

Noun Complements and Clause Types In Korean (and Japanese)

Korean complement clauses to verbs are typically subordinated by the complementizer *ko*, yet within the complement clause a mood marker appears indicating whether the clause type is declarative, interrogative, imperative or exhortative (Cha 1999, Pak 2004):

- (1)
- a. Mina-ka [Swuna-ka ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**ta**]-ko cwucangha-ess-ta
Mina-NOM Swuna-NOM that problem-ACC solve-PST-DEC-C claim-PST-DEC
'Mina claimed that Swuna solved the problem.'
 - b. Mina-ka Swuna-eykey [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**nya**]-ko mwul-ess-ta
Mina-NOM Swuna-DAT that problem-ACC solve-PST-INT-C ask-PST-DEC
'Mina asked Swuna whether she solved the problem.'
 - c. Mina-ka Swuna-eykey [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**la**]-ko malha-ess-ta
Mina-NOM Swuna-DAT that problem-ACC solve-IMP-C say-PST-DEC
'Mina told Swuna to solve the problem.'
 - d. Mina-ka Swuna-eykey [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**ca**]-ko ceyanha-ess-ta
Mina-NOM Swuna-DAT that problem-ACC solve-EXH-C suggest-PST-DEC
'Mina suggested to Swuna to solve the problem together.'

There is general consensus among Korean linguists such clauses are truly syntactically subordinated, and are not presented as embedded quotations. For instance, extraction out of all complement clauses in Korean is acceptable (examples not shown here). Following the style of analysis in Portner (1997) and Ginzburg and Sag (2000), I will assume that a matrix verb semantically selects for the type of its complement, explicitly marked in Korean as a declarative (a proposition), or an interrogative, etc.

This paper is a preliminary exploration of clauses which are complements to nouns. Interestingly, the clause-typing particles in (1) appear just the same in (2), followed by the 'prenominal' ending *nun*:

- (2)
- a. [Swuna-ka ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**ta**]-nun cwucang
Swuna-NOM that problem-ACC solve-PST-DEC-PNE claim
'the claim that Swuna solved the problem'
 - b. [Swuna-ka ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**nya**]-nun cilmwun
Swuna-NOM that problem-ACC solve-PST-INT-PNE question
'the question if Swuna solved the problem'
 - c. [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**la**]-nun myenglyeng
that problem-ACC solve-IMP-PNE order
'the order *pro* to solve the problem'
 - d. [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**ca**]-nun ceyan
that problem-ACC solve-EXH-PNE suggestion
'the suggestion *pro* to solve the problem together'

Such clauses also show evidence of being subordinated; and once again, extraction from all these noun complement clauses is in general acceptable, once factors such as factivity are taken into account.

I will refer to the complements in (2) as 'complex form' clauses. These are not the only types of prenominal clauses that Korean has. Other noun complement clauses, and all relative clauses, have a 'simple' expression in which the prenominal marker is *nun* (present tense), replacing the usual clausal tense marker, and with no other marker of mood or clause type. Nouns of experience or sensation as in (3) require the 'simple' complement. Abstract nouns of communication or attitude require the complex form (4). Finally, there are two nouns in Korean, *sasil* and *kes*, which take either (declarative) form (5). *sasil* is usually translated as 'fact', but in fact its meanings must include 'fact, eventuality, possibility', because it can be used in meanings that are semantically non-factive.

- (3) a. [sayngsen-i tha-nun] naymsay b. *[sayngsen-i tha-n-ta-nun] naymsay
fish-NOM burn-PNE smell fish-NOM burn-PRS-DEC-PNE smell
‘the smell of fish burning’
- (4) a. [Mina-ka posek-ul hwumchi-ess-ta-nun] somwun/sosik/cwucang
Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PST-DEC-PNE rumor/news/claim
‘the rumor/news/claim that Mina stole the jewelry’
b. *[Mina-ka posek-ul hwumchi-n] somwun/sosik/cwucang
Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE rumor/news/claim
- (5) a. [cikwu-ka twunggu-n] sasil b. [cikwu-ka twunggul-ta-nun] sasil
earth-NOM be.round-PNE fact earth-NOM be.round-DEC-PNE fact
‘the fact that the earth is round.’ ‘that the earth is round’ (as a proposition)

Making a semantic distinction between facts and events on the one hand and propositions on the other (see e.g., Vendler 1967, Lee, Nam and Kang 1999, Ginzburg and Sag 2000), I claim that the **simple modifying clause denotes a fact or event**, an object in the world, while the **complex form denotes a proposition**, an object that is the a representation of a possibility. (A fact is a possibility that is true in the real world.) This explains the data in (3)–(5). This claim is inspired by suggestive remarks in Lee et al. (1999), and by the analysis of Japanese *toyuu* in Terakura (1983). *toyuu* is essentially the ‘complex form’ for Japanese prenominal modifiers, though its usage is wider than the Korean complex forms. According to Matsumoto (1998), *toyuu* presents a fact- or event-description in a form as if it were represented by someone as part of an attitude (of saying, describing, believing).

Example (6-a) has a simple fact-denoting clause as complement to ‘not believe’, and what it means is that the subject would not believe the fact, which is not actually ungrammatical, but sounds irrational on the part of the subject. With complex form as in (6-b), it simply means that the subject did not believe the proposition (which could be true or false); the interpretation is non-factive, even though the head noun is *sasil* or *kes*.

- (6) a. ^{?(?)}ku-nun [Mina-ka posek-ul hwumchi-n] kes/sasil-ul mit-ci anh-ass-ta
he-TOP Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE thing/fact-ACC believe-COMP NEG-PST-DEC
‘He didn’t believe the fact that Mina stole the jewelry.’
b. ku-nun [Mina-ka posek-ul hwumchi-ess-ta-nun] kes/sasil-ul mit-ci
he-TOP Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PST-DEC-PNE thing/fact-ACC believe-COMP
anh-ass-ta
NEG-PST-DEC
‘He didn’t believe (what people say/think) that Mina stole the jewelry.’

In (7), the predicate ‘be discovered’ or ‘came to light’ presupposes the truth of its complement, and so it is natural with the simple form; but with the complex form, the example is marked, for it seems that the speaker does not want to commit to the truth of the complement, yet the predicate presupposes it:

- (7) a. [Mina-ka posek-ul hwumchi-n] sasil-i palkhi-e ci-ess-ta
Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE fact-NOM discover-COMP become-PST-DEC
‘The fact that Mina stole the jewelry was discovered (came to light).’
b. ^{??}[Mina-ka posek-ul hwumchi-ess-ta-nun] sasil-i palkhi-e ci-ess-ta
Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PST-DEC-PNE fact-NOM discover-COMP become-PST-DEC
‘That Mina stole the jewelry was discovered (came to light).’

In summary, the morphosyntax of Korean allows all clause-types to be embedded, and nouns show the full range of embedded clause-types that verbs do. Simple clauses are fact- or event-denoting and complex ones have extra syntactic projections necessary to type the clause as declarative, interrogative, etc. The next step should be to investigate in detail the mapping from morphosyntax to semantics.