

Korean Dative Experiencers: The Evidence for their Status as Surface Subjects

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1. Introduction: Two Views of Psych Constructions*

Many languages have constructions in which experiencers appear in the dative case but nevertheless exhibit properties generally associated with subjects. For example, consider the Russian data from Moore and Perlmutter (2000:374), henceforth M&P:

- (1) Borisu ȳzal' sebja i svoju sem'ju.
Boris/DAT sorry self and self's family
'Boris feels sorry for himself and his family.'

These are often referred to as Dative-Subject Constructions. M&P point out that the dative nominal *Borisu* is an experiencer, a thematic role often associated with subjects. Moreover, *Borisu* in the above example antecedes the reflexive *sebja* and the possessive reflexive *svoju*. Since traditional grammarians claim that only subjects can antecede these kinds of reflexives, it is logical to assume that the experiencer in psych constructions is a surface subject. However, M&P examine a fuller range of data and conclude that the experiencer in Russian psych constructions is actually an I-nominal, that is, a nominal that behaves like a subject only in a limited number of ways. While it antecedes reflexives and controls into certain adjunct clauses, it fails the subject tests of agreement, raising, and the ability to serve as a PRO in a control construction.

In Relational Grammar, the I-nominal is claimed to be a subject in the initial level of structure but an indirect object in the final level of structure. The retreat of a subject to indirect object has been referred to as Inversion in Relational Grammar. M&P call clauses with such properties I-Constructions and hence the label I-nominal. M&P thus claim that *Borisu* is not a Dative Subject and that furthermore calling examples like (1) Dative-Subject Constructions is a misnomer.

M&P suggest that the pattern of subject properties for I-Nominals in Russian is typical. In particular, they note that this profile is replicated in Romance languages. In French (Legendre 1989), Italian (Perlmutter 1984), and

Catalan (Alsina 1996), I-nominals determine Dative case and control into adjunct clauses. However, they do not determine agreement, they do not raise, and they cannot be controlled. Therefore, M&P (p. 407) conclude that these latter properties are “clearer diagnostics for surface subjecthood” and that one can tentatively distinguish I-Nominals from Dative-Subjects on the basis of “their lack of these more reliable subject behaviors.”

M&P remark that, other than the above suggested profile, little is known about the difference between Dative-Subjects and I-Nominals in the world’s languages. This is because most researchers have been unaware of the potential distinction between the two types of nominals. As Gerdts and Youn (1988) have pointed out, research within Government/Binding has largely followed the proposal for Italian by Belletti (1988) and Belletti and Rizzi (1988) that dative experiencers are indirect objects in initially unaccusative clauses and advance to surface subject position, while research within Relational Grammar has assumed, following Perlmutter (1978, 1983, 1984), that the experiencers are initial subjects that retreat to indirect object. It is necessary, therefore, to find language-internal evidence that bears on the issue of which analysis is appropriate for DAT-marked NPs in a given language.

This brings us to a discussion of DAT-marked experiencers in Korean, which occur with a wide range of psychological predicates.

- (2) Haksayng-tul-eykey ton-i philyoha-ta.
 student-PL-DAT money-NOM need-IN
 ‘The students need money.’
- (3) Chelswu-eykey Swuni-ka mopsi kuli-wess-ta.
 C.-DAT S. -NOM badly miss-PST-IN
 ‘Chulsoo missed Soonie badly.’
- (4) Swunay-eykey swuhak-i swi-wess-ta.
 S. -DAT math-NOM easy-PST-IN
 ‘Math was easy for Soonie.’

In our earlier work, as M&P note, we posited an Inversion analysis for such examples (Youn 1986, 1990; Gerdts and Youn 1987). However, they fail to note that in our later work we reanalyzed these constructions as advancements (Gerdts and Youn 1988, 1990). In this paper we hope to set the record straight. Korean Dative experiencers are best analyzed as surface subject.

