

# *On the syntactic typology of topic marking: A comparative study of Japanese and Korean\**

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## **Abstract**

This paper investigates the syntactic distribution of topics in Japanese and Korean. The literature on the two languages notes a number of similarities, but also some differences particularly with respect to so-called contrastive topics. However, no unified account for the two languages has been proposed. I show that similarities as well as such differences are systematic and predicted by a syntactic typology of information structural notions proposed by Neeleman et al. (to appear). The typology claims that there are syntactic rules that are sensitive to information structural notions [topic], [focus] and [contrast]. I demonstrate that Japanese and Korean exemplify the same rule for [topic] and the same rule for [contrast]. This results in a conflict for contrastive topics. I propose that in such a situation, there is parametric variation as to which operation is adopted. In Japanese, the rule for [topic] is adopted, while in Korean the rule for [contrast] is adopted. Some consequences for phrases marked by the putative topic markers *wa* in Japanese and *nun* in Korean, which are often noted not to behave like topics (Kuroda 1965, 2005, Choi 1999), are also discussed.

## **1 Introduction**

There is overwhelming evidence from a wide ranging languages that [topic], [focus] and [contrast] are autonomous notions of information structure that interact in systematic ways with syntax (e.g., Aboh 2004, Frey, 2004, Rizzi 1997, Vallduví 1992, Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998). Moreover, some authors have argued that items usually referred to as contrastive topic and contrastive focus should be analysed as composites of the notions [topic] and [contrast], and [focus] and [contrast], respectively (Molnár 2002, Giusti 2006). Based on these considerations, Neeleman et al (to appear) propose the typology in (1).

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(1) *Syntactic typology of topic, focus and contrast*<sup>1</sup>

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

The main motivation for the typology comes from the observation that languages show cross-cutting generalisations over the syntactic distribution of items sharing one of the three privative notions. If [topic], [focus] and [contrast] are autonomous notions that can be targeted by the syntax, one would expect to find syntactic operations that are sensitive only to [topic], those sensitive only to [focus], and those sensitive only to [contrast]. Following Neeleman et al. (to app.), I will talk of such syntactic operations as syntactic ‘rules’ and the information structural notions as ‘features’ that the syntax may target for convenience. Neeleman et al. provide Japanese, Russian and Dutch as example languages that have discrete syntactic rules regarding [topic], [focus] and [contrast], respectively. In Japanese, they show that a topic, contrastive or non-contrastive, must be licensed in clause-initial position, and items in other positions bearing the putative topic marker *wa* are not in fact topics. They demonstrate for Russian with data involving scope and so-called split scrambling that focus, contrastive or non-contrastive, is licensed in clause-final position in this language. Finally, in Dutch, a contrastive item licenses A'-scrambling which has a particular effect on the interpretation of the sister constituent of the A'-moved item, regardless of whether this item is contrastive topic or contrastive focus.

This paper provides further evidence from Japanese and Korean for the above typology. The two languages display an additional pattern of cross-linguistic variation. In particular, the table does not preclude the possibility that one language has more than one rule. For example, a language may have a rule for [topic] and a rule for [contrast]. In such an instance, a conflict potentially arises for contrastive topic. If the two rules cannot be satisfied simultaneously, it is not immediately obvious which rule contrastive topic should be subject to. I argue that in such an instance a language adopts one rule over the other. This predicts that if a language has conflicting rules for [topic] and [contrast], contrastive topic in that language

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<sup>1</sup> What I call ‘non-contrastive topic’ and ‘non-contrastive focus’ are often referred to in the literature as ‘aboutness topic’ and ‘new information focus’, as are in Neeleman et al. (to app.). However, to be theory-neutral, and to highlight the opposition to the contrastive types, I adopt the term ‘non-contrastive’.

would systematically behave either like non-contrastive topic or contrastive focus with respect to the rules. In this paper, I argue that Japanese and Korean bear out the predicted situation. The two languages have the same rule for [topic] and the same rule for [contrast]. Japanese contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [topic], while Korean contrastive topic is subject to the rule for [contrast]. The rule for [topic] in the two languages is the same as the one mentioned above for Japanese. Moreover, the rule for [contrast] in the two languages turns out to be the same as the one mentioned above in Dutch, but the two rules will be elaborated in much more detail using data from Japanese and Korean below.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. I will first clarify in Section 2 the notions ‘topic’, ‘focus’ and ‘contrast’ adopted in this paper. Section 3 examines the rule for [topic] in Japanese and Korean. I show that in both languages, non-contrastive topic must appear in clause-initial position. Section 4 shows that the two languages have the same rule for [contrast]. This is demonstrated by the syntactic distribution of contrastive focus in both languages. They optionally undergo scrambling to a clause-medial or clause-initial position. This option is not available for non-contrastive focus. Thus, the optional scrambling is not a rule for [focus]. The syntactic behaviour of contrastive topic is examined in Section 5. There, I show that contrastive topics in Japanese, must occupy clause-initial position, like non-contrastive topics in this language. On the other hand, in Korean, contrastive topics behave syntactically like contrastive foci. Contrastive topic in Japanese is thus regulated by the rule for [topic], while contrastive topic in Korean is regulated by the rule for [contrast]. The section also considers cases where phrases marked by the putative topic markers *wa* and *nun* in the two languages induce contrastive readings, but, I argue, are not topics. The current proposal predicts different distributions regarding these items, which are shown to be correct.

## 2 Terminologies

It is important to note at the outset the distinction between ‘sentence topic’ and ‘discourse topic’. Sentence topic is generally considered the syntactic category that is what the sentence is about, while discourse topic is what the whole discourse is about and can be more abstract (Reinhart 1981). In this paper, I take a narrower notion of ‘sentence topic’ as a syntactic category that is not merely what the rest of the sentence is about, but that in addition affects the topic of discourse, for example 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. An item having such a set of discourse functions has been noted in several languages to have a distinct set of syntactic properties from an item that is merely what the

sentence is about. It has variously been named ‘chain-initial topic’ (Givón 1983), ‘link’ (Vallduví 1992), ‘aboutness topic’ (Frascarelli & Hinterhölzl 2007). The present paper concerns the syntax of this narrower notion of ‘sentence topic’.

A sentence topic in this narrower sense can be identified as the item *X* in the answer to requests such as *tell me about X* or *what about X?* (Reinhart 1981). Such requests explicitly instruct the hearer to introduce *X* as the discourse topic. Thus, *John* in Speaker B’s utterance below is a sentence topic.

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

That *John* in (2B) indeed introduces the referent as the topic of discourse, can be seen from the fact that B’s utterance is still felicitous even if the request is less specific about what is to be the topic of discourse, such as *tell me about someone in your class*.

Sentence topics must be distinguished from items that simply refer back to them and are thereby interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about (Vallduví 1992, Lambrecht 1994, Vallduví & Engdahl 1996, Neeleman et al. to app.). The point can be illustrated by the following discourse.

- (3) A: Who did Max see yesterday?  
B: He saw Rosa yesterday.

