Locality in Suppletive Allomorphy of GIVE in Korean

Overview In recent studies of Distributed Morphology (DM), it has been argued that suppletion of a lexical root is subject to locality constraint (see Bobaljik 2012, Embick 2010, Merchant 2015 among others). However, Korean suppletive alternations for GIVE seems to violate locality conditions. In this paper, we attempt to identify a context for each phonological exponent of GIVE and to show that the Korean allomorphy, in fact, conforms to locality requirement in the sense of Bobaljik (2012).

Suppletive verb root GIVE The Korean root GIVE has three allomorphs: the non-subject honorific tuli-, the imperative with very limited distribution ta(l)-, and the elsewhere form cwu-.

Data Firstly, the phonological exponent /tuli/ is inserted when the status of the recipient individual marked with a dative case is elevated relative to the subject individual as shown in (1a,c). The elsewhere exponent /cwu/ is inserted if the subject has higher or equal status than the dative object as in (1b,d). Note that this non-subject (i.e., indirect object) honorification has nothing to do with the subject honorification suffix -s/that is attached to the root as shown in (1a,b vs. c,d) (Gloss abbreviations are as follows: ACC = accusative; CNJ = conjugation; DAT = dative; DEC = declarative; HON = honorific; NOM = nominative; PST = past tense).

Mother-NOM(HON) father-DAT(HON) key-ACC give-HON-PST-DEC.
Mother gave the key to father.
Mother-NOM(HON) I-DAT key-ACC give-HON-PST-DEC.
Mother gave the key to me.
Jina-NOM teacher-DAT(HON) movie ticket-ACC give-PST-DEC.
Jina gave the movie ticket to the teacher.
Jina-NOM friend-DAT movie ticket-ACC give-PST-DEC.
Jina gave the movie ticket to (her) friend.

Next, at least two conditions are identified with respect to the insertion of /ta(l)/: the existence of imperative mood and the recipient, who is realized as a dative argument (of the imperative clause). Crucially, this dative argument must refer to the speaker of the utterance that commands an action of giving. The realization of /ta(l)/ is exemplified as in (2). Note that the alternation between /ta/ and /tal/ is subject to a (morpho) phonological condition.

(2) a. (Na/*Jina-eykey) ku chayk-ul ta/*cwu-o.
I/Jina-DAT that book-ACC give-IMP
Give that book to me.
b. Minji-ka Chelswu-eykey ku chayk-ul (caki'-eykey) tal/*cwu-la-ko hay-ss-ta.
'Minji told Chelswu to give her the book.'

Analysis We propose that the insertion of /tuli/ is conditioned by [+hon-IO] which sits on a functional head Hon-IO between V and v. The root GIVE is spelled out as /tuli/ when [+hon-IO] c-commands a V0, and this process is parallel to how a (subject) Hon0 that is above VP provides a context for the Vocabulary Insertion (VI) of subject honorification form (Chung 2009). The VI and a morphosyntactic context of /tuli/ are shown as (3a) and (3b), respectively.
As shown in (2), morphosyntactic contexts of /ta(l)/ seem to challenge locality restrictions. The root /ta(l)/ co-occurs with an imperative suffix, -o or -la, and is sensitive to the long-distance binding relation between the indirect object in question and the superordinate subject (Following Speas & Tenny (2003), a Speech Act projection, of which arguments are a speaker and an addressee of given utterance, is assumed to be above a main clause.). The first condition can be handled if [+imp] is in the same domain (for VI) with the root. For this, the root has to move to Mood$^0$ through v$^0$ and T via head movement. To capture the sensitivity to the long-distance dependency, we suggest that the indirect object recognizes [+anaphoric] and this feature is also encoded in a functional projection between V$^0$ and v$^0$. Given the fact that there are many languages that have anaphoric suffixes on the verb (e.g., Tibeto-Burman languages reported in LaPolla 1996), this [+anaphoric] head is unlikely to be an idiosyncratic assumption that applies only to this case. The VI of /ta(l)/ is then presented as in (4).

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\begin{align*}
\sqrt{\text{GIVE}} & \leftrightarrow /\text{ta(l)}/ / \_\_ [+\text{anaphoric}] ... [v ...] \uparrow [+\text{imp}] \downarrow \text{Mood}
\end{align*}
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This means that an abstract feature (i.e., [+imp]) higher in the structure conditions allomorphy of the stem (i.e., $\sqrt{\text{GIVE}}$) as far as these nodes are within the same verbal head complex.

**Conclusion** We have provided a DM analysis for the suppletive allomorphy of $\sqrt{\text{GIVE}}$ in Korean. The proposed analysis has some theoretical implications on the central tenet of DM as follows: If our proposal is on the right track, the morphosyntactic context for /ta(l)/ does not support Embick’s (2010) strict adjacency condition. Meanwhile, the context is still “local” in that the VI concerns grammatical features which are within the verbal head complex (i.e., the zero-level synthesis composed of verbal heads resulting from the head movement from the lowest V$^0$ to the higher Mood$^0$). Since the syntactic context is not outside a boundary of any maximal projection, the analysis is compatible with the locality requirement suggested by Bobaljik (2012).

**Selected References**