First, we show that dative-marked experiencers exhibit all five of M&P’s tests for subjects. This leads to two possible conclusions: dative-marked experiencers are Dative Subjects in Korean, unlike Russian experiencers, which

are I-Nominals, or, experiencers in both Korean and Russian are I-Nominals and the proposed diagnostics are not cross-linguistically valid. Or to frame the problem in another way, do dative-marked experiencers in Korean advance (from indirect object to subject) or do they retreat (from subject to indirect object)? In sections 3-5, we discuss case in psych constructions, showing how it would be treated under both the advancement and the retreat analyses. We present three arguments, based on dative honorific case, case stacking, and case mismatches, that, in fact, advancement is the preferred analysis for Korean psych constructions.

2. Subject Tests and Korean Dative Experiencers

Korean has a variety of subject tests, and the dative-marked NP in psych constructions straightforwardly exhibits all of them (see Youn 1990). Here, we briefly review the evidence from Korean for M&P's five tests for subjects.

First, as previous researchers have noted, *casin* is a subject-controlled reflexive. DAT-marked experiencers can be antecedents of *casin* (Youn 1990).

- (5) Chelswu-eykey ton-i casin-uy atul-ul wihayse philyoha-ta.
 C.-DAT money-NOM self-GEN son-for need-IN
 'Chulsoo; needs money for self's; son.'

We see then that DAT-marked experiencers behave like other subjects with respect to antecedent reflexives.

Second, as seen in the following example, subjects of active clauses can control a PRO subject in a *myenseto* clause.

- (6) Haksayng-i-myenseto Swuni-ka ton-ul manhi ssu-n-ta.
 student-be-though S.-NOM money-ACC much spend-PRST-IN
 'Even though she; is a student, Sooni; spends much money.'

Youn (1990) argues that only surface subjects can antecede the PRO. Turning to DAT-marked experiencers, we find that they also can control the PRO subject:

- (7) Paykmancangca-i-myenseto Chelswu-eykey Yengswu-ka
 millionaire-be-though C.-DAT Y.-NOM
 pwule-wess-ta.
 envious-PST-IN
 'Even though he_i/*_j was a millionaire, Chulsoo_j was envious of
 Youngsoo_j.'

M&P's third test for subjects is agreement. Although Korean lacks verb agreement for person and number, it does exhibit agreement with an honored NP, as marked by the verbal suffix *-si*. Many grammarians have noted that the controller of Honorification must be the subject of a sentence. Youn (1990) shows that DAT-marked experiencers in psych constructions can also determine Subject Honorification:

- (8) Apenim-eykey ton-i philyoha-si-ta.
 father.HON-DAT money-NOM need-SH-IN
 'Father needs money.'

Thus the DAT experiencer tests to be a subject with respect to agreement.

Raising provides a fourth test for subject. In Korean, as in many languages, there is a syntactic rule of Subject-to-Object Raising, which has the effect of raising the subject of the complement clause into the matrix clause and making it the object of the matrix clause. Observe, for example, the following pairs of clauses:

- (9) a. Swuni-nun Chelswu-ka chencay-lako mit-nun-ta.
 S.-TOP C.-NOM genius-COMP believe-PRST-IN
 'Sooni believes that Chulsoo is a genius.'
- b. Swuni-nun Chelswu-lul chencay-lako mit-nun-ta.
 S.-TOP C.-ACC genius-COMP believe-PRST-IN
 'Sooni believes Chulsoo to be a genius.'

In (9a) *Chelswu* is the subject of the complement clause and appears in the NOM case, while in (9b) it is the object of the matrix clause and appears in the ACC case. Turning now to experiencers in psych constructions, we see that they can also raise:

- (10) a. Swuni-nun haksayng-tul-eykey ton-i philyoha-ta-ko
 S.-TOP student-PL-DAT money-NOM need-IN-COMP
 mit-nun-ta.
 believe-PRST-IN
 'Sooni believes that the students need money.'
- b. Swuni-nun haksayng-tul-ul ton-i philyoha-ta-ko
 S.-TOP student-PL-DAT money-NOM need-IN-COMP
 mit-nun-ta.
 believe-PRST-IN
 'Sooni believes the students to need money.'

