

Bound Noun *tus* in Korean*

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Kim, Tae Sik. (2024). Bound noun *tus* in Korean. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 32(2), 103-120. This paper discusses the grammaticalization process of a bound noun *tus* in Korean. Broadly, Choi (2017) proposes two different types of *tus* in Korean—a bound noun in Syntax and a non-final ending in Morphology with an adverbial use. The two types are distinguished by whether or not *tus* can be followed by *i* which is an alleged adverbial derivational affix in Choi (2017). Choi (2017) further argues that the bound noun *tus* is grammaticalized into the morphological ending *tus*. However, we find some problems with the categorization: the two types show a different NPI licensing pattern, and the alleged adverbial affix *i* does not behave like a true adverbial affix *i*. Instead, I argue that both are a linguistic object in Syntax. The bound noun type of *tus* merges in N and cyclically moves to Mod. The adverbial type of *tus* directly merges in Mod without any movement. The two different structures are intertwined by the process of grammaticalization.

Key Words: bound noun, grammaticalization, *tus*, reanalysis, epistemic modal

1. Introduction

Bound nouns in Korean are in need of helping words or phrases (e.g., an adjunct, complement, specifier, etc.) to be grammatical in a sentence.

- (1) a. [il-ul yelsimhi ha-nun] kes-un maywu cwungyooha-ta.
 work-ACC hard do-ADN BN-TOP very important-DECL
 'It is very important to work hard.'
- b. *kes-un maywu cwungyooha-ta.
 BN-TOP very important-DECL

* I thank three anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments. All remaining errors are mine.

(1) contains a typical bound noun *kes* in Korean (Kim 2016, *inter alia*). In (1a), we find that the bound noun *kes* is aided by the phrase *il-ul yelsimhi ha-nun*, and the sentence is fine. However, when there is no helping phrase as shown in (1b), the sentence is ungrammatical.

Tus is also traditionally categorized as a bound noun (Choi, 2017, *inter alia*) because it shows a similar behavior (i.e., it needs an adjunct, complement, and so on).

- (2) a. John-un sengkongha-l tus ha-ta.
 John-TOP succeed-ADN BN do-DECL
 ‘John is likely to succeed.’
 b. *tus ha-ta.
 BN do-DECL

In (2a), there is a phrase that modifies (in a broad sense) the bound noun *tus* (e.g., *John-un sengkongha-l*). On the other hand, (2b) is ungrammatical since there is no aiding phrase.

Recently, Choi (2017) argues that there are two different types of *tus*—a bound noun in Syntax and a suffix (or a non-final ending) in Morphology. However, in this paper, I claim that one is a bound noun which merges in N, and the other is a Mod head in Syntax, but they are related through grammaticalization.

The roadmap of this paper is as follows: next section discusses Choi (2017) and its problems. In section 3, I will propose another analysis that can overcome the problems in Choi (2017). In section 4, I will discuss some issues with the proposed analysis. I will conclude this article in the last section.

2. Choi (2017)

Choi (2017) classifies three different realizations of *tus* in Korean based on the possible preceding or following phrases.

- (3) ipeney ku-eykey hoysin-ul ponay cwu-nun kes-i
 this.time he-to reply-ACC send give-ADN BN-NOM
 coh-ul tus-ha-y.

good-ADN BN-do-DECL
 ‘It would be better to reply to him this time.’ (Korea University Korean Dictionary)

(4) ku-nun phek kyemsonha-n tus-(i) hayngtongha-ciman
 he-TOP fairly humble-ADN BN-i behave-but
 sasilun kyomanhan sengkyek-uy soyuca-ta.
 in.fact arrogant personality-GEN owner-DECL
 ‘Even though he appears to behave fairly humbly, but in fact he is arrogant.’
 (Korea University Korean Dictionary)

(5) kutul-un nay pang-ul i cap-tus-(i) twicy-ess-ta.
 they-TOP my house-ACC flea catch-BN-i search-PAST-DECL
 ‘They searched my house, as if they catch fleas.’
 (Korea University Korean Dictionary)

Choi (2017) argues that (3) is a bound noun, (5) is a morphological ending and (4) is in the process of morphologicalization from (3) (in Syntax) to (5) (in Morphology). There is some restriction on (3) with regard to the verb that follows the bound noun: only a few verbs such as *ha* ‘do’ and *siph* ‘want’ can be after the bound noun *tus* (Choi, 2017).

(6) ipeney ku-eykey hoysin-ul ponay cwu-nun kes-i
 this.time he-to replay-ACC send give-ADN BN-NOM
 coh-ul tus siph-ta.
 good-ADN BN be.like-DECL
 ‘It would be better to reply to him this time.’

