

Comments on Kim and Sells

Jieun Kiaer, UCL IS workshop, 13-15 September 2008

Three forms of structures are under discussion:

(i) [NP [S 'clause'] *kes*]-TOP XP –*copula*

-----*given*--- --*new*---

(ii) XP-TOP [NP [S 'clause'] *kes*]-*copula*

---- *given* -----*new* -----

(iii) XP-NOM [NP [S 'clause'] *kes*]-*copula*

-- *new* -----*given* -----

(A) Is the information structure of *kes* construction, under current discussion, so sensitive to morphological marking? Is it the case that all topic-marked NPs denote given information and all nominative NP new information? To my view, changing examples in the paper with –*nun* ending to –*i/ka* nominative ending doesn't seem to change grammaticality or meaning.

(32) [John-i ceyl coaha-nun hoysa tonglyo]-nun i salaim-ita.

John-NOM most like-ADN company colleague]-TOP this person-COP-DECL

(34)?? [John-i ceyl coaha-nun hoysa tonglyo]-ka i salaim-ita.

John-NOM most like-ADN company colleague]-NOM this person-COP-DECL

'John's favourite colleague is this person.'

→ There seems to be no such strong asymmetric grammaticality judgement in my view.

(48) a. [John-i sa-n kes]NP-un i chayk-i-ta.

John-NOM buy-ADN-KES-TOP this book-COP-DECL

'What John bought is this book.'

b. *John-i manna-n kes]NP-un i yeca-i-ta.

John-NOM meet-ADN-KES-TOP this woman-COP-DECL

'What John met is this woman.'

(64) *John-i manna-n kes]NP-i i yeca-i-ta.

John-NOM meet-ADN-KES-NOM this woman-COP-DECL

'What John met is this woman.'

(65) a. ??[John-i sa-n kes]NP-i i chayk-i-ta.

John-NOM buy-ADN-KES-NOM this book-COP-DECL

'What John bought is this book.'

→ (48b), (64) and (65) are perfectly fine by me. – More examples as below:

(i) John-i cwuk-in kes]NP-un/-i i yeca-i-ta.

John-NOM kill-ADN-KES-TOP/NOM this woman-COP-DECL

‘What John killed is this woman.’

(ii) John-i manna-n-kes-i(ke)/ke-nun(ken) i-saram-i-ko,

John-NOM meet-ADN-kes-TOP/NOM this-person-COP-CONJ

Bill-I manna-n-kes-i(ke) ke-nun(ken) ce-saram-i-ya.

Bill-NOM meet-ADN-kes-TOP/NOM that-person-COP-DECL

(B) When *kes*-phrase is in a postcopular position, XP-(NOM/TOP) seems to be given in the context (regardless of NOM/TOP marking). So, (ii) will be most natural when a context, as in (iii), is given. The same applies with (iv) and (v) My hunch is that when the *kes*-clause comes early/in the left periphery, it sets the context. On the other hand, when it comes late/in the right periphery, it updates the term introduced earlier. The choice of either construction seems to be sensitive to the given context.

(i) [Mary-ka cengmallo coaha-nun kes]-un chizukheyk-i-ta.

Mary-NOM really like-ADN KES-TOP cheesecake-COP-DECL

‘What Mary really likes is cheesecake.’

(ii) i/ku chizukheyk-i/un [Mary-ka cengmallo coaha-nun kes]-i-ta.

This/the cheesecake-NOM/TOP Mary-NOM really like-ADN KES-COP-DECL

‘This cheesecake is what Mary really likes.’

(iii) Uri tongney Paris Bakery chizukheyk-un cengmal mass-iss-ta.

Our village Paris Bakery cheesecake-TOP really taste-exist-DECL

‘The cheesecake in Paris Bakery in our village is really delicious.’

(iv) Bill al-ci?

Bill-know-Q

‘You know Bill?’

(v) Ku-salam-i/ John-i ceyil coaha-nun hoysa tonglyo-iyia.

that-person-NOM John-NOM most like-ADN company colleague-COP-DECL

(C) I think the paper needs to clarify the definition of *givenness/newness* in their usage.

(D) On the animacy clash: In fact, if we simply assume that *kes* is animacy-underspecified, then as for the left-peripheral *kes*, no matter what occurs afterwards, no clash is expected, because the newly introduced term will update the animacy of *kes*. However, for *kes* to update the already-introduced term, its animacy must be matched with the already-introduced term. The + animate term must be updated with the + animate term. So, *kes* is not qualified to this update. There is no restriction with the – animate term. Hence:

(i) I **chayk**-i/un John-i sa-n **kes**-i-ta.

This book-NOM/TOP John-NOM buy-ADN kes-COP-DECL

(ii) ??I **yeca**-ka/nun John-i manna-n **kes**-i-ta.

This woman-NOM/TOP John-NOM meet-ADN kes-COP-DECL

If we keep this simple criterion, we can predict data such as (64) and (65) grammatical. The only problematic data are in (25). Yet, I wonder whether it is to do with the use of the connective, which somehow closes off the update of *kes*. In (iii) below, even though it is expected that there should be no animacy clash, still it sounds unnatural.

(25)* John-i coaha-nun kes kwa Mary-ka chotayhan-n kes-un nay tongsayng-i-ta.

John-NOM like-AND kes CONJ Mary-NOM invite-AND kes-TOP my brother-COP-DECL

(ii)* John-i coaha-nun kes kwa Mary-ka chotayhan-n kes-un i-sakwa-i-ta.

John-NOM like-AND kes CONJ Mary-NOM invite-AND kes-TOP this-apple-COP-DECL

(E) How do we update adjunct in file-change semantics?

A. John-i manna-n kes-un nwukwu-i-ci?

J-NOM meet-ADN kes-TOP who-COP-Q

B. John-i Sue-lul manna-n kes-un way-i-ci?

J-NOM S-ACC meet-ADN kes-TOP why-COP-Q

(F) In (30), *l* in *phwu-l* is not future tense morpheme. It is the part of a verb stem. Consider the following. I find this example perfectly fine. The asymmetry found in (30) seems not to be so clear.

(i) Nayil i-sikan-e yeki o-l-kes-un Mina-ppwun-i-ta.

Tomorrow this-time-at here come-FUT-kes-TOP Mina-only-COP-DECL

(G) Again, even if what Kim and Sells calls ‘new’ information comes first, the grammaticality is not radically degraded. (i) is very natural.

(39)?? Ney-ka hay-ya ha-nun kes-i software-lul mence cwumiwnha-nun kes-i-ta.

you-NOM do-COMP must-ADN kes-NOM software-ACC first order-ADN kes-COP-DECL

‘What you must do is to order the software first.’

(i) Jina-ka hay-ya ha-nun kes-i software-lul mence cwumiwnha-nun kes-i-ko,

J-NOM do-COMP must-ADN kes-NOM software-ACC first order-ADN kes-COP-CONJ

Mina-ka hay-ya ha-nun kes-i kakyel-ul alapo-nun kes-it-ta.

M-NOM do-COMP must-ADN kes-NOM price-ACC search-ADN kes-COP-DECL

‘What Jina must do is to order the software first and what Mina must do is to search the price.’