in the unique specifier position, hence the ungrammaticality of 
the examples in (7):

(7) a. *It there was a cat.
    b. *John’s yesterday’s study.

In Japanese, however, the -ga phrase and the -no phrase do not occupy a 
unique structural position: verbs and nouns project up to a single bar level 
which can iterate indefinitely, creating an indefinite number of positions 
where these phrases can appear. Fukui proposes that -ga marking takes 
place as a default process, assigning -ga to any noun phrase which is a sister 
of V, and that this accounts for the possibility of multiple -ga phrases.

Pursuing the analogy between -ga phrases in sentences and -no phrases in 
NPs, he argues that the assignment of the two markers can be unified, and 
proposes the following schema (p. 260):

In the environment |N/P| \( \bar{X} \),
(i) insert -ga if \( X = V \)
(ii) insert -no if \( X = N \)

While the parallel drawn by Fukui is of considerable interest, there are 
difficulties with his proposal. Firstly, note that in the schema given for
assignment of -no and -ga the environment is given in terms of both Ņs and Ĥs. Presumably the motivation for this generalization of the environment is the necessity for -no marking of all Ņ and Ĥ modifiers of N—for example, in the example given as (6) above, -no appears attached to the postpositional phrase Tokyo-daigaku-de ‘at Tokyo University.' It is also possible that Fukui wants to avoid ruling out grammatical sentences like (8) (from [Kuroda 86, p. 237]), where the -ga-phrase sono yubinkyoku-kara-ga ‘from that post-office’ is a Ĥ:

(8) Masao-ga kozutumi-o okuru-no -(ni) -wa Masao-NOM packets -ACC send -NMZ -(for) -TOP sono yuubinkyoku-kara -ga yo -i that post office -from -NOM good -PRES ‘(From) that post office would be a good place for Masao to send packages from.’

It is clear, however, that the proposed rule of -ga insertion would have to be heavily constrained, since despite examples like (8), the distribution of -ga phrases in sentences is much more restricted than that of -no phrases in Ņs. Consider for example the sentential counterpart of the Ņ in (6) above: if every -no phrase is replaced by a corresponding -ga-phrase the result is ungrammatical (we have altered the word order to produce a more natural clause—the point is unaffected):

(9) *Yamada-sensei -ga sensyuu -ga teacher -NOM last week -NOM Tokyo-daigaku -de-ga koogi si-ta koto university -at -NOM lecture do-PST fact Intended reading: ‘The fact that Professor Yamada gave a lecture at Tokyo University last week.’

In fact, this sentence may contain only one -ga phrase:

(10) Yamada-sensei -ga sensyuu teacher-NOM last-week Tokyo-daigaku -de koogi si-ta koto university -at lecture do-PST fact

The -ga phrase in (10) is, uncontroversially, the subject of the clause. To employ the notion of “subject” in explaining the distribution of -ga would,
however, be entirely contrary to the spirit of Fukui’s proposal.

4. -Ka/Ga Marking Establishing Subject-Predicate Structure

In the previous sections we have shown that nominative case marking in Korean and Japanese is independent of INFL. In this section we argue that -ka/-ga marks the syntactic subject of a predication structure which is independent of the argument structure of the clause. This enables us to give a uniform account for all nominative NPs, including nominative NPs in the so-called “multiple nominative,” or “multiple subject” construction. Our analysis also gives a straightforward account of the co-occurrence of the nominative case marker with postpositional phrases.

4.1. The Multiple Nominative Construction

Korean and Japanese allow the multiple nominative construction as shown below:

(11) Subject corresponding to possessive NP

   developed country NOM male NOM life-span NOM long DEC.
   a’. J: bunmeikovu ga dansei-ga zyumyoo-ga nagai
   developed country NOM male NOM life-span NOM long
   ‘As for developed countries, as for males, their life-span is long.’

   -NOM father -NOM die-PST-DEC
   -NOM father -NOM died
   ‘As for John, his father died.’

   -NOM son-NOM student -cop
   -NOM son -NOM student cop
   ‘As for John, his son is a student.’

