

ON THE TYPOLOGY OF TOPIC MARKING: CASE STUDIES IN JAPANESE AND KOREAN

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1 Introduction

This talk provides further support for the following typology of information structural notions and their mapping to the syntax, developed in Neeleman et. al. (to appear):

- (1) *Syntactic typology of topic, focus and contrast*

	Topic	Focus
non-contrastive	non-contrastive topic [topic]	information focus [focus]
contrastive	contrastive topic [topic] [contrast]	contrastive focus [focus] [contrast]

The table expresses a couple of ideas. First, topic, focus and contrast are autonomous notions of information structure. Secondly, we take contrastive topic to be a composite of notions [topic] and [contrast] and contrastive focus to be a composite of [focus] and [contrast] (Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998, Molnár 2002, Tomioka 2007). It is also widely reported that topic, focus and contrast have syntactic reflexes. If these ideas are on the right track, we predict cross-cutting syntactic generalisations over topics, over foci and over contrastive items. Our main evidence for the typology comes from the syntactic distribution of items that share one of the privative notions.

- (2) a. Rule for [topic]: Japanese – [topic] is licensed in clause-initial position
b. Rule for [focus]: Russian – [focus] is licensed in clause-final position
c. Rule for [contrast]: Dutch – [contrast] licenses A'-movement

The table does not preclude the possibility that one language has a rule for [topic] and a rule for [contrast]. In such an instance, a conflict arises for contrastive topic. I argue that in such an instance, one rule wins over the other. This predicts that if a language has rules for both [topic] and [contrast], then contrastive topic in that language should systematically behave either like non-contrastive topic, with respect to the rule for [topic], or like contrastive focus, with respect to the rule for [contrast]. I argue that this is indeed the case: Japanese instantiates the case where contrastive topic is subject to the rule regarding [topic], while in Korean, contrastive topic is subject to the rule regarding [contrast]. The rule for [contrast] in Japanese and Korean is the same as the one in Dutch.

Claims:

- (3) Japanese: - rule for [topic], rule for [contrast]
- contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [topic]
(4) Korean: - rule for [topic], rule for [contrast]
- contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [contrast]

In this talk, I will show that...

- there is a rule for [topic] in Japanese and a rule for [contrast] in Dutch.
- Japanese also has the same rule for [contrast] as in Dutch, but only contrastive focus is subject to it.
- Korean has the same rule for [topic] as in Japanese, and the same rule for [contrast] as in Dutch, and contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [contrast].
- further differences between *wa*-phrases and *nun*-phrases in contrastive contexts.

2 Terminologies

2.1 Topic

This talk is concerned with 'sentence topic' and not 'discourse topic' (Reinhart 1981). Moreover, a narrower definition of 'sentence topic' is adopted. It is a syntactic category that the sentence is about, but also a category that 'affects' the topic of discourse, i.e. by introducing a new one, re-introducing it, shifting it from one item to another, narrowing down its referent or implicating the existence of a salient alternative. (Givón's (1983) 'chain-initial topic', Vallduví's (1992) 'link', Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl's (2007) 'aboutness topic').

- (5) A: Tell me about John.
B: John likes hiking.

Sentence topics must be distinguished from items that simply refer back to them (Givon 1983, Chafe 1987, Lambrecht 1994, Vallduví & Engdahl 1996).

- (6) a. Maxine was introduced to the queen on her birthday.
b. She was wearing a special dress for the occasion.
(7) A: Who did Max see yesterday?
B: He saw Rosa yesterday.

Syntactic (and sometimes prosodic) differences between items identified as 'sentence topic' on the narrower notion and items that refer back to them have been reported for Italian, German, Catalan (Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007, Vallduví 1992). In Japanese and Korean too, the distinction is crucial in explaining certain syntactic properties of topics in these languages.

2.2 Focus

Highlighted information with respect to the material in the rest of the sentence, e.g. an item that answers the wh-part of a preceding question.

2.3 Contrast

A contrastive item is selected out of a set of alternatives to the exclusion of other alternatives. It often has a particular implicature with respect to those alternatives that were not selected.

- (8) a. Contrastive focus: highlighted information and implicates that it has been selected out of a set of alternatives.
b. Contrastive topic: what the sentence is about, affecting the topic of discourse, and implicates that it has been selected out of a set of alternatives.

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Tomioka (2007) notes that focus operates at the level of proposition, while topic operates at the level of speech act. Thus, the reason for selecting focus out of a set of alternatives is because the other alternative propositions are false, while the reason for selecting a topic could be for a pragmatic reason. Contrastive focus therefore has a sense of exhaustiveness, while contrastive topic implicates that the speaker is not sure, or has some reason for not asserting the same for the alternatives.

- (9) A: Which one of his friends wants to meet John? (Erteschick-Shir 2007: 49)
 B: JANET wants to meet John.
- (10) A: Do you think that Fritz would buy this suit? (Büring 1997: 56)
 B: Well, I certainly wouldn't.