(7) a. *ipeney ku-eykey hoysin-ul ponay cwu-nun kes-i
 this.time he-to replay-ACC send give-ADN BN-NOM
 coh-ul tus sayngkakha-n-ta.
 good-ADN BN think-PRES-DECL

b. *ipeney ku-eykey hoysin-ul ponay cwu-nun kes-i
 this.time he-to replay-ACC send give-ADN BN-NOM
 coh-ul tus nukki-n-ta.
 good-ADN BN feel-PRES-DECL

Note that *sayngkakha* ‘think’ and *mukki* ‘feel’ cannot co-occur with the bound noun *tus*. On the other hand, in (4) and (5), there seems to be less restriction on the following verb, since *tus* can be followed by verbs like *hayngtongha* ‘behave’ in (4) and *twicy* ‘search’ in (5) (Choi 2017). Based on these pieces of data, Choi (2017) further argues that the bound noun type of *tus* has more relationship with the following verb than the preceding phrase.

In the case of (5), the phrase with *tus* functions like an adverb (phrase) in that it modifies the matrix verb *twicy* ‘search’ (or the main clause). Note that the phrase with *tus* and the following verb *twicy* ‘search’ can be separated by optional *i*. This optional *i* cannot co-occur with the bound noun usage of *tus* in (3) (Choi, 2017).

- (8) *ipeney ku-eykey hoysin-ul ponay cwu-nun kes-i
 this.time he-to reply-ACC send give-ADN BN-NOM
 coh-ul tus-i ha-y.
 good-ADN BN-i do-DECL

Based off of this, Choi (2017) claims that the adverbial type of *tus* (e.g., (5)) has a stronger bond with the preceding phrase rather than the following verb unlike the bound noun type (e.g., (3)). Choi (2017) categorizes the adverbial use of *tus* (e.g., (5)) as a morphological ending. Observe that this type of *tus* in (5) is directly preceded by a bare form of a verb instead of an adnominal form (c.f., the adnominal *-nun* in (3)).

Choi (2017) assumes that (4) is in between (3) and (5). It is closer to (5) in that the phrase headed by *tus* shows an adverbial usage and can be followed by *i*. However, there is an adnominal form (e.g., *-n* in (4)) rather than a bare form with the preceding phrase, which implies (4) is more like (3). Choi (2017) assumes that there is a morphologicalization process from (3) to (5).

However, the categorization of *tus* as a morphological ending seems problematic given an NPI licensing pattern. NPIs in Korean need to satisfy a Clause-mate condition (Choe 1988, Sohn 1996, *inter alia*). Consider the following examples.

- (9) a. na-nun [John-i amwukesto ilk-ci anh-ass-ta]-ko
 I-TOP John-NOM anything read-ci not-PST-DECL-COMP
 sayngkakha-yss-ta.
 think-PAST-DECL
 ‘I thought that John did not read anything.’

- b. *na-nun [John-i amwukesto ilk-ess-ta]-ko
 I-TOP John-NOM anything read-PAST-DECL-ko
 sayngkakhaci anh-ass-ta.
 think-ci not.PAST-DECL

When an NPI and a negator are within one clause, the sentence is grammatical (e.g., (9a)). However, (9b) is ungrammatical, since the negator and the NPI are not in the same sentence. Keep this in your mind, and consider the following examples.

- (10) a. John-un pap-ul mek-ci anh-un tus ha-yss-ta.
 John-TOP rice-ACC eat-ci not-ADN BN do-PAST-DECL
 'John seemed not to have a meal.'
- b. *tus ha-yss-ta.
 BN do-PAST-DECL
- c. *John-un pap-ul mek-ci anh-un tus-i ha-yss-ta.
 John-TOP rice-ACC eat-ci not-ADN BN-i do-PAST-DECL
- d. [amwuto pap-ul mek-ci anh-un tus] ha-yss-ta.
 anyone rice-ACC eat-ci not-ADN BN do-PAST-DECL
 '(Lit.) Anyone seemed not to have a meal.'
- e. [amwuto pap-ul mek-un tus] ha-ci anh-ass-ta.
 anyone rice-ACC eat-ADN BN do-ci not-PAST-DECL
 '(Lit.) Anyone did not seem to have a meal.'

Tus in (10a) is a bound noun, since it needs to have some aiding phrase as shown in (10b). The addition of *i* after *tus* leads to the ungrammaticality in (10c). Thus, if we follow the criteria proposed by Choi (2017), (10a) is a bound noun. (10d) is fine since the NPI and its licensing negator are in the same clause. Given the grammaticality of (10e), there seems to be no CP boundary with the phrase headed by the bound noun *tus*: if there were a CP boundary with the bound noun *tus*, we expect (10e) to be ungrammatical, contrary to fact. The same pattern is observed when an NPI is in an object position, too.

