

Asymmetrical Dependency Relation between Checker and Checkee: Focusing on the Sentential Negation Constructions in Korean, West Flemish and Italian*

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This paper investigates into the dependency relation between checker and checkee by drawing mainly on the sentential negation constructions in Korean, West Flemish and Italian, and provides reinforcing evidence for the generalization that the relation is not symmetrical but asymmetrical. More specifically, a checkee requires the presence of a checker, whereas the latter does not require the presence of the former. Furthermore, the trace of a checkee can play a grammatical role, but that of a checker cannot. On the basis of these generalizations, we present various aspects of syntactic effects in the negative constructions in the three languages at issue that follow from the asymmetrical relation between checker and checkee. Incidentally, we explore the syntactic role of an empty negative operator as a checker in the negative construction in Italian. We then turn to demonstrate that an empty *wh* operator rather than a *wh*-phrase placed in situ plays a checking role in the *wh*-construction in Korean.

1. Issue

We have seen extensive application of the notion of checking or licensing to grammatical analyses in the last 15 years. The theory which adopts checking in grammatical analyses requires that a checkee or licensee be given a grammatical license or permit by an appropriate checker or licenser.

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Given the grammatical license or permit the checkee counts as a grammatically legitimate element.

This paper investigates this issue of the checker-checkee relation in sentences where the relation is well manifested, specifically, in sentential negation constructions in Korean, West Flemish and Italian. In particular, we provide further evidence for the generalization that checker and checkee display not symmetrical but asymmetrical behavior. Then we argue that asymmetrical behavior is instantiated in other constructions than negative constructions, which implies that checker-checkee asymmetry is demanded by Universal Grammar.

We briefly take a look at the asymmetrical behavior between checker and checkee before turning to our main investigation. As R.-H.-Y. Lee (1994) draws a conclusion, the generalization (1) obtains for checker and checkee:

- (1) The checkee requires the presence of its appropriate checker, but the checker does not require the presence of the checkee.

The generalization (1) is exemplified by (2) and (3). (2a) and (3a) show that the presence of a negative polarity item (NPI) requires the occurrence of its checker, namely, the negative marker. Likewise, the presence of an NP also requires the occurrence of its Case checker. However, (2b) and (3b) show that the negative marker and the Case checker each does not entail the presence of an NPI and a Case checkee,¹ respectively.

- (2) a. John does*(n't) meet any of his classmates.
 b. John doesn't know (any of) his classmates.
- (3) a. It seems (*Mary) that John likes her.
 b. Mary believes that John is honest.

The structure of the paper is organized as follows. In the next section we present the dependency relation of the negative head with NPIs in Korean and negative quantifiers (NQs) in West Flemish. Comparing the two languages, we bring out similarities and differences displayed in realizing the checker

¹The discussion of a Case checkee here is based on Stowell's (1991) claim that clauses are not marked for Case. In the conception of checking, Stowell's claim is rephrased as follows: clauses are not checked for Case.

and checkee relation at issue. In section 3 we then move on to the dependency relation between the negative head and NQs in Italian. In section 4 we briefly examine the implication of the discussion up to section 3 for the *wh*-constructions in English and Korean.

2. A Comparative Examination of NPIs in Korean and NQs in West Flemish

2.1. Similarities of Korean to West Flemish

Turning to our main investigation, we attempt a comparative examination of NPIs in Korean and NQs in West Flemish. We start to present some instances of similarity between the two languages in negative constructions. Later we examine the other cases of difference between them.

First, there is a well-known dependency relation between an NPI and a negative marker in Korean as in (4):

- (4) a. *John-i *amwukesto* mek-ess- ta
 John-Nom anything eat -Past-Decl
 ‘*John ate anything.’
- b. John-i *amwukesto* mekci *an*-h-ass-ta.
 John-Nom anything eat not-do-Past-Decl
 ‘John didn’t eat anything.’
- c. John-i sakwa-lul mekci *an*-h-ass-ta.
 -Nom apple-Acc eat not-do-Past-Decl
 ‘John didn’t eat an apple.’

In (4a) the NPI *amwukesto* cannot stand alone. It must be accompanied by the negative head *an(i)* as in (4b). However, the latter can stand alone as in (4c). Given the generalization (1), we can say that the negative head in Korean² is a checker, whereas NPIs are a checkee.

