Defective category C and Highest Subject effect in Korean pseudoclefts

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Based on the peculiar reconstruction puzzles observed in Korean and potentially in Japanese, this paper argues that this peculiarity, which we call the "Highest Subject (Sbj.) effect", can be accounted for if C is a defective functional category.

Assuming that the Korean *-kes* construction is an instance of pseudoclefts (Jhang 1994, Sohn 2004) rather than either clefts as in Kang (2006), or simple equative-predicational sentences as in Kim & Sells (2007), it is observed that Korean pseudoclefts, too, illustrate garden variety (Anti-)Connectivity effects as in English pseudoclefts discussed in Boskovic (1997), Sharvit (1999), den Dikken, *et al.* (2000), and Schlenker (2003). (1) is a pseudocleft with a reflexive counterweight.

(1) Kim kyosu-ka   ilk-un   kes-un   casin-uy   nonmun-i-ta

    Kim professor-Nom   read-Asp/Prs   C-Top   self-Gen   article-be-Decl

    [**What** [Prof. Kim$_i$ has read t]] is his (literally, *self$_i$'s*) own article.

English counterpart of (1) is a "reconstruction" case since the reflexive *casin* (=self) is not c-commanded by its antecedent if *-kes* is a C heading CP. As '*casin*' in (2) shows, it can be a local as well as a long-distance anaphor. When pseudoclefted, however, only the Highest Sbj. can be the binder in (3).

(2) John-i   [[Chelswu-ka cain-uy imo-lul   coaha-n-ta]-ko   saenggakha-ess-ta

    John-N. Chelswu-N.   self-Gen aunt-Acc like-Prs-Decl]-C   think-past-C

    John$_i$ thought that Chelswu$_j$ likes self's$_i$/$_j$ aunt.

(3) John-I   [[Chelswu-ka t coahanta]-ko] saenggakha-ess-ten]   kes-un casin-uy imou-i-ess-ta

    John-N.   Chelswu-N. t like-Prs-C   think-Asp/Pst-C   C-Top self-Gen aunt-be-Pst-Decl

    [**What** [John$_i$ thought that Chelswu$_j$ likes t]] was self"$_i$/*$_j$s aunt.

This phenomenon has been independently observed in Japanese clefts (Kizu 2005). We argue that the Highest Sbj. effect can be accounted for if C is defective and thus allows sub-command. The defectiveness of the category C is illustrated in (4) where the Highest Sbj. within the CP cannot take a Topic marker, unlike other "normal" subjects.

(4) [[Kim kyoswu-ka/*nun ilk-un]   kes-un] Chomsky-uy   nonmwun-i-ta

    Kim prof.-Nom/*Top   read-Prs]   C-Top Chomsky-Gen paper-be-Decl

    [**What** [prof. Kim read]] was Chomsky's paper

We attribute this fact to the lack of potential functional Topic structures on its Left Periphery (Rizzi 1997), unlike some "strong" CPs. In other words, not allowing a Topic marker in (4) is mysterious unless we argue for the defectiveness of *-kes* CP. This C is "impoverished" in its feature matrix so that the Highest Sbj. can *sub*-command into the base-generated *casin* in the counterweight position of the pseudocleft. Unlike Chomsky (2000) who argues that out of core functional categories, C, T, and v, T is the category that can be defective (T_{def}), this paper argues that C, too, can be a defective functional category (Gallego 2007).

Furthermore, the relaxation of c-command (i.e.,sub-command) needs to be extended to CPs (and TPs via defective C) as well as to DPs. *Sub*-command in DP, for example, has been instantiated in Yoon (1989).

(5) caki$_i$-ka I   seysang-ese ceyil yeppuke   toy-nun-kes-I   Mary$_i$-uy   kkwum-i-ta
    Self-N. this world-in   the   most pretty   become-Asp-C-N. Mary-Gen   dream-be-Decl
    It is Mary$_i$'s dream that self$_i$ becomes the prettiest in the world.

Independent empirical supports for our analysis come from Externally Headed Relative constructions in (6).

(6) John-i   [Mary-ka   t   sa-ess-ta]-ko]   malha-n   casin-uy caeyk

   [John-N. [Mary-N.   t   buy-Pst-Decl]-C]   say-Asp]RO] self-Gen book

   Self$_{1/*2}$'s book [RO that John$_1$ said [that Mary$_2$ bought   t]]

In (6), CP headed by null Rel. Op. also displays Highest Sbj. effect, and it is only fair to argue that C can be defective, and the CPs headed by defective C are weak to allow sub-command.

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