

Pragmatics behind the Usage of *-nun**

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Kim, Jieun. 2011. Pragmatics behind the Usage of *-nun*. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*. 19(4). 21-42. This study concerns the meaning generated from a particle *-nun* in Korean combined with a prosodic accent and the characteristic pragmatic behavior of the sentences containing it. In my previous research, I have argued that the alleged Topic marker *-nun* generates an existential presupposition of a contrastive alternative. In this paper, I will illustrate how the existential presupposition enables the utterances containing *-nun* obtain different felicity values from the canonical case marked ones in various pragmatic contexts. Speaker's presupposition and common ground (Stalnaker1972, 1974) and accommodation (Lewis1979) will be adopted to explain the felicity differences between *-nun* and a case marker in the aspect of the amount of information obtained from the existential presupposition, not in the aspect of information structure differences.

Key Words: *-nun*, Contrastive Topic, semantic/pragmatic presupposition, accommodation

1. Introduction

This paper tries to explain the behavior of the sentences containing a particle *-nun* combined with a prosodic accent in various conversational discourse situations. Here is one of the conversation pairs that will be discussed in this paper.

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- (1) Chris: Minwu-ka yangpok-ul sa-l kelako sayngkakha-ni?
 Minu-Nom suit-Acc buy-will that think-Q
 'Do you think Minu would buy a suit?'
 Dan: #kulssey, [NAY-KA] hwaksilhi an sa-l-keya.
 Well, I-Nom certainly Neg buy-Fut-Dec.
 'Well, [A-accl]certainly wouldn't.'
- (2) Chris: Minwu-ka yangpok-ul sa-l kelako sayngkakha-ni?
 Minu-Nom suit-Acc buy-will that think-Q
 'Do you think Minu would buy a suit?'
 Dan: kulssey, [NA-*nun*] hwaksilhi an sa-l-keya.
 Well, I-*nun* certainly Neg buy-Fut-Dec.
 'Well, [B-accl]certainly wouldn't.'¹⁾

The difference between (1) and (2) lies in the particle attached to the subject in the answers: in (2), the particle is *-nun*, which is generally accepted to be a Topic marker in Korean, while in (1), the particle is a nominative case marker *-ka*. Only based on the literal meaning of the answers in (1) and (2), both answers are expected to be pragmatically infelicitous by not giving a proper answer to the question (violation of question-answer congruence). That is, the inquirer requires some information about 'Minu' and apparently both answers seem to provide irrelevant answer, i.e the information regarding 'I' (Dan). The answer with a canonical sentence with a subject case marker is judged to be infelicitous as expected. However, interestingly, when the case marker is substituted by *-nun* as in (2), the answer becomes felicitous. How does the choice of this particle affect the felicity of the utterance in a conversation? It is the aim of this paper to provide a consistent explanation for the usage of a particle *-nun* combined with a prosodic accent. Let me first provide the background information of accented *-nun* by introducing the lexico-semantic function of

1) A-accent was named for a falling or a high accent (H*+(L)) and B-accent was named for a rising accent (L+H*). These accent types are thought to be related to different information structure components respectively: A-accent is thought to be correlated with Focus and B-accent is thought to be correlated with the so-called Contrastive Topic. (e.g. Bolinger 1965, Jackendoff 1972).

it suggested in Kim (2010). The main argument in Kim (2010) is that *-nun* has a lexical function of generating implicit propositions, an existential presupposition and an exhaustive implicature. Of these two implicit propositions, an existential presupposition affects the information flow of a conversation by changing the amount of information, which makes us be disguised of *-nun* to have a pragmatic function rather than a semantic function.

2. The Background of the Particle *-nun* Combined with a Prosodic Accent

An accented constituent attached by *-nun* has been called Contrastive Topic (CT henceforth). CT has gotten special interest in linguistic research not only in Korean (Lee, 1999, 2000, 2003) but also in English, German (e.g., Jackendoff, 1972; Büring, 1997), Japanese (Hara, 2006) and etc. Here is an example of CT in English.

(3) Contrastive Topic: Focus within Topic

A: Where were you (at the time of murder)?

