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On Peculiar Distribution of the Plural Marker *-tul*

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This paper deals with peculiar distribution of the seeming plural marker *-tul* from Korean--the licensing plural subject does not appear to c-command this marker. I suggest that the plural subject in such a problematic situation raises to a higher position to meet the c-command condition. Observing that the licensing plural subject carries focus, I identify this movement as focus movement. I argue that the relevant derivations can successfully proceed under the SVO hypothesis associated with the head-initial structure in Korean, but not under the SOV hypothesis associated with the head-final structure. Consequently, the current result supports Kayne's (1994) universal Specifier-head-complement order hypothesis, thereby helping eliminate the head-parameter in the computation in line with recent minimalism (Chomsky 2005).

1. Introduction: the distribution of *-tul*

The Korean plural marker *-tul* attaches to a preceding (pro)noun to make a plural noun, as seen in the sentences in (1); interestingly, it can also attach to other non-nominal categories, including verbal, adverbial, or prepositional phrases, as seen in the sentences in (2) (for discussions, see Choe 1988, Lee, HG 1991, Park and Sohn 1993, Moon 1995, Chung 2003, Yim 2003, Kim, C 2005, An 2007, Park, SY 2008, Kim, J 2008, among others). The former *-tul* will be glossed as PL, and the latter *-tul* as TUL.

(1) a. ai-**tul**-i   kongwen-eyse   phwungsen-lul   sa-ass-ta.
     child-PL-Nom   park-in   balloon-Acc   buy-Past-Dec
     'Children bought a balloon in the park.'
   b. ai-ka   kongwen-eyse   phwungsen-**tul**-lul   sa-ass-ta.
     child-Nom   park-at   balloon-TUL-Acc   buy-Past-Dec
     'A child bought balloons at the park.'
(2) a. ai-**tul**-i   nol-ko-**tul**   iss-ta.
     child-PL-Nom   play-Prog-TUL be-Dec
     'Children are playing.'
   b. ai-**tul**-i   kenkanghakey-**tul**   khu-ess-ta.
     child-PL-Nom healthily-TUL   grow-Past-Dec
     'Children grew healthily.'
   c. ai-**tul**-i   kongwen-eyse-**tul**   phwungsen-lul   sa-ass-ta.
     child-PL-Nom   park-at-TUL   balloon-Acc   buy-Past-Dec
     'Children bought a balloon at the park.'

Following An (2007), I will call the former *-tul* in (1) "intrinsic *tul*" and the latter *-tul* in (2) "extrinsic *tul*" (hereafter, E-tul).

One of the distributional properties of the E-tul is that it must be structurally c-commanded by a plural noun within a local domain.

(3) a. wuli ai-ka   kongwen-eyse(*-**tul**)   phwungsen-lul(*-**tul**) sa-ass-ta.
       we child-Nom   park-in(*-TUL)   balloon-Acc(*-TUL)   buy-Past-Dec
       'Our child bought a balloon in the park.'
   b. ai-tul-i   [nay-ka   kongwen-eyse(*-**tul**) phwungsen-lul(*-**tul**)
      child-PL-Nom   I-Nom   park-in(*-TUL)   balloon-Acc(*-TUL)
      sa-ass-ta-ko]   malha-ess-ta.
      buy-Past-Dec-Comp say-Past-Dec
      'Children said that I bought a balloon in the park.'
   c. na-nun [ai-tul-i   chakha-ta-ko]   yelsimhi(*-**tul**)   seltukha-ess-ta.
      I-Top   child-PL-Nom good-Dec-Comp intently(*-TUL)   persuade-Past-Dec
      'I persuaded intently that children are good.'

In (3a) the plural determiner *wuli* does not c-command the E-tul. In (3b), the E-tul has no c-commanding plural noun in its local domain, namely, the embedded clause; the matrix plural subject cannot help license the E-tul although the former c-commands the latter. In (3c) the E-tul has no c-commanding plural noun in its local domain, namely, the matrix clause; the embedded plural subject does not c-command the E-tul, and further it is in a different licensing domain. Thus, the following condition is obtained:[1]

(4) The E(xtrinsic)-*tul* must be locally c-commanded by a plural subject.