3 [Topic] and [contrast]

3.1 Rule for [topic]: Japanese (Vermeulen 2009, To appear)

- (11) [topic] is licensed in clause-initial position.

Non-contrastive topic:

- (12) ano boosi-nituite nanika osiete-kudasai
 that hat-about something tell-please
 'Tell me something about that hat.'
- (13) a. ano boosi-wa John-ga kinoo e_i kaimasita
 that hat-wa John-nom yesterday bought
 b. #John-ga ano boosi-wa kinoo kaimasita
 John-nom that hat-wa yesterday bought
 'John bought that hat yesterday.'

Contrastive topic:

- (14) kinoo-no paatii-de dare-ga pasuta-o tabeta no?
 yesterday-gen party-at who-nom pasta-acc ate Q
 'Who ate the pasta at the party yesterday?'
- (15) hmm, pasuta-wa doo-ka sir-anai kedo,
 well, pasta-top how-whether know-not but,
 'Well, I don't know about the pasta, but...'
 a. #BILL-GA MAME-WA 8-zi-goro tabeteita (yo)
 Bill-nom beans-wa 8 o'clock-around eating.was particle
 b. MAME_i-WA BILL-GA 8-zi-goro t_i tabeteita (yo)
 beans-wa Bill-nom 8 o'clock-around eating.was particle
 'as for the beans, Bill was eating them around 8 o'clock.'

To be concrete, topic is adjoined to the highest maximal projection. The motivation for the displacement is to mark the constituent that is the sister to the moved topic as the comment, facilitating an isomorphic mapping between syntax and information structure, in the sense of Neeleman & van de Koot (2008).

- (16) Syntax: XP_i-wa [YP e_i/t_i]
 Information Structure: Topic comment

3.2 Rule for [contrast]: Dutch (Neeleman, et. al. To appear)

- (17) [Contrast] licenses A'-movement.

Landing site for A'-movement of contrastive items is not to a designated position. (double underline = contrastive topic; SMALL CAPS = focus)

- (18)a. Ik geloof dat Jan Marie [alleen DIT boek] gegeven heeft.
 I believe that John Mary only this book given has
 'I believe that John has given only this book to Mary.'
 b. Ik geloof alleen JAN Marie dat [zo'n boek] gegeven heeft.
 I believe only John Mary that such-a book given has
 'I believe that only John has given such a book to Mary.'
- (19)a. Ik geloof dat [alleen DIT boek]_i Jan Marie t_i gegeven heeft.
 I believe that only this book John Mary given has
 'I believe that John has given only this book to Mary.'
 b. Ik geloof dat [zo'n boek]_i alleen JAN Marie t_i gegeven heeft.
 I believe that such-a book only John Mary given has
 'I believe that only John has given such a book to Mary.'
- (20)a. Ik geloof dat Jan [alleen DIT boek]_i Marie t_i gegeven heeft.
 I believe that John only this book Mary given has
 'I believe that John has given Mary only this book'
 b. Ik geloof dat Jan [zo'n boek]_i alleen MARIE t_i gegeven heeft.
 I believe that John such-a book only Mary given has
 'I believe that John has given such a book only to Mary.'

Movement of a contrastive item affects the constituent that becomes the sister to the moved item. It marks it as the 'domain of contrast'. The domain of contrast contains material which is relevant to calculating the set of alternatives.

- (21) Syntax: [XP_i [YP ... t_i ...]]
 Information Structure: C.Top / C.Foc Domain of Contrast
- (19) a' ... [alleen DIT boek]_i [_{DoC} Jan Marie t_i gegeven heeft]
 only this book John Mary given has
- (20) a' ... Jan [alleen DIT boek]_i [_{DoC} Marie t_i gegeven heeft]
 John only this book Mary given has

We assume that contrast is always based on an expression containing a single λ-bound variable (Schwarzchild 1999). The domain of contrast for (19a) and (20a) are thus as in (22a) and (22b), respectively. It is a standard assumption that the alternatives generated by a contrastive item such as those in (18), (19), and (20) are propositions. We argue that existential closure applies to the domain of contrast in (20a'), transforming the domain of contrast to a proposition, giving the expression in (22b). The interpretation of the existentially bound variable is then provided by the immediate context.

- (22) a. λx [John has given x to Mary]
 b. λx ∃y [y has given x to Mary]

A widely adopted idea of information structure is that an utterance is first and foremost partitioned into topic and comment, and the comment further into focus and background (Lambrecht 1994, Hajičová et al 1997):

(23) TOPIC [COMMENT FOCUS [BACKGROUND]]

If topic is to be interpreted with respect to the comment and focus with respect to the background, it follows that the domain of contrast for contrastive focus must consist of material from its background, and the domain of contrast for contrastive topic must consist of material taken from the comment. Putting (21) and (23) together yield the following predictions:

(24) a. topic_i [YP FOCUS t_i]
 b. *FOCUS_i [YP topic t_i]

The predictions are borne out:

(25) Hoe zit het met de *SOEP*? Wie heeft *DIE* gegeten?
 ‘What about the soup? Who ate that?’

