

# EALL TALK SERIES

## Verbal Nouns and Structural Case in Korean Light Verb Constructions

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**Center for Korean Studies Auditorium**

The verbal nouns in Korean light verb constructions are standardly analyzed as nouns [-V, +N]. A question is then what licenses two or more accusative Case-markers in light verb constructions:

- (1) 철수가 책을 출간을 했다.  
Chelswu-ka chayk-ul chwulkan-ul hayssta.  
Chelswu-Nom book-Acc publish-Acc ha-Past  
'Chelswu published (a) book.'

We argue that verbal nouns are in fact (defective) verbs whose verbal feature is syntactically underspecified as [uV, -N]. Hence, we claim that there is a one-to-one correspondence between Case licensers (i.e., verbal noun and light verb) and arguments in light verb constructions. Assuming that underspecified features [uF] are uninterpretable at the LF interface (Chomsky 1995, 2000), we also argue that underspecified features must be valued by a probe with a specified matching feature via the operation Agree.

The theoretical finding of Korean verbal nouns in light verb constructions as defective verbs is confirmed by the experiment of Korean speaker's intuition on the nature of verbal nouns in light verb constructions.

- (2) 철수가 책을 \*publication/√publish를 했다.  
Chelswu-ka chayk-ul \*publication/√publish-lul hayssta.  
Chelswu-Nom book-Acc \*publication/√publish-Acc ha-Past  
'Chelswu published (a) book.'

Results show a strong verb preference by Korean speakers. Based on the results, we suggest that a new type of light verb constructions is being made in Korean. That is, some English words are being accepted as verbal nouns in Korean light verb constructions, reflecting the dominant trend of English as a lingua franca. In sum, Korean verbal nouns in light verb constructions are not nominal but verbal.

Dr. Jeong-Seok KIM (professor of Korea University) is a visiting scholar at the UHM Center for Korean Studies. He has presented his works in many academic conferences and published numerous research papers in academically refereed journals. His representative publications include *Syntactic Analysis: A First Course* (2012) and *When Grammar Meets Linguistics* (2012).

The talk is open to the public, and light refreshments will be served.

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