Successive-Cyclic Case Assignment: Korean Case Alternation and Stacking

In general, Case theory excludes the option of a DP receiving more than one Case (e.g. Chomsky 2000, 2001; Marantz 1991). However, certain constructions demonstrate that this is possible (e.g. McCreight 1988, Bejar & Massam 1999, Richards 2013). In this talk, I will examine two separate, but related, phenomena which are problematic for theories which do not permit multiple case assignment - case alternation and case stacking. *Case Alternation* occurs when a DP displays one of two (or more) case markers in the same structural position. *Case Stacking* occurs when those two case morphemes are realized simultaneously. Korean demonstrates both phenomena as seen in (1).

> (1) a. Cheli-eykey/-ka/-eykey-ka   ton-i   iss-ta
>   C.-**DAT**/-**NOM**/**DAT-NOM** money-NOM exist-DEC
>   'Cheli has money.'
>
>   b. Swunhi-ka Yenghi-eykey/-lul/-eyekey-lul chayk-ul   cwu-ess-ta
>   S.-NOM   Y.-**DAT**/**ACC**/-**DAT-ACC**   book-ACC give-PST-DEC.
>   'Swunhi gave Yenghi a book.'

In (1a), the subject *Cheli* displays dative-nominative alternation and stacking. Similarly, the indirect object *Yenghi* in (1b) displays dative-accusative alternation and stacking. Moreover, case-stacking is attested on adjuncts (2) and certain doubly nominative-marked subjects.

> (2) ecey-pwuth-(ka)   nalssi-ka cohaci-ess-ta
>   yesterday-**from**(-**NOM**) weather-NOM become.good-PST-DEC
>   'From yesterday, the weather became good.'
>
> (3) sensayngnim-tul(-kkeyse)-man(-i) kulen il-ul ha-si-pnita
>   teacher-PL-(**HON.NOM**)-only(-**NOM**) that.kind work-ACC do-SH-DEC
>   'Only teachers do that kind of work.'

While the distribution of single-case-marked DPs is quite free, stacked case is restricted to focus contexts - including *wh*-questions and their answers, correction contexts, and co-occurrence with the overt focus marker *–man* 'only' (Yoon 1996, Schutze 2001). This observation has led some to conclude that stacked case is, in fact, a focus marker homophonous with and in the same distribution as strutural case (Schutze 2001). I posit that the examples in (1-3) and related constructions can be captured without appealing to a focus analysis, if we adopt a cyclic view of case assignment. Under this view, in Korean (and maybe all languages), DPs receive case in every case assignment domain (i.e. phase) they occupy. Case alternation is captured by restricting the pronunciation of stacked case morphemes via morphological rules.

     Case alternation and stacking are known problems for both the agree model of case assignment (Chomsky 2000, 2001) and the configurational model (Marantz 1991, Bobaljik 2008) as both require case be assigned to a DP only once. In the proposed analysis, I present an emendation to the configurational model, which allows us to capture such case-marking phenomena. Specifically, I remove the stipulation that case may only be assigned to a DP once. Instead, the configurational algorithm can apply to a DP whenever it undergoes A-movement.

     In (1a), the subject has undergone movement from Spec-vP to Spec-TP. In its base-position is assigned lexical dative by virtue of being the subject of a possession verb. In Spec-TP, the DP is evaluated for case again, and assigned unmarked nominative. Similarly in (1b), the indirect object can receive dative case from V^0 (or $Appl^0$), if the nominal undergoes movement it can also receive dependent accusative case by virtue of being c-commanded by the subject in Spec-TP. Support for this analysis comes from the

observation that accusative and dative-accusative indirect objects *must* receive a specific interpretation suggesting they have undergone object-shift to the edge of the vP (Diesing 1992). Examples like (3) can be accounted for if unmarked nominative is assigned twice – once to the subject in Spec-vP, and again in Spec-TP. Such assignment obeys the case disjunctive hierarchy proposed by Marantz if we take case assignment to be conducted phase-by-phase as suggested by Baker & Vinokurova (2010).

Examples like (2) require slightly more exposition. The adjunct DP receives lexical case within the vP, and unmarked nominative after the adjunct undergoes movement to some position above the subject in Spec-TP. Unlike subjects and indirect objects which permit case alternation and stacking, adjuncts only display case stacking. There are several ways to capture this behavior, one such way would be to posit that the lexical case of the adjunct is the P^0 itself which assigns null case to its DP complement. Under this view, the alternation can be maintained although because one of the two case morphemes is null it can never be realized.

Under the current proposal, all nominals which have undergone A-movement bear stacked case underlyingly. However, case-stacking is only possible in focus contexts. I posit that morphological rules restrict the over realization of such stacks. First, a PF deletion process akin to Pesetsky's One Suffix Rule (2010), originally proposed to explain case and number mismatches in Russian DPs modified by paucal numerals, intervenes forcing one of the two cases to go unpronounced. Whereas in Russian, the One Suffix Rule deletes all but the last case assigned. I propose to parameterize the One Suffix Rule to delete all but one of the cases assigned. Such a move may be necessitated independently of Korean due to the preservation of quirky case in Icelandic passives (Svenonius 2005). In instances of case-stacking, the One Suffix Rule must be overridden to realize multiple case morphemes on a single nominal. The preservation of case in focus contexts in not unusual. It has been observed in Korean and Japanese colloquial speech that structural case morphology can go unpronounced (Yatabe 1999, Kim 2008). However, when the nominal bears focus its case morphology must be realized. A similar process occurs in case stacking environments to overcome the One Suffix Rule permitting both assigned cases to be pronounced. Finally, it is important to note that many logically possible combinations of case markers in Korean are unavailable, because these particles are subject to morphological co-occurrence restrictions (Cho and Sells 1995).

The proposed analysis represents an improvement over previous case-based analyses (Gerdts & Youn 1988, 1999; Yoon 1996, 2004), because it captures all instances of case alternation and stacking in a unified manner. Furthermore, the analysis captures both phenomena without recourse to a focus analysis in which focus-markers are homophonous with and occur in identical environments as their structural case counterparts (Schutze 2001). The analysis also provides indirect arguments for the preferability of the configurational model of case assignment over the agree model. First, the agree model cannot capture (3), because it would require multiple phi-agreement with the same functional head (T^o). Similarly, the agree model cannot capture the obligatory specific reading of accusative and dative-accusative marked indirect objects in (1b). The modified agree model would capture dative-accusative assignment through phi-agreement between both V^0 (or $Appl^0$) and v^o with the indirect object. However, because accusative is realized on direct objects regardless of their specificity the agree model predicts no interpretive consequences for case alternation or stacking on indirect objects.

Selected Refernces

Bejar, S. & D. Massam. (2001) Multiple case checking. *Syntax* 2. **Marantz, A**. (1991). Case and licensing. *ESCOL 8*. **Pesetsky, D.** (2010). Russian Case Morphology and the Syntactic Categories. Available at LingBuzz. **Richards, N.** (2013) Lardil 'Case Stacking' and the timing of case assignment. *Syntax* 16. **Schütze, C.** (2001). On Korean "Case Stacking": The varied functions of the particles –ka and –lul. *The Linguistic Review* 18. **Yatabe, S.** (1999). Particle ellipsis and focus projection in Japanese. *Language, Information, Text* 6. **Yoon, J.** (1996). Ambiguity of government and the chain condition. *NLLT* 14.