(26) Nou, dat weet ik niet, maar ik geloof ...
 ‘Well, I don’t know, but I believe ...’

a. dat WIM van de bonen meer gegeten heeft dan vorig jaar (Foc Top)
 that Bill from the beans more eaten has than last year
 b. dat van de bonen_i WIM t_i meer gegeten heeft dan vorig jaar (Top, Foc t_i)
 that from the beans Bill more eaten has than last year
 ‘that Bill has eaten more from the beans than last year.’

(27) Hoe zit het met *FRED*? Wat heeft *HIJ* gegeten?
 ‘What about Fred? What did he eat?’

(28) Nou, dat weet ik niet, maar ik geloof
 ‘Well, I don’t know, but I believe’

a. dat Wim VAN DE BONEN meer gegeten heeft dan vorig jaar. (Top Foc)
 that Bill from the beans more eaten has than last year
 b. #dat VAN DE BONEN_i Wim t_i meer gegeten heeft dan vorig jaar. (#Foc, Top t_i)
 that from the beans Bill more eaten has than last year
 ‘that Bill has eaten more from the beans than last year.’

In fact, the considerations in (21) and (23) make stronger predictions, which are also correct:

(29) a. Top_i [YP t_i Foc]
 b. #Foc_i [YP t_i Top]

(30) Hoe zit het met tante Jo? Wat heeft grootpapa haar nagelaten?
 ‘How about auntie Jo? What has granddad bequeathed to her?’

(31) Nou, dat weet ik niet, maar ik geloof
 ‘Well, I don’t know, but I believe ...’

a. dat grootpapa zijn burea DE KLOCK heeft willen nalaten (Top Foc)
 that granddad his neighbours the clock has want bequeath
 b. dat zijn burea_i grootpapa t_i DE KLOCK heeft willen nalaten (Top, t_i Foc)
 that his neighbours granddad the clock has want bequeath
 ‘that granddad wanted to bequeath the clock to his neighbours.’

(32) Hoe zit het met het dressoir? Wie heeft grootvader dat nagelaten?
 ‘How about the sideboard? To whom has granddad bequeathed that?’

(33) Nou, dat weet ik niet, maar ik geloof
 ‘Well, I don’t know, but I believe ...’

a. dat grootpapa ZIJN BUREN de klock heeft willen nalaten (Foc Top)
 that granddad his neighbours the clock has want bequeath
 b. #dat ZIJN BUREN_i grootpapa t_i de klock heeft willen nalaten (#Foc, t_i Top)
 that his neighbours granddad the clock has want bequeath
 ‘that granddad wanted to bequeath the clock to his neighbours.’

In sum:

- [contrast] licenses A'-movement which marks the domain of contrast
- the landing site of the A'-movement can be a variety of positions
- specific predictions on the syntactic distribution of contrastive topic and contrastive focus with respect to each other: (24), (29).

4 Japanese

(34) a. [topic] is licensed in clause-initial position, as above: (12)-(15)

- b. [contrast] licenses A'-movement that marks the domain of contrast, as in Dutch.
- c. Contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [topic].

(i) Contrastive focus can be moved to various positions:

(35) John-wa Sue-ni nani-o ageta no?
 John-nom Sue-to what-acc gave Q
 ‘What did John give to Sue?’

(36) a. John-wa Sue-ni ANO CD-O ageta
 John-wa Sue-to thatCD-acc gave
 b. John-wa ANO CD_i-O Sue-ni t_i ageta
 John-wa thatCD-acc Sue-to gave
 c. ANO CD_i-O John-wa Sue-ni t_i ageta
 thatCD-acc John-wa Sue-to gave
 ‘John gave that CD to Sue.’

Like Dutch (18a), (19a), (20a)

(ii) Contrastive topic must be moved to clause-initial position, see also (14)/(15):

(37) Dare-ga Sue-ni ano CD-o ageta no?
 Who-nom who-to that CD-acc gave Q
 ‘Who gave that CD to Sue?’

(38) Hmm, ano CD-wa doo-da-ka siranai kedo
 Well, that CD-wa how-cop-whether not.know but
 ‘Well, I don’t know about that CD, but...’

a. #JOHN-GA Sue-ni ANO HON-WA kinoo ageteita (yo)
 John-nom Sue-to that book-wa yesterday gave prt
 b. ??JOHN-GA ANO HON_i-WA Sue-ni kinoo t_i ageteita (yo)
 John-nom that book-wa Sue-to yesterday gave prt

- c. ANO HON_i-WA JOHN-GA Sue-ni kinoo t_i ageteita (yo)
 that book-wa John-nom Sue-to yesterday gave prt
 ‘as for that book, John gave it to Sue yesterday.’

Unlike Dutch: (18b), (19b), (20b)

- (iii) Contrastive focus movement marks the domain of contrast, as in Dutch. This makes the predictions in (24) and (29):

- (24) a. topic_i [_{VP} FOCUS t_i]
 b. *FOCUS_i [_{VP} topic t_i]
 (29) a. Top_i [_{VP} t_i Foc]
 b. #Foc_i [_{VP} t_i Top]

(24a): The example in (14)/(15) already shows that the prediction in is correct.