The dependency relation between NPIs and the negative head in Korean can be compared to the same relation between NQs and the negative head in West Flemish³ as shown in (5):

² We assume without any further discussion that the negative marker *an(i)* is positioned in the head position of NegP. See M-K. Park (1994) and (1998) for the relevant discussion.

- (5) a. da Valère me *niets* ketent was
 that Valère with nothing contented was
 'that Valère was not pleased with anything.'
- b. da Valère me *niets* ketent (*en*)-was
 that Valère with nothing contented -was
 'that Valère was not pleased with anything.'
- c. *da Valère ketent me zenen kado (*en*)-was
 that Valère contented with his present -was
 'that Valère was pleased with his present.'

As reported by Haegeman (1991, 1995) and Haegeman and Zanutinni (1991, 1996), the NQ *niets* 'nothing' as in (5a) can stand alone. However, the negative head *en* cannot stand alone as in (5c). It must be accompanied by the negative quantifier as in (5b).⁴ Notably, when the NQ occurs in a sentence, the negative head appears optionally. Again, given the generalization (1), we can say that NQs in West Flemish are a checker, whereas the negative head is a checkee.

³ West Flemish is a dialect of Dutch. Its basic structure is like that of Standard Dutch and Standard German in that it is an SOV language subject to the V2 constraint in matrix clauses.

⁴ Let us point out the two notable features of sentential negation in West Flemish. One is that when a negative quantifier does not appear, the negative adverbial *nie* must present itself to express sentential negation as in (i).

- (i) da Valère *(*nie*) dienen und (*en*)-kent
 that Valère not that dog knows
 'that Valère does not know that dog.'

The other is that, as reported by Haegeman (1995) and Haegeman and Zanutinni (1996), West Flemish exhibits Negative Concord which means that negative quantifiers in a clause do not cancel each other out, but jointly express a single negation. As shown in the following examples Negative Concord may obtain between the negative quantifier and the negative adverbial (iia); it may also obtain between negative quantifiers, even when not accompanied by *nie* (iib).

- (ii) a. da Valère *niemand nie* (*en*)-kent
 that Valère no one not knows
 'that Valère does not know anyone.'
- b. da Valère *an niemand niets* gezeid (*en*)-zegt
 that Valère to no one nothing said has
 'that Valère did not tell anyone anything.'

The fact that we observe regarding negative elements in Korean and West Flemish is summarized as in (6):

(6)	Checker	Checkee
Korean	the negative head (<i>ani</i>)	negative polarity item
West Flemish	negative quantifier	the negative head (<i>en</i>)

Before going further, we highlight the contrast between NPIs in Korean and NQs in West Flemish. As we summarized in (6), the former are classified as a checkee, whereas the latter is as a checker. The checker and checkee distinction is also instantiated in the following examples:

(7) a. John-un [Mary-ka ku siktang-eyse mwues -ul mek-ess-tako]
 -Top -Nom the restaurant-in something-Acc eat -Past-Comp
 sayngkakhani?

think-Interrogative

'What did John think that Mary ate in that restaurant?'

b. **amwukesto*

'anything.'

(8) a. Wad zei Pol da Valère gisteren kocht?
 what said Pol that Valère yesterday bought
 'What did Pol say that Valère bought yesterday?'

b. *Niets*

nothing

'Nothing.'

As in (7), NPIs cannot be used on their own as a negative answer to a question.⁵ However, NQs can be as in (8). This contrast is attributed to the

⁵ As an anonymous reviewer of this journal pointed out correctly, however, the checkee NPI stands alone in the following example (ib) of Korean:

(i) a. Mary-ka ku siktang-eyse mwues -ul mek-ess -ni
 -Nom the restaurant-in something-Acc eat -Past-Interrogative
 'What did Mary eat in that restaurant?'

b. *amwukesto*

'anything.'

generalization that a checker can stand alone without a checkee, but not the other way around.

Second, one property that Korean and West Flemish share in negative sentences is that an NPI in Korean and an NQ in West Flemish must appear in the same clause with the negative head as in (9) and (10), as reported by Choe (1988) for Korean and Haegeman (1991, 1995) for West Flemish.

