Using Scope Judgments to Locate the Only head in Korean

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1. Key Claim

• Exclusivity is expressed in Korean by way of the -man particle:
      John-only-NOM come-PST-DECL
      ‘Only John came.’
  b. Yujin-i kep-i-man-ul mas-yess-ta.
      Yujin-NOM coffee-only-ACC drink-PST-DECL
      ‘Yujin only drank coffee.’

• There are two competing analyses for the nature of -man:
  1. -man is quantificational, attaching the semantics of exclusivity directly to the marked DP (Choe 2002).
  2. -man is an agreement marker, indicating that the DP has passed through a phrase headed by covert Only\(^0\) (Lee 2005).

• In this paper, I use scopal interactions between -man, negation, and quantifiers to arrive at the following conclusions:
  1. Exclusivity is best analyzed as originating from a fixed head, favouring Lee’s analysis.
  2. The Only\(^0\) head appears in different positions when agreeing with case-marked subjects as opposed to objects.

2. The Covert Head Analysis

• Exclusivity is derived from a covert functional head Only\(^0\), part of the verb’s extended projection.
  • -man marking is merely an agreement phenomenon resulting from a DP passing through (Spec, Only\(^0\)).
  • Relative ordering of Only\(^0\) and case-asigning heads follows from Baker’s mirror principle.
  • Both subjects and objects originate deep in VP; one Only\(^0\) head can account for the data in (1) and (2).

3. Properties of Negation Scope

• Han et al. (2007) also argue that objects move to a functional case position, neutrally-designated FP.
  • In this configuration, the relative scope of an object quantifier and negation depends on whether V moves to T through Neg.
  • This movement is not present for all Korean speakers, and speakers show consistent behaviour over time.
  • If -man is indeed quantificational, then speakers should evaluate the relative scope of Object-man and negation equivalently.
  • If exclusivity derives from a head, then the relative scope with negation should only depend on the head ordering, regardless of verb raising.

4. Testing Object-Man

• Korean speakers were first given sentences testing object quantifiers and negation. Speakers both with and without verb raising were identified.

• Speakers were then asked to evaluate the truth of examples such as:
  (3) Yujin-i kep-i-man-ul an mas-yess-ta.
      Yujin-NOM coffee-only-ACC drink-PST-DECL
      ‘Yujin did not drink only coffee.’

• Sentences were presented in contexts where only one scope reading was true.
  • All speakers judged (Only > Neg) to be true, and (Neg > Only) to be false.
  • This supports the Only\(^0\) analysis, and locates the head above Neg\(^0\).

5. Testing Subject-Man

• When -man is marked on a subject, there is no evidence for the Only\(^0\) position relative to accusative case marking.

• The current analysis predicts that object quantifiers will outscope Only\(^0\), even if the -man marking is on a subject.

• Again, speakers were asked to evaluate sentences in contexts where only one reading was true.
      Jaepil-only-NOM 2-COUNT-GEN dog-ACC pet-PST-DECL
      ‘Only Jaepil petted two dogs.’

• All speakers judged (Only > 2) to be true, and (2 > Only) to be false.
  • This suggests a second Only\(^0\) head above the accusative case position.

6. Conclusion

• According to Burzio’s Generalization, the external theta role and accusative case should be connected.
  • Thus, we can re-analyze AgroP and FP as a single VP with two specifiers.
  • Only\(^0\) has two possible positions, one for subjects and one for objects.
  • This extends Lee’s original analysis which calls for a further Only\(^0\) projection above TP in cases such as John-hakoman motun-salam-i akswuhayessta.
  • More generally, a picture emerges where Only\(^0\) is a functional head with multiple possible positions.
  • Cases where -man appears inside a case marker have stricter interpretations.

References and Acknowledgments

To my patient consultants: 감사합니다. All errors are my own. This research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Post-Doctoral Fellowship 736-2010-0677.