Throughout this paper we use the abbreviation ‘K’ for Korean and ‘J’ for Japanese. The descriptive headings in this section are merely for expository convenience, and have no theoretical significance.
(12) Subject corresponding to locative or dative NP:
primarily with predicates of existence.
      -NOM Korean -NOM many-DEC
   a’. J: Los Angeles-ga kankokuzin-ga ooi
      -NOM Korean -NOM many
   ‘As for Los Angeles, there are many Koreans.’
      -NOM money -NOM a lot -DEC
   b’. J: John-ga takusan okane-ga aru koto
      -NOM a lot money -NOM have
   ‘As for John, he has a lot of money.’

(13) Transitive adjectivals
   a. K: John-i koyangi-ka mwusep -ta
      -NOM cat -NOM frightening-DEC
   a’ J: John-ga neko-ga kowai.
      -NOM cat -NOM frightening
   ‘John is afraid of cats.’ or ‘Cats are frightening to John.’

(14) Others
      linguistics-NOM getting-a-job-NOM difficult DEC
      linguistics -NOM getting-a-job-NOM difficult
   ‘As for linguistics, getting a job is difficult.’

In the examples above the outer nominative NPs are not arguments of
the inner predicates (i.e. verbs and adjectives) since all the predicates in the
examples are one-place. The predicates in the examples in (13) are generally
assumed to be two-place predicates taking a nominative case-marked object.
Here we claim that they are one-place predicates with the inner nominative
NPs as their single argument.

As for the status of the outer nominative NPs, some linguists such as
[Kuno 73] and [Kang 85] have claimed that the outer nominative NP is
derived by a transformation of “subjectivization” from a possessive or loca­tive NP. This claim, however, does not cover the whole range of data, as
pointed out by [Saito 82]. The outer nominative NPs in (13) and (14) above
do not stand in a possessor relation to the second nominative NPs. Fur­thermore, this analysis entails a change in the categorial status of the argu-
ment involved in the movement. Even for cases where the outer NP apparently stands in a possessor relation to the inner NP, sometimes possessor interpretation of the outer NP does not give the correct semantics. Evidence comes from idiomatic expressions in Korean such as pay-ka aphuta ‘to feel sour’, son-i khu-ta ‘to be generous’, pal-i nelp-ta ‘to have wide contacts’, etc. Examples follow:

(15) a. Mary-ka [son -i khu-ta] 
   -Nom hands -NOM big -DEC
   ‘Mary is generous.’
   -idiomatic reading
   ‘As for Mary, her hands are big.’ - literal meaning
b. Mary-uy Son -i khu-ta.
   -POSS hand -NOM big -DEC
   ‘Mary’s hands are big.’

(16) a. John-i [pay -ka aphu-da] 
   -NOM stomach -NOM ache -DEC
   ‘John feels sour.’
   -idiomatic reading
   ‘As for John, he has a stomachache.’ - literal meaning
   -POSS stomach -NOM ache -DEC.
   ‘John has a stomachache.’

In (15) and (16), when the double nominative sentences have idiomatic interpretations the outer nominative NPs cannot be understood as the possessor of the inner nominative NPs. Rather the outer nominative NPs are understood as subjects of which the idiomatic expressions are predicated.

This will be discussed later.

[Kang M 87] proposes an NP/ECM process for the type of examples in (11), following [Baker 85] and [Massam 85]. We do not discuss Kang’s analysis here.

The idiom examples are based on [Kang 87] and [Yoon 87].

S-H. Ahn, originally from D-W. Yang, notes (personal communication) that in questions the idiomatic reading is possible even when the possive construction, rather than the multiple nominative, is used as shown below.

nwukwu-uy son -i ilechke ke?
who POSS hand -NOM this much big-QU
‘Whose hands are so big?’ - literal meaning
‘Who is so generous?’ - idiomatic reading

At this point we do not have any explanation for this.
On the other hand, [Saito 82] proposes that the outer nominative NP is base-generated with the nominative marker (i.e. -ga) in the focus position. Here he divides nominative cased NPs into two categories, namely, focus and subject. This distinction appears to correspond to that between non-argument and argument. Therefore if we can show that nominative NPs in other languages do occur both as arguments and non-arguments, and that the only reason for the occurrence of non-argument nominative NPs is for them to function as the syntactic subject of the sentence, then we have independent motivation for treating all nominative NPs in Korean or Japanese as one syntactic category (i.e. subject), and this is the approach that we adopt in this paper.