- (9) a. *John-un Mary-eykey [Bill-i *amwukesto* mekesstako]
 -Top -Dat -Nom anything eat
 malhaci *an* -h -ass -ta.
 say not-do-Past-Decl
 ‘*John didn’t say to Mary that Bill ate anything.’
- b. John-un Mary-eykey [Bill-i *amwukesto* mekci an-h-ass-tako]
 -Top -Dat -Nom anything eat not-do-Past-Decl
 malha-yess-ta.
 say -Past-Decl
 ‘John said to Mary that Bill didn’t eat anything.’
- (10) a. **en*-peinzen-k [da Valère *niets* keut]
 en-think -I that Valere nothing know
 ‘I don’t think that Valere knows anything.’
- b. peinzen-k [da Valère *niets en*-keut]

Let us call this condition the clausemate requirement. In the ungrammatical (9a) and (10a), the clausemate requirement is not obeyed, whereas in the grammatical (9b) and (10b), it is.

Another property that the two languages share in negative constructions is that scrambling of an NPI in Korean or an NQ in West Flemish to the clause where the negative head occurs makes the sentences involved improve substantially as in (11)-(12), as reported by H-D. Ahn (1990) for Korean and by Haegeman (1991, 1995) for West Flemish:

Conjecturably, the unusual behavior of (ib) unlike (7b) in the text is attributed to root clause effects that arise when syntactic operation or interpretation is involved only within main clauses. (ib) is interpreted in relation to the non-embedded root clause (ia).

- (11) a. *John-un Mary-eykey [Bill-i *amwukesto* mekesstako] malhaci
 -Top -Dat -Nom anything eat say
 an-h -ass-ta.
 not-do-Past-Decl
 ‘*John didn’t say to Mary that Bill ate anything.’
 b. ? [*amwukesto*_i [John-un Mary-eykey [Bill-i t_i mekesstako] malhaci
 an-h-ass-ta]].
- (12) a. **en*-peinzen-k [da Valere *niets* keut]
 en think -I that Valère nothing know
 ‘I don’t think that Valère knows anything.’
 b. *Niets*_i *en*-peinzen-k [da Valère t_i keut].

In other words, if scrambling makes NPIs or NQs meet the clausemate requirement with the negative head, the resultant sentences as in (11b) and (12b) become grammatical in Korean and West Flemish.

In addition to the clausemate requirement that the negative head should occur in the same clause with NPIs or NQs, it seems that there is an even stricter restriction on their dependency relation. That is, they have a Spec-head relation at overt syntax. First, in West Flemish, which is a SOV language just like Korean, an adjective appears before its complement in canonic word order as in (13a). However, when the complement of the adjective is an NQ, it must occur before the adjective as shown by the contrast between (13b) and (13c). Haegeman (1991, 1995) takes the contrast as demonstrating that the Spec-head relation obtains for the negative head and NQs at overt syntax.⁶

- (13) a. da ze ketent van eur werk was
 that she contented with her work was
 ‘that she was pleased with her job’
 b. da ze *me niets* ketent (*en*)-was
 that she with nothing contented en-was
 ‘that she was not pleased with anything.’
 c. da ze ketent *me niets* (**en*)-was
 that she contented with nothing en-was

⁶ West Flemish involves bipartite negation in that, after achieving the Spec-head relation, one negative element occurs in head position and the other in Spec position.

If the NQ is not moved to the [Spec,NegP] position as in (13c), this has two effects: (i) the negative head *en* cannot be licensed, and (ii) the NQ cannot take sentential scope, that is, it cannot receive an operator interpretation. In the latter situation, for instance, the sentence (13c) is interpreted in the sense that (even) when she has nothing, she is happy.

In addition to the option with which the negative head *en* is licensed in a head-Spec relation with NQs that are moved to the [Spec,NegP] position, *en* is also licensed by the negative adverbial *nie*, which always occurs at overt syntax in the fixed position of [Spec,NegP] (See ft. 4 above):

- (14) da Valère *nie* dienen und (*en*)-kent
 that Valère not that dog knows
 'that Valère does not know that dog.'

Note that the negative head occurs optionally in (13b) and (14) after it is licensed by an appropriate checker. We attribute the optional occurrence of the negative head to the optional application of the deletion operation following the obligatory checking operation. After the checkee negative head has an appropriate checking relation with the checker NQ or negative adverbial in the [Spec,NegP] position,⁷ deletion applies optionally to the former. Note that the deletion of the negative head which supposedly only contributes to sentential negation does not violate the recoverability condition, in that sentential negation force is provided by the NQ or negative adverbial in the [Spec,NegP] position. In a nutshell, the checkee negative head in West Flemish can be deleted after the checking operation within NegP to eliminate redundancy on its part.