For the ensuing discussion, I confirm that the E-tul is attached to a phrase: The E-tul is optional; it never attaches to a phrase-internal head, as seen in (5) below (see also Park, MK 1994); it always appears in a phrase-final position.

(6) a. ai-tul-i   nol(*-**tul**)-ko   iss-ta.
       child-PL-Nom   play-TUL-Prog be-Dec
       'Children are playing.'
   b. ai-tul-i   kenkangha(*-**tul**)-key**l**   khu-ess-ta.
      child-PL-Nom   healthy-TUL-ly   grow-Past-Dec
      'Children grew healthily.'
   c. ai-tul-i   kongwen(*-**tul**)-eyse   phwungsen-lul   sa-ass-ta.
      child-PL-Nom   park-TUL-at   balloon-Acc   buy-Past-Dec
      'Children bought a balloon at the park.'

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1) Kim, J (2008) claims that the licensor of the E-tul is not always necessarily a plural subject, but can be any c-commanding plural noun. With this in mind, I use the condition in (4) in this paper. In addition, I acknowledge that as Yim (2003) does, the relation between the licensing plural noun and the E-tul can be described in terms of Agree (Chomsky 2000).

     d. ai-**tul**-i   kongwen-eyse   phwungsen-lul   sa(*-**tul**)-ass(*-**tul**)-ta.

        child-PL-Nom   park-in   balloon-Acc   buy-TUL-Past-TUL-Dec

        'Children bought a balloon in the park.'

    In the next section, I discuss some problematic situations for the level of understanding of the distribution of the E-tul, described in (4).

2. Problems

    I highlight one particular distribution of the E-tul that safely violates the condition (4)--the E-tul can be attached to the clause-final predicate complex:

(6) a. ai-**tul**-i   kongwen-eyse   phwungsen-lul   sa-ass-ta-**tul**.

        child-PL-Nom   park-in   balloon-Acc   buy-Past-Dec-TUL

        'Children bought a balloon in the park.'

    b. na-nun [ai-**tul**-i   chakha-ta-ko]-**tul**   mit-nun-ta.[2]

        I-Top   child-PL-Nom good-Dec-Comp-TUL believe-Pres-Dec

        'I believe that children are good.'

    c. ai-**tul**-i   [nay-ka chakha-ta-ko]-**tul**   malha-n-ta.

        child-PL-Nom I-Nom   good-Dec-Comp-TUL say-Pres-Dec

        'Children say that I am good.'

The declarative marker *-ta* is placed in M in the traditional head-final structure adopted by previous analyses, the plural subject *ai-tul-i* in Spec TP does not c-command the E-tul which is attached to MP in (6a)[3] to CP in (6b).[4] In (6c), the matrix plural subject can c-command the E-tul, which is a normal case, compared with a peculiar case in (6b).

    Thus the E-tul in (6a,b) will not be licensed by the local c-commander, contrary to fact. This paper attempts to offer a solution to this problem and explore its structural implication for Korean. This will be based on the demonstration that the traditional head-final structure is not satisfactory in dealing with the distribution of the E-tul construction in Korean. I will show that the alternative head-first structure serves as a successful alternative.

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2) Since the Comp *-ko* can be deleted, the embedded predicate complex can appear as *chakha-ta-tul*, which makes the sentence far better than (6b). But the point remains the same in that even without the Comp *-ko*, the E-tul still attaches to CP or as high as MP.

3) Chung (2003: fn 10), attributed to Yong-Tcheol Hong (p.c.), also notes the same problem reporting a similar example.

4) According to Yoon (2005: fn 3(ii)), the following similar sentence sounds somewhat odd (his judgment is ??/*):

(i) ku-ka   [ai-**tul**-i   o-ass-ta]-ko-**tul**   haday-yo

   he-Nom child-PL-Nom come-Past-Dec-Comp-TUL say-decl

   'I heard from him that children have come.'

