

An Inversion Analysis of Korean Tough Constructions

Donna B. Gerdtts & Cheong Youn

State University of New York at Buffalo

1. Inversion.

In this paper, we provide a Relational Grammar account of the case alternations found in Tough Constructions like (1) and (2): the experiencer may be in either the NOM or DAT case, and a non-subject within the embedded clause, e.g. *chaek* in (1), can be in either its expected clause internal case, that is ACC, or NOM case. 1,2,3

(1) *Sansaengnim-i/eykey(n+n) k+ chaek-+l/-i ilk-sal-ki-ka*
teacher- NOM/-DAT(TOP) the book-ACC/NOM read-SH-cmp-NOM

swi-usi-et-ta.
easy-SH-pst-ind

"It is easy for the teacher to read the book."

(2) *Chelau-ka/-eykey(n+n) ce +yca-ey/-ka an-ki-ka elyep-ta.*
C. -NOM/-DAT(TOP) that chair-LOC/-NOM sit-cmp-NOM heard-ind

"It is hard for Chulsoo to sit in that chair."

Our analysis makes use of an observation concerning Tough Constructions made by Yang (1972) that the Tough predicates *swipta/elyepta* are Psychological predicates, and like many other such predicates, they optionally allow the rule of Psych Movement (Postal 1971), as illustrated in (3-5).⁴

(3) *Eaeni-ka/eykey(n+n) ai-t+l-i k+li-usi-et-ta.*
mother-NOM/DAT(TOP) child-pl-NOM miss-SH-pst-ind
"Mother missed children."

(4) *Haksaeng-t+l-i/eykey(n+n) ton-i philyoha-ta.*
student-pl-NOM/DAT(TOP) money-NOM need-ind
"Students need money."

(5) *Sunae-ka/eykey(n+n) auhak-i swi-wet-ta.*
S. -NOM/DAT(NOM) math-NOM easy-pst-ind
"Math was easy for Soon Ae."

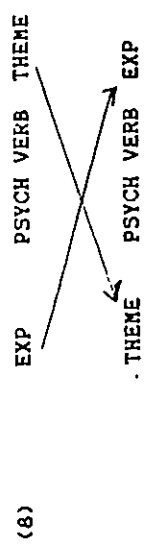
Some examples of predicates which appear with DAT experiencers are listed in (6).

(6) miþ "hate", musep "be afraid", tulyep "be fearful",
 kwiyeþ "be lovable", kayep "be pitiful", silh- "dislike",
 puleþ "be envious", kwichanh- "annoy", cungyoþa- "be
 important"

In Psych Movement, the rule that supposedly derives clauses
 like (7b) from those like (7a), the experiencer/subject becomes
 some sort of object and the theme/object becomes the subject as
 schematized in (8).

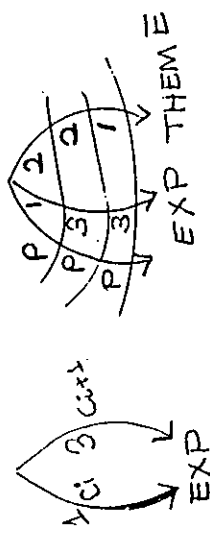
(7) a. Bill likes this book.
 EXP THEME

b. This book pleases John.
 THEME EXP

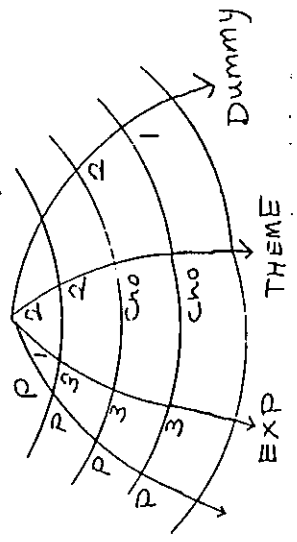


In Relational Grammar (see especially Perlmutter 1983,
 1984), as in other modern theories, Psych Movement effects are
 dealt with in two stages. First, there is Inversion where the
 subject retreats to indirect object, as represented in (9a).
 Second, there is Unaccusative Advancement of the object to
 subject as in (9b), or-alternatively--there is Impersonal
 Unaccusative Advancement involving an inserted dummy as in (9c).

