

# Copular Constructions and Asymmetries in the Specificational Pseudocleft Constructions in Korean\*

Language and Linguistics  
17(1) 89–112  
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sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/1606822X15586672  
lin.sagepub.com



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The noun *kes*, occurring in many syntactic environments, can introduce the so-called pseudocleft constructions in Korean. This paper discusses the animacy asymmetry we find in the Korean pseudocleft constructions and suggests that the explanation for such asymmetry follows from the proper interpretation of specificational pseudocleft constructions as well as their information structure properties.

Key words: focus, information structure, iota operator, pseudocleft, specificational

## 1. Introduction

The formal noun *kes* in Korean is used in a variety of constructions, including cleft-like constructions which are employed to mark a certain constituent as discourse-prominent. There are two syntactic frames for these cleft-like structures with *kes*, as illustrated in examples like (1) (see, among others, Jhang 1995; Sohn 2004; Yoon 2008; Choi 2011; Kim et al. 2013):<sup>1</sup>

- (1) a. Pseudocleft:  
 [John-i \_\_\_<sub>i</sub> ilk-un kes]-un [i chayk]<sub>i</sub>-i-ta  
 John-NOM read-MOD KES-TOP this book-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John read is this book.’
- b. Inverted Pseudocleft:  
 [i chayk]<sub>i</sub>-un palo [John-i \_\_\_<sub>i</sub> ilk-un kes]-i-ta  
 this book-TOP very John-NOM read-MOD KES-COP-DECL  
 ‘This book is (really) what John read.’

\* Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the University of Hawai‘i Syntax Workshop, January 2012, and the Korean Society of Language and Information Spring Workshop in May 2012. I thank the audiences on these occasions for questions and criticisms which have led to improvements in the present version. Part of this paper, in particular the discussion of information packaging, is based on Kim & Sells (2007). I am grateful to Jae-Woong Choe, Kiyong Choi, Line Mikkelsen, Chongwoon Park, Myung-Kwan Park, William O’Grady, and Peter Sells for helpful discussion and suggestions. I also thank anonymous reviewers of this journal for constructive criticisms and comments which have helped me greatly improve the quality of the paper.

<sup>1</sup> We gloss *kes* as KES as a cover term. The expression has been taken to be a nominal with the meaning of ‘thing’ (Kim & Sells 2007; Kim & Yang 2010), or to be a complementizer (Jhang 1995; Sohn 2004; Yoon 2008), or to be ambiguous between the two (Choe 2007).

Example (1a) looks rather like an English pseudocleft, and consists of a cleft clause with a missing position co-indexed with the precopular XP2 expression *i chayk* ‘this book’. Example (1b) is taken to be the inversion of the pseudocleft (1a).

One aspect of these constructions (see §3.1 for details) concerns the formal status of *kes*. The expression *kes* is an inanimate noun and is usually translated as ‘fact’ or ‘thing’; yet in these pseudocleft constructions, the phrase headed by *kes* appears to denote either an inanimate or animate individual, as illustrated by the following two examples (see Jhang 1995; Kang 2006; Kim & Sells 2007):

- (2) a. [John-i sa-n kes]-un i chayk-i-ta  
 [John-NOM buy-MOD KES]-TOP this book-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John bought is this book.’  
 b. [John-i manna-n kes]-un i yeca-i-ta  
 [John-NOM meet-MOD KES]-TOP this woman-COP-DECL  
 ‘Who John met is this woman.’

The possibility of its referring to an entity or even an animate entity is supported by the fact that in this pseudocleft *kes* is inter-substitutable with a noun like *salam* (‘person’):

- (3) a. [i seysang-eyse ceyil alumtaw-un salam/kes]-un nwukwu-ci?  
 [this world-LOC most beautiful-MOD person/KES]-TOP who-QUE  
 ‘Who is the most beautiful (person) in the world?’  
 b. [ku il-ul ha-l swu iss-nun salam/kes]-un ne-ppwun-i-ta  
 [the work-ACC do-can-MOD person/KES]-TOP you-just-COP-DECL  
 ‘The person/one who can do the work is just (=only) you.’

Unlike the pseudocleft examples in (2), the inverted structures display an intriguing asymmetry as noted by Jhang (1995) and Kang (2006) among others:

- (4) a. i chayk-un [John-i sa-n kes]-i-ta (inanimate topic)  
 this book-TOP [John-NOM buy-MOD KES]-COP-DECL  
 ‘This book is the one that John bought.’  
 b. \*i yeca-nun [John-i manna-n kes]-i-ta (animate topic)  
 this woman-TOP [John-NOM meet-MOD KES]-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) This woman is the one who John met.’

The examples here involve the inverted pseudocleft construction with the *kes*-phrase in the precopular XP2 position, but note that (4b) is unacceptable. And even though (4b) is unacceptable, we can make it acceptable simply by putting the animate head noun *salam* in the precopular position, as in (5):<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The string in (4b) can be considered acceptable as focusing the whole event, with the interpretation of *i yeca-nun* ‘this woman’ as topical information—‘As for this woman, the news is that John met her’. See Kim & Sells (2011) for further discussion of this type of cleft construction.

- (5) i yeca-nun [[John-i manna-n] salam]]-i-ta  
 this woman-TOP [John-NOM meet-MOD person]-COP-DECL  
 ‘This woman is the person who John met.’

The acceptability of (5) shows that *kes* in (4b) must also be used as a (bound) noun, with a referential interpretation, and hence it is incompatible with *yeca* ‘woman’ due to the clash in animacy. If this is so, then why does *kes* in (2b) not have the same analysis? Why is there no animacy clash? This paper tries to answer these questions. In particular, the paper argues that the animacy asymmetry follows from the interpretations of specificational pseudocleft as well as equative (inverted) ones.

## 2. Copula constructions in Korean

### 2.1 Three types and interpretations

All of the *kes* cleft constructions of interest have the copula as the matrix verb. Hence, it is important to understand the properties of the copula as part of a study of *kes*. Similarly to English copular constructions (whose properties are familiar from works such as den Dikken 2005; Heycock 1994; Heycock & Kroch 2002; Higgins 1979; Mikkelsen 2005, among others), Korean copula constructions can be classified into three different types, as illustrated in (6):<sup>3</sup>

- (6) a. Predicational:  
 Mimi-nun haksayng-i-ta  
 Mimi-TOP student-COP-DECL  
 ‘Mimi is a student.’
- b. Equative:  
 Mimi-ka palo Jane-i-ta  
 Mimi-NOM very Jane-COP-DECL  
 ‘Mimi is Jane.’
- c. Specificational:  
 ku kyengki-uy sungca-nun Mimi-i-ta  
 the game-GEN winner-TOP Mimi-COP-DECL  
 ‘The winner of the game is Mimi.’