People I consulted, however, found this example and (6b) acceptable. This is expected since the E-tul can be attached to almost any non-nominal category.

3. Some conceivable remedies

For the above problems, I will consider some conceivable remedies but show that they will not be successful.

Affix lowering analysis yields a conflicting result: for (6a,b) the predicate complex formed by affix lowering (i.e., *X-ta-**tul***, *X-ta-ko-**tul***; X is a predicate) under V is lower than the plural subject, allowing c-command relation; for (6c) the predicate complex (i.e. *X-ta-ko-**tul***) is put in the embedded V position, breaking the locality.

The lexicalist analysis in Sells (1995) puts the predicate complexes (i.e., *X-ta-tul, X-ta-ko-tul*) under V, allowing c-command relation in (6a,b), but breaking locality in (6c). One may suggest that the whole verbal chunk further raises from V to higher functional categories up to C to check the relevant morphological features (Chomsky 1995). Then the required c-command relation may hold in (6a,b) since the plural subject can c-command the trace of the E-tul in V. As for (6c), the plural subject in the main clause can c-command the overt E-tul raised to the embedded C.

But a problem arises with this analysis in examples like (7), where the E-tul can be licensed either by the embedded subject or by the matrix subject:

(7) pwumo-tul-i   [ai-**tul**-i   chakha-ta-ko]-**tul**   mit-nun-ta.
    parent-PL-Nom child-PL-Nom good-Dec-Comp-TUL believe-Pres-Dec
    'Parents believe that children are good.'

This judgment can be confirmed by the following dialog after the utterance in (8a) made by the speaker A:

(8) a. A: salam-tul-i   [ai-tul-i   o-ass-ta-ko]-**tul**   hatay-yo
           people-PL-Nom child-PL-Nom come-Past-Dec-Comp-TUL say-Dec
           'I heard from the people that children have come.'
    b. B: nwu-ka   o-ass-ta-ko?
           who-Nom   come-Past-Dec-Comp-TUL
           'Who came?'
    c. A: ai-tul-i   o-ass-ta-ko-**tul**
           child-PL-Nom come-Past-Dec-Comp-TUL
           'Children have come.'

The E-tul can be associated with the embedded plural subject, as seen in (8c), which is uttered after the echo question context in (8b) (-*ko*: Quatative marker), which in turn can be derived from an indirect question via ellipsis of the matrix predicate complex (Lee, HR 2010: 330).

This fact then rejects the affix lowering analysis because the association of the E-tul with the matrix subject is not predicted. Also, the lexicalist analysis is problematic because the single E-tul chain consisting of the overt -*tul* and its trace can be ambiguously associated with the matrix plural subject and the embedded plural subject in (7, 8a) at the same time.

Subject raising from Spec TP to Spec MP does not help. In (6a) the subject in Spec MP cannot c-command the E-tul attached to MP. In (6b) the E-tul attached to CP is still higher than MP.

Another solution to (7) may be that under the lexicalist hypothesis, the E-tul is adjoined to VP or CP--When the E-tul is adjoined to the embedded VP, it can be licensed by the embedded plural subject; when it is adjoined to the embedded CP, it can be licensed by the matrix plural subject. Under the lexicalist hypothesis, however, the whole predicate complex in (7), *chakha-ta-ko-tul*, must appear under the embedded V as one unit; the E-tul is not to be attached to VP or CP as a phrasal affix. Now that the predicate complex with the E-tul starts from the embedded clause in (7), the matrix plural subject loses a chance to license the E-tul, contrary to fact.

Under the non-lexicalist hypothesis, the E-tul can only attach to the CP phrase on the spine of a clause; if it is attached to VP, TP, MP, the ill-formed verbal complexes, e.g., *sa-tul-ass-ta*, *sa-ass-tul-ta, *sa-ass-ta-tul-ko* are obtained; if it is attached to CP, the correct verbal complex, e.g., *sa-ass-ta-ko-tul* is obtained.