(24b): Because of the independent clause-initialness constraint on topics, this prediction must be tested involving embedded clauses.

First, it is possible to have an embedded topic:

- (39) Context: John finds a book on Sue’s desk and he asks Bill to tell him something about the book, perhaps with the intention of finding out where Sue obtained the book. Bill does not know anything about the book, but he knew how Sue obtained a CD that was also on the desk. So, he decides to tell John about the CD. In describing this situation, you utter (40).
 (40) Bill_j-wa [_{CP} KONO CD_j-WA Mary-ga kare_j-no mise-de Sue-ni t_i ageta-to] itta.
 Bill-wa this CD-wa Mary-nom he-gen shop-at Sue-to gave-that said
 ‘Bill_j said that as for this CD, Mary gave it to Sue in his_j shop.’

Secondly, focus can be moved from within the embedded clause to sentence-initial position:

- (41) Bill_j-wa [_{CP} Mary-ga Jane-ni kono CD-o kare_j-no mise-de ageta-to] itta.
 Bill-wa Mary-nom Jane-to this CD-acc he-gen shop-at gave-that said
 Lit.: ‘Bill_j said that Mary gave this CD to Jane in his_j shop.’
 (42) Tigau-yo. SUE_i-NI Bill_j-wa [_{CP} Mary-ga t_i kono CD-o kare_j-no mise-de ageta-to] itta-ndayo
 Incorrect-prt Sue-to Bill-wa Mary-nom this CD-acc he-gen shop-at gave-that said-prt
 Lit.: ‘No. It’s to Sue that Bill_j said that Mary gave this CD in his_j shop.’

The precise prediction that follows from (24b) is that it should be impossible to combine the above two operations, as this will result in a structure like the following:

- (43) *Foc_i [... [_{CP} Top ... t_i ...]]

- (44) Bill_j-wa [_{CP} Mary-ga Jenny-ni ano hon-o kare_j-no mise-de ageta-to] itta.
 Bill-wa Mary-nom Jenny-to that book-acc he-gen shop-at gave-that said
 Lit.: ‘Bill_j said Mary gave that book to Jenny in his_j shop.’

- (45) Tigau-yo. Bill-wa ano hon-nituute-wa sira-nakat-ta kedo...
 Incorrect-prt Bill-wa that book-about-wa know-not-past but
 ‘No, Bill didn’t know about the book, but...’
 #SUE_i-NI Bill_k-wa [_{CP} KONO CD_j-WA Mary-ga kare_k-no mise-de t_i t_j ageta-to] itta.
 Sue-to Bill-wa this CD-wa Mary-nom he-gen shop-at gave-that said
 Lit.: ‘it’s to Sue that Bill_k said that as for this CD, Mary gave it to her in his_k shop.’
 (#Foc_i Top t_i)

The example in (45) is felicitous if the contrastive focus remained in-situ:

- (46) ... Bill_k-wa [_{CP} KONO CD_j-WA Mary-ga kare_k-no mise-de SUE-NI t_j ageta-to] itta.
 ... Bill-wa this CD-wa Mary-nom he-gen shop-at Sue-to gave-that said
 ‘... Bill_k said that as for this CD, Mary gave it to Sue in his_k shop.’
 (Top Foc)

(29a): Top_i t_i Foc is ok

- (47) John-wa Mary-ni nani-o ageta no?
 John-wa Mary-to what-acc gave Q
 ‘What did John give to Mary?’
 (48) Hmm, Mary-wa doo-da-ka siranai kedo...
 Well, Mary-wa how-cop-whether not-know but
 ‘Well, I don’t know about Mary, but...’
 a. ^{??}John-wa SUE-NI-WA ANO HON-O kinoo ageteita (yo) (Top Foc)
 John-wa Sue-to-wa that book-acc yesterday gave prt
 b. SUE-NI_i-WA John-wa t_i ANO HON-O kinoo ageteita (yo) (Top_i t_i Foc)
 Sue-to-wa John-wa that book-acc yesterday gave prt
 ‘as for Sue, John gave her that book yesterday.’

Like Dutch: (30)

NB: the motivation for the movement of contrastive topic is different in Dutch and Japanese. In Dutch the movement marks the domain of contrast for the contrastive topic, while in Japanese, given (16), the movement marks the comment for the contrastive topic. However, the prediction in (29a) follows in both languages.

(29b): #Foc_i t_i Top can’t be tested, because topic is independently required to be clause-initial.

In sum:

- Japanese has a rule for [topic] and also a rule for [contrast], like the one in Dutch.
- contrastive focus in Japanese behaves like contrastive items in Dutch.
- contrastive topic in Japanese is subject to the rule for [topic].