Uttered discourse-initially, the question in (3a) introduces Max as the topic of discourse. However, the pronoun *he* in (3b) is not a sentence topic. It is an anaphoric item that simply refers back to the discourse topic Max (Vallduví & Engdahl 1996). The information structure of the utterance in (3b) is that *Rosa*, that answers the *wh*-part of the preceding question, is the focus and the remaining items constitute the background. The sentence in (3b) gives the impression that it is about the referent of *he*, but this is so only because *he* refers back to the discourse topic. Thus, a sentence topic is always what the sentence is about, but the item that the sentence is about is not necessarily a sentence topic.

Below, I will examine the syntactic distribution of ‘topic’ in Japanese and Korean in this narrower sense. Note that the notion ‘topic’ is not defined in terms of whether the relevant item is marked by the so-called topic markers *wa* and *nun* in Japanese and Korean, respectively. I have argued in Vermeulen (2009, to app.) that there are *wa*-marked phrases that do not coincide with items identified as topics on discourse considerations in both contrastive and non-contrastive cases and this particle should therefore not be analysed as a topic marker. For Korean too, the literature notes many instances in which *nun* should not be treated as a topic marker (e.g. Choe 1995, Han 1998, Choi 1999, Gill & Tsoulas 2004).

Turning to ‘focus’, I adopt the widely held view that it provides a highlighted piece of information with respect to the rest of the sentence. As such, it can be identified as the item that answers the *wh*-part of a preceding question (É Kiss 1998, Erteschik-Shir 2007 and references therein).

Finally, I take a contrastive item to be an item that generates a set of salient alternatives and induces a particular implicature with respect to the alternatives that are not selected. It appears that contrast can be expressed only if the item is also focus or topic. (Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998, Repp 2009). The nature of the implicature seems to depend on whether the item is also focus or topic. Tomioka (2009), for instance, argues that this distinction follows from the different level at which focus and topic operates. He argues that focus operates at the level of proposition, while topic operates at the level of speech act. Consequently, a contrastive focus generates a set of alternative propositions and the reason for selecting that particular item is because the alternative propositions are false. On the other hand, a contrastive topic generates a set of alternative speech acts, and as such the reason for selecting a particular contrastive topic could be pragmatic, for example, the speaker is not sure about the alternatives, or wishes not to make a statement about the alternatives. Contrastive focus and contrastive topic are often associated with distinct tones in English. The former is instantiated by a falling tone, the so-called A-accent, while the latter by a fall-rise tone, the so-called B-accent (Jackendoff 1972). Typical examples of contrastive focus and contrastive topic are given below in (4) and (5), and (6) and (7), respectively. (SMALL CAPS indicate additional discourse-related stress).

- (4) A: Which one of his friends wants to meet John?  
 B: [ JANET ]<sub>A</sub> wants to meet John.  
 (Erteschik-Shir 2007: 49)
- (5) A: Which of Giorgo and Maria has broken the vase?  
 B: [ MARIA ]<sub>A</sub> has broken the vase.  
 (based on an Italian example in É Kiss (1998: 269))
- (6) A: Do you think that Fritz would buy this suit?  
 B: Well, [ I ]<sub>B</sub> certainly wouldn't.  
 (Büring 1997: 56)
- (7) A: Can Jack and Bill come to tea?  
 B: [ BILL ]<sub>B</sub> can.  
 (Büring 2003: 532)

*Janet* in (4B) is a focus, because it answers the *wh*-part of a preceding question, and it is also contrastive, as the question makes it clear that there is a set of salient alternatives out of which *Janet* has been selected. The answer implies strongly that

other friends did not want to meet John. Similarly, in (5), where the set is made explicitly to contain only two alternatives ‘Girogo has broken the vase’ and ‘Maria has broken the vase’, (5B) implicates that the other alternative is false.

*I* in (6B) is a topic, as it is what the rest of the sentence is about and has shifted the topic of discourse from *Fritz*, which has been introduced as such by the preceding question. It is also contrastive: shifting the topic of discourse from *Fritz* to *I*, the speaker B opted not to make an utterance regarding Fritz, which is in the set of alternatives. A possible implicature here seems much freer than that in (4B) and (5B). It could be that the speaker simply does not know, or wishes not to express his/her opinion regarding Fritz, and so on. Similarly in (7), where the answer makes the alternatives in the set explicit, it does not necessarily imply that the other alternative, namely ‘John can come for dinner’ is false. It could be that B is unsure about John.

However, there are instances in which items with a B-accent are not contrastive ‘topics’ in a most obvious way despite generating the same kind of contrastive interpretation as the contrastive topic in (6B) and (7B). Being what the sentence is about, a topic must usually be specific (Reinhart 1981). However, the following examples show that the accent can be used to mark contrast on verbs or quantifiers. It is difficult to see in what sense these non-specific items are what the sentences are about, or how they affect the discourse topic. Conversely, if contrastive topics are identified simply as items bearing this accent, and not necessarily what the sentence is about, it is unclear what is common to contrastive topics and non-contrastive topics in terms of their interpretation.

- (8) A: How’s your revision going?  
 B: Well, I [BOUGHT]<sub>B</sub> the book, but I haven’t [READ]<sub>A</sub> it.
- (9) A: How many people expressed interest in your house?  
 B: Well, [LOTS]<sub>B</sub> of people called, and [THREE]<sub>B</sub> looked at it,  
 but [NOBODY]<sub>B</sub> made an offer.
- (modified from McNally 1998: 152)

I propose that accents such as the English B-accent only indicate contrast of the type that is proposed in the literature<sup>2</sup> and the topic status of contrastive topic is identified in terms of aboutness and its effect on the current topic of discourse, discussed above. A B-accented item should then also be able to function as a

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<sup>2</sup> I will not review the vast literature on the precise meaning of the B-accent (e.g., Ward & Hirschberg 1988, Büring 1997, 2003, Constant 2006, Hara and van Rooij 2007, Wagner 2008). However, I will discuss some analyses proposed for Japanese and Korean for a similar contrastive interpretation expressed by the particles *wa* in Japanese and *nun* in Korean in Section 5.

contrastive focus, given an appropriate discourse context. Indeed, I argue that the B-accented items in the examples in (8) and (9) are a type of contrastive focus. The B-accent indicates that the item has a different kind of contrastive implicature from A-accented items such as those in (4B) and (5B), contrary to Büring (2003) and Tomioka (2009).<sup>3</sup> Thus, in terms of the syntactic typology in (1), the B-accented items in (8) and (9) are ‘contrastive focus’. One argument comes from the observation that a B-accented item can be used to answer a *wh*-question, and it may be the sole pitch bearing item in the sentence, as shown below (Hara 2006: 19). This also means that A-accented items are not the only instantiation of contrastive focus in terms of the typology in (1).

- (10) A: Who passed the exam?  
 B: [Mary did]<sub>B</sub>  
 (Implicature: Possibly, others didn’t pass. /I don’t know about others.)

In Japanese and Korean, the counterparts to the A-accented foci are marked by case markers, while the putative topic markers *wa* and *nun* mark items that appear in similar environments to those bearing the B-accent in (8), (9), and (10). I will argue in Section 5 that the latter are not contrastive topics, but rather contrastive foci.

To recap, I assume that topic is what the rest of the sentence is about, affecting the topic of discourse, and focus is a highlighted piece of information in the sentence. Contrast generates a set of alternatives with a particular implicature for those alternatives that were not selected. Those are the notions relevant for the syntactic typology in (1). In the next two sections, I will demonstrate that there are cross-cutting generalisations for the syntax of items with the feature [topic] and items with the feature [contrast].