B: [[\I/]Focus]Topic[was[at/ HOME\]Focus]Comment

Krifka 2007

As well revealed from the indexes of 'Focus', 'Topic', and 'Comment', previous studies on CT have treated it as a sub-type of Topic²⁾, and have been interested in how this "special" type of Topic generates a special pragmatic meaning, distinguished from a canonical Topic. The term 'Topic' is generally understood either in a cognitive way (Reinhart 1982) or in a pragmatic way (Halliday, 1967)³⁾. Accordingly, research based on the

2) The usage of the terms (especially the distinction between focus vs. Focus) needs to be clarified here. The terms with the a capital letter (Focus, Topic, Comment etc) are those that constitutes information structure components. For example, Focus usually means newly updated information in a context and the term "Topic" can be roughly translated to the thing that the sentence talks about. For the definition of focus, I adopt Rooth's (1985, 1992).

assumption that *-nun* marks the Topical status of the attached item initiated the analysis of the accented *-nun* from identifying what kind of pragmatic function CT does or what kind of conversation strategy (or conversation structure) is constructed to derive the CT.

However, this study approaches this issue based on a different assumption that the particle *-nun* has a lexico-semantic meaning/function, not assuming that *-nun* is a Topic marker. I try not to depend on the canonical pragmatic concepts such as Topic or Focus here to explain the function of *-nun*. Only for a prosodic accent, which I call focus⁴), I set a minimal presupposition that an accent induces a set of alternatives, avoiding controversies regarding what the existence of an accent means (such as whether it marks new information or not). In the following subsections, let me introduce the previous suggestion regarding accented *-nun* in Lee (1999, 2000, 2003) first and then the suggestion in Kim (2010).

2.1 Generation of a Scalar Implicature from *-nun*

Lee (1999, 2000, 2003) has extensively discussed the accented *-nun* constructions. He proposed that accented *-nun* induces scalar implicature in a conversation adopting Horn's theory of scale (Horn 1972). He argues that *-nun* induces a scalar implicature and the *-nun* marked item is placed in the lowest status in a scale formed by its alternatives. If the Gricean quantity principle applies here, alternatives higher up in the scale have a negative property $\sim P$. It does not seem hard to understand the following example using a scalar value.

- (4) [SEY-MYENG-NUN] tongkwa-hay-ss-e.
 Three-counter-Nun pass-do-Pst-Dec
 'At least three have passed.'

3) In Reinhart (1982), the term 'Topic' was thought to be an entity that the speaker have in mind at the moment of speech and that the utterance is about. In Halliday (1967), this term was thought in the information status of the entity, that is, as given information contrastive to new information.

4) Let us remind that Focus and focus are used in a different way. See footnote (2) for more details.

As for the above example, Lee's account predicts that *-nun* places its attached item 'three' in the lowest level of the scale and negates the predicate for all the elements in the upper scale, which leads to the interpretation of 'three people have passed but not four, five, etc.' In (4), the argument that *-nun* attaches to is a number, which is inherently compatible with a scalar meaning. However, how would he deal with an individual item such as a personal name which does not inherently have a scalar meaning? The way how a scalar implicature works in individual items is more interesting. What would it mean to say that 'Mary' is the lowest one in a scale? Placing an individual 'Mary' in a scale is different from doing it in a common value scale. Let us consider the following example.

(5) Accented *-Nun* in Individual Items

Mary-nun tongkwa hay-ss-e.

Mary-Nun passing do-Pst-Dec

'Mary passed but not other people.'

Lee (1999) considers the scalar value of an individual using the concept of a set. He thinks that {Mary} is placed in a lower point of the scale than {Mary, Mary+John}. That is, 'Mary passed the exam' is in a lower scale than 'Mary and John passed the exam' in Lee's paradigm. Since *-nun* denies the upper scale values and 'Mary and John passed the exam' is in a higher scale than 'Mary passed the exam', 'John passed the exam' is naturally denied.

He shares this intuition with Hara (2006) in that accented *-nun* (accented *-wa*, the Japanese correspondent of accented *-nun*, in Hara's case) makes one of its alternatives to have a negative value for the predicate of the *-nun* marked item. In Lee's case, he uses scalar values to explain the process and in Hara's case, she integrates this meaning with the uncertainty meaning. According to them, the meaning that *-nun* derives looks similar to the exhaustive meaning derived from *-man* 'only'. Both of them propose an implication of the negative value of the alternatives to the marked item. The difference between them seems to be that while *-nun* sets a scalar value among the alternatives prior to the process of deriving exhaustive implicature in Lee's analysis, *-wa* does not set scalar values in Hara's. However, aside from the differences just mentioned, their accounts also have some limits in their explanatory power. Let us consider the following

example.