<sup>3</sup> Higgins (1979) proposed a fourfold distinction between English copular constructions:

- (i) a. Tom is a novelist. (predicational)  
 b. The Morning Star is the Evening Star. (equative)  
 c. The winner of the election is John Smith. (specificational)  
 d. That is Jane. (identificational)

Of these types, the identificational type is the least clearly characterized class of copular clauses, with the subject being a demonstrative pronoun or an NP with a demonstrative determiner. We leave this type out, focusing on the three traditional main types.

In the predicational copula in Korean, similarly to English, the pre-copular XP describes (predicates) a property of the subject XP1's referent. In (6a), the property of being a student is assigned to the subject *Mimi*. This in turn means that the copula in the predicational use functions as a link between the subject XP1 and the predicative XP2, and it can be taken to have the following meaning representation (see Higgins 1979; Mikkelsen 2005; Partee 1987, among others):

$$(7) \quad \text{be}_{pred}: \lambda P \lambda x [P(x)]$$

According to this treatment, the copula indicates that the property P denoted by its complement holds of the external argument *x*. The predicative use of the precopular expression XP2 can be distinguished from the referential use of the phrase in the equative type, in particular with respect to the *who* and *what* question. As noted by Higgins (1979) and others, unlike *who*, *what* can ask for a property:

- (8) A: Mimi-nun cikepsang mwues-i-ci?  
 Mimi-TOP as.profession what-COP-QUE  
 'Mimi is what (by profession)?'  
 A': #Mimi-nun nwukwu-i-ci?  
 Mimi-TOP who-COP-QUE  
 'Mimi is who?'

The copula sentence in (6a) can be a legitimate answer to the clear-cut predicational *what* question in (8A), but not to the *who* question in (8A'). Hence, in the predicational use, the subject NP is referential (*e*), while the predicative is nonreferential ( $\langle e, t \rangle$ ). This, in turn, means that when the predicate NP combines with the copula bearing the meaning defined in (7), predicational sentences like (6a) would have the following meaning composition (see Geist 2007; Kearns 2011):

- (9) a. a student:  $\lambda y [\text{student}(y)]$   
 b. is a student:  $\lambda P \lambda x [P(x)] (\lambda y [\text{student}(y)]) \equiv \lambda x [\text{student}(x)]$   
 c. Mimi is a student:  $\lambda x [\text{student}(x)](m) \equiv [\text{student}(m)]$

The result thus corresponds to the paraphrase, 'Mimi has the property of being a student'.

Different from the predicational use in (6a), the copula sentence in (6b) equates the referents of the two surrounding expressions. That is, the copula asserts that the subject XP1 and the precopular XP2 have the same referent. Note that (6b) can be a legitimate answer to a *who* question, but not to a *what* question:

- (10) A: #Mimi-ka mwues-i-ci?  
 Mimi-NOM what-COP-QUE  
 'Mimi is what (by profession)?'  
 A': Mimi-ka nwukwu-i-ci?  
 Mimi-NOM who-COP-QUE  
 'Mimi is who?'

The predicational and equative uses of the copula differ in terms of the inversion possibility. The following examples are the inverted version of the predicational copula sentence (6a) and the equative one (6b), respectively:

- (11) a. \*haksayng-i Mimi-i-ta  
 student-NOM Mimi-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) The student is Mimi.’  
 b. Jane-i Mimi-i-ta  
 Jane-NOM Mimi-COP-DECL  
 ‘Jane is Mimi.’

The contrast indicates that the predicative, nonreferential XP2 cannot be inverted to the subject position while the referential XP2 can be freely inverted. Note that the subject of the inverted equative sentence in (11b) can be also questioned with *who*:

- (12) nwu-ka Mimi-i-ci?  
 who-NOM Mimi-COP-QUE  
 ‘Who is Mimi?’

As a way of introducing the identity relation, we follow Higgins (1979) and Sharvit (1999) and assume that the *be* of identity takes two arguments of type *e*:

- (13)  $be_{ident} : \lambda x \lambda y [y = x]$

The equative sentence in (6b) would then have the following compositional processes:

- (14) a. is Jane:  $\lambda x \lambda y [y = x]$  (j)  $\equiv \lambda y [y = j]$   
 b. Mimi is Jane:  $\lambda y [y = j]$  (m)  $\equiv [m = j]$

Finally, with the specificational copula in (6c), the subject expression *the winner of the game* sets up a variable and the precopular expression *Mimi* ‘specifies’ the value for this variable (see Mikkelsen 2011, and references cited therein). In this copula sentence, it is intuitively clear that there is a winner (variable *x*) of the game, and the precopular XP2 specifies the value of the variable described by the subject XP1. In English, the main difference between predicational and specificational uses appears in tag questions, as noted by Mikkelsen (2005). The possibility of pronominalizing the subject in tag questions shows that the subject of a specificational copular clause is different from that of a predicational one.

- (15) a. The guest of honor was happy, wasn’t she/\*it? (Predicational)  
 b. The director of the movie is Otto Preminger, isn’t it/?he? (Specificational)

The personal pronoun *she* can refer back to the animate subject in the predicational use, but the situation is different in the specificational one. Only the neutral pronoun *it*, differing in the person value, can be used in the tag question.

A similar situation arises in Korean. Observe the question in (16) which can occur after the specificational use of the copula in (6c):

- (16) *ku key Mimi-i-lako?*  
 the thing Mimi-COP-QUE  
 ‘Is it Mimi?’

The subject *ku key* here, a short form of the referential pronoun *ku kes* ‘the thing’, can refer to the animate subject in the previous dialogue. That is, the subject of the specificational use in (6c) bears a variable  $x$ , and the question in (16) asks the value of this variable. Note that this question cannot be applied to the predicational use or equative use in (6a) and (6b).

Observing these properties as well as adopting the analysis of Partee (1987) and Heycock & Kroch (1999), we introduce the iota operator in representing the meaning of the definite NP subject in (6c):<sup>4</sup>

- (17) the winner of the game:  $\iota x[\text{winner-of-the-game}(x)]$

Together with the iota operator interpretation, we can treat the specificational use of the copula as similar to the equative use, which is also suggested by Heycock & Kroch (1999). The only difference between the two uses is that the subject in the specificational use represents a variable, and the XP2 offers this value. We would thus have the following meaning composition for (6c):

- (18) a. is Mimi:  $\lambda x \lambda y [y = x] (m) \equiv \lambda y [y = m]$   
 b. The winner of the game is Mimi:  $\lambda y [y = m] (\iota x [\text{winner-of-the-game}(x)]) \equiv [\iota x [\text{winner-of-the-game}(x)] = m]$

The resulting meaning thus tells us that there is a winner of the game and this person is Mimi. In what follows, we shall see that these interpretations carry over to the interpretations of pseudocleft constructions in Korean, playing an important role in accounting for the asymmetries we discussed at the beginning of this paper.