### 3 [Topic]

Neeleman et al. (to app.) propose that a topic in Japanese, contrastive or not, is subject to the syntactic rule in (11) (See also Vermeulen (2009, to app.)).

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

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<sup>3</sup> The idea that a B-accented item can be a focus, however, seems incompatible with Tomioka’s (2009) idea that focus operates at the level of proposition, while the B-accent, the accent he associates with contrastive topic, operates at the level of speech act. The implicatures of the B-accent in (8), (9) and (10) appear similar to the ones in (6) and (7). I leave this issue for future research.

The main empirical motivation comes from the distribution of items identified as topics in contexts that require them to be topics. This section demonstrates the above rule in Japanese and Korean by examining the distribution of non-contrastive topics in the two languages. In Section 5, I will show that contrastive topics in Japanese are also subject to the above rule.

Non-contrastive topics in Japanese must be marked by the particle *wa*. In the literature on Japanese, non-contrastive topics are generally described as typically appearing in clause-initial position, but they can sometimes occupy other positions (e.g. Watanabe 2003). However, in a context that explicitly requires an item to be a non-contrastive topic, it must occupy clause-initial position. Thus, in answering the request in (12), the subject *ano inu-wa* ‘that dog-wa’ must appear in clause-initial position, as in (13b). A reply in which the *wa*-phrase occupies a non-clause-initial position, as in (13b), is infelicitous.

- (12) *ano inu-nituite nanika osiete-kudasai* (J)  
 that dog-about something tell-give  
 ‘Tell me something about that dog.’
- (13) a. *ano inu-wa kinoo kooen-de John-o kande-simatta*  
 that dog-wa yesterday park-at John-acc bite-closed  
 b. #*John<sub>i</sub>-o ano inu-wa kinoo kooen-de t<sub>i</sub> kande-simatta*  
 John-acc that dog-wa yesterday park-at bite-closed  
 ‘The dog bit John in the park yesterday.’

The same observation obtains when the object in the answer is to be interpreted as the non-contrastive topic. In answering the request in (14), *ano boosi* ‘that hat’ must appear in clause-initial position, as in (15a), and it cannot remain in its canonical object position, as in (15b).

- (14) *ano boosi-nituite nanika osiete-kudasai* (J)  
 that hat-about something tell-give  
 ‘Tell me something about that hat.’
- (15) a. *ano boosi<sub>i</sub>-wa John-ga kinoo e<sub>i</sub> 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.’

In Korean too, an item that is interpreted as a non-contrastive topic must occupy clause-initial position. The point is illustrated for subject and object in (16)/(17) and (18)/(19), respectively.<sup>4</sup>

(16) ku kay-eytayhayse mal-hay-po-a (K)  
 that dog-about tell-do-try-imperative  
 ‘Tell me about this dog.’

(17) a. ku kay-nun/ka ecey kongwen-eyse John-ul mwul-essta  
 this dog-nun/nom yesterday park-at John-acc bit  
 b. #John<sub>i</sub>-ul ku kay-nun/ka ecey kongwen-eyse t<sub>i</sub> mwul-essta  
 John-acc this dog-nun/nom yesterday park-at bit  
 ‘This dog bit John in the park yesterday.’

(18) ku moca-eytayhayse mal-hay-po-a (K)  
 this hat-about tell-do-try-imperative  
 ‘Tell me about this hat.’

(19) 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.’

Korean non-contrastive topics, unlike the Japanese counterpart, need not be marked by the putative topic marker *nun*. Choi (1999) claims that *nun* on a clause-initial phrase specifically marks items with functions associated with Vallduví’s (1992) notion of ‘link’, which is equivalent to the notion of ‘topic’ adopted in this paper, while case markers *ka* and *lul* are neutral with respect to the discourse function of the host item. Thus, the latter are compatible with topics. The situation is different in Japanese, where it seems that topics must be marked by *wa*, although as we will see that *wa* can mark items other than topics. As indicated above, whether the non-contrastive topic is marked by the case marker or *nun* does not affect the syntactic restriction to clause-initial position. I will therefore not discuss this difference between *wa*-marking in Japanese and *nun*-marking in Korean and concentrate on the syntactic distribution of those items identified as topics by discourse considerations.

There is a further syntactic property that non-contrastive topics in the two languages share, supporting the claim that they have the same rule for [topic]. The standard analysis of non-contrastive topics in Japanese is that it is base-generated in

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<sup>4</sup> The nominative case marker is realised as *ka* after a vowel and as *i* elsewhere. Similarly, the accusative marker is realised as *lul* if following a vowel and as *ul* elsewhere.

a left-peripheral position and can bind an empty pronominal in a thematic position, resulting in a structure typically assumed for dislocation (Cinque 1990), illustrated in (20).

(20) Topic<sub>i</sub> [IP pro<sub>i</sub> ]

This analysis explains the well-known observation that a non-contrastive topic can be associated with a position inside an island, such as a relative clause.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in the example in (21), *sono sinsi* ‘that gentleman’ appears in the main clause and is interpreted as the subject inside the relative clause. The presence of the empty pronominal *pro* can be seen from the fact that it is possible to overtly realise it (Perlmutter 1972, Kuno 1973, Saito 1985, also Hoji 1985).

(21) sono sinsi<sub>i</sub>-wa kyoo [NP Ø<sub>j</sub> [TP pro/kare<sub>i</sub>-ga kinoo e<sub>j</sub> kitei-ta]  
 that gentleman-wa today he-nom yesterday wearing-Past  
 yoohuku]-ga yogoretei-ta.  
 suit-nom dirty-Past  
 ‘As for that gentleman, the suit (he) was wearing was dirty.’  
 (modified from Kuno (1973: 249))

The same construction is possible in Korean, as shown below. Based on such data, Choe (1995) proposes an analysis along the same line as that in (20).

(22) ku kulim<sub>i</sub>-nun nay-ka [NP [TP e<sub>j</sub> (kukes<sub>i</sub>-ul) kuli-n] salam<sub>j</sub>]-ul  
 the picture-nun I-nom it-acc draw-adn person-acc  
 al-ko iss-ta  
 know-and exist-dec  
 ‘Speaking of the picture, I know a person who painted it.’  
 (modified from Choe 1995: 312)

The following simpler examples illustrate the same point, where the *wa*-marked phrase in Japanese and the *nun*-marked phrase or the nominative phrase in Korean are interpreted as the possessor of the subject. The sentences are felicitous answers to the request ‘tell me something about Mary.’<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Kuroda (1988), Sakai (1994) and Ishizuka (to app.) argue that topicalisation always involves movement. However, the possibility of linking to a position inside a relative clause is still considered to be a characteristic of (a construction that can feed into) topicalisation.

<sup>6</sup> In the example in (24), if the dislocated item bears the nominative case marker *ka*, the result is the so-called multiple nominative construction. Unlike Japanese, this construction is possible without the first nominative phrase being interpreted as focus (Vermeulen 2005, Yoon 2009)

- (23) Mary<sub>i</sub>-wa kinoo [<sub>NP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> / kanozyo<sub>i</sub>-no ootoo]-ga (J)  
 Mary-wa yesterday she-gen younger.brother-nom  
 John-o mita.  
 John-ACC saw
- (24) Mary-ka/nun ecey [<sub>NP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> tongseng]-i (K)  
 Mary-nom/nun yesterday younger.brother-nom  
 John-ul po-ass-ta.  
 John-acc saw  
 ‘Speaking of Mary, her little brother saw John.’