Likewise, it seems that in Korean, NPIs move to the [Spec,NegP] position at overt syntax. This is evidenced by (15). In (15a), the universal quantifier can take either wide or narrow scope with respect to the negative head. As noted by J-H. Suh (1990), however, in (15b), where the universal quantifier appears before the NPI, the universal quantifier only takes wide scope over the negative marker.

- (15) a. John-un motun haksayngtul-eykey chayk-ul cwuci *an*-h-ass-ta.
 -Top every student -to book-Acc give didn't

⁷We conjecture that the [Neg] feature is involved in the Spec-head checking relation between NQs or NPIs and the negative head.

- (i) 'John gave books to none of the students.'
- (ii) 'John give books to not all of the students.'
- b. John-un motun haksavngtul-eykey *amwu chaykto* cwuci *an*-h-ass-ta.
 -Top every student -to any book give didn't
- (i) 'John gave books to none of the students.'
- (ii) *'John give books to not all of the students.'

Assuming that scope resolution between the negative head and a quantifier is accomplished at overt syntax, we along with Sohn (1995) take the example (15b) to imply that the NPI stays in the Spec of NegP at overt syntax. When the NPI occurs in Spec of NegP at overt syntax, the preceding universal quantifier will be outside the c-commanding domain of the negative head. That is why the former universal quantifier only has wide scope over the latter negative head.⁸

2.2. Differences between Korean and West Flemish

Although Korean and West Flemish share several properties involving the dependency relation of NPIs and NQs with the negative head, the two languages differ in one remarkable way as in (16)–(18):

- (16) a. John-un Mary-eykey [_{embedded clause} Bill-i *amwukesto* mekci
an-h-ass-tako] malhayssta.

⁸ An anonymous reviewer of this journal claimed that the following example is also interpreted as unambiguous, with the universal quantifier only taking wide scope over the negative marker:

- (i) John-un motun haksavngtul-eykey chayk-to cwuci *an*-h-ass-ta.
 -Top every student -to book -also give didn't

We agree with his grammatical judgment. Apparently, the unambiguous interpretation of (i) casts doubt upon the argument in the text that NPIs in Korean raise overtly to the [Spec, NegP] position. However, note that the direct object phrase following the universal quantifier in (i) is marked for the focus particle *-to* 'also' just like the morphologically complex NPI. If we adopt Laka's (1991) proposal that NegP should be extended to Σ P, where Σ is a cover term for the positive marker and the focus marker as well as the negative marker, the unambiguous interpretation of (i) can be given a unified analysis along with (15b) in the text. When the direct object *chayk-to* is raised at overt syntax to Spec of Σ P, the preceding universal quantifier is outside the scope of and takes wide scope over the negative marker.

- b. [*amwukesto*_i [John-un Mary-eykey [_{embedded clause} Bill-i *t*_i mekci *an-h-ass-tako*] malhayssta]].

In (16b) of Korean, when the clausemate requirement or, more narrowly, the strict Spec-head relation is disturbed by scrambling the NPI to the matrix clause where the negative marker does not appear, the sentence does not change in grammaticality. The grammaticality of (16b) can be given an account by adopting Saito's (1989) claim that the scrambled item is undone to its original position at covert syntax or by chain binding (Cf. Barss (1986)). Incidentally, if our claim above that the NPI in Korean must participate in a Spec-head relation at overt syntax is correct, the grammaticality of the example (16b) implies that Spec-head checking can obtain in a point of derivation. That is, before the NPI moves to the matrix clause, it drops by the [Spec,NegP] position and is licensed by the negative head. Or alternatively, we may capitalize on the trace of the NPI. That is, the trace of the checkee NPI can play the same function as the phonetically realized NPI to form the dependency relation with the negative head. Below we will decide which way we must go to account for the grammaticality of (16b).

Turning to West Flemish, however, scrambling of NQs out of the clause where the negative head occurs changes the grammaticality of the sentences involved, as shown in (17b-c):

- (17) a. *peinzen-k* [_{embedded clause} *da Valère niets en-keut*].
 think -I that Valere nothing en-knows
 'I think that Valère does not know anything.'
- b. **Niets*_i *peinzen-k* [_{embedded clause} *da Valère t*_i *en-keut*].
- c. **Niets*_i *en-peinzen-k* [_{embedded clause} *da Valère t*_i *en-keut*].