- (11) a. [John-un amwukesto mek-ci anh-un tus] ha-yss-ta.
 John-TOP anything eat-ci not-ADN BN do-PAST-DECL
 'John seemed not to have anything.'

- b. [John-un amwukesto mek-un tus] ha-ci anh-ass-ta.
 John-TOP anything eat-ADN BN do-ci not-PAST-DECL
 'John did not seem to have anything.'

However, the alleged morphological ending *tus* shows a different pattern.

- (12) a. tongmwul-i amwukesto ip-ci anh tus-(i) salam-to
 animal-NOM anything wear-ci not BN-i human-too
 cayulo-weya ha-n-ta.
 free-should do-PRES-DECL
 'Like animals do not wear anything, humans should be free, too.'
- b. *tongmwul-i amwukesto ip tus-(i) salam-to
 animal-NOM anything wear BN-i human-too
 cayulop-ci anh-aya ha-n-ta.
 free-ci not-should do-PRES-DECL

Choi (2017) assumes that *tus* is a morphological ending and *i* is an derivational affix in (12). However, we find a different pattern between a bound noun in (11) and an alleged morphological ending in (12), which begs an explanation, if Choi (2017) is on the right track.

Another problem with Choi (2017) is a derivational affix *i*. If *tus* is gramamticalized as a morphological ending from a bound noun (Choi, 2017), then *tus* would be a noun-related morpheme. Choi (2017) argues that when the phrase headed by *tus* co-occurs with *i*, the whole phrase functions as an adverbial phrase. Then, *i* is a derivational affix which converts the noun-related *tus* to an adverb. However, consider the behavior of a true adverbial affix *i* from Standard Korean Language Dictionary.

- (13) a. ilccik-i
 early-i
 'early'
- b. noph-i
 high-i
 'highly'

- c. cip-cip-i
 house-house-i
 'house-by-house'

(Standard Korean Language Dictionary)

Generally, the derivational affix *i* can be attached to an adverb (e.g., (13a)), an adjective (e.g., (13b)) and a noun (e.g., (13c)). However, some limitation with the nominal root is offered in Standard Korean Language Dictionary—the root of the derivational affix tends to be the reduplication of a one syllable noun. For example, in (13c), the one syllable noun *cip* 'house' is reduplicated once and the derivational affix is attached.

- (14) a. ku nyusu-lul cip-cip-i allye-cwu-ela.
 the news-ACC house-house-i spread-give-IMP
 'Spread the news house-by-house.'
 b. *ku nyusu-lul cip-i allye-cwu-ela.
 the news-ACC house-i spread-give-IMP
 c. *ku nyusu-lul kaok-i allye-cwu-ela.
 the news-ACC house-i spread-give-IMP
 d. *ku nyusu-lul kaok-kaok-i allye-cwu-ela.
 the news-ACC house-house-i spread-give-IMP

As shown in (14), the reduplication is required in the case of nouns (e.g., (14b)). Also, the affixation is fairly limited to one-syllable nouns (e.g., (14c/d)). However, the reduplication is not grammatical with *tus*.

- (15) a. koyangi-ka cwi-lul cap tus-i cek-ul kongkyekha-la.
 cat-NOM mouse-ACC catch BN-i enemy-ACC attack-IMP
 'Attack the enemy as if a cat catches a mouse.'
 b. *koyangi-ka cwi-lul cap tus-tus-i cek-ul kongkyekha-la.
 cat-NOM mouse-ACC catch BN-BN-i enemy-ACC attack-IMP

Then, it is somewhat hard to assume that *i* is a derivational affix with the target structure. In the next section, I will propose a different account that can remedy the problems in Choi (2017).