As mentioned previously, however, a phrase marked by the putative topic marker *wa* in Japanese can appear in positions other than clause-initial position, as illustrated below. (Watanabe 2003).

- (25) ano inu-wa kinoo dare-o kande-simatta no? (J)  
 that dog-nom yesterday who-acc bite-ended.up Q  
 ‘Who did the dog bite?’
- (26) a. ano inu-wa kinoo JOHN-O kande-simatta  
 that dog-wa yesterday John-acc bite-ended.up  
 b. JOHN<sub>i</sub>-O ano inu-wa kinoo t<sub>i</sub> kande-simatta  
 John-acc that dog-wa yesterday bite-ended.up  
 ‘The dog bit John yesterday.’

According to the rule in (11), the *wa*-phrase in (26b) cannot be a topic. As discussed in Section 2 with English examples, the subject in the answer in a context such as the above is not a topic, but it is an anaphoric item referring back to the topic of discourse that is introduced as such by the previous question. It therefore need not occupy clause-initial position.<sup>7</sup> I call such non-topical *wa*-phrases discourse anaphoric *wa*-phrases. I provide two further pieces of evidence for their non-topical status.

Firstly, in Korean, it is widely documented that a non-contrastive *nun*-phrase cannot appear in positions other than clause-initial position (Choe 1995, Choi 1997, 1999, Han 1998). Thus, in the Korean counterpart of (26b), the subject cannot be marked by *nun*: it must bear the nominative case marker *ka*, as illustrated below. Following Choi (1999), if *nun* is a marker specifically for the narrower notion of topic adopted in this paper, then its unavailability in (28b) indicates the non-topical

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<sup>7</sup> By virtue of appearing in the same context, one would expect the clause-initial *wa*-phrase in (26a) also not to be a topic. However, we cannot exclude the possibility that it is a topic, re-introducing the topic of discourse, though somewhat redundantly here.

status of the host item.

- (27) ku kay-ka ecey nwukwu-lul mwul-ess-ni? (K)  
 this dog-nom yesterday who-acc bite-past-Q  
 ‘Who did this dog bite?’
- (28) a. ku kay-ka/nun ecey JOHN-UL mwul-essta  
 this dog-nom/nun yesterday John-acc bite-past  
 b. JOHN<sub>i</sub>-UL ku kay-ka/#nun ecey t<sub>i</sub> mwul-essta  
 John-acc this dog-nom/nun yesterday bite-past

Secondly, if a non-clause-initial *wa*-phrase is not a topic, it should not be able to take part in a construction like (21)/(23), where it is base-generated in a non-thematic position binding an empty pronominal in a thematic position inside a following island. There appears to be no reason to assume that a discourse anaphoric item is licensed in a dislocated position. The prediction is correct and to demonstrate, we need the following ingredients. First, the phrase that is to be marked with *wa* in the answer must be mentioned in the preceding question, as it is to be interpreted as discourse anaphoric. Secondly, in the answer, a fronted focus should be present, preceding the *wa*-phrase, to ensure that we are dealing with a *wa*-phrase that cannot be a topic (see footnote 6). Fronting of a focused object is permitted in answering an object *wh*-question, for instance, as we saw in (25)/(26) and (27)/(28), and is most natural if other items in the answer remained the same as in the question. As a consequence, considering that we are attempting to see if the *wa*-phrase could bind a position inside the subject, it must already do so in the question. These ingredients yield the question in (29). As indicated, the reply in (30) is infelicitous.<sup>8</sup>

- (29) Mary-wa kinoo [<sub>NP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> otooto]-ga dare-o mita no? (J)  
 Mary-wa yesterday younger.brother-nom who-acc saw Q  
 ‘Speaking of Mary, who did her younger brother see yesterday?’
- (30) # JOHN<sub>j</sub>-O Mary<sub>i</sub>-wa kinoo [<sub>NP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> otooto]-ga t<sub>j</sub> mita.  
 John-acc Mary-wa yesterday younger. brother-nom saw  
 ‘Mary’s brother saw John yesterday.’

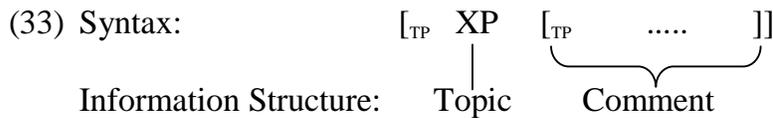
In Korean too, a non-clause-initial *nun*-phrase or nominative phrase cannot take part in the same construction.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Samek-Lodovici (2008) for a similar distinction between pre-focus items and post-focus items in Italian, where he argues the former are topics, while the latter are discourse anaphoric.

<sup>9</sup> One of my Korean informants reports that the example in (32) is acceptable if *Mary* appears with the nominative case marker *ka*. I assume that this is because the nominative case marker is

- (31) Mary<sub>i</sub>-nun [<sub>NP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> tongsayng]-i                      nwukwu-lul po-ass-ni?                      (K)  
 Mary-nun                      younger.brother-nom                      who-acc                      see-past-Q  
 ‘Talking of Mary, who did her younger brother see yesterday?’
- (32) #JOHN<sub>j</sub>-UL ecey                      Mary-nun/ka [<sub>NP</sub> pro<sub>i</sub> tongseng]-i                      t<sub>j</sub> po-ass-ta.  
 John-acc yesterday Mary-nun/nom                      younger.brother-nom                      see-past-decl

Thus, an item bearing the feature [topic] in Japanese and Korean must be licensed in clause-initial position. For concreteness, I propose that topic is in an adjoined position to the highest maximal projection in the clause. Thus, in a simple declarative clause, the topic is adjoined to TP, as shown in (33). Following the standard literature on Japanese and Choe (1995) for Korean, I assume that if the topic is a non-contrastive nominal argument, it is base-generated in the adjoined position, binding an empty pronominal internally to the clause, as we saw above, (20); if it is a non-contrastive PP argument or a contrastive argument, nominal or otherwise, it has undergone movement to that position. The distinction is motivated by the fact that the latter group of items show properties of movement, such as weak crossover, reconstruction effects, licensing of parasitic gaps, and they cannot be associated with an argument position in an island as in the cases we discussed above, (21)-(24) (see Saito 1985, Hoji 1985 for discussion on this point for Japanese and Choe 1995 for Korean). In cases of so-called ‘scene-setting topics’ (Lambrecht 1994) or ‘stage topics’ (Erteschik-Shir 1997), I assume that they are base-generated in the adjoined position (Tateishi 1995), while other adverbials such as manner adverbials, have undergone movement to this position. I assume furthermore, following Neeleman & van de Koot (2008), that the sister constituent to the topic is interpreted as the comment in information structure. The displacement of the topic is motivated to facilitate this one-to-one mapping.<sup>10</sup>




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neutral with respect to the discourse status of its host item, as proposed by Choi (1999) and the speaker has accommodated some alternative interpretation of the subject that licenses multiple nominative constructions (see also footnote 5).