(9) a. INVERSION b. PERSONAL INVERSION



c. IMPERSONAL INVERSION



As typical in the cross-linguistic literature on
 Inversion, the experiencer in Korean shows a variety of
 subject properties--even when it is DAT marked. As discussed
 in Youn (1985), it determines subject honorification,
 antecedes the reflexive casin, and controls a PRO subject in a
 ayense construction as seen in (10); these properties are
 otherwise limited to subjects. 5

(10) Mikusain-i-ayense(to), speci-kkeyse/eykey(n+n)
 U.S. citizen-be-although father-NOM+HON/DAT(TOP)

thongyekwan-i casin-+y seep-ttaeuney philyoha-si-ta.
 interpreter-NOM self-GEN business-for need-SH-ind

"Although he_i is an American citizen, Father_i needs an
 interpreter_j for his_i business."

With respect to Unaccusative Advancement in Korean
 Inversion, Youn claims that only Impersonal constructions (as in
 9c) are possible in Korean: they involve the advancement of an
 invisible dummy to subject. Therefore, the theme, lacks subject
 properties: it cannot control subject honorification,
 reflexives, or ayense constructions as seen in (10) and (11).

(11) Sunhi-ke/eykey(n+n) yengeseenseengnim-i/*kkeyse
 S. -NOM/DAT(TOP) English teacher-NOM/*NOM+HON

philyoha-(*si)-et-ta.
 need-SH-pst-ind

"Soon Hee needs an English teacher."

We assume that the case of the theme, which is NOM in both the
 base transitive and the inversion construction, is assigned via
 a rule which assigns NOM to objects in stative or low-transitive
 clauses along the lines of Kuno's rule for Japanese.

Many though not all psychological predicates can also take
 a clausal theme which has a PRO subject controlled by the
 experiencer: when the clause takes the nominal complementizer ki
 it can be case marked NOM, like nominal Themes. As seen in (12)
 the Tough predicates are among those that appear with a clausal
 theme.

(12) Yengau-ka/eykey(n+n) (i) chaeþ-+1 ilk-ki-þka
 Y. -NOM/DAT(TOP) this book-ACC read-cmp-NOM

swi-/suwelha-/tulye-/cincaemeling-/cikye-/ciluha-yet-ta.
 easy/simple/dreadful/disgusting/tedious/boring-pst-ind

"Young Soo finds this book easy/simple/dreadful/etc. to read."

Furthermore, Inversion is also possible in such examples, as seen by the DAT case on the experimenter in (12). The experimenter is an initial subject which can retreat to indirect object, nevertheless maintaining some subject properties, that is, it determines Subject honorification on the main clause predicate, antecedes reflexives, and controls the subject PRO in a wysense construction, as seen in (13).

- (13) Nollaun suwanka-i-ayense(to), apaci-kkeyse/eykey(n-n)
 remarkable able person-be-although, father-NOM+HON/DAT(TOP)
 k+ hoyse-yy secang-+l casin-yy asep-ttaemoney
 the firm-GEN head-ACC self-GEN business-for
 xenna-si-ki-ka elye-usi-et-ta.
 meet-SH-cap-NOM hard-SH-pst-ind

"Although he_i,*j was a remarkably capable man, it was difficult for Father_i to meet the president_j of the firm on account of his_i,*j business."

An inversion analysis thus provides an account of the NOM/DAT alternation of the experimenter and also motivates NOM case for the clausal theme.

2. Ascension.

The second problem this paper deals with is the fact that a non-subject in the embedded clause of psychological predicates may take on NOM case as an alternative to the case it would be assigned within the embedded clause, as seen in (14) and (15) as well as in (1) and (2) above.