In (17b) and (17c), scrambling of the NQ out of the clause where the negative head occurs in the surface structure makes the sentences ungrammatical, whether the target clause which the NQ moves into contains the negative head or not. Is it the case that the Spec-head relation must be held tight in West Flemish? The answer is no. The following example shows that the *strict* Spec-head relation between the negative head and the negative constituent can be disrupted at overt syntax.

- (18) Valere *en*_i-eet [_{NegP} *niemand* [_{Neg t}_i] gevraagd]
 Valere en has nobody asked

West Flemish, which is a V2 language, always forces the matrix verb to raise along with the negative head to the Comp position as in (18). This V2 effect disturbs strict Spec-head relation of the NQ with the negative head in the matrix clause.

The question is why there is a contrast between (17b-c) and (18) in obeying strict Spec-head relation? Haegeman (1994) conjectures that the contrast is due to the well-known A and A' distinction. Assuming that head movement is assimilated to A-movement, Haegeman argues that the trace of head- or A-movement can enter into a Spec-head relation, but the trace of A'-movement cannot.

The contrast between traces in A-position and ones in A'-position that Haegeman assumes is based on the following example:

(19) *Who₁ do you wonder [t'₁ [t₁ won the race]]?

In (19), the offending trace is t'₁, but not t₁. As argued in Lasnik and Saito (1984), the intermediate trace t'₁ in A'-position cannot qualify as an operator since it does not contain the relevant feature. However, the trace t₁ in A-position can be assigned Case.

However, Haegeman's analysis for the distribution of the negative head and NQs in West Flemish cannot be maintained when we bring into our analysis the example (16) of Korean. In (16) the trace is left by the A'-moved scrambled element. But the example containing it turns out to be grammatical.

To provide a unified account for the distribution of negative elements in Korean and West Flemish, we propose (20).

(20) The trace of a checkee plays a grammatical role, that is, it participates in checking, but the trace of a checker cannot, that is, it cannot qualify as a checker.

In accordance with (20), the trace of the checkee NPI in Korean and the negative head in West Flemish can be licensed by a checker, which implies that the former itself can occur as a grammatically legitimate element. In West Flemish, however, the trace of the licensing NQ cannot qualify as a checker. This generalization accounts for the contrast between the grammatical (16) and (18), on the one hand, and the ungrammatical (17b) and (17c), on the other hand.

Furthermore, the ungrammaticality of (19), which is repeated as (21), also follows from (20) in the following way:

(21) *Who₀₁ do you wonder [t'₁ [t₁ won the race]]?

Let us assume that wh-moved elements are a checker (cf. Cheng (1991)), whereas Case-assigned NPs are a checkee. Then the trace t₁ is taken to play a grammatical role and is appropriately checked by the embedded [+Tense] feature. However, the trace t'₁ cannot entrust itself to an operator role that checks off the Q feature in the embedded Comp position. This is why the example (21) is ruled out.

In passing, if our claim about the checker and checkee asymmetry is correct, there cannot be the following representation in Korean, corresponding to the example (18) in West Flemish, where the verb raises along with the negative head.

- (22) a. John-un [_{NPegP} *amwuto*_i [_{VP} t_i manaci] *an*]-h -ass -ta
 -Top anyone meet not-do-Past-Decl
 'John didn't meet anyone.'
 b. * [_{CP} John-un [_{NPegP} *amwuto*_i [_{VP} t_i manaci] t_j] [_C *an*_j-hass-ta]]

We suggest that (22a) is a correct representation of the negative sentence in Korean. However, the representation (22b), where the negative head is raised to the higher Comp position along with the verb as argued by Whitman (1991), is ruled out. Since the trace of a checker cannot assume a checking role, the representation is not allowed. This implies that verb raising is not an grammatical option in Korean as extensively argued by M-K. Park (1994) and (1998).

2.3. Further Evidence

We now consider further evidence supporting our claim that the trace of a checker cannot qualify as a legitimate checker. The evidence comes from Bambara, an African language. Koopman (1992) notes that in this language, the two auxiliary verbs alternate depending on their complement verbs, as summarized in (23):

- (23) a. The auxiliary verb *ye* occurs if its complement verb assigns structural accusative Case.