<sup>10</sup> The idea of a transparent mapping is similar in spirit to the so-called cartographic approach initiated by Rizzi (1997). (See Watanabe 2003, Munkata 2006, Endo 2007, Kuwabara 2008 for cartographic analyses of topics in Japanese) I will not compare the above approach to the cartographic approach. See Neeleman & van de Koot (2008) and Vermeulen (to app.) for detailed discussion on this issue.

## 4 [Contrast]

In this section, I show that Japanese and Korean have the same rule for [contrast]:

(34) [Contrast] licenses A'-scrambling.

The above rule is the same as the one proposed for Dutch in Neeleman et al. (to app.). The rule was motivated on syntactic as well as interpretive grounds. However, here, I concentrate on the syntactic aspects of contrastive items in Japanese and Korean. In Section 2, it was noted that phrases marked by the putative topic markers *wa* and *nun* can also be a kind of contrastive focus, analogous to B-accented items in English. I will deal with them in the next section, concentrating here on case-marked contrastive foci.

The following examples show that contrastive focus can undergo scrambling to an intermediate or sentence-initial position in both languages. The preceding question makes the set of alternatives explicit and the use of *dake* 'only' in Japanese and *man* 'only' in Korean also makes clear the implicature that the alternative proposition regarding the CD is false.

(35) John-wa Sue-ni hon-to CD-to ryoohootomo ageta no? (J)  
 John-wa Sue-to book-and CD-and both gave Q  
 'Did John give both the book and the CD to Sue?'

(36) a. Ie, John-wa Sue-ni CD-dake(-o) agemasita.  
 No, John-wa Sue-to CD-only-acc gave  
 b. Ie, John-wa CD-dake<sub>i</sub>(-o) Sue-ni t<sub>i</sub> agemasita.  
 No, John-wa CD-only-acc Sue-to gave  
 c. Ie, CD-dake<sub>i</sub>(-o) John-wa Sue-ni t<sub>i</sub> agemasita.  
 No, CD-only-acc John-wa Sue-to gave  
 'No, John gave only the CD to Sue.'

(37) John-i Sue-eykey chayk-kwa CD-lul twul ta cwu-ess-ni? (K)  
 John-nom Sue-to book-and CD-acc two all give-past-Q  
 'Did John give both the book and the CD to Sue?'

(38) a. Ani, John-i Sue-eykey CD-man cwu-ess-e.  
 No, John-nom Sue-to CD-only give-past-decl  
 b. Ani, John-i CD<sub>i</sub>-man Sue-eykey t<sub>i</sub> cwu-ess-e.  
 No, John-nom CD-only Sue-to give-past-decl  
 c. Ani, CD<sub>i</sub>-man John-i Sue-eykey t<sub>i</sub> cwu-ess-e.  
 No, CD-only John-nom Sue-to give-past-decl  
 'No, John gave only the CD to Sue.'

That focus may play a role in licensing A'-scrambling has been suggested by many (Saito 1992, Miyagawa 1996, 1997, 2006, Ueyama 2006, a.o. for Japanese; M. Lee 2006 and references therein for Korean). Specifically, Miyagawa argues for Japanese that focus licenses A'-scrambling of the direct object VP-internally and to above the subject. One may therefore wonder whether the relevant feature licensing the optional scrambling is [focus], rather than [contrast]. This may be suggested by the possibility of scrambling the direct object in the answer to a simple object-*wh*-question, as illustrated below.

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

(40) a. John-wa Sue-ni ano CD-o agemasita  
 John-wa Sue-to that CD-acc gave  
 b. John-wa ANO CD<sub>i</sub>-O Sue-ni t<sub>i</sub> agemasita  
 John-wa that CD-acc Sue-to gave  
 c. ANO CD<sub>i</sub>-O John-wa Sue-ni t<sub>i</sub> agemasita  
 that CD-acc John-wa Sue-to gave  
 'John gave that book to Sue.'

(41) John-i Sue-hantey mwues-lul cwuesse? (K)  
 John-nom Sue-to what-acc gave  
 'What did John give to Sue?'

(42) a. John-i Sue-hantey i CD-lul cwuesse  
 John-nom Sue-to this CD-acc gave  
 b. John-i I CD<sub>j</sub>-LUL Sue-hantey t<sub>j</sub> cwuesse  
 John-nom this CD-acc Sue-to gave  
 c. I CD<sub>j</sub>-LUL John-i Sue-hantey t<sub>j</sub> cwuesse  
 this CD-acc John-nom Sue-to gave  
 'John gave the CD to Sue.'

However, as has been observed for numerous other languages that have focus movement, including Dutch (Neeleman & van de Koot 2008), Finnish (Vallduví & Vilkuna 1997), Hungarian (É Kiss 1998), Italian (Rizzi 1997, Samek-Lodovici 2005), and Russian (Neeleman & Titov 2009), it seems that only the contrastive type of focus undergoes movement. Most of my informants report, and Choi (1999) claims explicitly for Korean, that an extra contrastive interpretation is required for the (b)- and (c)-examples above, where the object has undergone scrambling, although it is not necessary for the (a)-example, where it remains in-situ.

The point can be made more explicitly. In answering the questions in (39) and (41), if the object is given as an example, not implicating that all other alternatives

are false, scrambling is not possible. The point is illustrated by (43) and (44) for Japanese and Korean, respectively. As shown by the (a)-examples, it is possible for *tatoeba* / *ye-lul twul-e* ‘for example’ to follow the object which it modifies. However, the direct object cannot undergo scrambling, as illustrated by the (b)- and (c)-examples. Strictly speaking, adding ‘for example’ only ensures that the given answer is not exhaustive, not necessarily contrastive. However, assuming that exhaustivity is a specific kind of contrast and in the absence of a better test at present, I take the observations in (43) and (44) to be suggestive of the fact that scrambling of the type in (36) and (38) are limited to contrastive foci.<sup>11,12</sup>

(43) *What did John give to Sue?* (= (39))

- |    |                      |                     |          |                        |           |     |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|----------|------------------------|-----------|-----|
| a. | John-wa              | Sue-ni              | hon-o    | tatoeba                | agemasita | (J) |
|    | John-wa              | Sue-to              | book-acc | for.example            | gave      |     |
| b. | #John-wa             | hon <sub>i</sub> -o | Sue-ni   | t <sub>i</sub> tatoeba | agemasita |     |
|    | John-wa              | book-acc            | Sue-to   | for.example            | gave      |     |
| c. | #hon <sub>i</sub> -o | John-wa             | Sue-ni   | t <sub>i</sub> tatoeba | agemasita |     |
|    | book-acc             | John-wa             | Sue-to   | for.example            | gave      |     |

(44) *What did John give to Sue?* (= (41))

- |    |                         |                        |            |                              |         |     |
|----|-------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------------|---------|-----|
| a. | ?John-i                 | Sue-hantey             | chayk-ul   | ye-lul twul-e                | cwuesse | (K) |
|    | John-nom                | Sue-to                 | book-acc   | for.example                  | gave    |     |
| b. | #John-i                 | chayk <sub>i</sub> -ul | Sue-hantey | t <sub>i</sub> ye-lul twul-e | cwuesse |     |
|    | John-nom                | book-acc               | Sue-to     | for.example                  | gave    |     |
| c. | #chayk <sub>i</sub> -ul | John-i                 | Sue-hantey | t <sub>i</sub> ye-lul twul-e | cwuesse |     |
|    | book-acc                | John-nom               | Sue-to     | for.example                  | gave    |     |