The lexicalist analysis combined with the SOV hypothesis faces a difficulty in another area concerning the right dislocated construction (hereafter, RDC). Consider the following example.

(9) O-ass-ta-tul   ku-tul-i
     come-Past-Dec-TUL he-PL-Nom
     'They came.'

Under Sells' (1995) analysis, the verbal complex is a lexical unit and is thus placed in V. Under the head-final structure, this verbal complex cannot front, and thus, the subject is claimed to undergo rightward movement (hereafter, RM). Notice that the non-lexicalist analysis with the SOV hypothesis also requires RM to derive (9) for the same reason.

Unfortunately, however, RM proves untenable as shown by the following wrong prediction of binding relations (Lee, JS 2009):

(10) a. John-i [motun haksayng]$_i$-eykey ku$_i$-uy ccak-ul   sokayha-ess-ta.
        J.-Nom every   student-Dat   he-Gen partner-Acc introduce-Past-Dec
        'John introduced every student his parter.'
     b. John-i sokayha-ess-ta   [motun haksayng]$_i$-eykey ku$_i$-uy ccak-ul.
        J.-Nom introduce-Past-Dec every   student-Dat   he-Gen partner-Acc
(11) a.*John-i ku$_i$-uy ccak-eykey [motun haksayng]$_i$-ul sokayha-ess-ta.
        J.-Nom he-Gen partner-Dat   every   student-Acc   introduce-Past-Dec
     b.*John-i sokayha-ess-ta   ku$_i$-uy ccak-eykey [motun haksayng]$_i$-ul.
        J.-Nom introduce-Past-Dec he-Gen partner-Dat   every   student-Acc

(10b) is derived from (10a) by RM of Dat-NP first and then by RM of Acc-NP, and thus, the Acc-NP becomes higher than the Dat-NP, leading to the wrong prediction that (10b) is ungrammatical. (11b) is derived from (11a) by RM of Dat-NP first and then by RM of Acc-NP, and thus, the Acc-NP becomes higher than the Dat-NP, leading to the wrong prediction that

(11b) is grammatical.

4. Proposal under the SOV hypothesis

Now I suggest that FocP be posited above CP to resolve the deadlock noted above, so that the plural subject raised to its Spec can c-command the E-tul, as shown in (12) established under the SOV hypothesis and the non-lexical hypothesis.

(12)　　　　　　FocP
　　　　　／　　　　＼
　　ai-tul-i　　　　Foc'
　　　　　　／　　＼
　　　　　CP ← -tul　Foc
　　　／　　　＼
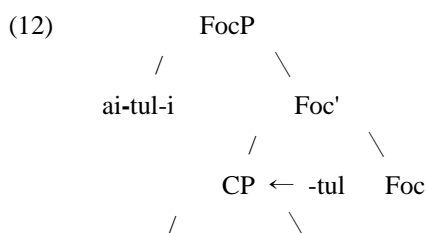
The structure in (12) can allow the plural subject in (6a,b) to c-command the E-tul attached to the CP when this subject raises to Spec FocP. This is focus movement that can be justified by the fact that the plural subject bears focus in E-tul constructions like (6a,b,c) (see also the echo question and its answer in (8b,c)). In (6c) the matrix plural subject can c-command the E-tul attached to the embedded CP, with no FocP above the embedded CP. (7) can be dealt with as follows: *ai-tul-i* may have focus, so this embedded subject raises to Spec FocP to license the E-tul, or it may not have focus, so it can stay in the embedded Spec TP to allow the matrix subject to license the E-tul. (See also Kim, J 2008, where the antecedent of the E-tul is claimed to be specific.)

A piece of empirical evidence for the FocP approach is found in another area like Sluicing. Consider:

(13) A: Chelswu-ka　　mwuenka-lul　　sa-ass-e.
　　　　C.-Nom　　　something-Acc　buy-Past-Dec
　　　　'Chelswu bought something.'
　　B: mwuess-ul?
　　　　what?

