

## Silent Possessors in Korean

**Introduction:** In this paper, I present a hitherto unnoticed three-way correlation in Korean possession constructions. I argue that this observation suggests that there is a silent accusative-marked possessor and the distribution of the silent accusative-marked possessor can be captured by the notion of *inherent participant* proposed by Funakoshi (2012). From this discussion, I conclude that Korean has backward control constructions in the nominal domain.

**Observation:** In Korean, a floating numeral quantifier (FNQ) must be c-commanded by its associate NP. Thus, possessor NPs (PNPs) cannot be associated with FNQs outside the possessed NPs since the PNPs do not c-command the FNQs. This is shown in (1).

- (1) a. \*Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy meli]-lul sey-myeng tta-ss-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN hair-ACC 3-CL pick.up-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu picked up three students’ hair.’  
 b. \*Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy os]-ul sey-myeng kay-ess-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN cloth-ACC 3-CL fold-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu folded three students’ clothes.’

However, there are cases where PNPs license FNQs even if the former does not c-command the latter, as (2) shows.

- (2) a. Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy meli]-lul sey-myeng jaru-ass-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN hair-ACC 3-CL cut-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu cut three students’ hair.’  
 b. Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy os]-ul sey-myeng botki-oss-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN cloth-ACC 3-CL take.off-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu took off three students’ clothes.’

The only difference between (1) and (2) is in the type of predicates. Interestingly, the same contrast can be observed in constructions involving Case-marked FNQs. Korean has Case-marked FNQs that are marked with the same Case as their associates, as illustrated by (3).

- (3) Haksayng-tul-i ecey sey-myeng-i maykcwu-lul masi-ess-ta.  
 student-PL-NOM yesterday 3-CL-NOM beer-ACC drink-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Three students drank beer yesterday.’

As shown in (4), genitive-marked PNPs do not license accusative-marking on FNQs. This is not surprising because usually PNPs do not license FNQs in the first place, as we saw in (1).

- (4) a. \*Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy meli]-lul sey-myeng-ul tta-ss-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN hair-ACC 3-CL-ACC pick.up-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu picked up three students’ hair.’  
 b. \*Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy os]-ul sey-myeng-ul kay-ess-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN cloth-ACC 3-CL-ACC fold-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu folded three students’ clothes.’

However, genitive-marked PNPs license accusative-marking on FNQs in the situation where they can license FNQs like in (2) even if the PNPs themselves are not marked with accusative, as shown in (5).

- (5) a. Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy meli]-lul sey-myeng-ul jaru-ass-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN hair-ACC 3-CL-ACC cut-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu cut three students’ hair.’  
 b. Chelswu-ka [haksayng-tul-uy os]-ul sey-myeng-ul botki-oss-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-GEN cloth-ACC 3-CL-ACC take.off-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu took off three students’ clothes.’

Furthermore, the same contrast can be observed in the so-called external possession construction, where PNPs are marked with accusative Case. PNPs can be marked with accusative in some cases but not in others:

- (6) a. \*Chelswu-ka haksayng-tul-ul meli-lul tta-ss-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-ACC hair-ACC pick.up-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu picked up students’ hair.’  
 b. \*Chelswu-ka haksayng-tul-ul os-ul kay-ess-ta.  
 Chelswu-NOM student-PL-ACC cloth-ACC fold-PAST-DECL  
 ‘Chelswu folded students’ clothes.’  
 (7) a. Chelswu-ka haksayng-tul-ul meli-lul jaru-ass-ta.

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Chelswu-NOM	student-PL-ACC	hair-ACC	cut-PAST-DECL
'Chelswu cut students' hair.'			
b. Chelswu-ka	<b>haksayng-tul-ul</b>	os-ul	botki-oss-ta.
Chelswu-NOM	student-PL-ACC	cloth-ACC	take.off-PAST-DECL
'Chelswu took off students' clothes.'			