## 2.2 On the information structure

We have so far identified three uses of the copula construction. For the predicational and equative uses, there is no strong restriction on the information structure. That is, either the subject

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<sup>4</sup> A definite description is a denoting phrase in the form of ‘the X’ where X is a noun phrase or a singular common noun. The definite description is proper if X applies to a unique individual or object. This meaning can be represented in terms of the lambda operator in the theory of generalized quantifiers:

(i)  $\lambda f \lambda g [\exists x [f(x) = 1 \ \& \ \forall y [f(y) = 1 \rightarrow y = x]] \ \& \ g(x) = 1]$

In much formal work, we can use the so-called iota operator for a definite description:

(ii)  $\iota y [f(y)]$  denotes  $\alpha$  iff  $f(\alpha)$  AND  $(\forall z)(f(z) \text{ iff } z \leq \alpha)$

This says that  $\iota x(\varphi(x))$  means ‘the unique  $x$  such that  $\varphi(x)$ , and  $\psi(\iota x(\varphi(x)))$  is equivalent to ‘there is exactly one and it has the property  $\varphi$  and it has the property  $\psi$ ’. See Kearns (2011: Chapter 4) for detailed introduction.

XP1 or the precopular XP2 can represent NEW or GIVEN. This is supported by the fact that the first XP1 can be marked with either the topic marker or the subject focus marking, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (19) a. Predicational:  
 ku moca-nun/ka kacca-i-ta  
 that hat-TOP/NOM fake-COP-DECL  
 ‘That hat is fake.’
- b. Equative:  
 Mimi-ka/nun palo ku haksayng-i-ta  
 Mimi-NOM/TOP very the student-COP-DECL  
 ‘Mimi is the very student.’

The *wh*-question test also supports this flexibility in the information structure. As we have seen in §2.1, either the subject or the precopular XP2 can be *wh*-questioned in both cases.

As observed by Heycock & Kroch (2002) and others, however, the information structure of the English specificational copular clauses is fixed: the postcopular XP2, serving as the complement of the copula, must present NEW information. Consider the following conversation:

- (20) A: Who was the culprit? (John or Bill?)  
 B: The culprit was JOHN.
- (21) A: What was John (Was John the culprit or the victim?)  
 B: \*THE CULPRIT was John.

As seen from the contrast, in the specificational copula, we can focus only the postcopular complement in English. Such a fixed information structure is also found in the Korean specificational copular sentence:

- (22) A: John-i mwues-i-la-ko?  
 John-NOM what-COP-QUE-COMP  
 ‘What did you say John is?’
- B: John-i pemin-i-ya  
 John-NOM culprit-COP-DECL  
 ‘John is the culprit.’
- B’: \*pemin-i John-i-ya  
 culprit-NOM John-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) The culprit is John.’

As illustrated here, it is possible to focus the precopular XP2 but not the subject XP1. This leads us to accept the view that the subject XP in the specificational copular sentence is GIVEN, while the precopular expression is NEW. This information structure constraint allows us to assign a definite description interpretation to the subject of specificational copula sentences. This is why sentences like the following are rather unnatural:

- (23) #kyengki-uy etten sungca-nun Mimi-i-ta  
 game-GEN some winner-TOP Mimi-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) A winner of the game is Mimi.’

The subject NP here is an indefinite NP, violating the fixed information structure of the specificational copula sentence.

### 3. On the syntax of pseudocleft constructions

#### 3.1 Grammatical properties of *kes*

As noted at the beginning of this paper, all pseudocleft clauses in Korean are introduced by the expression *kes*, roughly corresponding to English *what*. The expression *kes* is traditionally taken to be a bound noun in terms of morphosyntactic category in the sense that it canonically combines with either a specifier or a sentential complement (Jhang 1995; Kang 2006; Kim 2009; Kim and Sells 2007, 2011).

- (24) a. \*(i) kes-kwa \*(ce) kes  
 this thing-and that thing  
 b. \*(nay) kes-i \*(ne) kes-pota khu-ta  
 my thing-NOM your thing-more big-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) My thing is bigger than your thing.’  
 c. \*(John-i talli-nun) kes-ul moll-ass-ta  
 John-NOM run-MOD KES-ACC not.know-PAST-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) (We) didn’t know that John was running.’

As noted here, *kes* in (24a) and (24b) refers to a nonhuman entity.<sup>5</sup> The expression *kes* in (24c) refers to the proposition denoted by the preceding complement clause. This suggests that there are at least two different types of *kes*: one referring to an entity (or thing) and the other functioning as a pronoun denoting an event.<sup>6</sup>

There is enough evidence indicating that *kes* in the pseudocleft is just a nominal expression. As we have seen in §1, one strong piece of evidence supporting its nominal status comes from the possibility of replacing *kes* by a common noun even in the pseudocleft construction:

- (25) a. [John-i \_\_\_ cohaha-nun kes/konchwung]-un camcali-i-ta  
 John-NOM like-MOD KES/insect-TOP dragonfly-COP-DECL  
 ‘What/The insect that John likes is dragonfly.’  
 b. camcali-ka [John-i \_\_\_ cohaha-nun kes/konchwung]-i-ta  
 dragonfly-NOM John-NOM like-MOD KES/insect-COP-DECL  
 ‘Dragonfly is what/the insect that John likes.’

<sup>5</sup> When *kes* refers to an individual, its reference value can be a nonanimate or a nonhonored human being as in *elin kes* ‘a childish one’.

<sup>6</sup> See Chung & Kim (2003) and Kim (2006).



Though there exist pragmatic conditions on the replacement, nothing blocks its replacement by an appropriate common noun, as illustrated here.

The literature has suggested that *kes* is a complementizer (CP) (Kang 2006; Sohn 2004). However, a canonical complementizer like *-ko* does not host a grammatical case marker (NOM or ACC), whereas all phrases headed by *kes* in the pseudocleft do:

- (26) a. [John-i ku sasil-ul molunta-ko-(\*lul)] malha-yess-ta  
 John-NOM the fact-ACC not.know-COMP-ACC say-PAST-DECL  
 ‘John said that (he) does not know the fact.’  
 b. [John-i \_\_\_ sa-n kes]-i palo i chayk-i-ta  
 John-NOM buy-MOD KES-NOM very this book-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John bought is this very book.’