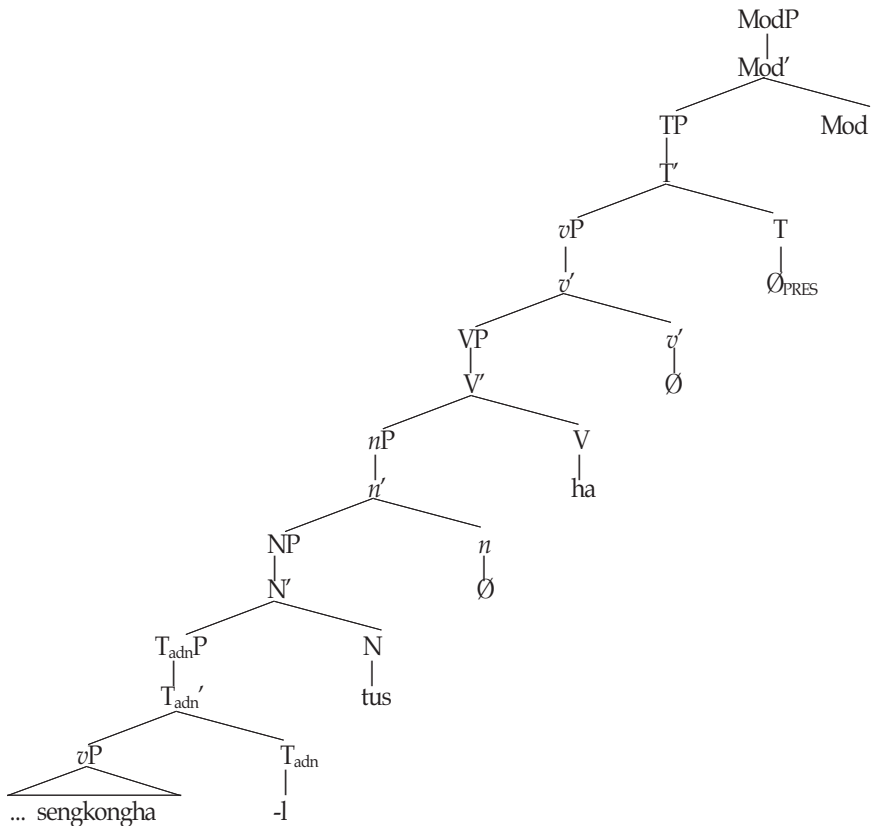
3. Two Different types of *tus*

Basically, I assume that *tus* is a syntactic object, and there is no clear evidence that the bound noun *tus* is grammaticalized into a morphological ending. Broadly, I assume two types of *tus* in Syntax, and I propose two different structures for *tus*.

First, let us start with the bound noun *tus* which takes an adnominal form as a complement. Consider (2a), repeated here as (16).

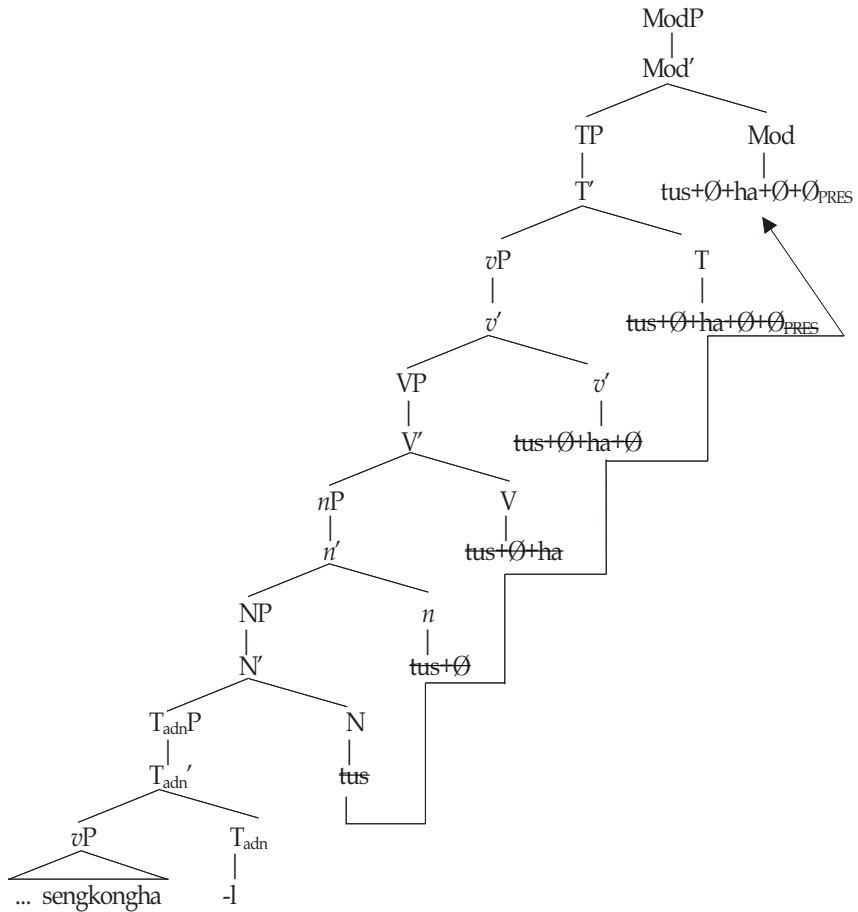
- (16) John-un sengkongha-l tus ha-ta.
 John-TOP succeed-ADN BN do-DECL
 'John is likely to succeed.'