- b. The auxiliary verb *-ra* occurs if its complement verb does not assign structural Accusative Case.

The examples below (24) and (25) illustrate that the auxiliary verb *-ra* takes an intransitive verb as its complement, whereas the auxiliary verb *ye* takes an Accusative-Case-assigning transitive verb. Furthermore, the examples show that the intransitive complement verb is amalgamated with the auxiliary verb, whereas the transitive complement verb is not.

- (24) a. Den *ye* ce ye
 child Perf man see (Perf = the perfective aspect marker)
 'The child saw the man.'
- b. *Den *ye-ra* ce
 child saw-Perf man
- (25) a. N son *-ra* a ma
 I agree-Perf it to
 'I agreed to it.'
- b. *N *ye* son a ma
 I Perf agree it to

Assuming that verb movement applies in Bambara, Koopman accounts for this contrast by claiming that verb movement depends upon the Case-assignability of a verb in Bambara. That is, when a transitive verb raises to the higher auxiliary verb position, its trace cannot assign Case to the complement of the trace. That is why its movement is not allowed. An intransitive verb, however, is allowed to raise to the higher auxiliary verb position since there is no element which needs checking by the trace of the complement verb. To our purpose, the impossibility of transitive verbs being raised in Bambara lends additional evidence in favor of the proposal that the trace of a checker cannot assume a checking function.

3. The Sentential Negation Construction in Italian

3.1. NQs and the Negative Head in Italian

In this section we consider the distribution of the negative head *non* and NQs in Italian. Sentential negation is expressed by the negative marker

non, which we, following Belletti (1990), assume to be a head element.

- (26) Gianni **non** telefona a sua madre.
 non telephones to his mother
 ‘Gianni does not call his mother.’

In addition, sentential negation can be expressed by one or more NQs. There is a correlation between the position of NQs and the presence of the negative head **non**. In the presence of one or more preverbal NQs, as in (27a-c), **non** is excluded or is at best marginally acceptable for some speakers.

- (27) a. **Nessuno** (***non**) telefona a Gianni.
 no one non telephones to Gianni
 ‘No one telephones to Gianni.’
 b. **A nessuno** Gianni (***??non**) telefona
 to no one Gianni non telephones
 ‘Gianni does not telephone to anyone.’
 c. **Nessuno** (***non**) legge niente.
 no one non reads nothing
 ‘No one reads anything.’

In the absence of a preverbal NQ, however, **non** is required in a negative sentence, as in (28a-b):

- (28) a. Gianni ***(non)** legge **niente**.
 Gianni non reads nothing
 ‘Gianni does not read anything.’
 b. Gianni ***(non)** dice **niente a nessuno**.
 Gianni non says nothing to no one
 ‘Gianni does not tell anyone anything.’
 c. **A nessuno** Gianni (***??non**) dice **niente**.
 to no one Gianni non says nothing
 ‘Gianni does not say anything to anyone.’

In the postverbal NQ construction of (28a-b), where an NQ appears after a verbal element, the negative head **non** occur obligatorily. On the other hand, when at least one of the NQs appears before a verbal element as in (28c), omission of the negative head is strongly favored.

Note that like West Flemish, Italian also exhibits Negative Concord, whereby two or more NQs expressing sentential negation do not each carry negative force but, rather, jointly express a single negation. Thus in (27) and (28), the negative head and NQs do not cancel each other, as they would in (29) of English.

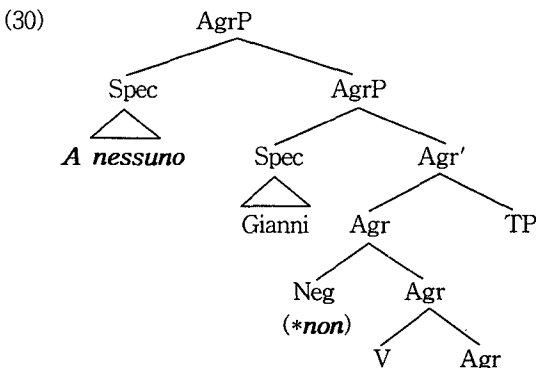
- (29) No one reads nothing.
(i.e., everyone reads something)

3.2. Discussion

In what follows we argue that NQs in Italian raise optionally to the preverbal position at overt syntax. When, on the one hand, they raise prior to a verbal element, the preverbal NQ construction results. When, on the other hand, they stay in situ, the postverbal NQ construction results. Considering the two options for the placement of NQs, we will account for the presence or absence of the negative head by refining the checker and checkee asymmetry hypothesis.