We claim that nominative case is assigned to the subject of predicate in Korean and Japanese. The only possible argument for one-place predicates is a nominative NP, not an accusative or dative NP. We propose that every nominative case is assigned by the same mechanism regardless of the argument status of the NP. Therefore the same process that assigns -ka/-ga to the argument NPs does so to the outer non-argument NPs. This implies that the inner nominative NP and the one-place predicate that subcategorizes for it become the predicate with respect to the outer nominative NP.

Immediate evidence that a one-place predicate and its subject can form a new predicate and assign nominative case to the outer NP comes from intransitive predicates consisting of a noun and a one-place predicate (in some sense the minimal pair to the corresponding double nominative sentence). Examples are given in (17) and (18):

(17) a. aki -ka cam -tul -ess-ta.
   baby-NOM sleep get into PST-DEC.
   ‘The baby fell asleep.’
 b. aki -ka cam -i tul -ess-ta.
   baby-NOM sleep-NOM get into-PST-DEC.
   ‘The baby fell asleep.’
 c. totuk-i tul -ess-ta.
   thief-NOM come PST-DEC
   ‘A thief broke in.’

(18) a. Mary-ka hwa -na -ss -ta.
   -NOM anger -come-out PST-DEC
  
[Saito 82] p. 5, “I will, somewhat tentatively, call elements such as nihon-ga in nihon-ga dansei-ga tanmei desu ‘focus’ with nominative case in order to distinguish them from the subject, although the term ‘focus’ may not be the most appropriate one in this context.”
‘Mary got angry.’

b. Mary-ka hwa-ka na -ss-ta.  
   -NOM anger -NOM come-out PST-DEC  
   ‘Mary got angry.’

c. pul-i na -ss-ta.  
   fire-NOM occur PST-DEC  
   ‘Fire took place.’

In (17a), the intransitive verb *cam-tul-ta* ‘fall asleep’ is a compound consisting of a noun *cam* ‘sleep’ and an intransitive verb *tul-ta* ‘come in’. There is a corresponding double nominative sentence where the nominal *cam* that appears in (17a) as a part of the predicate is also marked nominative as in (17b). The same is true of the examples in (18). The contrast between (17a) and (18a) on the one hand, and (17b) and (18b) on the other shows that the same nominative cased NP in almost the same context could be both an argument ((17a), (18a)) and a non-argument ((17b), (18b)). Examples (17c) and (18c) show that one-place predicates *tul-ta* and *na-ta* are clearly independent one-place predicates.

This account of the outer nominative NP as the subject of a saturated function also extends to the subject-predicate relationship between a nominative NP and the idiomatic expressions consisting of a nominative NP and a one-place predicate, examples of which are given earlier in this section.

4.2. PP Subjects

Our analysis of Korean *-ka/-i* and Japanese *-ga* as markers of nominative case assigned to subjects of predication also accounts for the co-occurrence of these case-markers with postpositions:

    now -from -NOM difficult-DEC
    ‘It is from now on that it is difficult.’

b. J: [pp ima-kara] -ga muzukasi -i
    now-from -NOM difficult-PRES
    ‘It is from now on that it is difficult.’

If *-ka/-i* and *-ga* were simply ‘default case-markers,’ as proposed in [Fukui
86], their occurrence in these clauses would be difficult to account for, since there is no reason to suppose that these PPs require case. Under Takezawa’s analysis, INFL must discharge its nominative case—but this still leaves unexplained the fact that PPs may appear marked with -ga even when there is an NP to receive the nominative case.

5. Non-Argument Subjects in English

We have argued that in the multiple nominative construction a saturated function is acting as a one-place predicate, and that the outer subject receives no theta-role, but is licensed by predication alone. We may then ask whether this ability to license lexical NPs by predication, in the absence of theta-role assignment, is a marked property of Korean and Japanese, absent from English and other languages.