(17) The initial partial structure of (16)



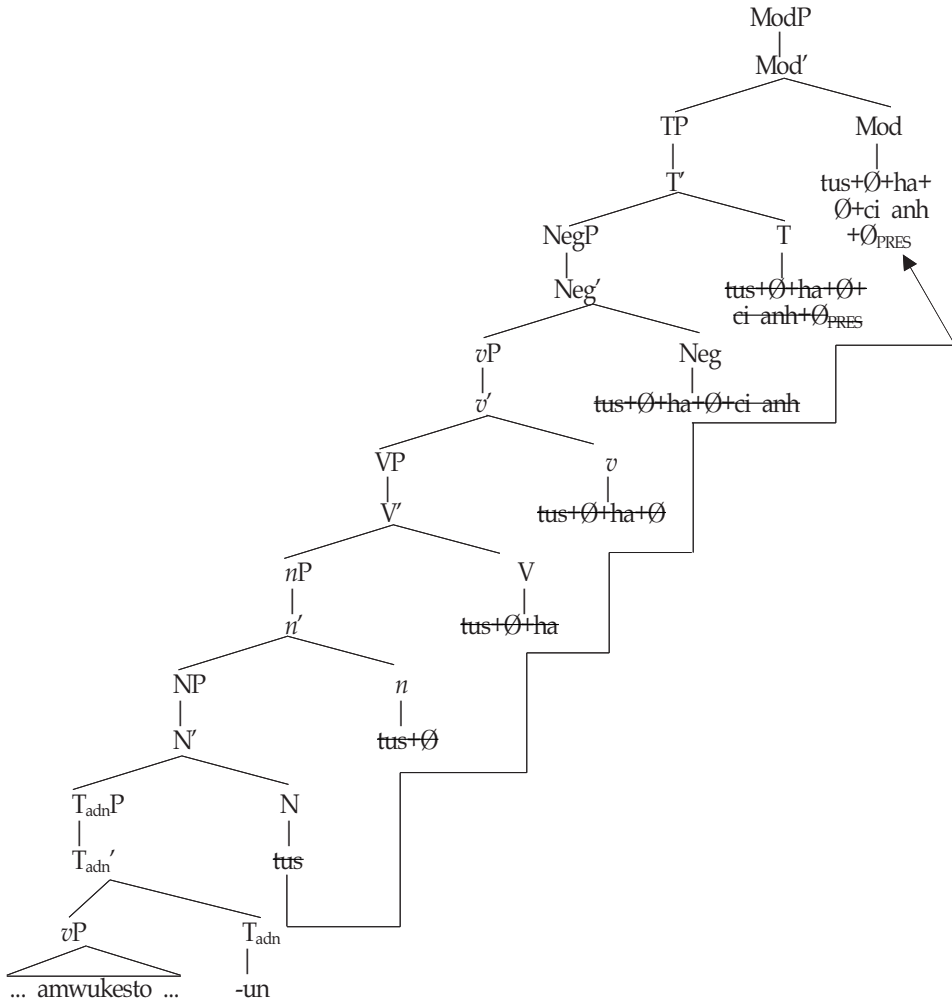
The bound noun *tus* merges in N and the adnominal TP ($T_{\text{adn}}P$) is a complement. There is ModP in the structure, since the meaning of the bound noun *tus* is related to epistemic modality (i.e., the meaning is *likelihood* or *possibility*). The bound noun *tus* moves to Mod cyclically through several heads between N and Mod, as shown below.

(18) Movement from N to Mod



This structure accounts for the NPI pattern in (11b).

(19) The partial structure of (11b)



Note that there is no CP boundary between the NPI and the Neg head, which explains the grammaticality of (11b).

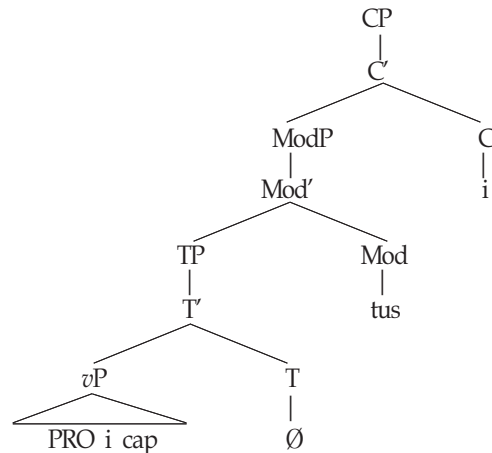
At this point, some might imagine the possibility that the bound noun *tus* directly merges in Mod instead of moving from N to Mod. However, if we assume the direct merger option, we find an ungrammatical word order.

- (20) *John-un sengkongha-l ha tus-ta.
 John-TOP succeed-ADN do BN-DECL

Since ModP is higher than *v*P (or VP), the word order sequence should be the ungrammatical order in (20) (e.g., ... *ha tus-ta*) but not the grammatical sequence in (16) (e.g., *tus ha-ta*), if we assume the direct merger of *tus* in Mod.