Before examining the distribution of the negative marker, we assume, following Belletti (1990), that in Italian AgrP dominates NegP, which in turn dominates TP. A finite verb moves through T and lands in Agr. Let us also assume that *non* moves to Agr along with the verb.

Given the assumptions regarding the clausal structure of Italian, let us first look at the preverbal NQ construction as in (27a-c). The preverbal NQ construction has NQ(s) preceding a verbal element. We suggest that this word order comes about when NQs raise to the [Spec,AgrP] position. In this line of analysis, (27b) is postulated as having the following structure:



The most notable feature of the structure (30) is that the NQ *a nessuno*, which is base-generated within VP, raises to Spec of AgrP. The NQ is considered to raise to Spec of AgrP to get into a checking relation with the negative head which is now positioned in the Agr position. Remarkably, in this situation the negative head is preferably to be deleted.

Given the diagnostics regarding checker and checkee, we can say that the negative head in Italian is a checkee whereas NQs are a checker in that the former can be phonetically suppressed. Maintaining the analysis for the distribution of the negative head in West Flemish, we attribute the deletion of the negative head in Italian to the deletion operation that applies obligatorily after the checking operation within AgrP. When the checker NQ enters into a checking relation with the checkee negative head, the former checks off the latter. After this checking process, the checkee negative head undergoes deletion since sentential negation force can be provided by the checker NQ in the [Spec,AgrP] position.

Let us now turn to the postverbal NQ construction as in (28a-c). The construction shows another twist of checker-checkee relation. The defining characteristic of the postverbal NQ construction is that NQs follow a verbal element and the negative head cannot be phonetically omitted. The positional feature of NQs in the postverbal NQ construction means that the NQs in the construction, unlike those in the preverbal NQ construction, do not raise to Spec of AgrP. This is why the former follow the negative head that is positioned in the Agr position. The effect of an NQ staying in-situ is that the NQ as a checker cannot participate at overt syntax in a checking relation with the negative marker as a checkee. In this situation it seems that the negative marker as a checkee cannot be deleted. This accounts for the obligatory presence of the negative head in the postverbal NQ construction.

However, a question arises why NQs do not raise in the postverbal NQ construction. One possibility which we will pursue is that unlike in West Flemish, in Italian there is an empty negative operator which is inserted in the [Spec,AgrP] position. The insertion of the empty negative operator, like the expletives *there* or *it* in English which make unnecessary the movement of NPs, obviates the movement of NQs to the [Spec, AgrP] position. Reasonably, the occurrence of the empty negative operator in the [Spec,AgrP] position is responsible for the obligatory presence of the negative head as a negative marker in the postverbal NQ construction. If the negative head is deleted, there is no way of expressing sentential negation.⁹

Postulating the empty negative operator in the [Spec,AgrP] position in the postverbal NQ construction accounts for the inner island effects in the construction.

- (31) a. *Perchè* hai detto che Gianni è partito
 why has you said that Gianni is left
 ‘Why did you say that Gianni left?’
- b. *Perchè non* hai detto a nessuno che Gianni è partito
 why non has say to no one that Gianni left
 ‘Why did you not say to anyone that Gianni left?’

In (31a) *perchè* may question the matrix clause or the lower clause. In other words, (31) is read either as a question about ‘why Gianni left’ or as a question about ‘why you said so.’ However, in (31b) it can question only the matrix clause. In terms of a *Relativized Minimality* account (cf. Rizzi (1990)), the postulated intervening empty negative operator in the [Spec,AgrP] position will block the antecedent government relation between *perchè* and its trace in the lower clause in (31b).

We now turn to the sentential negation construction as in (26), where only the negative head occurs without any NQ. Obviously, (26), which is repeated as (32), cannot have the negative head deleted when it conveys sentential negation as follows.

- (32) Gianni **(non)* telefona a sua madre.
 non telephones to his mother
 ‘Gianni does not call his mother.’