- (14) Haksaeang-t-l-l/eykey(n-n) i sacen-+l/l
 student-pl-NOM/DAT(TOP) this dictionary-ACC/NOM

as+ki-ka awi--wet-ta.
 use-cap-NOM easy-pst-ind

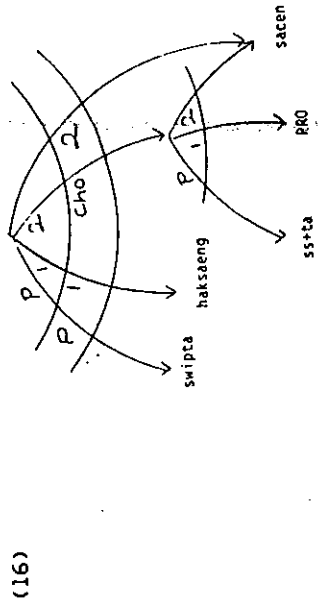
"The students found this dictionary hard to use."

- (15) Halmeni-kkeyse/eykey(n-n) k+ iyaki-l-l/ka
 grandmother-NOM+HON/DAT(TOP) the story-ACC/NOM

t-l-+si-ki-ka cikye-uesi-et-ta.
 listen to-SH-cap-NOM tedious-SH-pst-ind

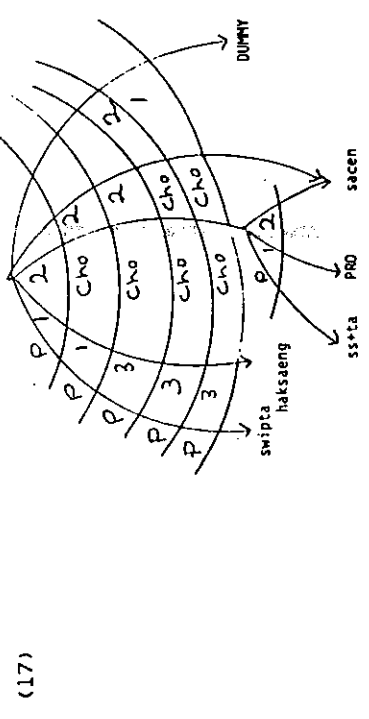
"Grandmother found the story tedious to listen to."

This phenomenon, referred to as Tough movement, has been variously treated as a case of Raising or WH-Movement. Since the Korean data do not, to our knowledge, bear on this issue, we have treated it-- as appropriate within Relational Grammar-- as a case of Ascension. Specifically, the relevant nominal in the embedded clause may ascend to take over the grammatical relation of the host, that is the entire embedded clause, as forecasted by the Relational Succession Law (Perlmutter and Postal 1983). We have represented this analysis in (16).



(16)

There may also be inversion in which case there is, as proscribed for Korean, Impersonal unaccusative advancement, as represented in (17).



(17)

Two types of scrambling in Korean present evidence for an ascension analysis.⁶ First, in Korean Tough constructions it is possible to scramble nominals between the embedded clause and the psychological predicate, as seen in (18), where the DAT marked inversion nominal appears between the two predicates.⁷

- (21) Hullyunghan philcek-+l kac-ess-+my.ense(to),
 beautiful handwriting-ACC have-pst although
 Cheisu-eykey(n+n) halepeci-ka/*kkeyse casin-+y phyenci-losse
 C. -DAT(TOP) grandfather-NOM/*NOM-HON self-GEN letter-with
 soki-ki-ka elye-(=usi)-et-ta.
 deceive-cmp-NOM herd-SH-pst-ind

"Although hei*J had beautiful handwriting, it was difficult for Chulsoo_i to cheat grandfather_j with hisi,*J letter."

To summarize, Korean tough constructions involve optional Inversion (which implies Impersonal Unaccusative advancement) and also optional Ascension of a complement non-subject, yielding the four possible case patterns illustrated in (1) and (2) above.

3. A Typology of Tough Constructions.

To place Korean in cross-linguistic perspective, other languages, for example the Romance languages and English, have been noted to involve Inversion with Tough predicates; however, in these languages, unlike Korean, Inversion is obligatory rather than optional, thus NOM case is not a possible realization for the Experiencer, as seen in (22).