- (6) [MARY-NUN] [SWUHAK] sihem-ul tongkwa hay-ss-e.
 Mary-Nun math exam-Acc pass do-pat-Dec
 'Mary passed the math exam' (others may have passed other
 kinds of exams)

According to Lee's analysis, this sentence implicates that other people excluding Mary did not pass this math exam. However, this sentence means more than that and Lee's theory does not explain this; if John passed both math and science, we can use the above sentence. That is, the sentence is compatible with other people passing other types of exams.

Another weak point of this argument lies in that it is hard to be compatible with Hara's uncertainty explanation. As Hara illustrated regarding accented *-wa* (Hara 2006), accented *-nun* can also have uncertainty meaning depending on the context. If generation of scalar implicature is implemented as the lexical property of accented *-nun* as Lee argues, how these two meanings can be related to each other? These two representative analysis seems hard to be integrated.

In the following, I will try to derive the scalar or uncertainty meaning of *-nun* from the combination of lexical function of *-nun* and independent pragmatic source such as presupposition and accommodation. This suggestion will not directly implement the above meanings as the lexical meaning of *-nun*. This will provide wider range of explanatory power for the appearance of *-nun* in various contexts.

2.2 The Lexico-semantic Function of *-Nun*

In this subsection, I will compare the propositional meanings between a sentence with *-ka* and another sentence with *-nun* and conclude the function of *-nun* as generation of existential presupposition. Let me bring the answer sentences in (1) and (2) here (and number them (7) and (8) respectively) for the comparison.

- (7) kulssey, [NAY-KA] hwaksilhi an sa-l-keya.
 Well, I-Nom certainly Neg buy-Fut-Dec.
 ‘Well, [A-accl]certainly wouldn’t.’
- (8) kulssey, [NA -*nun*] hwaksilhi an sa-l-keya.
 Well, I -*Nun* certainly Neg buy-Fut-Dec.
 ‘Well, [B-accl]certainly wouldn’t.’

In (7), ‘I-Nom’ is assigned of a prosodic accent, called focus. A sentence containing focus is thought to have a presupposition, which is in a similar vein with the analysis of a wh-question presupposition (Hamblin, 1973; Karttunen, 1977). Here is a presupposition alleged to be in (7).

(9) Presupposition in (7)

There is someone in the set ALT (I) and (s)he did not buy a suit.
 $\exists x \in \text{ALT}(I) [\neg [\text{buy}(y,x) \& y = \text{suit}]]$

The presupposition of a sentence containing a falling prosodic accent as (7) is that there is someone who belongs to an alternative set of ‘I’, for whom it is not the case that he bought the suit. However, the presupposition generated from the sentence in (8) is different despite of the existence of the apparently same prosodic accent in the same place. Thus, the difference in the presupposition of (8) from (7) must be induced from the existence of the particle *-nun*. (8) has a presupposition as follows.

(10) Presupposition in (8)

There is a member in the set ALT (I), who is not ‘I’ and who stands in a relation R to some member of ALT(Neg), whose predicate does not hold the ‘Neg’ value.
 $\exists x \in \text{ALT}(I) [x \neq I \ \& \ \exists y \in \text{ALT}(\text{Neg}) [y \neq \text{Neg} \ \& \ R(y,x)]] \ \& \ R = \text{buy}(z,x) \ \& \ z = \text{suit}$

By merely substituting *-nun* with *-ka*, the sentence gets to have a different presupposition. It presupposes the existence of some alternative which has a different value from the *-nun* marked item, ‘I’, in this case.

This is the main argument in Kim (2010). It argues that the generation of the existential presupposition such as the one in (10) is the lexico-semantic function of the particle *-nun*. Since demonstration of this argument is beyond the aim of this paper, for more details and evidence for this argument, please refer to Kim (2010). Assuming that I accept the above analysis, I will proceed to discuss how this lexico-semantic analysis can be extended to the pragmatic analysis of the usage of *-nun* in various conversation contexts.