The answer by B can best be derived by CP-Sluicing, as represented below, with FocP above CP (Lee, JS 2012):

(14) [FocP mwuess-ul [CP Chelswu-ka　mwuess-lul　sa-ass-ni]]?
　　　　　　what-Acc　　　　C.-Nom　　　what-Acc　buy-Past-Q

If FocP is posited between CP and TP, the wh-phrase will survive in Spec FocP after TP-Sluicing, which leaves behind the Q marker *-ni* in C, thereby deriving an unwanted result, namely, *mwuess-ini?* 'What is it?'

Although this approach does not seem to go through in the preverbal embedded Sluicing in

(15), it works fine for the postverbal embedded Sluicing in (16):

(15) *Chelswu-ka mwuenka-lul   sa-ass-nuntey,   na-nun
       C.-Nom   something-Acc buy-Past-Dec   I-Top
       [FocP mwuess-ul ~~[CP Chelswu-ka   mwuess-lul   sa-ass-nunci]~~]
              what-Acc   C.-Nom   what-Acc   buy-Past-Q
       kwungkumhay
       wonder
       'Chelswu bought something, but I wonder what.'

(16) (?)Chelswu-ka mwuenka-lul   sa-ass-nuntey,   na-nun kwungkumhay
        C.-Nom   something-Acc   buy-Past-Dec   I-Top   wonder
        [FocP mwuess-ul ~~[CP Chelswu-ka   mwuess-lul   sa-ass-nunci]~~]
               what-Acc   C.-Nom   what-Acc   buy-Past-Q
        'Chelswu bought something, but I wonder what.'

For the above contrast, I temporarily assume that a verb like *kwungkumha-* 'wonder' requires a matching affix *-ci* to appear on the preceding sluiced element, thereby forcing preverbal TP-Sluicing (see Lee, JS 2012 for details).

    One particular construction that rejects bi-clausal analysis with the SOV hypothesis is the following RDC:

(17) wundongcang-eyse-**tul**   moi-ko iss-ta-**tul**   haksayng-tul-i.
      playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**   student-PL-Nom
      'Students are gathering at the playground.'

Since the RDC is not to be derived by rightward movement (RM) under the SOV hypothesis, one analysis without RM is the bi-clausal analysis advocated by Chung (2009), in which (17) would be derived as illustrated below:

(18) [e wundongcang-eyse-**tul**   moi-ko iss-ta-**tul**] &
         playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**
     [haksayng-tul-i   ~~[t   wundongcang-eyse-tul   moi-ko iss-ta-tul]~~]
      student-PL-Nom   playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**
     'Students are gathering at the playground.'

Above, the RD element, *haksayng-tul-i*, has been scrambled out of the second doubled clause, and the rest of the clause has been deleted to derive the order in (17). But the E-tul requires the presence of the overt c-commander with the plural marker *-tul*, as seen in the contrast in (19) (Kim, J 2008).

(19) a. *haksayng-i   wundongcang-eyse-**tul**   moi-ko iss-ta.
          student-Nom playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec
          'Students are gathering at the playground.'
     b. haksayng-tul-i   wundongcang-eyse-**tul** moi-ko iss-ta.

student-PL-Nom playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec

'Students are gathering at the playground.'

So the first conjunct in (18) is wrong.[5)] The correct representation is (20) below:

(20) [~~haksayng-tul-i~~   wundongcang-eyse-**tul**   moi-ko iss-ta-**tul**] &
       student-PL-Nom playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**

   [haksayng-tul-i   ~~[t wundongcang-eyse-tul moi-ko iss-ta-tul]~~]
       student-PL-Nom   playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**

   'Students are gathering at the playground.'

Unfortunately, however, backward deletion applied in (20) is not attested in coordinated sentences in Korean:

(21) a. [Chelswu-ka   Yenghi-lul   manna-ass-e] & [~~Chelswu-ka~~
          C.-Nom   something-Acc   buy-Past-Dec   C.-Nom
          Swunhi-to   manna-ass-e]
          S.-also   meet-Past-Dec
          'Chelswu met Yenghi and met Swunhi, also.'
     b. *[~~Chelswu-ka~~   Yenghi-lul   manna-ass-e] & [Chelswu-ka
          C.-Nom   something-Acc   buy-Past-Dec   C.-Nom
          Swunhi-to   manna-ass-e]
          S.-also   meet-Past-Dec
          'Chelswu met Yenghi and met Swunhi, also.'