Thus, we see that experiencers behave like subjects with respect to raising.

Finally, we have shown above how the experiencer in a psych construction can control a PRO in a *myense* construction. It is also possible for the *myense* clause itself to be a psych construction, and in this case the experiencer can be controlled by the main clause subject.

- (11) Kilyek-i pwucokha-myenseto, halmeni-ka
energy-NOM lack-though grandmother-NOM
 pyengca-tul-ul tolpo-si-n-ta.
 the sick-PL-ACC tend-SH-PRST-IN.
 ‘Although PRO_i is lacking in energy, Grandmother_j tends the sick.’

So we see that experiencers exhibit the subject property of being the controlled NP of a *myense* construction.

To summarize, we see that the DAT-marked experiencer in Korean behaves as a subject with respect to all five tests—antecedent reflexives, controlling PRO, determining agreement, raising, and controllability. Russian dative experiencers fail to behave as a subject under the last three tests. Interestingly, we see that in both Korean and Russian the condition on antecedence of reflexives is a “metatratal” rule. A subject at any level of structure can antecede a reflexive. Furthermore, Korean and Russian show a similar restriction on the NP that can control into an adjunct clause—a subject or a DAT-marked experiencer, but not a passive agent.

Following M&P’s logic, the results in Korean lead us to conclude that the DAT-marked experiencer is a surface subject (i.e., a Dative Subject) and thus differs from the Russian DAT-marked experiencer, which is an I-Nominal. We present additional evidence for this viewpoint in the following sections.

3. Honorific Dative Case *-kkey*

M&P show that Russian dative experiencers behave in all ways like final indirect objects. In contrast, Korean dative experiencers do not behave like final indirect objects in at least one respect. When final indirect objects designate a person to be honored, they can be marked with the honorific dative case marker *kkey* (see 12). However, as Chung (1980) points out, the experiencer cannot take the DAT honorific case, as in (13).

- (12) Chelswu-ka emenim-kkey yenge-lul kalichi-ess-ta.
C.-NOM mother-DAT(HON) English-ACC teach-PST-IN
 ‘Chulsoo taught English to Mother.’

- (13) *Emenim-kkey kohyang-i kuli-wusi-ess-ta.
 mother-DAT(HON) hometown-NOM miss-SH-PST-IN
 'Mother missed her hometown.'

This is problematic for the Inversion analysis. Since the experiencer is also a final indirect object, it should be able to be marked with *kkey* if its referent is honorable. Under the advancement analysis, the experiencer is not a final indirect object, and thus if the honorific DAT is limited to indirect objects, then the experiencer is not expected to be able to take this case.

4. Case Stacking and Psych Constructions

As noted by Gerds and Youn (1988, 1990) and Youn (1990, 1995), Korean psych constructions exhibit an interesting pattern of case assignment: the nominal with the thematic role of experiencer can appear in either the DAT case, the NOM case, or both cases stacked on top of each other.

- (14) Chelswu-eykey/-ka/-eykey-ka ton-i philyoha-ta.
 C.DAT/-NOM/-DAT-NOM money-NOM need-IN
 'Chulsoo needs money.'

Moreover, the first NP in (14) passes all the tests for subjecthood, regardless of its case marking. For example, it antecedes the reflexive *casin* (15), controls a PRO in a *myenseto* clauses (16), and determines subject honorification (17):

- (15) Chelswu-eykey/-ka/-eykey-ka Yengswu-ka casin-uy sengkong-ul wihay
 C.-DAT/-NOM/-DAT-NOM Y.-NOM self-GEN success-for
 philyoha-ta.
 need-IN
 'Chulsoo_i needs Youngsoo_j for self's_i/_j success.'