3. Pragmatics behind the Usage of *-Nun*

3.1 Pragmatic Presupposition and Accommodation

In the previous section, I have stated that with *-nun*, the answering sentence in (2) (=8)) generates an additional proposition ‘someone other than I would buy this suit’. This is a semantic presupposition, which is also called sentential presupposition in Stalnaker(1974). He distinguished a sentential presupposition from what he calls ‘speaker’s presupposition’. This speaker’s presupposition is a pragmatic concept. The sentential presupposition is semantically required to be true in order to let the sentence obtain a truth-value. This requirement does not concern the pragmatic environment: the semantic requirement for a sentential presupposition to be true should be satisfied regardless of whether the sentence is in a monologue, in a dialogue, or even out of the blue.

Now that a sentence with a presupposition appears in a conversational context, we will study the pragmatic impact of the presence of *-nun*. When it is compared to a sentence with a case marker, which does not generate a presupposition, the reason why Bill used *-nun* is clear: i) he wanted to deliver the meaning of a presupposed proposition as well as the at-issue meaning but ii) for some reason, he did not want to deliver the presupposed proposition as an explicit assertion. In (2), when Bill produced an utterance with a tacit presupposition in addition to an overt assertion, he presupposed that the information of the sentential presupposition was

already entailed in some kind of shared information between the speaker and listener. This is the pragmatic usage of presupposition, which Stalnaker calls speaker's presupposition.

What we have thought of as 'presupposition' in the last section explains the relation between a linguistic expression and a proposition, i.e. the particle *-nun* and the proposition alleged to be generated by it. However, Stalnaker's view is as follows: "all the facts can be stated and explained directly in terms of the underlying notion of speaker presupposition, and without introducing an intermediate notion of presupposition as a relation holding between sentences and propositions."

That is, he considered the presupposition as a speaker's cognitive property, not a linguistic expression's property. He thought that the presupposition reflects the speaker's belief about the content and the speaker's belief about the listener's belief about the content. According to him, in (2)(=(10)), Dan's utterance '[I *-nun*]' would not buy a suit' expresses Dan's belief that there is someone other than Dan who would buy a suit and also his belief that Chris would know this. This accounts for what 'shared information' means in the previous paragraph. This shared information is called common ground (Stalnaker, 1974). Here is Stalnaker's explanation of common ground.

(11) "The common ground of a conversation at a particular time is the set of propositions that the participants in that conversation at that time mutually assume to be taken for granted and not subject to (further) discussion. The common ground describes a set of worlds, the context set, which are those worlds in which all of the propositions in the common ground are true. The context set is the set of worlds that for all that is currently assumed to be taken for granted, could be the actual world."

Stalnaker 1974:202

His explanation here can be condensed in two phrases: 'taken for granted' and 'no more controversy'. However, it seems unclear to us whether the common ground is really 'taken for granted' by both a speaker and a listener or whether it is merely a tentative state of the summing up of the accumulated

knowledge at a specific point. Furthermore, apparently, Stalnaker's distinction of sentential and speaker's presupposition does not explain at all why the usage of *-nun* in (2) can improve the infelicity of (1). Rather the presupposition explanation seems to even weaken the lexico-semantic analysis of *-nun* since as having been described so far, if Chris already had the knowledge of some person who would buy a suit, he would not have asked such a question as (2). However, many cases that do not conform to this explanation have been reported and called 'accommodation' in previous research (eg. Lewis 1979). For example, consider the following sentence uttered out of the blue.

(12) "Sorry I'm late. I had to pick up my sister from the airport."

By using the phrase 'my sister', we expect the speaker's presupposition that she has a sister to be in the common ground of her and the listener. However, this is not necessarily true. The listener may not have known that the speaker had a sister before she said the above sentence. Apparently, the presupposition of this sentence violates the pragmatic requirement of a presupposition. However, it is felicitous. Based on this problem, some people such as Gauker (1998) argued that the pragmatic theory of presupposition as common ground is "simply wrong".

Let us have a look at another example. Assume that the following sentence is uttered in a situation where the listener is not aware that his daughter is engaged. The daughter herself is also well aware that her dad does not know anything about her engagement.

(13) "O Dad, I forgot to tell you that my fiancé and I are moving to
Seattle next week." Von Fintel 2000

Even though this is an extreme way to inform her father that she is engaged, it cannot be said to be wrong to say this. Apparently, in the above cases, the speaker creates a presupposition even though (s)he is aware that the presupposition is not in the listener's background or that different information is stored in the listener's knowledge. The speaker tries to change the common ground and implicitly fits it into new common ground without explicitly

providing new information, that is, not in an explicit way of updating information. This is called accommodation (Lewis, 1979; Stalnaker, 1972; von Stechow, 2000). Lewis, in his famous paper 'Accommodation', defines the phenomena of accommodation as follows.