It is important to emphasise that I am not claiming that every instance of A'-scrambling is licensed by [contrast]. As is well-known, there are many other motivations for scrambling, even within the domain of information structure. For instance, Miyagawa (1997, 2006) and Ishihara (2001) argue that the object may

<sup>11</sup> It is not the case, at least for Japanese, that *hon-o* ‘book-acc’ and *tatoeba* ‘for.example’ must form a constituent, as the examples in (i) and (ii) below show even if the latter is scrambled together, the answers are still infelicitous:

- |     |          |                       |                       |        |                          |
|-----|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| i.  | #John-wa | [hon-o                | tatoeba] <sub>i</sub> | Sue-ni | t <sub>i</sub> agemasita |
|     | John-wa  | book-acc              | for.example           | Sue-to | gave                     |
| ii. | #[hon-o  | tatoeba] <sub>i</sub> | John-wa               | Sue-ni | t <sub>i</sub> agemasita |
|     | book-acc | for.example           | John-wa               | Sue-to | gave                     |

<sup>12</sup> It is not easy to demonstrate that non-contrastive focus cannot undergo scrambling. In order to do so concretely, we must identify a context in which focus is required, but a contrastive interpretation is entirely excluded. However, the difficulty is that a contrastive interpretation can easily arise from the context and be accommodated (Kuroda 2005).

undergo scrambling in order to avoid being interpreted as focus itself. The pre-verbal position, which is the canonical position for the object, receives a sentential nuclear stress. Scrambling allows the object to escape being interpreted as focus due to receiving the nuclear stress and also allows formation of different kinds of focus domains (in the sense of Reinhart (1995, 2006)), such as the verb and the subject without the object. The claim here is that the [contrast] feature can be one trigger for A'-scrambling of contrastive focus.

## 5 Contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-phrases

In this section, I first show that the syntactic distribution of contrastive topics in Japanese is regulated by the rule for [topic] in (11), while contrastive topics in Korean are subject to the rule for [contrast] in (34). Subsequently, I turn to instances of *wa*- and *nun*-marked phrases that do not appear to be contrastive topics, but more like contrastive foci.

Before proceeding, I would like to spell-out a background assumption I am making here regarding the particles *wa* and *nun*. There is a debate as to whether *wa* in Japanese and *nun* in Korean appearing on non-contrastive topic and contrastive topic are one lexical item or two lexical items in the respective language (Kuno 1973, Kuroda 1992, 2005, Hara 2006, Tomioka 2009 for Japanese; Choi 1997, 1999, Han 1998, Gill & Tsoulas 2003, Y. Lee 2005, M. Lee 2006, Oh 2007 for Korean). Some authors argue that they are two different lexical items, with the contrastive interpretation being part of one and not the other, while others argue that there is only one lexical item and the contrast arises from the context. However, there is overwhelming evidence provided by some of the above mentioned authors that the particles display different syntactic, semantic and prosodic properties in the two circumstances in which they are used. For instance, the contrastive interpretation is invariably associated with freer syntax and an emphatic stress. Thus, I assume here that the contrastive and non-contrastive varieties correspond to two lexical items in each language, and refer to the kind that bears an emphatic stress and induces a contrastive interpretation as 'contrastive *wa*' and 'contrastive *nun*'.

### 5.1 Contrastive topics in Japanese

Contrastive topics in Japanese must be marked by the particle *wa* and bear an emphatic stress, and like non-contrastive topics, they must appear in clause-initial position. The obligatory clause-initialness is illustrated by the following discourse, where the context identifies the direct object in the answer to be a contrastive

topic.<sup>13</sup> The question in (45) is about *ano CD* ‘that CD’, but the hearer of this question may not know the relevant information with respect to the CD and offers information regarding *ano hon* ‘that book’. In doing so, she has shifted the topic of discourse from the CD to the book, making the latter a contrastive topic. As the contrast in (46) shows, *ano hon* ‘that book’ must be displaced to clause-initial position.

- (45) Dare-ga Sue-ni ano CD-o ageta no? (J)  
 Who-nom Sue-to that CD-acc gave Q  
 ‘Who gave that CD to Sue?’
- (46) 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<sub>i</sub>-WA Sue-ni Kinoo t<sub>i</sub> ageteita (yo)  
 John-nom that book-wa Sue-to yesterday gave prt
- c. ANO HON<sub>i</sub>-WA JOHN-GA Sue-ni kinoo t<sub>i</sub> ageteita (yo)  
 that book-wa John-nom Sue-to yesterday gave prt  
 ‘As for that book, John gave it to Sue yesterday.’

The standard view in the literature is that any phrase marked by contrastive *wa* is a contrastive ‘topic’ and it may appear in-situ (Heycock 2007, Tomioka 2009, and references in those works). A minimal pair of examples is given below:

- (47) a. Mary-ga ANO HON-WA katta.  
 Mary-nom that book-wa bought
- b. ANO HON<sub>i</sub>-WA Mary-ga t<sub>i</sub> katta.  
 that book-wa Mary-nom bought  
 ‘Mary bought that book.’  
 (Implicature: But, perhaps, she did not buy another one)

However, these examples are often provided without a context and as demonstrated clearly by the exchange in (45)/(46), in a context that requires a contrastive *wa*-phrase to be a contrastive topic, it must occupy clause-initial position. Thus, I argue that the clause-initial contrastive *wa*-phrase in (47b) is a contrastive topic, but the one in (47a) is not. Specifically, I argue in Section 5.3 that contrastive *wa*-phrases

<sup>13</sup> A subject contrastive topic must also occupy clause-initial position, but I do not illustrate this here, as it is not possible to see if a subject contrastive topic has moved or is in-situ and there are also further complications, which I discuss together with the relevant data in Vermeulen (2009).

that can appear in-situ, like the one in (47a), is a type of contrastive ‘focus’, just as a B-accented item in English can function as a type of contrastive ‘focus’ in an appropriate context, as I argued in Section 2.

Thus, contrastive topics in Japanese, like non-contrastive topics, are regulated by the rule for [topic] and must appear in clause-initial position.

## 5.2 Contrastive topics in Korean

In Korean, contrastive topics must also bear an emphatic stress and are typically marked by *nun*.<sup>14</sup> In contrast to Japanese, however, Korean contrastive topics need not appear in clause-initial position. They may remain in-situ, scramble to a clause-medial or clause-initial position. This distribution is illustrated by the following parallel exchange to the Japanese examples in (45)/(46):

- (48) John-i        nwuku-hantey ku CD-lul    ecey        cwuesse?        (K)  
 John-nom    who-to                this CD-acc yesterday gave  
 ‘To whom did John give this CD yesterday?’
- (49) 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<sub>i</sub>-UN        SUE-HANTEY        ecey        t<sub>i</sub> cwuesse  
 John-nom    this book-nun        Sue-to                yesterday    gave
- c. I CHAYK<sub>i</sub>-UN        John-i        SUE-HANTEY        ecey        t<sub>i</sub> cwuesse  
 this book-nun    John-nom        Sue-to                yesterday    gave  
 ‘as for this book, John gave it to Sue yesterday.’