- (22) a. It is easy for John to read this book.
 b. *John is easy to read this book.

Furthermore, in the Romance languages and English, Personal as well as Impersonal Unaccusative Advancement is possible in Inversion constructions. Since these languages also allow Ascension of a complement non-subject, the net effect is that these nominals may be final subjects, as seen in (23).

- (23) These books are easy for John to read.

An analysis from a Relational perspective shows that Inversion, Personal vs. Impersonal Unaccusative advancement, and Ascension are the sub-constructions which are universally available to Tough sentences. Korean, as we have seen, makes a different range of selections than English or Romance languages.

4. Inversion as a Tough Construction?

The data we have presented above are, in fact, compatible with many versions of Psych Movement & Tough Movement available in various frameworks. However, there is one proposal concerning the interrelationship of Inversion and Tough

- (18) I ascen-+l ss-+si-ki-ka halepeci-eykey(n+n)
 this dictionary-ACC use-SH-cmp-NOM grandfather-DAT(TOP)
 swi-usi-et-ta.
 easy-SH-pst-ind

"Grandfather found this dictionary easy to use."

The complement non-subject may also appear in this position as shown in (19), but only if it is case marked-NOM.

- (19) Halepeci-kkeyse/eykey(n+n) ss-+si-ki-ka i sacen-i/*+l
 grandfather-NOM-HON/DAT(TOP) use-SH-cmp-NOM this dictionary-NOM/*ACC
 swi-usi-et-ta.
 easy-SH-pst-ind

This would follow from an ascension analysis and a stipulation that this rightward movement rule be clause-bounded.

to have some clause-bounding effects. As seen in (20), a complement non-subject can appear in sentence initial position in front of a DAT experiencer, but only if it is case-marked NOM.⁸

- (20) I sacen-i/*+l halepeci-eykey(n+n) ss-+si-ki-ka swi-usi-et-ta.

Under the ascension analysis where the complement non-subject ascends, as evidenced by NOM case, to be a clause-mate to the experiencer and the psychological predicate, a freer range of word orders is expected.

Finally, since Korean does not allow personal unaccusative advancement, the complement non-subject, although it may ascend to object position, will never advance to subject, as do the equivalent nominals in English tough constructions. As seen in (21), a NOM-marked complement object cannot control Subject Honorification, Reflexives, or the PRO in a wyanse construction, these properties being jealously guarded by the experiencer nominal.

constructions which the Korean data fail to support. Throughout the above discussion we have taken the point of view that Tough sentences were a type of Inversion construction. Pesetsky (1987) has put forward the opposite claim. In order to account for unexpected cases of anaphors in clauses with psychological predicates, like (24) without relying on an essentially global rule of Reflexive, necessary in an Inversion treatment, Pesetsky posits that sentences like (24) are actually Tough constructions as in (25).

(24) Stories about herself generally please Mary.

(25) Stories about herself generally please Mary (PRO to listen to el).

Mary is base-generated as an object which controls a PRO which in turn antecedes the reflexive herself. After the Tough Movement and binding of stories about herself the remnant clause is deleted. Thus unexpected anaphora, Pesetsky claims, reduces to the more run-of-the-mill problem of connectivity, as illustrated in (26).

(26) Pictures of himself I know John likes e.

In short, Pesetsky is claiming that Inversion clauses are a type of Tough construction, the opposite of the viewpoint which we assumed above.

In addition requiring the basically unpalatable rule of deletion which Pesetsky needs in order to get from (25) to (24), his treatment offers no insight into the behaviour of the Korean experimenter. As we have shown above, antecedent Reflexives is just one of the subject properties of the Korean experimenter. The ability of these nominals to determine subject honorification on the higher predicate and to control a PRO in a mysense construction, which is limited to matrix subjects, cannot be accounted for by passing the responsibility down to the PRO in the lower clause, as a nominal in this position would be ineligible for these rules anyway. As schematized in (27), it is completely mysterious under Pesetsky's analysis why grandfather controls subject honorification since neither that nominal nor the PRO it controls is ever subject of the matrix clause.