So it turns out that the bi-clausal analysis has no way to find its application to RDC. This finding also casts doubt on the SOV hypothesis for Korean. It rather appears that in (17) the right dislocated element is more closely associated with the preceding part, and thus, they may well appear in a single clause. Now if the word order in (17) is not derived by RM under the SOV hypothesis, a question arises as to what the underlying structure of (17) is. I will turn to the SVO hypothesis in the next section.

5. Proposal under the SVO hypothesis

Keeping the advantage of positing FocP in mind, I will attempt to complete the proposal under the SVO hypothesis for Korean. For the purpose of discussion, I assume the following basic skeleton of a clause in Korean under the head-initial, the SVO hypothesis; particularly, Foc

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5) Of course, in an immediate context in the discourse, pro may license the E-tul:

(i) A: haksayng-tul-i   wundongcang-eyse-**tul**   moi-ko iss-ta-**tul**
       student-PL-Nom   playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**
       'Students are gathering at the playground.'
   B: pro   mwues-**tul**   ha-lyeko-**tul**   kule-ci-**tul**?
       they-PL what-TUL   do-Purpose-Tul do-Q-TUL
       'What are they trying to do?

is located above C to deal with the distribution of the E-tul under consideration:
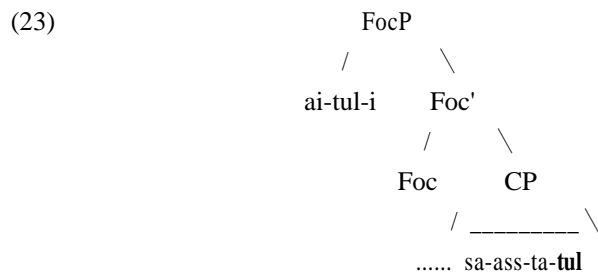
(22) Foc - C - T - v - M - Asp - V

Here I do not intend to provide detailed derivations under the SVO hypothesis; Lee, JS (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, among others) can be referred to for illustrations of deriving variety of constructions from Korean.
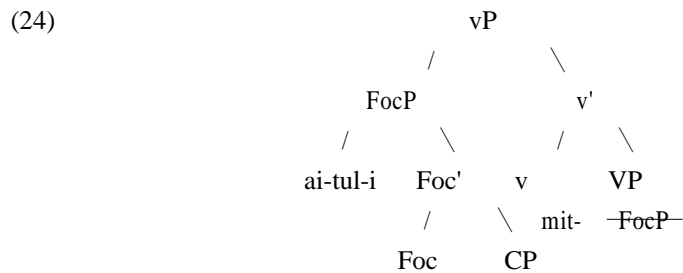
The examples in (6a,b,c) are repeated below for ensuing discussion:

(6) a. ai-tul-i   kongwen-eyse   phwungsen-lul   sa-ass-ta-**tul**.
        child-PL-Nom   park-in   balloon-Acc   buy-Past-Dec-TUL
        'Children bought a balloon in the park.'
    b. na-nun [ai-tul-i   chakha-ta-ko]-**tul**   mit-nun-ta.6)
        I-Top   child-PL-Nom good-Dec-Comp-TUL believe-Pres-Dec
        'I believe that children are good.'
    c. ai-tul-i   [nay-ka chakha-ta-ko]-**tul**   malha-n-ta.
        child-PL-Nom I-Nom   good-Dec-Comp-TUL say-Pres-Dec
        'Children say that I am good.'