As we have argued, the multiple nominative construction is possible in Korean and Japanese, and impossible in languages such as English, because in the latter type of language clausal subjects must be co-indexed with AGR. Thus there is a strictly syntactic explanation for the impossibility of the multiple nominative construction in English, and we need not postulate any additional differences between English on the one hand, and Korean and Japanese on the other.

There is in addition positive evidence in English that the ability to create open predicates out of saturated functions is not restricted to Korean and Japanese. Consider the following sentences:

(20) a. It seems like the book will sell well.
   b. It looks like the book will sell well.
   c. It sounds like the book will sell well.

Clearly, seems, looks, and sounds are not assigning any theta-role to the matrix subject position, which is consequently occupied by an expletive it. Notice, however, that parallel to these sentences we also find the following:

(21) a. The book seems like it will sell well.
   b. The book looks like it will sell well.
   c. The book sounds like it will sell well.

These verbs may assign theta-role to their subjects, as in the following
(22) The dog is barking: he sounds like he wants to be let in.

However, it is clear from the interpretation of the examples in (21) that in these sentences the subjects do not receive a theta-role from the verb in this way: the sentences are interpreted exactly as those in (20). This point is made also in [Lappin 85].

It might then perhaps be proposed that the verbs in (21) are in fact raising predicates, so that the matrix subjects receive their theta-roles via co-indexation with the pronouns that somehow occur instead of traces in the complement clause. Notice, however, that the co-indexed pronoun need not be in subject position in the complement clause:

(23) a. Courter looks like Florio's gonna beat him.
   b. That book sounds like lots of people are gonna wanna buy it.
   c. That book sounds like its publication could cause quite a stir.

There is in fact no way under current assumptions that these sentences could be derived by syntactic movement of the matrix subject from the positions occupied by the pronouns. How then can these sentences be analyzed?

We propose that in these sentences the matrix subject NP is assigned a theta-role neither by the matrix verb nor by the verb in the embedded clause, but is licensed uniquely by the subject-predicate relationship, established via co-indexation with the AGR element in INFL. Thus these sentences are instances in English of the non-expletive non-argument predication subjects that we have found in Korean and Japanese. The requirement in the English construction that there should be a co-indexed pronoun in the embedded clause, we take to be the equivalent of the “aboutness” condition that must be observed in Korean and Japanese for a predicate to be linked to a non-argument subject. Notice that even in English there are examples without co-indexed pronouns:

(24) That book sounds like lots of people are gonna wanna buy a copy.

Given this analysis of the constructions in (21) we must then ask why (25b) is not possible alongside (25a) in the same way that (25d) is possible alongside (25c):
(25) a. It seems that tomorrow's party may be fun.
b. *Tomorrow's party seems that it may be fun.
c. It seems like tomorrow's party may be fun.
d. tomorrow's party seems like it may be fun.

An explanation for this contrast lies in the nature of theta-role assignment to clauses. [Stowell 81] argues that a theta-role can only be assigned to a chain with Case or headed by PRO. Thus, in order for the complement clause in (25a) to receive a theta-role, it must be co-indexed with the nominative case-marked expletive. In (25b) there is no expletive to form the head of a chain, and so the sentence is ruled out by the theta-criterion. In (25c) and (25d) the embedded clause is the complement to a preposition, and thus does not need to be co-indexed with the initial expletive. Thus, when the embedded clause is a complement to like the initial expletive is required only in order to receive nominative case and to act as a syntactic subject; when the embedded clause is not a complement to like the initial expletive is required for an additional reason: to form a chain with the that-clause. This function cannot be fulfilled by a lexical NP: hence the ungrammaticality of (25b).

6. Conclusion

In this paper we have argued that -ka/-ga should receive a uniform treatment as the marker for predication subjects. The subject of a syntactic predication may in addition be an argument of the verb, but the multiple nominative construction of Korean and Japanese shows that the predication relationship alone is sufficient to license the presence of a lexical NP. Further, we have argued that the ability to license non-theta marked NPs by syntactic predication alone is not an idiosyncrasy of Korean and Japanese, but that non-argument non-expletive predication subjects can be found in English as well.

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