As for the second type, I assume that the phrase with the bound noun *tus* functions as an adverb (phrase) and can co-occur with *i* following Choi (2017). However, I am against Choi's (2017) morphological analysis. Instead, I assume the following derivation for the adverbial use.

- (21) The partial structure of (5)



Tus directly merges in the Mod position, and *i*, which is in the C position, introduces an adverbial clause.¹⁾ *Tus* takes non-finite TP as its complement—note that, in (5), we do not

1) Anonymous reviewers question the assumption that *i* is the head of C. However, as one of them comments, it appears that *i* indicates a clause type (i.e., a subordinate clause). Consider the following example.

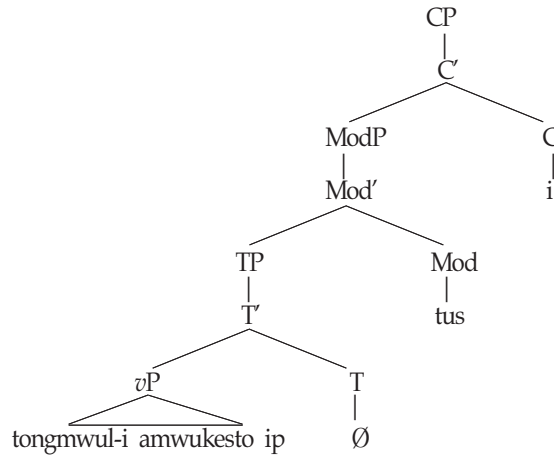
- i) *kutul-un nay pang-ul i cap-tus-(i).
 they-TOP my house-ACC flea catch-BN-i

Note that when there is no other phrase/clause (e.g., a main clause), the sentence is ungrammatical (c.f., (5)). This is the clear characteristic of a subordinate clause. Second, An optionality is another characteristic of a C head (especially a subordinate clause), cross-linguistically.

- ii) I think (that) he is smart.

find any overt tense morpheme with the *tus* phrase. This analysis readily explains why the NPI licensing is not possible in (12b).

(22) The partial structure of (12b)

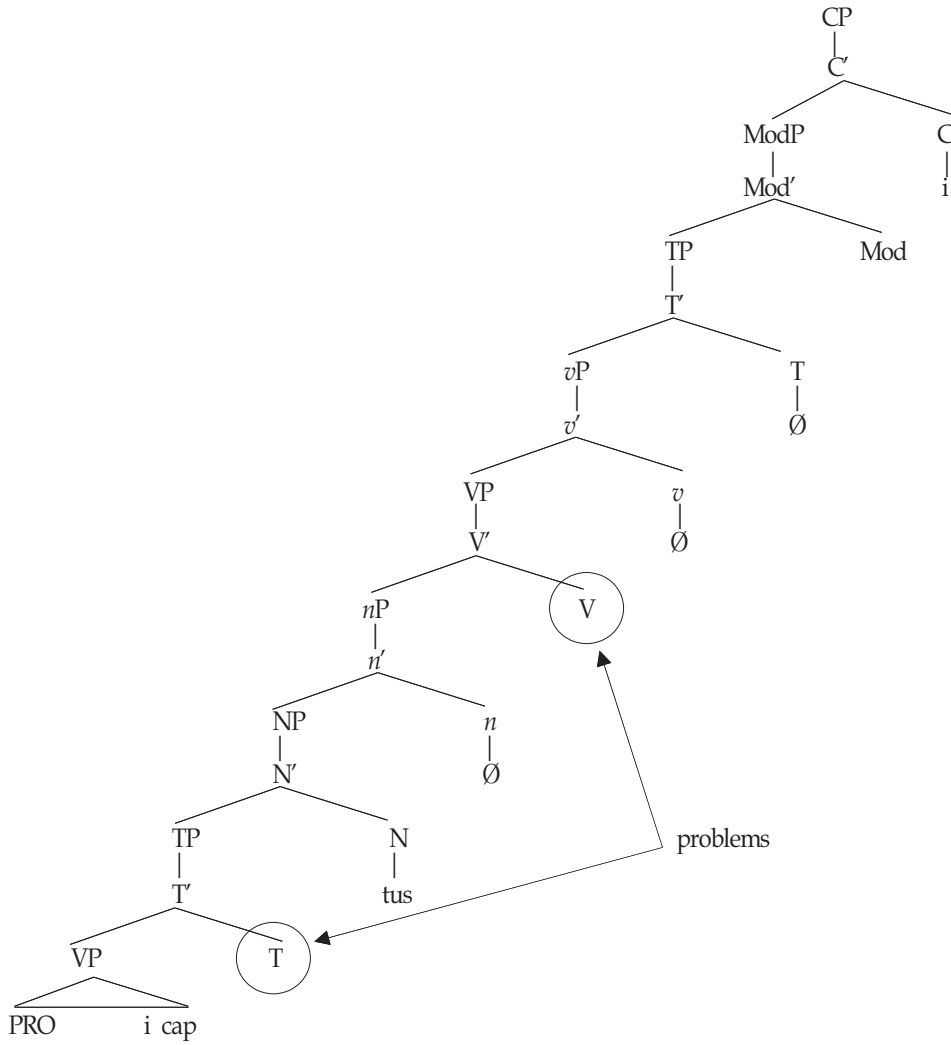


In (22), we do not find any negator that can license the NPI within one CP, which leads to the violation of Clause-mate condition.