Notice that PNPs can be marked with accusative in the exactly same situation where PNPs can license FNQs outside the possessed NPs and they can license accusative-marking on FNQs.

**Silent Accusative-Marked PNPs:** In order to account for the three-way correlation, I propose that in sentences like (2) and (5), (i) there is a silent element outside the possessive phrase, (ii) the silent element is coreferential with the PNPs, and (iii) the silent element is marked with accusative. Given that FNQs are adjoined to VP, then, (2) and (5) have the structure in (8) (the actual word order in these sentences is derived after the object NPs are moved to in front of the FNQs via scrambling).

(8) Subj [ $\Delta_1$ -ACC [<sub>VP</sub> FNQ(-ACC) [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>NP</sub> PNP<sub>1</sub> NP] V] ] ]

In (8), the PNP can indirectly license the FNQ and accusative-marking on it since the coreferential element  $\Delta$  c-commands the FNQ and is marked with accusative (I call  $\Delta$  a silent possessor in what follows). In (7), the PNPs themselves, rather than silent possessors, occupy the position where  $\Delta$  appears in (8), hence being accusative-marked.

**Inherent Participant Generalization:** Now notice that it is not always the case that PNPs or the silent possessor can occupy the position where  $\Delta$  appears in (8). This is so because otherwise we cannot rule out (1), (4), and (6). Then, the question is when PNPs or silent possessors can appear outside the possessive phrase. I propose the following generalization: **PNPs or silent possessors can appear in the position where  $\Delta$  appears in (8) only if PNPs are *inherent participants* in the event described by the predicate that takes the possessed NPs as its argument.** The notion of inherent participant is proposed by Funakoshi (2012) to capture the distribution of external possession constructions in Japanese. He defines this notion as follows: *x* is an inherent participant in an event *e* iff the participation of *x* in *e* is necessary for the realization of *e*. For example, in the event described by the sentence "Mary hit John's face", John as well as Mary and John's face is an inherent participant since it is impossible to hit John's face in the absence of John. On the other hand, in the sentence "Mary destroyed John's car", *John* is not an inherent participant since it is possible to destroy John's car in the absence of John. Given this notion of inherent participant, let us consider the possession constructions under discussion. In the event of cutting hair and the event of taking off clothes, the possessors of hair and clothes must participate in the event while in the event of picking up hair and the event of folding clothes, the possessors of hair and clothes do not have to. Thus, in the acceptable sentences (2), (5), and (7), the PNPs are inherent participants while in the unacceptable sentences (1), (4), and (6), they are not.

**Backward Control:** This generalization can be accounted for if we assume that the position where  $\Delta$  occupies in (8) is theta-marked by V and the relevant theta-role is inherent participant. Only the elements that can be interpreted as inherent participants can occupy the  $\Delta$ 's position in (8). If a silent possessor occupies a theta position, this means that sentences like (2) and (5) are backward control constructions in Polinsky and Potsdam's (2002) sense. In backward control constructions, there is a dependency between an overt NP and a silent NP in reference, they are both in theta positions, and the silent NP is in a structurally higher position than the overt NP. The structure in (8) exactly matches this description. Thus, I conclude that sentences like (2) and (5) are instances of backward control constructions in the nominal domain.

**Conclusion:** The conclusion that Korean has backward control constructions in the nominal domain is both empirically and theoretically important. Empirically, this fills in the missing piece of the typology of raising and control in the nominal domain. As Funakoshi (2012) mentions, while in the nominal domain, forward raising (Hebrew: cf. Landau 1999), backward raising (Nez Perce: cf. Deal 2011), and forward control (German: Lee-Shoenfeld 2006) has been attested, backward control has not. Theoretically, this paper lends an empirical support to Movement Theory of Control (cf. Hornstein 1999) and Copy Theory of Movement (cf. Chomsky 1995) since this typology is expected in these theories.

**Selected References:** Deal 2011. Possessor raising. Ms. Harvard University; Funakoshi 2012. Backward control external possession constructions in Japanese. WAFL8.