

(Yeonju Lee, CUNY)

Scope Marking analysis on Korean Exceptional Case-Marking structure

This paper examines Korean Exceptional Case-Marking (ECM) structure, and argues that Korean ECM structure is ‘a hidden focus scope marking construction’. Under this analysis, Korean ECM involves a covert Focus-scope Marker (FM) undergoing “Full Concord” (den Dikken 2012) with the embedded subject of an ECM structure.

In Korean, the embedded clause of the ECM structure can contain a tense morpheme, e.g., *-ess*, and the overt complementizer *-ko*, while the subject appears with accusative Case marker *-lul*, as in (1).

- (1) John-i [Mary-**ka/lul** yeypu-**ess-ta-ko**] mitnun-ta.
 J-NOM M-NOM/ACC pretty-PAST-DECL-COMP believes
 ‘John believes [that Mary was pretty].’ (Lee 1991: 317)

This indicates that the embedded clause of Korean ECM is CP, not TP, leading to the assumption that Case checking of the embedded subject crosses the clausal boundary. This is puzzling, however, since CP, once it is fully built, cannot be looked into, according to the Phase theory (Chomsky 2001). This imposes problems on a raising analysis on the ECM structure with embedded CP (Lee 1991, Schütze 2001). For a raising analysis to be tenable, 1) the finite embedded T needs a way of circumventing its uninterpretable feature checking, not causing the derivation to crash; 2) the finite embedded CP in the ECM structure needs not to be a phase, or 3) the embedded subject needs to move to the edge of the embedded clause and gets Case there.

Lee (1991, 1995) addresses the second and third problems by suggesting that a Case-bearing head forms a minimal domain similar to a phase. Under his analysis, the embedded predicate *yeypu* ‘pretty’ in (1) is not a Case-bearing head, which makes T’ a minimal domain; thus, the embedded subject in Spec of TP is allowed to move to the matrix clause for Case. He further suggests that this raising analysis prevents over-generalization, preventing ECMed subject with an embedded transitive verb as in (2).

- (2) John-un [Mary-***lul/ka** Tom-ul salangha-n-ta-ko] mit-nun-ta.
 J-Top M-***Acc/Nom** T-Acc love-Pres-Dec-Comp believes
 ‘John believes [that Mary loves Tom].’ (Lee 1995: 270)

salangha ‘love’ is a Case-bearing head, and makes TP and VP minimal domains. Hence, the embedded subject *Mary* cannot move to the matrix clause for accusative Case. However, not all Case-bearing heads block ECM, as he admits.

- (3) salamtul-un [**ku say-lul hanul-ul nal-ci** moshan-ta-ko] sayngkakha-n-ta.
 people-Top **the bird-Acc sky-Acc fly-CI** not able to-Pres-Dec-Comp think-Pres-Dec
 ‘People think [that the bird is not able to fly in the sky].’ (Lee 1995: 271 fn.2)

Under Lee’s analysis, the embedded VP and TP in (3) are supposed to be minimal domains, and prevent the subject *ku say* ‘the bird’ from moving to the matrix clause for Case, just like (2), since the embedded verb *nal* ‘fly’ is a Case-bearing head. However, note that the embedded subject appears with accusative Case marker, indicating that the subject is outside the embedded clause. Moreover, in the raising analysis, the uninterpretable nominative Case feature on T is not checked, which will lead to derivational crash (Chomsky 2006), contrary to fact. Besides, this analysis cannot ban accusative Case-checking of *wh*-phrase in sentences like ‘I know *whom/who came’. Therefore the raising analysis will not be tenable unless these problems are solved.

In this paper, I argue that Korean ECM has a Focus-scope Marker (FM) which is base-generated in either Spec of *v*P or VP, and undergoes ‘Full Concord’ with the embedded subject of an ECM structure, adopting den Dikken (2012)’s analysis on “a Hungarian hidden *wh*-scope marking construction”. Considering that the ECM marked subject has focus reading (Schütze 2001), and that *wh*-elements have been argued to be closely related to a