Coordination data also indicate that *kes* is a noun-like expression. The conjunction marker *-(k)wa* conjoins only NPs, not Ss:

- (27) a. [sensayngnim]-kwa [haksayngtul]-i hamkkey ttena-ss-ta  
 teacher-and students-NOM together leave-PAST-DECL  
 ‘The teacher and students left together.’  
 b. \*[John-un chayk-ul ilk]-kwa [Mary-nun nolay-lul pwull-ess-ta]  
 John-TOP book-ACC read-and Mary-TOP song-ACC sing-PAST-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) John read books and Mary sang a song.’

We can observe that both pseudoclefts and inverted pseudoclefts allow nominal coordination:

- (28) a. [John-i sa-n kes]-kwa [Mary-ka ilk-un kes]-un  
 John-NOM buy-MOD KES-and Mary-NOM read-MOD KES-TOP  
 motwu kacca-i-ta  
 all fake-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John bought and what Mary read are all fake.’  
 b. i chayk-tul-i [John-i sa-n kes]-kwa [Mary-ka  
 this book-PL-NOM John-NOM buy-MOD KES-and Mary-NOM  
 ilk-un kes]-tul-i-ta  
 read-MOD KES-PL-COP-DECL  
 ‘These books are what John bought and what Mary read.’

If the cleft clause in the pseudocleft is a CP, we would not expect such a coordination. Further evidence can be found in floating quantifier properties (see Kim 2013 for details). The antecedent of a floating quantifier (or floated numeral classifier) needs to be within the same clause as illustrated in (29a). Interestingly, we allow a floating quantifier outside the cleft clause:

- (29) a. namca-tul-un [yeca-tul-i sakwa-lul mek-ess-ta-ko]  
 man-PL-TOP woman-PL-NOM apple-ACC eat-PAST-DECL-COMP  
**sey myeng-i** sayngkakha-yess-ta  
 three CL-NOM think-PAST-DECL  
 ‘As for men, three thought women ate apples.’
- b. [John-i sa-n kes-i] **sey kay-(ka)** kacca-i-ta  
 John-NOM buy-MOD KES-NOM three CL-NOM fake-COP-DECL  
 ‘As for the things John bought, three are fake.’

The antecedent of *sey kay-ka* in (29b) must be in the same clause: if *kes* were a C, it could not serve as its antecedent since it is in a different clause. Given the clausemate condition between a floating quantifier and its associated antecedent, the most feasible way to account for examples like (29b) is to treat the *kes* here as the head of the cleft clause, placing *kes* and the floating quantifier in the same clause.

What we have seen so far tells us that, regardless of its uses, *kes* is a nominal element. In particular, its use in cleft clauses is externally nominal though the clauses have verbal properties in terms of internal syntax.

### 3.2 On the structure of pseudocleft constructions

As observed in the previous section, cleft constructions mainly consist of a cleft clause, a focus (pivot) XP2, and the copula. As for the possible type of the pivot or focus phrase in the predicational copula, the focused XP can be either an argument or an adjunct. The postposition or semantic marker of the focused expression is optional (Kim & Yang 2010):

- (30) a. John-i Mary-lul manna-n kes-un [kongwen-(eyse)]-i-ta  
 John-NOM Mary-ACC meet-MOD KES-TOP park-at-COP-DECL  
 ‘It was at the park that John met Mary.’
- b. John-i senmwul-ul pat-un kes-un [wuphyen-(ulo)]-i-ta  
 John-NOM present-ACC receive-MOD KES-TOP mail-by-COP-DECL  
 ‘The way John received a present is by mail.’

An adverbial element can also be focused as long as it is categorically nominal:<sup>7</sup>

- (31) a. John-i Mary-lul manna-n kes-un [ecey]-i-ta  
 John-NOM Mary-ACC meet-MOD KES-TOP yesterday-COP-DECL  
 ‘It is yesterday when John met Mary.’
- b. John-i Mary-lul manna-n kes-un [siksa-lul ha-ko nase]-i-ta  
 John-NOM Mary-ACC meet-MOD KES-TOP meal-ACC do-COMP after-COP-DECL  
 ‘It is after having a meal when John met Mary.’

<sup>7</sup> Two points are in order. Unlike *ecey* ‘yesterday’, true adverbs like *chenchenhi* ‘slowly’ cannot be focused. See §5 for discussion.

Meanwhile, the inverted pseudocleft does not allow the PP adjunct to be focused, regardless of the presence of the postposition:

- (32) a. \*[tosekwan-(eyse)]-ka John-i Mary-lul manna-n kes-i-ta  
 library-at-NOM John-NOM Mary-ACC meet-MOD KES-COP-DECL  
 b. \*[ecey]-ka John-i Mary-lul manna-n kes-i-ta  
 yesterday-NOM John-NOM Mary-ACC meet-MOD KES-COP-DECL

This indicates that, unlike the pseudocleft, the inverted one allows only an NP argument to serve as its XP focus.

The gapped element in the cleft clause can be in the embedded clause, allowing a long dependency relationship between the gap and the linked XP:

- (33) a. [John-i [Mary-ka \_\_\_ cohahanta-ko] sayngkakha-nun kes]-un  
 John-NOM Mary-NOM like-COMP think-MOD KES-TOP  
 i kulim-i-ta  
 this picture-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John thought Mary likes is this picture.’  
 b. i kulim-i [John-i [Mary-ka \_\_\_ cohaha-n-ta-ko]  
 this picture-NOM John-NOM Mary-NOM like-PRES-DECL-COMP  
 sayngkakha-nun kes]-i-ta  
 think-MOD KES-COP-DECL  
 ‘This picture is what John thought Mary likes.’

In either case, the pivot phrase *i kulim* ‘this picture’ is linked to the object of the embedded clause. This pivot XP, however, cannot be an adjunct in the embedded clause.

