

On What Makes Korean HOW Island-Insensitive

This paper is concerned with why *ettehkey* 'how' does not show island effects, unlike *way* 'why': (1) vs. (2). There have been several analyses entertained to explain the island-insensitivity of *ettehkey*: T. Chung's (1991) VP adjunct analysis, D. Chung's (1996) nominal analysis, Yang's (1997) d-linking analysis, and D. Chung's (2000) predicate analysis. This paper witnesses some non-trivial problems with such analyses, and proposes an alternative analysis in which *ettehkey* is decomposed into *e-tte-ha-key* 'Det-N-do-adverbializer'. The presence of N enables *ettehkey* to be wh-scope-licensed via binding, accounting for the island-insensitivity.

As pointed out in D. Chung (2000), T. Chung's (1991) analysis (*ettehkey* is a VP adjunct specially a-governed by subject) and D. Chung's (1996) (*-key* in *ettehkey* makes it nominal) bear several non-trivial problems. One crucial problem with these approaches is that predicate *etteha* 'to be how' is island-insensitive as well: (3). Notice that *etteha* neither functions as an adjunct nor contains *-key*, but is still island-insensitive.

Yang (1997) and D. Chung (2000) also face some empirical/theoretical problems. According to Yang (1997), *ettehkey* is island-insensitive because *ette(ha)* makes it d-linked. Note the following, however. First, Korean wh-elements with no *ette(ha)* are freely d-linkable: (4). Second, wh-elements with *ette(ha)* are not necessarily d-linked: (5). Third, wh-elements in islands are not necessarily d-linked. (6), for example, can be uttered out of the blue. Thus, d-linking does not seem to be directly associated with the syntactic behavior of *ettehkey*. Now turn to D. Chung (2000), who claims that *etteha* and *ettehkey* are (small clause) predicates and as such side with arguments rather than with adjuncts w.r.t. theta-licensing. The first clause may be right, but the second is not. Notice that predicate movement does show island effects: (7), cited from Baltin (1989). Observe also that predicate phrases in Korean cannot be extracted out of a non-island embedded clause, not to mention out of an island: (8).

This paper proposes an alternative analysis, a (revised) nominal analysis, based on the morphological paradigm that Korean wh-phrases display. Observe first that most of the Korean wh-elements start with *e(n)-*: (9a). I analyze *e(n)-* as a determiner that modifies (or takes as complement) a nominal element that follows. This can be historically confirmed: (10). Another piece of evidence comes from the fact that *enu* can modify some wh-elements but not those with *e(n)-*: (11). *Ettehkey* is decomposed into four sub-parts: *e-tte-ha-key*, 'Det-N-do-adverbializer'. (Similarly, *etteha* → *e-tte-ha*.) The second element, i.e. *tte*, is diagnosed as N because the first element, i.e. *e-*, as a determiner, requires a nominal element to be modified and the third element, i.e. *ha*, as a transitive verb, requires a nominal complement. Given this (revised) nominal analysis, *ettehkey* (and *etteha* as well) can take advantage of a binding option (as opposed to a movement option) in its wh-scope licensing (Reinhart 1995, Tsai 1994), accounting for the lack of island effects. (Wh-elements in (9b) with the exception of *way* are themselves nominal elements or modify a nominal element, and their lack of island effects naturally follows also.)

Examples

- (1) a. [ettehkey yoliha-n] yangkoki-ka masiss-ni?
 how cook-Adn mutton-Nom delicious-QE
 'Q mutton that is cooked how is delicious?'
- b. [yangkoki-lul ettehkey yoliha-myen] ku citokhan naymsay-ka epseci-ni?
 mutton-Acc how cook-if that nasty smell-Nom disappear-QE
 'Q if you cook mutton how, that nasty smell disappears?'
- (2) a. *[Tom-ul way ttayli-n] yeca-ka kamok-ey ka-ess-ni?
 T.-Acc why beat-Adn woman-Nom jail-to go-Pst-QE
 'Q a woman who beat Tom why was imprisoned?'
- b. *[salam-ul way ttayli-myen] kamok-ey ka-ni?
 man-Acc why beat-if jail-to go-QE
 'Q if you beat a person why, you're imprisoned?'
- (3) [e_i [sanghwang-i etteh-ta-ko] pokoha-n] kyengchal-i haykotoy-ess-ni?
 situation-Nom how-DE-C report-Adn police-Acc be;fired-Pst-QE
 'Q the police officer who reported that the situation is how was fired?'
- (4) ku cwung-ey {nwukwu/mwues/eti/encey} 'among them, who/what/where/ when', etc.
- (5) a. (To a friend you just saw) b. (Looking at your car bumper damaged)
 yocum ettehkey cinay-ni? etten nom-i ilen cis-ul ha-ess-e?
 recently how spend-QE which guy such thing-Acc do-Pst-QE
 'How are you these days?' 'What rascal did this?'
- (6) a. yocum [nwu-ka e_i ssu-n] chayk_i-i cal phal-li-ni?
 Recently who-Nom write-Adn book-Nom well sell-Pass-DE
 'Q. the book that who wrote sells well these days?'
- b. Tom-i [mues-ul mek-ese] pay-ka aphu-ni?
 T.-Nom what-Acc eat-because stomach-Nom sick-QE
 'Q. Tom is sick because he ate what?'
- (7) a. *How intelligent did she wonder whether he was?
 b. *How eager did her campaign staff wonder whether she was?
 c. * How afraid of dogs did they ask if he was?
- (8) a. *[o-ess-ta-ko]_i Mary-ka [Sue-ka e_i] malha-ess-ta.
 come-Pst-DE-C M.-Nom S.-Nom say-Pst-DE
 (Intended) 'Mary said that Sue came.'
- b. *[o-ess-ta-ko]_i na-nun Mary-ka [Sue-ka e_i] malha-ess-nunci alkosiph-ta.
 come-Pst-DE-C I-Top M.-Nom S.-Nom say-Pst-QE want;to;know-DE
 (Intended) 'I want to know if Mary said that Sue came.'
- (9) WH-elements (=adapted from D. Chung 1996: 140, his (16))
 a. eti/encey/elma(<enma)/enu (N)/etten (N)/etteha/ettehkey
 where/when/how much/which/to be how/how
 b. nwu(kwu)/mwues/mwusun (N)/myech (CL) way
 who/what/what (N)/how many why
- (10) encey 'when' > enu-cey 'ENU-time'; eti 'where' > enu-tey 'ENU-place', etc.
- (11) enu {nwukwu/mwues} vs. *enu {encey/eti/elma/ettehkey, etc.}