(14) The Rule of Accommodation for Presupposition

"If at time *t* something is said that requires presupposition *P* to be acceptable, and if *P* is not presupposed just before *t*, then-ceteris paribus and within certain limits- presupposition *P* comes into existence at *t*."

Lewis 1979

He suggested that accommodation is a kind of adjustment of context that happens "quietly and without fuss when required". His description is right, but the follow-up questions such as when it is required or how it can happen without fuss should be answered to explain the accommodation.

Another question raised from the above explanation of 'presupposition' as information being 'taken for granted' and 'no more controversy' is this: if there is not room for any more discussion, why would the speaker generate the meaning? There may be other information in the common ground but it is not that every piece of information is generated in the presupposed form. Why is only that specific information generated as a presupposition? In some cases, it is clear but in some cases, it is not.

Coming back to our discussion of the pragmatic requirement of a presupposition, the requirement makes sense when we consider the fact that a presupposition is an implicit proposition. If it were intended to be a new assertion or an update of information, it should have been delivered in a more overt way. Under this view, the meaning encoded in the presupposition should already be in the common ground of the interlocutors and thus, it cannot be new. Therefore, under the view of a presupposition as common ground, a presupposition cannot serve the function of context update. According to this view, the conversations in (1) and (2) should comprise different common grounds and this should have been reflected in the usage of *-nun* in answerer's utterance. However, it does not seem to be like this.

These are the problems we will discuss in the next section.

3.2 Informative Presupposition: Unless Entailed, either Be Informative or Be Relevant!

In this section, I try to pursue the questions raised regarding the usage of *-nun* by exploring various types of examples. In these examples, the function of accented *-nun* has a crucial role for the flow of discourse based on the pragmatic concepts such as speaker's presupposition and accommodation.

The sentence in (15) is a representative type of an example to show that CT can be in a Focus position, i.e. the counterpart of a wh-phrase in an answer to a wh-question. By providing this type of an example, it has been concluded that CT does not necessarily be Topic but it can be even Focus. However, one of the problems in this conclusion is that there is not a unified consensus regarding the felicity of this sentence as a proper answer. The judgments of Bill's utterance in (15) are varied depending on speakers.

- (15) Ann: nwuka ku salin-ul mokkyek hay-ss-ni?
 Who the murder-Acc witness-do-Pst-Q
 'Who witnessed the murder?'
 Bill: [BEN-UN] hay-ss-eyo.
 [BEN -*nun*] do-Pst-Dec
 '[_{B-Acc}BEN] did.'

Let us consider the possibility that adopting Stalnaker's idea of pragmatic presupposition can explain something about the usage of accented *-nun* in the above conversation. If we follow Stalnaker's analysis, Bill's answer in (15) can be interpreted as follows. At a first sight, by using *-nun*, Bill seems to presuppose that the implicit meaning 'someone other than Ben did not witness the murder' already comprises the common ground between Ann and him. However, when Ann asks a question in (15), she does not seem to have any pre-knowledge as Bill presumes. What matters here is that it is not the case that Bill does not know of this. Here, accommodation can account for Bill's usage of *-nun*. He pretends the

presupposition to be in the common ground. He has some intention to update the context by delivering the implicit meaning silently and without fuss. This is an explanation that uses the concept 'accommodation', which also explains why there can be varied judgments among speakers; for those speakers who do accommodation, this conversation will be felicitous and for those who cannot do accommodation, it will not be accepted to be felicitous. What is interesting is that depending on whether a limited set of people are assumed to be given as background or not, the judgments can be so different. If it is assumed, the answer with *-nun* is highly accepted to be felicitous. However, if Ann's question is out of the blue, Bill's answer in the situation would not be a good answer.

A question naturally follows from this accommodation analysis; can accommodation account for why a *-nun* marked answer always triggers the reading of a limited set of specific potential witnesses?