Under the head-initial structure, the important portion of the sample derivation for (6a) can be roughly represented as in (23), with MP, AspP omitted for simplicity:

(23)   FocP
                                  /   \
                          ai-tul-i   Foc'
                                        /   \
                                   Foc   CP
                                         / _____ \
                                  ...... sa-ass-ta-**tul**

It is shown that the subject raised to Spec FocP can c-command the E-tul to license it. Basically the same analysis can apply to (6b); the important portion of the sample derivation of this example can be roughly represented as in (24):

(24)   vP
                                     /   \
                               FocP   v'
                             /   \   /   \
                       ai-tul-i   Foc'   v   VP
                                     /   \ mit-   ̶F̶o̶c̶P̶
                                 Foc   CP

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6) Since the Comp *-ko* can be deleted, the embedded predicate complex can appear as *chakha-ta-tul*, which makes the sentence far better than (6b). But the point remains the same in that even without the Comp *-ko*, the E-tul still attaches to CP or as high as MP.

$$/ \_\_\_\_ \ $$
<p style="text-align:center">chakha-ta-ko-**tul**</p>

The licensing of the E-tul in (6c) is no problem when the derivations of (6a,b) are considered. Deriving (7), repeated below, remains an interesting task.

(7) pwumo-tul-i   [ai-tul-i   chakha-ta-ko]-**tul**   malha-n-ta.
    parent-PL-Nom child-PL-Nom good-Dec-Comp-TUL say-Pres-Dec
    'Parents say that children are good.'

As previously discussed, when the embedded subject receives focus, it raises to Spec FocP above the embedded CP (cf. (24)) and there it licenses the E-tul; when the matrix subject bears focus, it raises to Spec FocP above the matrix CP and there licenses the E-tul (cf. (23)), with the non-focused embedded subject remaining within the embedded CP.

The examples that were not derived under the SOV hypothesis now must and can be derived under the SVO hypothesis. They are repeated below:

(9)   O-ass-ta-**tul**   ku-tul-i
      come-Past-Dec-TUL he-PL-Nom
      'They came.'
(17) wundongcang-eyse-**tul**   moi-ko iss-ta-**tul**   haksayng-tul-i.
      playground-at-TUL   gather-Prog-Dec-**tul**   student-PL-Nom
      'Students are gathering at the playground.'

The word order in (9) can be derived as follows: through relevant movements the verbal complex is formed, namely, *o-ass-ta-tul*, and this verbal complex further raises to a higher head past the subject that has moved to Spec FocP (see (23)). The word order in (17) is similarly obtained: the PP and the verbal complex move past the subject higher to their respective place.

One thing that need be mentioned is that right dislocated (RD) elements normally carry no focus.[7] In connection with this fact, I assume that the focused plural subject in (9, 17) c-commands the E-tul for the necessary licensing before the movement of (the PP and) the verbal complex to the left. And then the RD subject is defocused at the sentence-final position.

6. Conclusion

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7) Thus wh-phrases are not used as RD elements:

(i) *wundongcang-eyse   nol-ko iss-ni   nwu-ka?
    playground-at   play-Prog-Q   who-Nom
    'Who is playing at the playground?'

Since wh-phrases bear focus, they are not allowed as RD elements. Interestingly, when the RD element in (i) is defocused, it is interpreted as meaning *someone*:

(ii) wundongcang-eyse   nol-ko iss-ni   nwu-ka?
    playground-at   play-Prog-Q   someone-Nom
    'Is anyone playing at the playground?'

I have attempted to offer solutions to the problems posed by some examples that resist the well-known licensing condition for the distribution of the apparent plural marker *-tul*, called E(xtrinsic)-tul here, in Korean--the E-tul must be locally c-commanded by a plural subject. The plural subject that does not apparently c-command the E-tul in those examples was made to raise to a higher position to meet the licensing condition. This movement was identified as focus movement, as the licensing plural subject carries focus with it. I argued that the relevant derivations cannot successfully proceed under the SOV hypothesis associated with the head-final structure for Korean. I further showed that they can be desirably obtained under the SVO hypothesis associated with the head-first structure for Korean. Consequently, the current result supports Kayne's (1994) universal Specifier-head-complement order hypothesis, thereby helping eliminate the head-parameter in the computation in line with recent minimalism (Chomsky 2005).

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