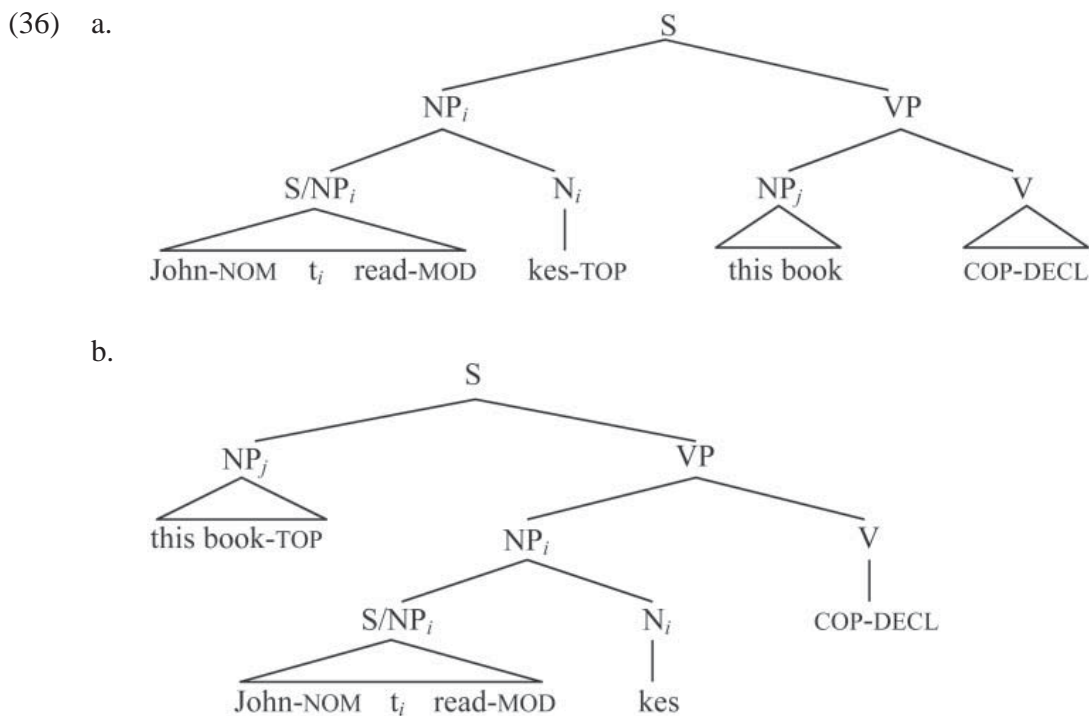
We can further observe that, just like relative clauses, the cleft clause observes the CNPC (complex noun phrase constraint):

- (34) a. [John-i \_\_\_ piphanha-n kes-un] ku nonmwun-i-ta  
 John-NOM criticize-MOD KES-TOP the article-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John criticized is the article.’  
 b. \*[John-i [[ \_\_\_ ssu-n] salam-ul] piphanha-n kes-un]  
 John-NOM write-MOD person-ACC criticize-MOD KES-MOD  
 ku nonmwun-i-ta  
 the article-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) What John criticized the person who wrote \_\_\_ was the article.’

This indicates that the cleft clause introduced by *kes* behaves like a nominal that forms an island even though internally it is a clause. This also supports our assumption that *kes* is not a complementizer, but a nominal head introducing the cleft clause. This is parallel to the fact that *kes* can be replaced by a common noun:

- (35) [John-i    \_\_\_    piphanha-n    kes/nonmwun-un]    ku-uy    nonmwun-i-ta  
 John-NOM    criticize-MOD    KES/article-TOP    his-GEN    article-COP-DECL  
 ‘What/the article John criticized is his article.’

In terms of the syntactic structures of the (inverted) pseudocleft construction, it is clear that the copula selects two syntactic arguments. The main difference between pseudocleft and inverted pseudocleft is the position of the *kes*-headed cleft clause and the pivot XP, as represented by the following tree structures for the pseudocleft and inverted pseudocleft in (1a) and (1b), respectively (Kim & Yang 2010; Kim et al. 2013):



In the cleft clause of the pseudocleft (36a), the missing element is first identified with the expression *kes*, and the NP projected from this carries the same index value as that of the missing expression. In a similar manner, the cleft clause in (36b) includes a missing expression linked to the *kes* expression. The structure reflects the idea that *kes*, similar to *what* in English, introduces a pseudocleft clause. Semantically, the expression introduces a variable (iota variable) co-indexed with the one in the cleft clause (see §5 for further discussion).

#### 4. Three uses of pseudocleft constructions

Just like the copula constructions, we note that the pseudocleft also has three different uses: predicational, equative, and specificational. This section discusses some main properties of these three, focusing on the specificational use.

## 4.1 Predicational uses

As we have seen earlier, one important property of predicational uses of the copula is that the subject XP1 is referential while the precopular XP2 is nonreferential (see Mikkelsen 2011). The precopular part describes a property of the entity denoted by the subject. This description property characterizes the pseudocleft too. Consider the following example:

- (37) [John-i sa-n kes]-un cengmal kacca-i-ta  
 [John-NOM buy-MOD KES]-TOP really fake-COP-DECL  
 ‘What John bought is really a fake.’

Here *kacca-i-ta* ‘a fake’ cannot be pronominalized by a referential pronoun and thus is predicative. This means that there must be some referent of the subject of this predication—a subject headed by the noun *kes*. Let us consider whether we can invert the XP2 or *what*-question the XP2 expression:

- (38) a. \*kacca-nun/ka [John-i sa-n kes]-i-ta  
 fake-TOP/NOM John-NOM buy-MOD KES-COP-DECL  
 b. John-i sa-n kes-un mwues-i-ci?  
 John-NOM buy-MOD KES-TOP what-COP-QUE  
 ‘What is it that John bought?’

What the uninvertibility in (38a) shows is that (37) is a predicational use in which the XP2 describes a property. This is also supported by the fact that the XP2 can be questioned by *what* as in (38b).

Now let us consider the examples in (39), which are (intended to be) predicative constructions but have no copula verb.

- (39) a. \*[[John-i t<sub>i</sub> kyelhon ha-n] kes<sub>i</sub>]-un alumtap-ta  
 [John-NOM marry-MOD KES]-TOP beautiful-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) The one who John married is beautiful.’  
 b. [[John-i t<sub>i</sub> ilhepeli-n] kes<sub>i</sub>]-un acwu pissa-ta  
 [John-NOM lost-MOD KES]-TOP very expensive-DECL  
 ‘What John lost is very expensive.’

In each of these examples, the XP2 is a predicative adjective, not referring to any individual. (39b) is acceptable, but (39a) is not. The contrast easily follows from the referential property of *kes* and the assumed pseudocleft construction. Given that the expression *kes* is the head of the subject cleft clause, (39a) would mean that the inanimate object that John married is beautiful while (39b) indicates that the object that John lost is very expensive. This explains the contrast here.

## 4.2 Equative uses

We have also seen that the equative use of the copula sentence identifies two expressions of the same semantic type (see, among others, Heycock & Kroch 1999, 2002; Mikkelsen 2011). We

have also noted that due to this property, the construction is invertible. The equative use of the pseudocleft construction also behaves in the same manner. Consider the following examples:

- (40) a. [John-i        penyekha-n        kes]-un        i        chayk-i-ta  
           [John-NOM    translate-MOD    KES]-TOP    this    book-COP-DECL  
           ‘What John translated is this book.’  
       b. i        chayk-i        [John-i        penyekha-n        kes]-i-ta  
           this    book-NOM    [John-NOM    translate-MOD    KES]-COP-DECL  
           ‘This book is what John translated.’