- (16) Mikwuksimin-i-myenseto Chelswu-eykey/-ka/-eykey-ka
 U.S. citizen-be-though C.-DAT/-NOM/-DAT-NOM
 yengesensayngnim-i philyoha-ta.
 English teacher-NOM need-IN
 'Even though he_i/_j is an American citizen, Chulsoo_i needs an English
 teacher_j.'

- (17) Emenim-eykey/-i/-eykey-ka kohyang-i kuli-wusi-ess-ta.
 mother.HON-DAT/-NOM/-DAT-NOM hometown-NOM miss-SH-PST-IN
 'Mother missed her hometown.'

The data in (14) pose an interesting puzzle: do the different case markings correlate with different syntactic constructions, or is there a single syntactic analysis for all of the differently case-marked version of the clause? In previous work, Gerdts and Youn (1990) have posited that the second viewpoint is correct. The sentences in (14) are syntactically identical at all levels of structure, regardless of case marking. We posit an advancement analysis for Korean psych constructions, so they all have two levels of structure: an initial level of structure where the NP has the thematic relation experiencer and a surface level where the nominal occupies the subject position. We propose a two-tiered system of case (see Gerdts 1991, Youn 1995). Syntactic case (S-Case) is licensed by final grammatical relations, while semantic case (I-Case) is licensed in initial structure by the semantic role of the NP.

(18) Korean Case (partial):

a. S-Case

NOM (*-i/-ka*) is licensed by a subject

ACC (*-ul/-lul*) is licensed by an object

b. I-Case

DAT (*-eykey* for animates, *-ey* for inanimates) is licensed by a

Exp, Goal, Loc, Ben, Passive agent, Temp etc.

INSTR (*-ulo/lo*) is licensed by an Instr, Path, etc.

etc.

In examples like (14), the relevant NP can either appear in DAT, by virtue of its semantic relation, or in NOM, by virtue of its syntactic position. Although some languages, e.g. Icelandic (Zaenen et al. 1985), demand that an I-case such as DAT appear on a dative subject, Korean has no such requirement. Korean lacks a case resolution rule that would give priority to either I-Case or S-Case, so either DAT or NOM case is possible on experiencers, as in (45). Furthermore, Korean has no morphological prohibition on concatenating case, so I-Case and S-Case can co-occur. Thus, the two-tiered nature of the case rule and the lack of a resolution rule result in something of a case free-for-all. The only restrictions are that two S-Cases never stack and that further, as predicted by the Satellite Principle (Gerdts 1991), case licensed in the earlier level of structure (the I-Case) must appear inside of the case licensed in the later level of structure (the S-Case).

In contrast, case marking would be problematic under the Retreat Analysis, since only two of the patterns are accommodated. First, in order for DAT case to be taken as evidence that the experiencer is the indirect object, the rule in (18) would be revised as in (19):

- (19) a. S-Case (final level)
 NOM is licensed by a subject
 ACC is licensed by an object
 DAT is licensed by an indirect object
 b. I-Case (initial level)
 DAT is licensed by a Loc, Ben, Passive Agent, Temp, etc.
 INSTR is licensed by an Instr, Path, etc.

According to (19), an initial subject that retreats to indirect object will license DAT case; thus DAT-marked experiencers are accounted for. To account for NOM-marked experiencers, a different structure must be posited, one in which the experiencer is the initial and final subject. This would account for its semantic relation, its subject properties, and its case. However, data with Case Stacking as in (14) are a dilemma. The Inversion Analysis would posit retreat, since the experiencer is DAT, but then the experiencer is not a final subject and thus cannot license NOM case. So where does the NOM case come from? We could claim perhaps that an initial subject licenses NOM, though we know this is not generally the case, for example with passive agents. Furthermore, the Satellite Principle would predict that NOM would occur inside of DAT case, since NOM is licensed in the early level of structure. But this is ungrammatical.

- (20) *Chelswu-ka-eykey ton-i philyoha-ta.
 C.-NOM-DAT money-NOM need-IN
 ‘Chulsoo needs money.’