To Answer to this question, assume a context where Bill does not have a limited set of specific people in mind as he uses *-nun*. This would mean that he presupposes that some unspecified person did not witness the murder. The potential witness could be anyone in the world and to say that one of them did not witness the murder does not provide any information to the listener. It goes against the Maxim of Quantity (Grice 1967). For instance, let us assume a situation where Ann skims a morning newspaper and reads a title of a news article about a murder. If Ann asks to Bill the identification of a murderer after reading only the title, Bill would not obstinately use the presupposition triggering marker *-nun* if he is a cooperative conversation partaker. That is, the conversation in (15) is not a possible conversation in the situation we are assuming. Why? First, i) Bill knows that his presupposition is not in the common ground and second, ii) Bill knows that even though his presupposition is implicitly delivered as new information through accommodation process, it neither helps to narrow down the answer nor implies the identification of the murderer since there is no limited number of candidates under consideration for the witness. That is, the 'someone' that corresponds to an alternative of 'Ben' that has the property of not witnessing the murder is one of the unlimited unspecific people. There must be numerous people in the world who have not

witnessed the murder. Therefore, the presupposition obtained by using *-nun* does not add any relevant information to increase listener's knowledge. The usage of *-nun* in this context is no more informative than the usage of a case marker. Based on these, after all, iii) the answerer knows that the accommodation process would not be able to update the common ground.

When a speaker's utterance contains a presupposition although he believes that it is not in the common ground, he must have a purpose for using it. The purpose is either to be economic or informative. When it is obvious that no refutation is expected and the usage of the presupposition obeys the Maxim of Quality (say only truthful things), accommodation is planned and used by a speaker for economic reasons. Accommodation is possible only if it helps in economizing the conversation process or facilitating the effective update of common ground. In particular, the accommodated presupposition triggered by the latter reason corresponds to the so-called informative presupposition.

Let us consider more cases of informative presupposition. Speakers know that their presuppositions as well as their assertions can serve the function of common ground update in some situations. They also know that the listener would recognize their intention as having a pragmatic purpose of common ground update. The following example (2), repeated here as (16), is also one of the cases where the usage of *-nun* is accepted to be felicitous by producing an informative presupposition.

- (16) Chris: Minwu-ka yangpok-ul sa-l kelako
 Minu-Nom suit-Acc buy-will that
 sayngkakha-ni?
 think-Q?
 'Do you think Minu would buy this suit?'
- Dan: kulssey, [NA -NUN] hwaksilhi an sa-l-keya.
 Well, I -*Nun* certainly Neg buy-Fut-Dec.
 'Well, [_{B-acc}I] certainly wouldn't.'

In the conversation pair in (16), as for Chris's question about the possibility of Minu's purchase of a suit, Dan provides information about

himself but not about Minu. As noted in the introduction, this apparently violates Question-Answer Congruence or Relevance (Roberts, 1996) since Dan does not provide information that is required in the question but provides information that is actually not required. Why do we accept Dan's answer to be felicitous in the given context then?

By having *-nun* on the subject, Dan's sentence has a presupposition that someone other than Dan himself ('I') would buy the suit. For the presupposition to be informative, the set of alternatives of 'I' should be a limited set of people as noted in the 'newspaper reading and questioning' context. Under the assumption that Dan tries to be cooperative, the listener will try to get the most information that she can. If the alternative of 'I' is the salient one, which was mentioned in the preceding utterance, 'Minu', Dan's utterance would be evaluated to be most informative. In this conversation pair, the answer that Chris wanted is obtained from the implicit meaning of the sentence (= presupposition) but not from the overt meaning (= at-issue meaning). Someone might ask why Dan uses a presupposition but not an assertion to provide the information. There can be various reasons. He might not want to commit to the answer because he is not sure about the information. Uncertainty can be expressed in this pragmatic way but should not be implemented as a lexical function of accented *-nun* (cf. Hara 2006). Also, speakers may prefer indirect answers to direct answers in order to avoid complication or trouble, or they may just want to be polite. An example utilizing presupposition as an answer to avoid complication or an embarrassing situation is provided in (17).

(17) Eric: neuy pwuin-i talun namca-lang kissu-hay-ss-ni?

Your wife-Nom other men-with kiss-do-Pst-Q?

'Did your wife kiss other men?'

Fred: WULI PWUIN-UN talun namca-lang kissu

My wife *-nun* other men-with kiss

ANH-HAY-SS-E.

Neg-do-Pst-Dec.

'My wife didn't kiss other men (but who knows about other wives?).'