The new information in (40a) is ‘this book’, which can be inverted into the subject position as in (40b). The equative construction is truly invertible in the sense that the information structure of (40a) can be maintained with the reversed order, as long as the subject *i chayk* ‘this book’ is marked with the nominative rather than topic marker. With prosodic emphasis on the subject, (40b) has the same information structure as (40a) (*i chayk* ‘this book’ is the new information).

Note also that, similarly to the corresponding copular sentences we discussed in §2.2, different information structure ordering is also possible, since there is no fixed information structure in the equative use of the copula sentence. One easy way to show this is to have the inverted order of (40b) with the same interpretation but differing only from (40a) in the order of GIVEN and NEW. Consider the following exchange:

- (41) A: way    i        chayk-ul        ilk-ko        iss-e?  
           why    this    book-ACC    read-CONN    exist-QUE  
           ‘Why are you reading this book?’  
       B: i        chayk-un        [John-i        penyekha-n        kes]-i-ya  
           this    book-TOP    [John-NOM    translate-MOD    KES]-COP-DECL  
           ‘This book is what John translated.’

The NP *this book* is already GIVEN in the context as further marked with the topic marker, and the precopular *kes* clause in (41B) thus serves as NEW information, telling the hearer the reason why he or she is reading the book or has it.

It is worth mentioning that the subject XP1 and the precopular XP2 need not refer to an individual. As long as the two are of the same semantic type, equative uses are fine. The XP1 and XP2 in the following can be considered to be a type of cleft clause, referring to an event or situation:

- (42) a. [ney-ka        hay-ya        ha-nun        kes]-un        [sophuthuweye    mence  
           [you-NOM    do-CONN    must-MOD    KES]-TOP    [software-ACC    first  
           cwumwunha-nun    kes]-i-ta  
           order-MOD                    KES]-COP-DECL  
           ‘What you must do (to solve your problem) is *order the software first*.’  
       b. [sophuthuweye-lul    mence    cwumwunha-nun    kes]-i        [ney-ka  
           [software-ACC        first        order-MOD                    KES]-NOM    [you-NOM  
           hay-ya        ha-nun        kes]-i-ta  
           do-CONN    must-MOD    KES]-COP-DECL  
           ‘*Order the software first* is what you must do.’

In these equative examples, we take it that both arguments of the copula refer to entities of the same kind, that is, an event or state of affairs. As for the information structure, the examples also show us that equative uses allow ambiguous information structure orderings, GIVEN-NEW or NEW-GIVEN.

### 4.3 Specificational uses

We have seen that the subject of the specificational copular clauses, specifying who (or what) someone (or something) is, sets up a variable and the precopular expression provides the value for that variable (see Mikkelsen 2011 and references therein).

We have also seen that one important property of the specificational copula sentence is that it has a fixed information structure. The same restriction seems to hold in the specificational use of the pseudocleft construction too. Consider the following exchanges:

- (43) A: *sophuthuweye-lul mence cwumwunhayeye-ya hay?*  
 software-ACC first order-CONN do  
 ‘Do I have to order the software first?’  
 B: *??[ney-ka hay-ya ha-nun kes]-i [sophuthuweye-lul*  
*[you-NOM do-CONN must-MOD KES]-NOM [software-ACC*  
*mence cwumwunha-nun kes]-i-ta*  
*first order-MOD KES]-COP-DECL*  
 ‘What you must do is order the software first.’

In (43B), the nominative marked subject is intended to be linked to NEW information, whereas the precopular expression is GIVEN, as set up by the prior question. As the information structure order is NEW-GIVEN, the example is highly unnatural on a specificational interpretation. However, example (44), in which the subject is linked to the previous context, while the precopular expression represents new information, is felicitous since it observes the information structure condition.

- (44) A: *nay-ka mwues-ul hay-ya ha-ci?*  
 I-NOM what-ACC do-CONN do-QUE?  
 ‘What should I do?’  
 B: *[ney-ka hay-ya ha-nun kes]-un [sophuthuweye-lul mence*  
*[you-NOM do-CONN must-MOD KES]-TOP [software-ACC first*  
*cwumwunha-nun kes]-i-ta*  
*order-MOD KES]-COP-DECL*  
 ‘What you must do is order the software first.’

This contrast implies that in the specificational use, the precopula XP2 offers the value for the variable denoted by the cleft clause.

The restriction on the information structure ordering also explains why the following is unacceptable:



- (45) A: hayngpokha-n salam cwungey nwu-ka chotaypatass-ci?  
 happy-MOD person among who-NOM invited-QUE  
 ‘Of all people who were happy, which one was invited?’  
 B: \*[John-i chotayha-n kes]-i cengmal hayngpokha-n salam-i-ta  
 [John-NOM invite-MOD KES]-NOM really happy-MOD person-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) **(The one) who John invited** was a really happy person.’

The B example cannot be predicational since *kes* cannot refer to an animate person, and it cannot be equative since the two arguments are of different semantic types. Thus, the only possibility is a specificational use, but then the B example is strange because of the NEW-GIVEN information structure ordering. As such, we can take the pseudocleft clause headed by *kes* in specificational uses to represent given information as an open proposition with a variable. This variable is filled by the precopular XP2, representing new information.

## 5. An LF-based analysis

### 5.1 Interpretative constraints and animacy clash

One key issue in the analysis of the specificational cleft with the copula is if we can treat it as an inversion construction of equative use or not. As pointed out by Heycock & Kroch (1999, 2002), the inversion treatment is not possible since the inversion of the XP2 in the specificational use is not always permissible, as shown in the following:

- (46) a. \*A doctor is John.  
 b. \*Proud of his daughters is John.

It is clear that tautologies like *Honest is honest* indicate that the equative construction is an independent construction, distinct from the predicational use. If we accept the existence of predicational and equative uses of the pseudocleft, the next question becomes: How about the specificational one? Do we need to take this as an independent construction too? The specificational pseudocleft in (47) can be interpreted as having a variable *x*, ‘*x* such that John bought *x*’, and the slot or variable *x* is filled by the postcopular NP *an expensive book*:

- (47) [What John bought] was an expensive book.