Therefore, the Retreat Analysis fails to account for Case Stacking in Psych constructions.

5. Case Mismatches

Gerds and Jhang (1995) discuss several case mismatch constructions, including part/whole, quantifier plus classifier, and comparative constructions. Here we only give data involving comparatives. The comparative form *pota* can stack on I-case such as DAT (21), but, like the Topic marker *-nun*, it cannot stack on NOM or ACC case (22) and thus these appear as \emptyset before *pota*.

- (21) Haksayng-tul-eykey-pota sensayngnim-eykey (te) manhun
 student-PL-DAT-than teacher-DAT more many
 ton-i philyoha-ta.
 money-NOM need-IN
 ‘A teacher needs more money than the students.’

- (22) Haksayng-tul-Ø-pota sensayngnim-i (te) manhun
 student-PL-Ø-than teacher-NOM more many
 ton-i philyoha-ta.
 money-NOM need-IN
 'A teacher needs more money than the students.'

In data like (21) and (22), we see that the compared and the comparative NPs are experiencers and are case-marked alike. But as Gerdts and Jhang (1995) note, a case mismatch is possible between the two experiencers. Thus the compared NP can be DAT while the comparative NP is NOM (23), or vice versa (24).

- (23) Haksayng-tul-Ø-pota sensayngnim-eykey (te) manhun
 student-PL-Ø-than teacher-DAT more many
 ton-i philyoha-ta.
 money-NOM need-IN
 'A teacher needs more money than the students.'

- (24) Haksayng-tul-eykey-pota sensayngnim-i (te) manhun
 student-PL-DAT-than teacher-NOM more many
 ton-i philyoha-ta.
 money-NOM need-IN
 'A teacher needs more money than the students.'

Under the advancement analysis, the psych constructions have the same syntax: the compared NP and the comparative NP are both indirect objects that have advanced to subject. The case assignment rule in (18) simply applies twice, independently to each NP, yielding four possible case patterns. Under the retreat analysis, the mismatched cases in (23) and (24) are problematical. Since parallelism is assumed in comparatives, and since the retreat analysis posits different structures for NOM and DAT experiencers, case mismatches go unexplained.

6. Conclusion

This paper has examined DAT-marked NPs in Korean psych constructions in light of the remarks of Moore and Perlmutter (2000) on the properties of such nominals in Russian and cross-linguistically. We have shown that the Korean data contrast with the Russian data in one important aspect. While Russian DAT-marked experiencers exhibit only two of five subject properties, Korean DAT-marked experiencers exhibit all five subject properties. M&P regard Russian experiencers to be I-Nominals rather than Dative Subjects and claim that

psych constructions in Russian are best regarded as Inversion Constructions. Conversely, we conclude for Korean that experiencers are Dative Subjects and that Korean psych constructions are not Inversion Constructions. The results regarding subject tests are compatible with a previous analysis posited by Gerdts and Youn (1988, 1990). We claim an initial unaccusative structure for Korean psych constructions; the experiencer is an initial indirect object and the theme is an initial object. Alternatively, it could be proposed that Korean psych constructions are in fact like Russian ones, namely they are Inversion Constructions. Under this scenario M&P are incorrect in assuming that tests for subject properties will distinguish two types of nominals—Dative Subjects and I-Nominals. However, we have shown, following Gerdts and Youn (1988, 1990) that there are three additional arguments that Korean psych constructions are best treated as advancements rather than Inversion Constructions. These are based on data from the honorific dative case *kkey*, case stacking, and case mismatches. Therefore, we conclude that DAT-marked experiencers in Korean psych constructions are Dative Subjects, arising through advancement in an initially unaccusative clause.

The Korean data, insofar as it yields a different result from Russian, which we are assuming has been correctly analyzed by M&P, thus support the claim that both types of dative-marked nominals, and thus both types of psych constructions, must be recognized in universal grammar.

Notes

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