An alternative analysis of (21) is to assume the identical structure to (18)—*tus* merges in N and subsequently moves to Mod. However, we find some empirical problems with this approach.

In the target structure, *i* is optional, which also supports the claim that *i* is the C head.

(23) The initial derivation of the alternative analysis of (21) for (5)



The first problem is that we need to assume the lower TP (not $T_{\text{adn}}P$) modifies N directly. Obviously, adnominal TP ($T_{\text{adn}}P$) can modify N directly, as shown in (1) and (2) with the bound noun *kes* and *tus*. However, it is somewhat hard to assume that T directly modifies N. Of course, we may assume that the lower T is a phonologically null T_{adv} but we have a burden to find some supporting evidence for this. Another problem is that we need to have some verbal projection above the phrase with *tus*, since there is C, which is occupied by *i*—assuming the basic structure of CP-TP-VP. Likewise, we may assume some null lexical verb element in the V position, but this also begs another explanation.

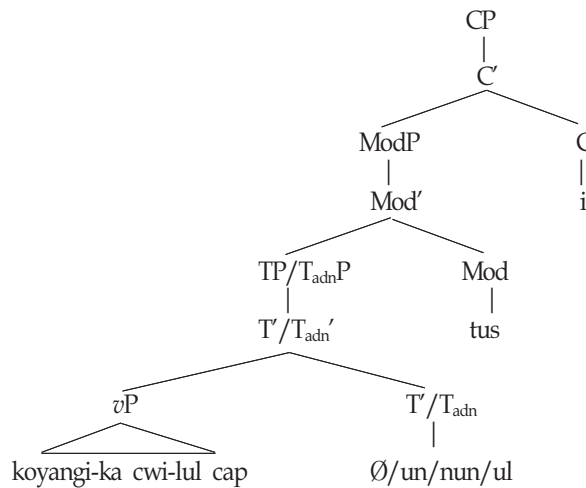
4. Discussion

In this section, I will discuss some issues related to the analysis given above. As Choi (2017) notes, we find that the adverbial use of *tus* can have adnominal T instead of non-finite T (or the bare form of a verb), as shown in (4). It seems that the adnominal T structure is not different from the non-finite T counterpart.

- (24) a. koyangi-ka cwi-lul cap tus-i cek-ul kongkyekha-la.
 cat-NOM mouse-ACC catch BN-i enemy-ACC attack-IMP
 ‘Attack the enemy as if a cat catches a mouse.’
- b. koyangi-ka cwi-lul cap-un tus-i
 cat-NOM mouse-ACC catch-ADN BN-i
 John-un kippeha-yss-ta.
 John-TOP be.glad-PAST-DECL
 ‘John was glad as if a cat caught a mouse.’
- c. koyangi-ka cwi-lul cap-nun tus-i John-un koki-lul
 cat-NOM mouse-ACC catch-ADN BN-i John-TOP meat-ACC
 mwul-ko iss-ta.
 bite-ko exist-DECL
 ‘John is biting a meat as if a cat catches a mouse.’
- d. koyangi-ka cwi-lul cap-ul tus-i John-un
 cat-NOM mouse-ACC catch-ADN BN-i John-TOP
 Mary-lul nolyepo-ass-ta.
 Mary-ACC look.angrily.at-PAST-DECL
 ‘John looked angrily at Mary as if a cat will catch a mouse.’

Observe that the bound noun *tus* can co-occur with non-finite T (e.g., (24a)) and adnominal T which is about past tense (e.g., (24b)), present tense (e.g., (24c)) and future tense (e.g., (24d)). All the examples in (24), *tus* (together with *i*) is used adverbially. The only difference among (24) can be attributed to the nature of T (e.g., non-finite T, past adnominal T, present adnominal T and future adnominal T). Thus, I assume that the structure of adverbial *tus* with adnominal T (e.g., (4)) is identical to (21).

(25) The partial structure of (24a/b/c/d)



Another possible analysis is that the bound noun *tus* (i.e., the structure given in (18)) might move upto the head of C (above Mod) and is reanalyzed as C, given the following example from Choi (2017:159).