This is a kind of equative treatment of the specificational cleft, similar to the treatment of the specificational copula sentence. However, the problem is that there is a type mismatch between the referent of *what John bought* and that of *an expensive book*:

- (48)  $\lambda x$ [John bought *x*]

The cleft clause denotes a set of individuals here, while *an expensive book* refers to an individual. We cannot therefore equate these two. A solution, as suggested by Heycock & Kroch (2002), is to



take the free relative clause *what John bought* as denoting the maximal individual (a plural individual) using the iota operator, rather than a set as represented in (49):

$$(49) \quad \iota x[\text{John bought } x]$$

This LF-based system, together with the iota operator, will then give the following equative interpretation for the pseudocleft sentence in (47):

$$(50) \quad \iota x[\text{John bought } x] = \text{an expensive book}$$

The  $\iota$ -reduction process applies to this equation, giving us the final interpretation such that there is a unique individual that John bought and this is an expensive book.

Within this system, the specificational pseudocleft thus undergoes the process of filling a value for the variable. Within this analysis, the XP1 in specificational uses is taken to be a free relative clause containing the iota operator, while the copula functions as an equivalence operator. The advantages of this kind of semantic analysis can be found in several places. One clear advantage of this kind of semantic analysis has to do with the information structure of the specificational use in which the XP1 represents old while XP2 describes new information. Since the iota operator involves a definite description, the XP1 is naturally expected to represent old information. To allow the occurrence of various syntactic types in the postcopular expression, we just need to allow the type of the  $\iota$ -variable to range over all the semantic types that free relative clauses denote:

- (51) a. What Mary was was [proud of herself].  
 b. What Mary did was [run the marathon].

We adopt this iota operator system for the specificational uses of the pseudocleft in Korean, too (see Sohn 2004 for a similar line of thought). Consider a simple case in which the precopular expression is inanimate:

$$(52) \quad \begin{array}{l} [\text{John-i} \quad \text{ilk-un} \quad \text{kes}]\text{-un} \quad \text{i} \quad \text{chayk-i-ta} \\ [\text{John-NOM} \quad \text{read-MOD} \quad \text{KES}]\text{-TOP} \quad \text{this} \quad \text{book-COP-DECL} \\ \text{'What John read is this book.'} \end{array}$$

The example can be specificational in the sense that the *kes* clause has a variable  $x$  and this value is filled out by 'this book'. This in turn means that the cleft clause introduces the iota operator with the variable  $x$ , and the value is filled with the NP 'this book':

$$(53) \quad \iota x[\text{John read } x] = \text{this book}$$

The  $\iota$ -reduction process applies to this LF interpretation, together with the definition of  $\iota$ -operator. The same analysis can be applied even to cases where the precopular NP is animate:

- (54) a. [John-i kyelhon ha-n kes]-un Mina-i-ta  
 [John-NOM marry-MOD KES]-TOP Mina-COP-DECL  
 ‘The one who John married is Mina.’  
 b. [John-i kyelhon ha-n kes]-un alumtaw-un yeca-i-ta  
 [John-NOM marry-MOD KES]-TOP beautiful-MOD woman-COP-DECL  
 ‘The one who John married is a beautiful woman.’

The pseudocleft clause refers to an event of John’s marrying someone *x*. The precopular NP provides the value for this variable:

- (55)  $\iota x[\text{John married } x] = \text{Mina}$

The iota variable *x* is filled by the value Mina. There thus arises no issue of mismatch or asymmetry in the reference type.

Now consider the inverted pseudocleft examples where we encounter the asymmetry:

- (56) a. *i* chayk-un [<sub>NP</sub> John-i sa-n kes]-i-ta (inanimate topic)  
 this book-TOP [John-NOM buy-MOD KES]-COP-DECL  
 ‘This book is what John bought.’  
 b. \**i* yeca-nun [<sub>NP</sub> John-i manna-n kes]-i-ta (animate topic)  
 this woman-TOP [John-NOM meet-MOD KES]-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) This woman is who John met.’

These examples are not specificational but equative. Here, unlike (56a), the animacy clash makes (56b) unacceptable. Why do we have the asymmetry here? The answer is that in this case the cleft clause cannot be interpreted as an iota operator which denotes given information for definite descriptions. It is well attested that the preverbal position is a default position for new information in Korean.<sup>8</sup>

Further, as we have seen in the previous section, the inverted pseudocleft induces an equative reading, where the two expressions are of the same type. In (56a), the NP *i chayk* refers to an individual entity, and the pseudocleft clause can also refer to an individual in which the variable *x* linked to the expression *kes* is interpreted as a ‘thing’:

- (57) this book =  $\iota x[\text{John bought } x]$

The situation is different in (56b). The cleft clause may be interpreted as the following, and this is in the equative relation with the subject *i yeca* ‘this woman’:

- (58) this woman =  $\iota x[\text{John met } x]$

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<sup>8</sup> The preverbal position includes the precopular position too.

This, however, would mean that ‘this woman’ is ‘a thing’, causing an animacy clash. The iota variable  $x$  is linked to the inanimate referential pronoun *kes* ‘thing’, while the subject ‘this woman’ is an animate referential phrase. Note that when the first NP is interpreted as a type of property one owns (treating a human being as a kind of property), a similar sentence can be acceptable:

- (59) a. *i namca/yeca-nun nay kes-i-ya*  
 this man/woman-TOP my thing-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) This man/woman is my thing.’
- b. *i yeca hain-un [ku yengcwu-ka olaytongan soyuha-ko*  
 this woman servant-TOP the monarch-NOM long.time own-CONN  
*iss-nun kes]-i-ess-ta*  
 exist-MOD KES-COP-PAST-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) This woman is the thing that the monarch had possessed for a long time.’

(59a), often used in a colloquial style, is acceptable due to the fact that this man/woman is taken to be a property. In a similar fashion, (59b) can be acceptable since the woman servant is interpreted as a type of entity that the monarch owns.

Such context-dependent interpretations are not possible in examples like the following:

- (60) a. \**Mini-ka [John-i kyelhon ha-n kes]-i-ta*  
 Mini-NOM [John-NOM marry-MOD KES]-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) Mini is who John married.’
- b. \**alumtaw-un yeca-nun [John-i kyelhon ha-n kes]-i-ta*  
 beautiful-MOD woman-TOP [John-NOM marry-MOD KES]-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) A beautiful woman is the one who John married.’

It is impossible for a person to marry an entity. In addition, the precopular clause cannot be interpreted as an iota operator denoting ‘the only one’ definite expression since these examples are equative uses. The cleft clause in the precopular position is also interpreted as new information as the default. When all these factors interact, the animacy clash happens in examples like these.

## 5.2 More on the specificational uses

In the canonical specificational uses, the precopular XP2 is referential and is further linked to the argument in the cleft clause, leading us to the analysis we just outlined. However, there are many examples where the XP2 is a nonnominal phrase. An interesting fact, as noted in the first section, is that XP2 can be a PP when the head of XP1 is *kes*.