The answers of these questions in (16) and (17) are provided by the presupposition of the sentence but not from the at-issue meaning. Therefore, if presupposition is not generated from the sentence, it is predicted not to be a felicitous answer. The prediction turns out to be right in the corresponding pairs of (16) and (17) with case markers instead of *-nun*. It confirms that the case marker *-ka* does not generate any presupposition.

- (18) Chris: Minwu-ka yangpok-ul sal ke-lako sayngkakha-ni?
 Minu-Nom suit-Acc buy will-that think-Q
 ‘Do you think Minu would buy this suit?’
 Dan: #kulssey, [NAY-KA] hwaksilhi an sa-l-keya.
 Well, I-Nom certainly Neg buy-Fut-Dec.
 ‘Well, [A-acc] certainly wouldn’t.’
- (19) Eric: neuy pwin-i talun namca-lang kissu-hay-ss-ni?
 Your wife-Nom other men-with kiss-do-Pst-Q?
 ‘Did your wife kiss other men?’
 Fred: #[WULI PWUIN-I] talun namca-lang kissu an-hay-ss-e.
 My wife-Nom othermen-with kiss Neg-do-Pst-Dec.
 ‘My wife didn’t kiss other men.’

Let us study another type of data that prefers a *-nun* marked answer, (20), to the case marked counterpart. This conversation, which has been originally discussed in English and German in Buring(1997), may be familiar to us.

- (20) Harriet: kaswutul-i mwue ip-ess-e?
 Popstars-Nom what wear-Pst-Q?
 ‘What did the pop stars wear?’
 Ignatz: [YECA KASWUTUL-UN][KAPUTAN-UL]ip-es-se.
 Female singers *-nun* caftan-Acc wear-PstDec.
 ‘The [B-Accfemale]CTpopstarswore[A-Acccaftans].’

Buring (1997) pointed out that even though the answer is not complete and provides only partial information, the answer is felicitous. In the

Korean example in (20), *-nun* is used. The overt answer in this case provides at least partial information unlike the examples of ‘suit’ and ‘wife’s kiss’. In terms of the quantity of information, it is not a good enough answer.

We have implicit information as well as the explicit information of ‘pop stars’ by having a presupposition. The ‘female pop stars’ will form a limited set of alternatives by the requirement of *-nun*. The presupposition provides information that at least⁵⁾ one alternative in this set wears different clothing from caftan. Under the assumption that Ignatz is a cooperative speaker, the alternative corresponds to ‘male singers’. Overall, Ignatz provides information that the female pop stars wore caftans and males wore something other than caftans, though he may have incomplete information (he may not know exactly what the male singers wore but at least he knows that they wore different clothing from the females). In this situation, if using a case-marker delivers information about only ‘female pop stars’, about which he has the complete information, he omits his partial knowledge about the male pop stars. When he uses *-nun*, he provides the most information that he has despite of its incompleteness, thereby he is faithful to the conversational maxim, especially the maxim of quantity: provide as much as possible! (in Grice’s wording).

3.3 Supplemental Information

In this section, we will study the examples in which the usage of *-nun* is optional so that both a case marker and *-nun* are allowed. The necessity of the information provided by *-nun* is different in this case from the previous ones. Let us start with the familiar ‘murder and witness’ example. I repeat the example in (21). Since now we know that the formation of a limited set of alternative is necessary for the informative usage of presupposition by *-nun*, I will add the limited set of people to the context for more natural conversation flow.

5) This ‘at least’ meaning can apply to the speaker’s epistemic state (ie. at the illocutionary level) but not at the propositional level.

- (21) [context] Ann is suspicious of Ben, Carl, and Diane about witnessing a murder since they were guarding the place where the murder happened.

Ann: enu kyengpiwen-i ku salin-ul mokkyek hay-ss-ni?

Which guardian-Nom the murder-Acc witness-do-Pst-Q

‘Which guardian witnessed the murder?’

Bill: [BEN-UN] hay-ss-eyo.

[BEN -*nun*] do-Pst-Dec

‘[_{B-acc}BEN] did.’

- (22) [context] Ann is suspicious of Ben, Carl, and Diane about witnessing a murder since they were guarding the place where the murder happened.

Ann: enu kyengpiwen-i ku salin-ul mokkyek hay-ss-ni?