(26) malleyi salom-i pokum-ul es-e tul-un tus.²⁾
 Malaysia human-NOM good.news-ACC get-e hear-ADN BN
 'A Malaysian person appears to overhear good news.'

(Tayhanmayilsinpo May 19 1908)

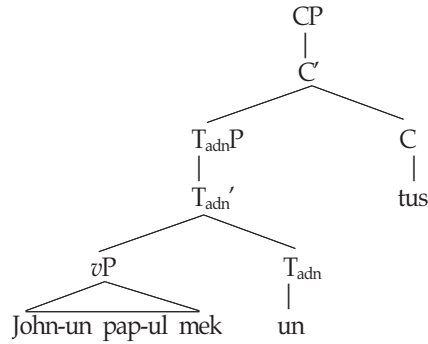
2) The obsolete vowel *alay a* is represented as 'o' following Yale Romanization.

(26) is from the twentieth century, and we find that the bound noun *tus* can be at the sentence final position. In contemporary Korean, we find the same grammaticality judgment.

- (27) John-un pap-ul mek-un tus.
 John-TOP rice-ACC eat-ADN BN
 'John appears to have a meal.'

The data in (26) and (27) might suggest the following structure.

- (28) the bound noun *tus* as the head of C



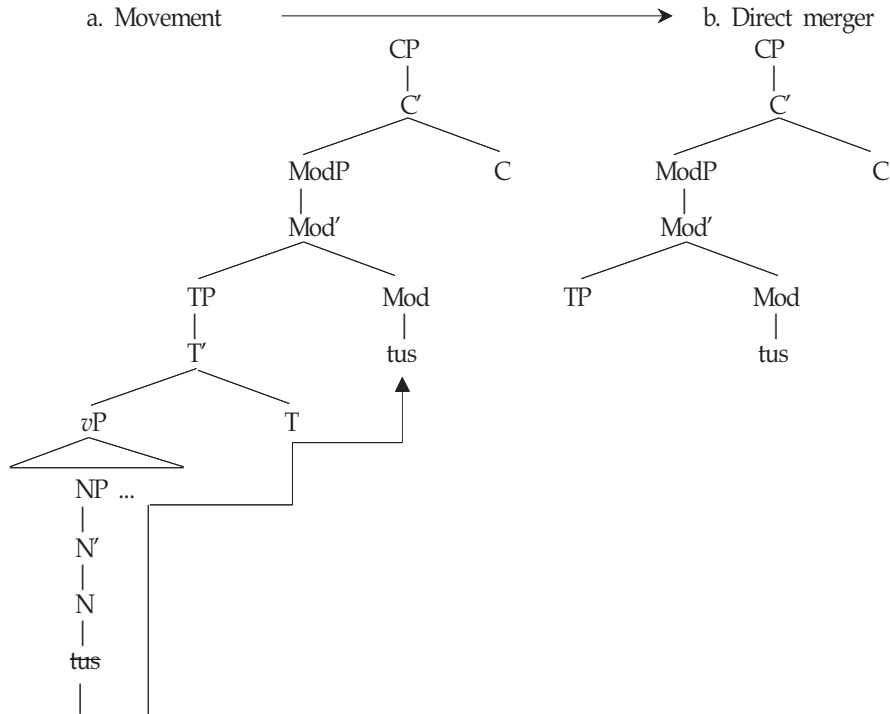
This analysis is not entirely implausible since we may assume some reanalysis from (18) to (28)—the movement operation is reanalyzed as direct merger as proposed in Roberts and Roussou (2003) and van Gelderen (2004). However, this structure that the bound noun *tus* directly merges in C is not empirically supported. Recall (11b), repeated here as (29).

- (29) [John-un amwukesto mek-un tus] ha-ci anh-ass-ta.
 John-TOP anything eat-ADN BN do-ci not-PAST-DECL
 'John did not seem to have anything.'

If the bound noun *tus* were the head of C, (29) cannot be accounted for, since there is a CP boundary between NPI and NEG. Thus I reject the possibility that the bound noun *tus* is reanalyzed as C.

In terms of grammaticalization, I assume that the movement operation in (18) is reanalyzed as the direct merger in (21) following *upward reanalysis* in Roberts and Roussou (2003) and *late merge* in van Gelderen (2004) as schematized below.

(30) Reanalysis from movement to direct merger



5. Conclusion

In sum, we find two different types of *tus* in Korean: the bound noun *tus* which merges in N and cyclically moves to Mod and the adverbial *tus* which directly merges in Mod. The adverbial *tus* is grammaticalized from the bound noun *tus* by reanalysis in that movement becomes direct merger in a higher structure (Roberts and Roussou (2003) and van Gelderen (2004)).

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