

# 2-11 'Converb + Topic Marker' Conditionals in Korean



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## 1. Research Questions

In Korean, converbs, whose basic meaning is temporal, can express conditional when it is used with a topic marker.

(cf. Japanese *-te-wa* (-CVB-TOP))

- What is the usage of 'converb + topic marker' conditionals? (→ 2)
- How does the conditional meaning arise? (→ 3, 4)

## 2. Usage of Conditionals

CVB + TOP: "It should not be X (If X, it won't be good)"; CVB only: succession (and)

(1) ku-uy kkwum-ul kkay-**ese-nun** antway.

he-GEN dream-ACC break-CVB-TOP not.good:DEC

"You must not break his dream. (lit. If you break his dream, it is not good.)"

CVB + TOP: "If X does not happen, Y is impossible"; CVB only: succession (and)

(2) ne-lul manna-ci anh-**kose-nun** icey-pwuthe na-n amwukes-to

you-ACC meet-NMLZ NEG-CVB-TOP now-from I-TOP anything-also

mos-ha-l kes-man kath-ass-e.

IMPS-do-IRR thing-only seem-PST-DEC

"It seemed that if I did not meet you, I could not do anything from now on."

CVB + TOP: "If X keeps on happening, Y will follow"; CVB only: interruption (while)

(3) kule-n kunye-lul ciksiha-**taka-nun** nwun-i mele-peli-l kes kath-ass-ta.

such-ADN she-ACC stare-CVB-TOP eyes-NOM be.blind-PFV-IRR thing seem-PST-DEC

"If I keep on staring at her, I could be blind."

CVB + TOP: "If X has finished, Y will follow", CVB only: completion (after)

(4) manyakey sethwu-n cis-ha-kena engttwungha-n sayngkak-ul

if unwise-ADN act-do-or erratic-ADN thinking-ACC

hay-**ss-taka-nun** mokswum pwuci mos-ha-key toy-pnita.

do-PST-CVB-TOP life sustaining IMPS-do-CVB become-DEC:POL

"If you act unwisely or think erratically, you can not sustain your life."

## References

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- Noda Hisashi (1994) "Katei Joken no Toritate — '-temo', '-tewa', '-dakede' nado no Taikai —" (Focus markers in Conditionals: the System of '-temo', '-tewa', '-dakede' etc.), *Nihongogaku* (Japanese Linguistics) 13-9, Tokyo: Meijishoin, pp. 34-41

## 3. Hypothesis

Table1: Schema of conceptual transition of case marking (Heine *et al.* 1991: 154)

A	B	C
Less Grammaticalized Case Function	Conceivable Intermediate Stage	More Grammaticalized Case Function
<b>TIME</b> "X happens at the same time as Y"	"When(ever) X happens, Y follows"	<b>CONDITION</b> "if X happens, Y follows"

- This schema can also be applied to 'converb + topic marker' conditionals.

An additional stage that signals causative conditional can be assumed between the stages **A** and **B**.

(5) [TEMPORAL] A

pi-ka o-**taka** kuchy-ess-ta.

rain-NOM come-CVB stop-PST-DEC

"It was raining but it stopped." (I Huyca, I Conghuy 2006: 183)

(6) [CAUSATIVE CONDITIONAL]

na-nun cinan pen-ey kwutwu-lul sin-ko ka-**ss-taka** pal-i aph-ase cwuk-ul ppen-hay-ss-e.

I-TOP last time-DAT shoes-ACC wear-CVB go-PST-CVB foot-NOM hurt-CVB die-IRR almost-do-PST-DEC

"I went there in my shoes last time and I almost died because I had a pain in my feet."

(7) [GENERALIZED CONDITIONAL] B

yolyeng-epsi him-man cwe kkul-**taka-nun** nakksiscwul-i kkunhki-ki sipsang-i-ketun.

know-how-without strength-only give:CVB pull-CVB-TOP fishing line-NOM be.cut.off-NMLZ likely-COP-because

"If you pull it with all your strength without know-how, your fishing line will definitely to be cut off."

(8) [CONDITIONAL] C

= Example (3)

cf. *-ko-nun* + *hata* (-CVB-TOP + do) means habitual. (also JP *-te-wa*)

- topic marker

+ topic marker

## 4. Further Discussion

- In *-taka* and *-kose* conditionals, a conditional meaning can be expressed **solely with the converb**.

(9) kule-**taka** cengchika toy-keyss-ney.

do.like.that-CVB politician become-possibly-ADM

"If you keep going like that, you will be a politician."

- In 'converb + topic marker' conditionals, the topic marker signals **contrastive meaning**.

(cf. In JP *-te-wa* (-CVB-TOP), *wa* is contrastive (Noda 1994))

→ The following clause tends to have a negative form.

## 5. Conclusion

- The topic marker in 'converb + topic maker' conditionals expresses a contrastive meaning.
- Conditional meaning is acquired through the conceptual transition:

[TEMPORAL]

-> [CAUSATIVE CONDITIONAL]

-> [GENERALIZED CONDITIONAL]

-> [CONDITIONAL]