The above distribution is identical to that of contrastive focus in Korean and Japanese, examined in Section 4 (see (35)/(36) and (37)/(38)). Thus, I conclude that contrastive topics in Korean are regulated by the rule for [contrast].

In the literature on Korean, contrastive *nun*-phrases that appear in positions other than clause-initial position are often uniformly called contrastive ‘focus’ (Choe 1995, Choi 1997, 1999, Han 1998, Gill & Tsoulas 2003). Analogous to the case of contrastive *wa*-phrases that appear in non-clause-initial positions in Japanese, I argue that a contrastive *nun*-phrase can function as a particular kind of contrastive focus as well as a contrastive topic, depending on the context. Specifically, in those

<sup>14</sup> My informants report that it is also possible to mark contrastive topics with a case marker, as was the case for non-contrastive topic (see Section 3). However, they also expressed stronger preference for marking with *nun* in cases of contrastive topics.



- (52) aki-ka      ton-ul      mence cip-ess-ni      (ttonun/animyen)      (K)  
 baby-nom    money-acc    first      pick-past-Q (or/if.not)  
 phen-ul    mence cip-ess-ni?  
 pen-acc    first      pick-past-Q  
 ‘Did the baby pick the money first or did she pick the pen first?’
- (53) (aki-ka)      ton-ul/?\*ton-un      mence cip-ess-e<sup>15</sup>  
 baby-nom    money-acc/money-CT    first      pick-past-dec  
 ‘The baby picked the money first/?\*money<sub>CT</sub> first.’  
 (C. Lee 2003a, ex. (20)/(21))

Thus, I argue, following C. Lee (1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2008) that a contrastive *nun*-phrase can function as a contrastive topic if it appears in an appropriate discourse context. As demonstrated by (48)/(49), its syntactic distribution is identical to that of contrastive focus. I now turn to cases where, I argue, contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-phrases do not function as contrastive topics, but more like contrastive foci.

### 5.3 Contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-phrases that are contrastive foci

I suggested above that contrastive *wa*-phrases in Japanese in positions other than clause-initial position are not contrastive topics and contrastive *nun*-phrases that are the Korean counterparts to such contrastive *wa*-phrases are also not contrastive topics. I argue that this is correct both from interpretational and syntactic points of view: they are not interpreted as what the rest of the sentence is about and in Japanese, they behave syntactically more like contrastive focus, than contrastive topic.

Let us first consider the interpretation associated with contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-phrases. There is much recent work on the precise meaning of contrastive *wa* and *nun*. Several authors have argued that 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, 2008, Hara 2006, M. Lee 2006, Hetland 2007, Hara & Van Rooij 2007, Oshima 2008, Tomioka 2009). Hara (2006), for instance, proposes that Japanese contrastive *wa* implicates the existence of a stronger scalar alternative which could be false. To illustrate, let us consider the following example.

- (54) NANNINKA-WA    kita      (J)  
 some people-wa    came  
 ‘Some people came.’ (Implicature: ‘Not everyone came’)

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<sup>15</sup> The glossing of *un* as ‘CT’ as well as the translation are as given in Lee (2003a).

The above example has the meaning given in (55a). According to Hara's analysis, it has the presupposition that there is a stronger scalar alternative such as (55b), 'everyone came'. The sentence also induces the implicature that this alternative could be false, giving rise to the implicature that '(it is possible that) not everyone came'. Lee (2003b, 2008) proposes that Korean *nun* has similar semantics.

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

There are obviously differences amongst the proposals mentioned above. However, they all argue that the use of a contrastive *wa*-/*nun*-phrase generates a set of alternatives, and that there is a particular implicature regarding the alternatives, that gives rise to the impression of incompleteness or uncertainty. I believe that this line of analysis provides a correct characterisation of the interpretation of contrastive *wa*/*nun*-phrases in general. However, there is nothing inherent in this kind of interpretation itself that makes a contrastive *wa*/*nun*-phrase a contrastive 'topic', i.e., what the rest of the sentence is about, affecting the current topic of discourse. I propose therefore that contrastive *wa*- or *nun*-phrases in general have the type of contrastive interpretation proposed in the recent literature, but they are in addition interpreted as a topic if the context requires it to be so. In other words, topicality and the particular contrastive interpretation associated with contrastive *wa*/*nun*-phrases are two independent features of a contrastive topic (Kuroda 2005, Tomioka 2009), in accordance with the typology in (1).

In the same vein, one would then expect that contrastive *wa*- or *nun*-phrases can also be interpreted as focus if the context requires it, with the same contrastive interpretation.<sup>16</sup> I argue that this is indeed the case. For instance, a contrastive *wa*/*nun*-phrase can be used to answer a *wh*-question, as illustrated by the object *wa*-phrase in-situ in (56)/(57) and the object *nun*-phrase in (58)/(59).<sup>17</sup> If we take seriously the ability to answer a *wh*-question as indicative of focus-hood, then the object *wa*-phrase in (57) and the *nun*-phrase in (59) must be a contrastive focus.

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<sup>16</sup> Similarly, one would expect that case-marked phrases can perhaps be interpreted as topics. This is presumably the situation in Korean, which I discussed above briefly in Section 3, in relation to Choi's (1999) proposal that case markers in Korean are discourse neutral. In Japanese, it seems that *wa*-marking is obligatory for all topics. I leave this issue for future research.

<sup>17</sup> Some 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). Kuroda (2005) claims precisely on the basis of examples like (56)/(57) that a *wa*-phrase is not necessarily a topic.

- (56) Mary-wa nani-o katta no? (J)  
 Mary-wa what-acc bought Q  
 'What did Mary buy?'
- (57) Mary-wa HON-WA kinoo katta  
 Mary-wa book-wa yesterday bought  
 'Mary bought a book.'  
 (Implicature: 'But, perhaps, she did not buy other things')
- (58) Mary-ka nwukwu-lul po-ass-ni? (K)  
 Mary-nom who-acc see-past-Q  
 'Who did Mary see?'
- (59) Mary-ka JOHN-NUN po-ass-ta.  
 Mary-nom John-nun see-past-decl  
 'Mary saw John.'  
 (Implicature: 'But, perhaps, she did not see Bill.')