(27) It's easy-SH for grandfather (PRO to read these books).

We conclude then that from a cross-linguistic viewpoint Pesetsky has not offered a reasonable alternative to the Inversion analysis. We stand by our analysis that Tough sentences can involve Inversion -- not vice versa.

FOOTNOTES:

¹However, this paper does not discuss the above cases where the clausal themes are marked with ey locative, as in:

- (i) K+ chaeK-i ilk-ki-ey swip-ta.
the book-nom read-nom-LOC easy-ind
"The book is easy to read."

Im (1972, 1974) also points out this possibility. Although he does not give an analysis of sentences like (i), he claims that they have a different structure from sentences like (1) and (2).

²It was mentioned to us by some participants at the conference that not all speakers accept DAT-marked experiencers in these constructions. However, these constructions are acceptable to the dozen speakers we checked with, especially if the Topic marking follows the DAT case. Furthermore, Yang (1972) is one of several Korean scholars who gives such data.

³This paper deals only with the 'easy'/'difficult' readings of swip-ta/elvop-ta. As Yang (1972) points out, the 'likely/unlikely' readings of these verbs govern a different structure which involves a sentential subject, as represented in (i); this structure does not allow the experimenter to be DAT, the non-subject within the clause to be NOM, for subject honorification on the higher verb.

- (1) [Sensaengnim-i k+ chaeK-+l ilk-+aj-ki]-ka swip-ta.
"The teacher is likely to read the book."

⁴Yang (1972) discusses two classes of Psychological predicates--verbs of 'self-judgement' and of 'semi-self-judgement'--which are distinguished on semantic not syntactic grounds.

⁵To be precise, SH and the reflexive gasin, but not the PRO in mysense constructions, can also be controlled by the possessor within the subject, as discussed in Yoon (in preparation). As Yoon (1985) notes, working is control SH and mysense while metaatratat is control casin.

⁶Other scholars, e.g. Lee (1985), have also broken down scrambling phenomena into two rules.

⁷We found conflicting judgements concerning the scrambling of a NOM experiencer into this position:

- (1) ?/*I socen-+l ss-+si-ki-ka halopeci-kkeyse swi-usi-et-ta.

Perhaps a ban on scrambling one NOM nominal across another would explain *(i).

⁸In contrast, this example is good with a NOM experiencer; we have no explanation for this:

(i) I sacen-i/+l halapeci-kkeyse sa-si-ke-ka swi-usi-et-ta.

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On Case Conversion in Korean

Hak-Sung Han

University of Texas at Austin

Saito (1983 p.250) observes that in Japanese the nominative Case marker ga can be converted to the genitive Case marker no in relative clauses or pronominal sentential modifiers (ga/no conversion), whereas the accusative Case marker o cannot (*o/no conversion) as shown in the following.

- (1) a. John-ga kaita hon 'the book that John wrote'
-nom wrote book
b. John-no kaita hon
(2) a. hon-o kaita hito 'the person that wrote a book'
book-acc wrote person
b. *hon-no kaita hito

According to Saito (1983 p.251), (1a) can optionally undergo Bedell's (1972) restructuring rule as illustrated in the following.

- (3) a. [np [s John-ga proj kaita] hon_i] -->
b. [np [np John-no] [np [s proj kaita] hon_i]]

As a result of restructuring, John in (3b) is now in the environment for genitive Case marking, which he assumes to be as follows.

- (4) [+N, -V]^a
[-V]^{max} [+N, -V]^b

(4) amounts to saying that NP's or PP's which are immediately dominated by a projection of N are assigned genitive Case. Assuming that Bedell's restructuring rule is responsible for ga/no conversion, Saito raises a question of why (2b) should be ruled out. To be more specific, why is the following restructuring not possible?

- (5) a. [np [s --- hon-o kaita] hito] -->
b. [np --- [np hon-no] [np kaita hito]]

Saito argues that this asymmetry can be explained by his hypothesis about Japanese Case marking, that is, accusative Case is assigned by the verb to its object (presumably under