5 Korean

- (49) a. [topic] is licensed in clause-initial position, as in Japanese
 b. [contrast] licenses A'-movement that marks the domain of contrast, as in Dutch
 c. Contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [contrast]
- (i) Non-contrastive topic must occupy clause-initial position (Choe 1995, Choi 1997, 1999, Oh 2007):

- (50) ku moca-eytayhayse mal-hay-po-a
 this hat-about tell-do-try-imperative
 'Tell me about this hat.'
- (51) a. ku moca-nun/lul John-i ecey sasse
 this hat-nun/acc John-nom yesterday bought
 b. #John-i ku moca-nun/lul ecey sasse
 John-nom this hat-nun/acc yesterday bought
 'John bought this hat yesterday.'

Like Japanese: (12)/(13)

- (ii) Contrastive topic does not have to be clause initial:

- (52) ecey party-eyse nwuka pasta-lul mekesse?
 yesterday party-at who pasta-acc ate
 'Who ate the pasta at the party yesterday?'
- (53) Hmm, pasta-nun molu-keyss-ko
 Well, pasta-nun not-know-but
 'Well, I don't know about the pasta, but...'
- a. BILL-I KHONG-UN 8-si-ey mekesse (Foc Top)
 Bill-nom beans-nun 8 o'clock-at ate
- b. KHONG-UN BILL-I 8-si-ey mekesse (Top_i Foc t_i)
 beans-nun Bill-nom 8 o'clock-at ate
 'as for the beans, Bill ate them around 8 o'clock.'

Unlike Japanese: (14)/(15)

- (iii) Contrastive topic can move to a variety of positions:

- (54) John-i nwuku-hantey ku CD-lul cwuesse?
 John-nom who-to this CD-acc gave
 'To whom did John give this CD?'
- (55) Hmm, ku CD-nun molu-keyss-ko
 Well, this CD-nun not-know-but
 'Well, I don't know about this CD, but...'
- a. John-i SUE-HANTEY I CHAYK-UN ecey cwuesse
 John-nom Sue-to this book-nun yesterday gave
- b. John-i I CHAYK_i-UN SUE-HANTEY ecey t_i cwuesse
 John-nom this book-nun Sue-to yesterday gave

- c. I CHAYK_i-UN John-i SUE-HANTEY ecey t_i cwuesse
 this book-nun John-nom Sue-to yesterday gave
 'as for this book, John gave it to Sue yesterday.'

Like Dutch: (18b), (19b), (20b)

Unlike Japanese: (37)/(38)

- (iv) Contrastive focus can also move to a variety of positions:

- (56) John-i Sue-hantey mwu-lul cwuesse?
 John-nom Sue-to what-acc gave
 'What did John give to Sue?'
- (57) a. John-i Sue-hantey i CD-lul cwuesse
 John-nom Sue-to this CD-acc gave
 b. John-i I CD_j-LUL Sue-hantey t_j cwuesse
 John-nom this CD-acc Sue-to gave
 c. I CD_j-LUL John-i Sue-hantey t_j cwuesse
 this CD-acc John-nom Sue-to gave
 'John gave the CD to Sue.'

Like Dutch: (18a), (19a), (20a)

Like Japanese: (35)/(36)

- (v) Like Dutch, contrastive focus and contrastive topic movements mark the domain of contrast. It therefore gives rise to the predictions in (24) and (29):

- (24) a. topic_i [VP FOCUS t_i]
 b. *FOCUS_i [VP topic t_i]
- (29) a. Top_i [VP t_i Foc]
 b. #Foc_i [VP t_i Top]

(24a): Already shown to be correct by (55b) and (55c).

(24b): The example in (58)/(59) shows that this prediction is also borne out in Korean.

- (58) John-un/i ecey pathi-eyse mwu-ess-lul mekesse?
 John-nun/nom yesterday party-at what-acc ate
 'What did John eat at the party yesterday?'
- (59) Hmm, John-un molu-keyss-ko
 Well, John-nun not-know-but
 'Well, I don't know about John, but...'
- a. BILL-UN 8-si-ey KHONG-UL mekesse. (Top Foc)
 Bill-nun 8 o'clock-at beans-acc ate
- b. #KHONG_i-UL BILL-UN 8-si-ey t_i mekesse. (#Foc_i Top t_i)
 beans-acc Bill-nun 8 o'clock-at ate
 'as for Bill, he was eating beans around 8 o'clock.'

Like Dutch: (27)

Like Japanese: (44)/(45)

(29a): Top_i t_i Foc is ok:

- (60) John-i Mary-hantey mwu-lul cwuesse?
 John-nom Mary-to what-acc gave
 ‘What did John give to Mary?’
- (61) Hmm, Mary-nun molu-keyss-ko
 Well, Mary-nun not-know-but
 ‘Well, I don’t know about Mary, but...’
- a. John-i SUE-HANTEY-NUN I CHAYK-UL ecey cwuesse (Top Foc)
 John-nom Sue-to-nun this book-acc yesterday gave
- b. SUE_j-HANTEY-NUN John-i t_j I CHAYK-UL ecey cwuesse (Top_i t_i Foc)
 Sue-to-nun John-nom this book-nun yesterday gave
 ‘as for Sue, John gave her this book yesterday.’