The fact that contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-marked phrases can be a type of contrastive focus, predicts a further difference between Japanese and Korean. Contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-phrases of the type in (57)/(59) should be subject to the rule for [contrast] and behave like contrastive foci in these languages. In Korean, contrastive topics are also subject to the rule for [contrast]. Thus, contrastive *nun*-phrases of the type in (59) and contrastive topics should show the same syntactic distribution. By contrast, Japanese contrastive topics are subject to the rule for [topic]. Thus, contrastive *wa*-phrases of the type in (58) should behave differently from those contrastive *wa*-phrases that appear in contexts requiring them to be contrastive topics. This is already indicated by the fact that the object *wa*-phrase in (57) is in-situ. A further relevant consideration here is that topics in Japanese must be marked by *wa*. Consequently, one would expect from a functional perspective that this language would interpret any contrastive *wa*-phrase displaced to clause-initial position as a contrastive topic. Thus, the precise prediction is that like case-marked contrastive focus, a contrastive *wa*-phrase answering a *wh*-question should be able to appear in-situ and scramble to clause-medial position. However, it cannot move to clause-initial position, because it would be automatically interpreted as a contrastive topic when the context does not identify it as such. The predictions for the two languages are schematically illustrated below:

(60) *Japanese*

- a. contrastive *wa*-phrase: (#DO<sub>i</sub>-WA) S (DO<sub>i</sub>-WA) IO (DO-WA) V  
 b. contrastive topic: (DO<sub>i</sub>-WA) S (#DO<sub>i</sub>-WA) IO (#DO-WA) V

(61) *Korean*

- a. contrastive *nun*-phrase: (DO<sub>i</sub>-NUN) S (DO<sub>i</sub>-NUN) IO (DO-NUN) V  
 b. contrastive topic: (DO<sub>i</sub>-NUN) S (DO<sub>i</sub>-NUN) IO (DO-NUN) V

The prediction is borne out. In the following exchanges in Japanese and Korean, the object in the reply answers the *wh*-part of the preceding question. It is a contrastive *wa/nun*-phrase, inducing the relevant implicature. In Japanese, it can remain in-situ, as in (63a), or scramble to an intermediate position, as in (63b), but not to clause-initial position, (63c). In Korean, the contrastive *nun*-phrase may appear in any of the three potential position, as illustrated by (64).

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

- (63) a. Mary-wa Sue-ni ANO HON-WA agemasita.  
 Mary-wa Sue-to that book-wa gave  
 b. Mary-wa ANO HON<sub>i</sub>-WA Sue-ni t<sub>i</sub> agemasita.  
 Mary-wa that book-wa Sue-to gave  
 c. ??ANO HON<sub>i</sub>-WA Mary-wa Sue-ni t<sub>i</sub> agemasita.  
 that book-wa Mary-wa Sue-to gave  
 ‘Mary gave that book to Sue.’  
 (Implicature: ‘But I’m not sure if she gave anything else’)

- (64) John-i Sue-hantey mwu-lul cwuesse? (K)  
 John-nom Sue-to what-acc gave  
 ‘What did John give to Sue?’

- (65) a. John-i Sue-hantey i CD-nun cwuesse  
 John-nom Sue-to this CD-nun gave  
 b. John-i I CD<sub>j</sub>-NUN Sue-hantey t<sub>j</sub> cwuesse  
 John-nom this CD-nun Sue-to gave  
 c. I CD<sub>j</sub>-NUN John-i Sue-hantey t<sub>j</sub> cwuesse  
 this CD-nun John-nom Sue-to gave  
 ‘John gave the CD to Sue.’  
 (Implicature: ‘But, I’m not sure if she gave anything else’)

Unfortunately, my Japanese informants report that the judgement for (63c) is rather subtle, only expressing dispreference, rather than infelicity. On the other hand, they

report robust judgements in cases where there are only two arguments and the prediction is borne out: a contrastive *wa*-phrase answering the *wh*-part of a previous question cannot undergo scrambling to clause-initial position, while in Korean, the contrastive *nun*-phrase may move to clause-initial position.<sup>18</sup>

(66) John-wa nani-o katta no? (J)  
 John-wa what-acc bought Q

‘What did John buy?’

(67) a. John-wa OSEENBEE-WA tikaku-de katta  
 John-wa rice.crackers-wa near-at bought  
 b. #OSEENBEE<sub>i</sub>-WA John-wa t<sub>i</sub> tikaku-de katta  
 rice.crackers-wa John-wa near-at bought  
 ‘John bought rice crackers nearby.’  
 (Implicature: ‘But, perhaps, he didn’t buy cookies.’)

(68) Mary-ka nwukwu-lul po-ass-ni? (K)  
 Mary-nom who-acc see-past-Q

‘Who did Mary see?’

(69) a. Mary-ka JOHN-UN po-ass-ta. (= (59))  
 Mary-nom John-nun saw  
 b. JOHN<sub>i</sub>-UN Mary-ka t<sub>i</sub> po-ass-ta.  
 John-nun Mary-nom saw  
 ‘Mary saw John’  
 (Implicature: ‘But perhaps, she didn’t see Bill.’)

There is another context that bears out the prediction. This context exemplifies a further peculiar property of contrastive *wa/nun*: contrastive *wa*- and *nun*-phrases can project the contrast to a larger constituent. This is illustrated by (70a) and (71a), respectively. The two clauses in these examples are not statements about rain or an umbrella. None of the *wa*- and *nun*-marked phrases is therefore a contrastive ‘topic’. It is also not the case that rain and umbrella are contrasted with each other. Rather, the two events described by the two clauses are contrasted with each other. Again, in Japanese, the object contrastive *wa*-phrase in the second clause cannot undergo scrambling to clause-initial position, while the object contrastive *nun*-phrase in Korean can, as demonstrated by the (b)-examples.

<sup>18</sup> Following Neeleman & Reinhart (1998), I assume that a structure in which the object precedes an adverbial can be base-generated. Thus, I do not consider the example in (67a) to exemplify the case where the object contrastive *wa*-phrase has undergone scrambling to an intermediate position.

- (70) a. [AME-WA hutteiru ga] [John-ga KASA-WA motteikanakatta] (J)  
rain-wa is.falling but John-nom umbrella-wa bring-went-not  
b. #[AME-WA hutteiru ga] [KASA<sub>i</sub>-WA John-ga t<sub>i</sub> motte-ika-nakatta]  
rain-wa is.falling but umbrella-wa John-nom bring-go-not.past  
‘It is raining, but John did not bring an umbrella.’  
(modified from Kuno (1973: 46) attributed to Minoru Nakau (p.c.))

- (71) a. [pi-nun o-nuntey] [John-i WUSAN-UN kacyeo-ci an-hassta] (K)  
rain-nun come-but John-nom umbrella-nun bring-neg neg-past  
b. [pi-nun o-nuntey] [WUSAN<sub>i</sub>-UN John-i t<sub>i</sub> kacyeo-ci an-hassta]  
rain-nun come-but umbrella-nun John-nom bring-neg neg-past  
‘It is raining, but John didn’t bring an umbrella.’

On the standard analysis for Japanese contrastive *wa*-phrases, where they are treated as contrastive topics uniformly irrespective of their position, it is difficult to capture the differences in the interpretation and the syntactic distribution between those contrastive *wa*-phrases that are identified as contrastive topics and those that are not. Moreover, the proposed idea that a language adopts one rule over the other in cases of conflict provides a uniform account of the differences in the syntactic distribution of contrastive topics in Japanese and Korean.

## 6 Summary

In the preceding sections, I have argued that Japanese and Korean both have syntactic rules for the interpretive features [topic] and [contrastive]. Moreover, I argued that where a conflict arises, as in the case of contrastive topic, there is parametric variation as to which rule a particular language adopts. In Japanese, the rule for [topic] is adopted, which was demonstrated by the fact that both contrastive and non-contrastive types of topic must appear in clause-initial position in this language. On the other hand, in Korean, the rule for [contrast] is adopted, which was illustrated by the fact that both contrastive foci and contrastive topics in this language optionally undergo A'-scrambling. These observations are patterns that are predicted to exist by the syntactic typology of information structural notions proposed by Neeleman et al. (to app.) in (1) and therefore provide further empirical support for it.

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