- (61) *[John-i Mary-lul manna-n kes]-un kongwen-eyse-i-ta*  
 [John-NOM Mary-ACC meet-MOD KES]-TOP park-at-COP-DECL  
 ‘It was at the park that John met Mary.’

In this example, the XP2 refers not to an individual but to a location. Since the type of the  $t$ -variable can range over all the semantic types that free relative clauses denote, we can predict this too.

Example (61) is also a specificational use. This sentence does not have a predicational or equative interpretation. As we have discussed, in a true predicational structure, the XP2 predicates a property of the XP1's referent; in an equative structure, XP1 and XP2 both refer to entities of the same kind. The XP1 in (61) is certainly providing GIVEN information, intuitively about an event, while the precopular PP represents NEW information. There is then a simple skeletal interpretation for examples such as (61): an event of John meeting Mary is the given information, and the PP provides new information about that event, as represented in the following:

- (62) a. GIVEN:  $\lambda \exists e[\text{meet}(e,j,m,l)]$   
 ('There is an event  $e$  and in  $e$ , John met Mary at the specific location "l".')
- b. NEW:  $\text{park}(p)$ ,  $\text{Location}(e,p)$   
 ('The location of an event  $e$  is the park.')

This way of interpreting specificational uses of the *kes* clause is in parallel with the idea of treating *kes* to refer to an event (a situation). That is, in the specificational uses, the *kes*-phrase refers to a situation or, more accurately, describes a situation, and the precopular phrase provides more information about that situation.

Given the present analysis, where the iota variable can range over different syntactic types, other elements such as adverbials, referring to a temporal location, can also provide new information. Some speakers only allow the relevant examples if the adverbial is categorically a nominal, such as *ecey*, as in (63a), but not *chenchenhi*, as in (63b).

- (63) a. [John-i Mary-eykey senmwul-ul cwu-n kes]-un [<sub>NP</sub> ecey]-i-ta  
 [John-NOM Mary-DAT present-ACC give-MOD KES]-TOP [yesterday]-COP-DECL  
 'It is yesterday when John gave Mary a present.'
- b. \*[John-i talli-n kes]-un [<sub>Adv</sub> chenchenhi]-i-ta  
 [John-NOM run-MOD KES]-TOP [slowly]-COP-DECL  
 '(Int.) The way John ran is slowly.'

The manner adverb cannot refer to a location or temporal location, rendering examples like (63b) unacceptable. This property is also reflected in the fact that the language allows a *wh*-word or phrase in the precopular position of a pseudocleft-like example (the copula is phonetically silent in this particular example):

- (64) [Sue-ka Bonn-eyse palphyoha-nun kes]-un encey-ya?  
 [Sue-NOM Bonn-LOC present-MOD KES]-TOP when(-COP)-QUE  
 'When is it that Sue is presenting in Bonn?'

The cleft clause introduces a variable  $x$  referring to a temporal location. This variable is questioned in this example.

Cho and colleagues (2008) propose a syntactic ellipsis analysis for what they term 'amalgam pseudocleft' examples such as (65). They show that two full clauses are generated with ellipsis, leaving a cleft-like output structure, and they observe that there is a possibility that what survives

ellipsis is a sequence of constituents. The role of the copula in the amalgam pseudocleft (65) is as a placeholder for the main predicate of the clause. As a copular structure, though, it is straightforward to map the constituents to a GIVEN-NEW profile, and this meshes naturally with the syntactic analysis of the amalgam pseudocleft:

- (65) [Mina-ka ku chayk-ul sa-n kes]-un cak.nyen LA-eyse-i-ta  
 [Mina-NOM that book-ACC buy-MOD KES]-TOP last.year LA-LOC-COP-DECL  
 ‘Where/when Mina bought that book is last year in L.A.’

An example like (65) cannot have an interpretation that is predicational or equative—if it did, the *kes*-phrase would have to refer to an individual. However, the simple notion of information (descriptive) update fits the example perfectly. The information up to *kes* is GIVEN, and the rest is NEW:

- (66) a. GIVEN:  $\lambda t \exists e [\text{buy}(e, m, b, l, t)]$ ; book(*b*)  
 b. NEW: last.year(*t*), Time(*e, t*)  
 c. NEW: L.A.(*l*); Location(*e, l*)

Hence (65) means that the given event of Mina buying a book is further specified as having been last year and in L.A.

One interesting prediction that this variable-based approach makes concerns amalgam examples with multiple arguments in the XP2 position, which most native speakers do not accept (Kim & Lee 2008):

- (67) \*[John-i cwu-n kes]-un [Mary-eykey chayk]-i-ta  
 John-NOM give-MOD KES-TOP Mary- DAT book-COP-DECL  
 ‘(Int.) What John gave is Mary books.’

Unlike the possible amalgam examples such as (65), which has two adverbial expressions in the precopular position, example (67) has two arguments in the precopular position, to be represented as follows:

- (68) a. GIVEN:  $\exists e \lambda x \lambda y [\text{give}(e, j, x, y)]$   
 b. NEW: Mary(*m*):  $x = m$ , book(*b*):  $b = y$

As seen here, to reach a proper interpretation, we need to process two iota operators, which may not be allowed for most speakers. But those speakers who accept examples like (67) may allow multiple iota operators.

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper we have discussed the animacy asymmetry found in the pseudocleft clauses headed by the noun *kes* in Korean. We briefly reviewed the main properties of the three Korean

copula constructions—predicational, equative, and specificational—and discussed how the uses of pseudocleft clauses are linked to these three uses. In particular, the pseudocleft constructions inherit the main grammatical as well as information-structure properties of the predicational, equative, and specificational copular constructions, supporting our claim that their syntax and semantics are basically the same as the corresponding copular constructions.

The novel idea that we presented here concerns the analysis of specificational uses. In addition to their canonical uses, we saw that specificational uses of copula as well as pseudocleft constructions are closely related to the information structure, updating the information about the event denoted by the *kes* cleft clause. This informational update can include a variable-filling process. This way of looking at specificational uses provides an insight into the puzzling asymmetry we laid out in the paper.

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[Received 17 April 2013; revised 23 June 2014; accepted 21 July 2014]

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## 韓語特指準分裂結構的不對稱性

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韓語中名詞 *kes* 出現於各種不同的句法結構，包括某些分裂結構。我們發現，韓語準分裂結構有「有生／無生」的不對稱性。本文提出，此不對稱性可由正確地詮釋特指準分裂結構的語意以及其信息結構獲得解釋。

關鍵詞：特指，信息結構，*iota* 運符，焦點，準分裂句