Which guardian-Nom the murder-Acc witness-do-Pst-Q

‘Which guardian witnessed the murder?’

Bill: [BEN-I] hay-ss-eyo.

[BEN-Nom] do-Pst-Dec

‘[_{A-acc}BEN] did.’

Bill straightforwardly provides the answer in the at-issue meaning of his sentence different from the ‘suit’ and ‘wife’ conversation of Chris and Dan. Also, different from the ‘pop star’ example, Bill provides the complete answer. He provides the necessary information in his at-issue meaning and thus, one might be doubtful as to whether the presupposition here is necessary. In other pairs where its presupposition is the source of information, the alternation with a case marker does not form a felicitous discourse. As we have seen in (22), the case marker alternative *Ben-i* also makes a felicitous answer and actually it is the preferred one. The success of accommodation here should mean that the presupposition is economizing the context or is informative. It does not seem to economize the context by providing more information than the sentence with a case marker. Also, the presupposed information may not be necessary in the sense that it was not exactly required by the preceding question. However, the presupposed information is relevant to what has been requested since the information is

about the alternatives who are all potential witnesses. Ann is concerned with whether other members have witnessed the murder and provides information about it. Since both Ann and Bill have a limited set of people under consideration as potential witnesses, the presupposed information is informative in that sense and functions as supplemental information. It is no harm to add some supplemental relevant information using *-nun*. Compare the above examples to the following one in (23). I slightly changed the context in (23) as Ann has a negative question. The answer remains the same. These pairs make a clear comparison set between informative presupposition, an obligatory one, and supplemental presupposition, an optional one.

- (23) [context] Ann is suspicious of Ben, Carl, and Diane about witnessing a murder since they were guarding the place where the murder happened.

Ann: enu kyengpiwen-i ku salin-ul mokkyek
 Which guardian-Nom the murder-Acc witness
 haci-an-ass-ni?
 do-Neg-Pst-Q
 ‘Which guardian has not witnessed the murder?’

Bill: BEN-UN] hay-ss-eyo.
 [BEN *-nun*] do-Pst-Dec
 ‘[_{B-acc}BEN] did.’

- (24) [context] Ann is suspicious of Ben, Carl, and Diane about witnessing a murder since they were guarding the place where the murder happened.

Ann: enu kyengpiwen-i ku salin-ul mokkyek
 Which guardian-Nom the murder-Acc witness
 haci-an-ass-ni?
 do-Neg-Pst-Q
 ‘Which guardian has not witnessed the murder?’

Bill: #[BEN-I] hay-ss-eyo.
 [BEN-Nom] do-Pst-Dec
 ‘[_{A-acc}BEN] did.’

In (23), the answer has the presupposition that either Carl or Diane, or probably both of them, have not witnessed the murder. The assertion states that Ben and probably only Ben witnessed the murder, which is not the requested information. Here, thus, the source of required information is from the presupposition, not from the assertion. Unlike the minimally contrasted previous pair in (21), the presupposition of the answer in (23) is necessarily informative. In case the presupposition is necessarily informative, the case-marked counterpart would be infelicitous since it does not obtain the necessary information due to the lack of presupposition. We predict then that the answer with a case marker would not be allowed. This prediction turns out to be right in (24). In fact, analyzing the conversation in (24), we can find that the sentence ‘Ben witnessed the murder’ does not provide information about who did not witness the murder.

In the last two sections, we have studied how cases where a presupposition of a sentence is not in the common ground are allowed in various discourse contexts. It turned out that the permitted cases had informative presuppositions either necessarily or supplementarily.

4. Summary

As we have observed so far, the usage of *-nun* is intimately related to the pragmatic stage of a discourse context and the interlocutors’ epistemic state at the moment of the utterance. Thus, it is not surprising that *-nun* has been recognized as the direct indicator of Topic. However, I have shown that the effect that *-nun* exhibits in contrast with case marking needs more explanation than merely attributing it to the difference between a Topic and a non-Topic phrase. I have accounted for them through the informativeness of an existential presupposition generated by *-nun*. In this paradigm, we do not need special stipulations to account for the pattern that *-nun* exhibits in contrast to case markers. Once we have established that the function of accented *-nun* as generating presupposition, we use only the existing theories for independent reasons, such as accommodation, to account for the accented *-nun* in a discourse but do not stipulate any

additional theories specific to *-nun*.

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