Like Dutch: (30)

Like Japanese: (47)/(48)

(29b): But it’s #Foc_i t_i Top:

- (62) John-i nwuku-hantey ku CD-lul cwuesse?
 John-nom who-to this CD-acc gave
 ‘To whom did John give this CD?’
- (63) Hmm, ku CD-nun molu-keyss-ko
 Well, this CD-nun not-know-but
 ‘Well, I don’t know about this CD, but...’
- a. John-i SUE-HANTEY I CHAYK-UN ecey cwuesse (Foc Top)
 John-nom Sue-to this book-nun yesterday gave
- b. #SUE_j-HANTEY John-i t_j I CHAYK-UN ecey cwuesse (#Foc_i t_i Top)
 Sue-to John-nom this book-nun yesterday gave
 ‘as for this book, John gave it to Sue.’

Like Dutch: (32)

Korean is not Dutch: there is no comparable rule for non-contrastive topic in Dutch:

- (64) Vertel me eens wat over deze hoed
 tell me once something about this hat
 ‘Tell me about this hat.’
- (65) a. Oh, Jan heeft deze hoed gisteren gekocht
 Well, John has this hat yesterday bought
- b. #Oh, deze hoed_i heeft Jan t_i gisteren gekocht
 Well, this hat has John yesterday bought
 ‘Well, John bought this hat yesterday.’

6 Contrastive *wa*-phrases and contrastive *nun*-phrases:

The claim that one rule wins over the other in conflict resolution predicts a further difference in the syntactic distribution between *wa*-phrases and *nun*-phrases in contrastive contexts.

There is a debate as to whether *wa* and *nun* appearing on non-contrastive topic and contrastive topic are one lexical item or two lexical items (Kuno 1973, Kuroda 1992, 2005, Hara 2006, Tomioka 2007 for Japanese; Choi 1997, 1999, Han 1998, Gill & Tsoulas 2003, M. Lee 2006, Oh 2007 for Korean). Some authors argue that there is non-contrastive *wa* and contrastive *wa*, while others argue that there is only one lexical item *walnun* and the contrast arises from the context. However, there is overwhelming evidence that the particles have different syntax, semantics and prosody in the two circumstances in which they are used. For instance, the contrastive interpretation is invariably associated with freer syntax and emphatic stress. The prediction pertains only to cases where *wa*- and *nun*-phrases are interpreted contrastively. So, for this talk, I will assume there are two *wa*’s and two *nun*’s.

The semantics of contrastive *wa* and *nun* is akin to what is encoded by the B-accent in English or the rising pitch accent in German (C. Lee 1999, 2003b, 2006, Hara 2006, M. Lee 2006, Hetland 2007, Hara & Van Rooij 2007, Oshima 2008, Tomioka 2007). Hara (2006) proposes that Japanese contrastive *wa* implicates the existence of a stronger scalar alternative which could be false. C. Lee (2003, 2006) proposes that Korean *nun* has similar semantics.

- (66) NANINKA-WA kita
 some.people-wa came
 ‘Some people came.’ (Implicature: ‘Not everyone came’)

- (67) a. $\exists(x)$ [[person(x)] [came (x)]]
 b. a stronger scalar alternative: $\forall(x)$ [[person(x)] [came (x)]]
 c. (b) can be false.

However, there is nothing inherent in this kind of interpretation that makes contrastive *wa*- or *nun*-phrases contrastive ‘topics’. Indeed, several authors have argued for Japanese that the properties of contrastive *wa* are akin to other focal particles such as *mo* ‘also’ and *sae* ‘even’ (Kuroda 1965, 2005, Oshima 2008). A contrastive *wa*-phrase can answer a wh-question.

Japanese:

- (68) A: Dare-ga siken-ni ukatta no?
 who-nom exam-in passed Q
 ‘Who passed the exam?’
- B: JOHN-WA ukatta
 John-wa passed
 ‘John passed.’ (‘but I’m not sure about others’ / ‘but Bill didn’t’)

In Korean, the general convention is to call contrastive *nun*-phrases in-situ contrastive ‘focus’, but it is not necessarily read as exhaustive (Choi 1999: C. Lee 2003, M. Lee 2006).

Korean:

- (69) A: nwuka Inho-lul manna-ss-e?
 who-nom Inho-acc meet-past-decl
 ‘Who met Inho?’

B: SWUNI-NUN Inho-lul manna-ss-e
 Swuni-nun Inho-acc meet-past-decl
 'Swuni met Inho.' ('but I'm not sure about others' / 'but Mina didn't')

As we saw above, a contrastive *wa*- or *nun*-phrase can also be contrastive topics. The kind of contrast indicated by contrastive *wa* and contrastive *nun* seems compatible with both focus and topic. I argue therefore that they are identified as contrastive topics only by pragmatic consideration, i.e., what the rest of the sentence is about, affecting the topic of discourse. In other words, contrastive topics are always marked by contrastive *wa* or *nun*, but contrastive *wa*-phrases and contrastive *nun*-phrases are not always contrastive topics (Kuroda 2005, Hetland 2007).

Similar arguments can be made for the so-called English B-accent. Contrastive topics are sometimes identified as items bearing the B-accent (Jackendoff 1972, Büring 1997, 2003), but B-accented items are not necessarily always contrastive topics. It is unclear in what sense the B-sentences below are about the verb or the quantified non-specific items. Conversely, if contrastive topics are to be identified as bearers of the B-accent, it is unclear what interpretation is shared by contrastive and non-contrastive topics. B-accent is only indicative of the kind of contrast (Constant 2006, Wagner 2008).

(70) A: How's your revision going?
 B: Well, I [bought]_B the book, but I haven't read it.

(71) A: How many people expressed interest in your house?
 B: Well, [lots]_B of people called, and [three]_B looked at it, but [nobody]_B made an offer.
 (McNally 1998: 152)

The fact that contrastive *wa*- and contrastive *nun*-phrases can be items other than contrastive topic predicts a further difference with respect to their syntactic distribution. I have argued that the rule for [topic] wins over the rule for [contrast] with respect to contrastive topic in Japanese. Thus, from a functional perspective, one would expect that this language would interpret any contrastive *wa*-marked phrase displaced to clause-initial position as topic. In other words, if a contrastive *wa*-phrase is not a topic, moving it to sentence-initial position should be dispreferred. On the other hand, in Korean, the rule for [contrast] wins over the rule for [topic]. Thus, it should be possible to move a contrastive *nun*-phrase to sentence-initial position.

Japanese: [topic] > [contrast]
 (72) a. contrastive *wa*-phrase: (#XP_i –WA) YP (XP_i –WA) ZP (XP –WA) V
 b. contrastive topic: (XP_i –WA) YP (#XP_i –WA) ZP (#XP –WA) V

Korean: [contrast] > [topic]
 (73) a. contrastive *nun*-phrase: (XP_i –NUN) YP (XP_i –NUN) ZP (XP –NUN) V
 b. contrastive topic: (XP_i –NUN) YP (XP_i –NUN) ZP (XP –NUN) V

The prediction is borne out in two instances.

(i) A contrastive *wa*-phrase answering a *wh*-question cannot be fronted to clause-initial position, but a contrastive *nun*-phrase answering a *wh*-question can:

Japanese:

(74) Mary-wa Sue-ni nani-o ageta no desu ka?
 Mary-wa Sue-to what-acc gave nmz cop Q
 'What did Mary give to Sue?'

(75) a. Mary-wa Sue-ni ANO HON-WA agemasita.
 Mary-wa Sue-to that book-wa gave
 b. Mary-wa ANO HON_i-WA Sue-ni t_i agemasita.
 Mary-wa that book-wa Sue-to gave
 c. ?ANO HON_i-WA Mary-wa Sue-ni t_i agemasita.
 that book-wa Mary-wa Sue-to gave
 'Mary gave that book to Sue.' (but I'm not sure if she gave anything else)

Korean:

(76) John-i Sue-hantey mwu-lul cwuesse?
 John-nom Sue-to what-acc gave
 'What did John give to Sue?'

(77) a. John-i Sue-hantey i CD-nun cwuesse
 John-nom Sue-to this CD-nun gave
 b. John-i i CD_j-NUN Sue-hantey t_j cwuesse
 John-nom this CD-nun Sue-to gave
 c. i CD_j-NUN John-i Sue-hantey t_j cwuesse
 this CD-nun John-nom Sue-to gave
 'John gave the CD to Sue.' (but I'm not sure if she gave anything else)

Judgements are more robust with two arguments:

Japanese:

(78) John-wa nani-o katta no?
 John-wa what-acc bought Q
 'What did John buy?'

(79) a. John-wa OSEENBEE-WA tikaku-de katta (kedo, KUKKII-WA kawanakatta)
 John-wa rice.crackers-wa near-at bought but cookies-wa buy-not.past
 b. #OSEENBEE_i-WA John-wa t_i tikaku-de katta (kedo, KUKKII-WA kaw-anakatta).
 rice.crackers-wa John-wa near-at bought but cookies-wa buy-not.past
 'John bought rice crackers nearby, but (he) didn't buy cookies.'

Korean:

(80) Mary-ka nwukwu-lul po-ass-ni?
 Mary-nom who-acc see-past-Q
 'who did Mary see?'

(81) a. Mary-ka JOHN-UN po-ass-ta.
 Mary-nom John-nun saw
 b. JOHN_i-UN Mary-ka t_i po-ass-ta.
 John-nun Mary-nom saw
 'Mary saw John' (but I'm not sure if she saw anyone else)

- (ii) A contrastive *wa*-phrase projecting the contrast to a larger constituent cannot be fronted to clause-initial position, but a contrastive *nun*-phrase in the same context can:

Japanese:

- (82) a. [AME-WA hutteita-ga] [John-ga KASA-WA motteikanakatta]
 rain-wa falling-but John-nom umbrella-wa bring-went-not
 b. #[AME-WA hutteita-ga] [KASA_i-WA John-ga t_i motte-ika-nakatta]
 rain-wa falling-but umbrella-wa John-nom bring-go-not.past
 'It was raining, but John did not bring an umbrella.'
 (modified from Kuno (1973: 46) attributed to Minoru Nakau (p.c.))

Korean:

- (83) a. [pi-nun o-nuntey] [John-i WUSAN-UN kacyeo-ci an-hassta]
 rain-nun come-but John-nom umbrella-nun bring-neg neg-past
 b. [pi-nun o-nuntey] [WUSAN_i-UN John-i t_i kacyeo-ci an-hassta]
 rain-nun come-but umbrella-nun John-nom bring-neg neg-past
 'It's raining, but John didn't bring an umbrella.'

It is not the case that in Japanese a contrasted item within focus cannot undergo movement.

- (84) A: nani-ga atta no desu ka?
 what-nom existed nmz cop Q
 'What happened?'
 B: [TAROO-O_i Hanako-ga t_i nagutte-simai-masita]_{FOC}
 Taroo-acc Hanako-nom hit-end.up-POLITE
 'Hanako hit Taro.'

7 Conclusion

The Japanese and Korean data expand the patterns of topic-, focus- and contrast-marking in a way that is predicted by the typology in (1).

- (85) Japanese:
 a. [topic] is licensed in clause-initial position
 b. [contrast] licenses A'-movement that marks domain of contrast.
 c. Contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [topic].
- (86) Korean:
 a. [topic] is licensed in clause-initial position.
 b. [contrast] licenses A'-movement that marks the domain of contrast.
 c. Contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [contrast].

Crucially, those are patterns that are predicted to exist. What is not predicted by the typology in (1) is that there is a language in which there is a rule that generalises over items that do not share a notion, i.e. non-contrastive topic and information focus, non-contrastive topic and contrastive focus, or information focus and contrastive topic.

Speaker variation: one Korean informant (out of five) reported a pattern exactly like the Japanese pattern, while two Japanese informants (out of seven) reported the Korean pattern. This suggests that the choice for which rule wins may be an issue of a parametric variation.

APPENDIX: non-contrastive *wa* and *nun*

In Japanese non-contrastive topic must be marked with *wa*, but in Korean, it can be marked with a case marker. This observation, particularly with respect to subject topic, was initially noted by Haig (1982). Shimojo & Choi (2000) propose that *nun* establishes the topic of discourse, while *wa* marks any 'activated' item. Re-interpreting Shimojo & Choi's proposal, I propose that the notion [topic] is relevant also for explaining this difference. Specifically, I argue for Korean, following Choi (1999) that *nun* marks [topic] in Korean, while a case marker is discourse-neutral. By contrast, in Japanese, *wa* must mark [topic], but it can also mark other discourse given material under certain circumstances, while a case marker cannot mark [topic] (Vermeulen 2008 for some discussion):

- (87) Japanese:
 a. *wa* marks [topic] as well as discourse given material under certain circumstances.
 b. case marker cannot mark [topic].
- (88) Korean:
 a. *nun* marks [topic].
 b. case marker is neutral with respect to discourse function.

The differences in (87) and (88) predict that Japanese *wa* can be used for items that are not topic, but Korean *nun* cannot. There are two instances in which this is true:

- (i) Discourse anaphoric/given object can be *wa*-marked, but not *nun*-marked:

Japanese:

- (89) Mary-wa ano hon-o tosyokan-de karita no?
 Mary-wa that book-acc library-at borrowed Q
 'Did Mary manage to borrow that book in the library?'
 (90) Ie, Mary-wa ano hon-wa honya-de KAIMASITA.
 No, Mary-wa that book-wa book.shop-at bought
 'No, Mary bought that book at the bookshop.'

Korean:

- (91) Mary-ka ku chayk-ul tosekwan-eyse pilyesse?
 Mary-nom this book-acc library-at borrowed
 'Did Mary borrow this book from the library?'
 (92) #Aniyo. Mary-ka kyelkwuk ku chayk-un secem-eyse sasse.
 No. Mary-nom in.the.end that book-nun book.shop-at bought
 'No, Mary bought that book at the bookshop in the end.'

- (ii) *wa*-marked discourse given item can be preceded by another item, but not a *nun*-marked discourse given item.

Japanese:

- (93) Mary-wa dare-o mita no desu ka?
 Mary-wa who-acc saw nmz cop Q
 'Who did Mary see?'
 (94) JOHN_i-O Mary-wa t_i mita
 John-acc Mary-wa saw
 'Mary saw John.'

Korean (Choi 1999, M. Lee 2006:29):

- (95) Mary-nun/ka nwukwu-lul po-ass-ni?
Mary-nun/nom who-acc see-past-Q
'Who did Mary see?'
- (96) JOHN_i-UL Mary-#nun/ka t_i po-ass-ta.
John-acc Mary-nun/nom see-past-decl
'Mary saw John.'

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