The sentential negation construction without any NQ can be analyzed on a par with the postverbal NQ construction. This construction does not contain any NQ. This is why it seems that the negative head as a checkee cannot be checked at overt syntax. However, there is another option than checking with an NQ raised to the [Spec,AgrP] position. As in the postverbal NQ construction, the empty negative operator is inserted in the [Spec,AgrP] position and enters into a Spec-head checking relation with the negative

⁹ Ouhalla (1990) also notes that given the condition on the recoverability of the content of empty categories, we do not expect to find a language where the Spec of NegP is an empty category and the head an abstract morpheme.

head. Postulation of the empty negative operator in the sentence negation construction is also evidenced by the fact that as in the postverbal NQ construction, (33b) lacks the lower clause interpretation of *perchè* unlike (33a), which has either the matrix clause interpretation or the lower clause interpretation.

- (33) a. *Perchè credi che Gianni sia partito*
 why believe you that Gianni is left
 ‘Why do you believe that Gianni has left?’
 b. *Perchè non credi che Gianni sia partito*
 why non believe you that is left
 ‘Why don’t you believe that Gianni has left?’

In (33b) the inner island effect is caused by the presence of the empty negative operator in the [Spec,AgrP] position which checks the negative head *non*.

4. The Implication of the Dependency Relation in Italian for the Wh-constructions in Korean and English

In the previous section we have seen that the presence or absence of the negative head in Italian depends upon the overt syntactic position of its checker, NQs. When NQs raise to Spec of AgrP, where it gets into a Spec-head checking relation with the negative head, the latter is checked off and then phonetically suppressed. Otherwise, the negative head must be phonetically realized since it enters into a checking relation with the empty negative operator inserted in Spec of AgrP.

This sort of distinction that we find within Italian is expected to be instantiated across languages. What comes to our mind is the well-known distinction between Korean-type languages and English-type languages in the wh-constructions. In the former type languages, on the one hand, wh-phrases do not undergo overt movement. They rather stay in situ (Of course, we ignore displacement effects of wh-phrases which are scrambled.). In these languages the Comp position is occupied by overtly realized question particles like *-ci* as in Korean of (34):

- (34) na-nu [Mary-ka *mwues-ul* sa -ass-nun-ci]
 -Top -Nom what -Acc buy-Past-Adn-Interrogative
 molu-nta
 not · know-Decl
 'I don't know what Mary bought.'

In the latter type languages, on the other hand, wh-phrases move to the [Spec,CP] position, whereas the Comp position is not filled by any lexical item as shown in (35):

- (35) I wonder *what* Mary bought.

The two types of languages have received various analyses (cf. Baker (1970), Cheng (1991), etc.). Given the discussion so far in this paper, we propose an alternative analysis of the two types of languages in the following way.

As assumed in section 2, let us first suppose that in English, what functions as a checker in the wh-construction is a wh-moved phrase. The wh-phrase in (35) moves to the [Spec,CP] position and enters into a Spec-head relation to check off the Q feature in the Comp position. Considering that the head position is not realized phonetically, the English type of wh-construction is assimilated to the preverbal NQ construction in Italian.

On the other hand, it is tempting to analyze the Korean type of wh-construction on a par with the postverbal NQ construction in Italian. The characteristic feature of this type of wh-construction is that the Comp marker is realized overtly while a wh-phrase stays in situ. Rather than moving a wh-phrase to Spec of CP, this construction employs an empty wh operator which participates into a Spec-head relation with the Comp position. When a Spec-head relation actually obtains, Spec and head positions both cannot be empty owing to the recoverability condition on the content of empty categories. When a checker is empty, a checkee has to be phonetically realized.

Postulation of the empty wh-operator in the [Spec,CP] position in the Korean type of wh construction has been extensively argued for recently (Watanabe (1992) for Japanese; H-S. Choe (1995) for Korean). To rehearse it, the postulated empty wh-operator can account for the so called Subjacency effects in the Korean type of wh-construction. Let us look at

the following example:

- (36) ne-nun [meyri-ka *mwukwu-tul* cohaha-nun-*ci*]
 you-Top Mary-Nom who -Acc like -Adn-Interrogative
 a-*ni*
 know-Interrogative
 'Do you know who Mary likes?'
 '??Who do you know whether Mary likes?'

In (36), the matrix and the embedded clauses have the Interrogative marker *ni* and *ci*, respectively. The notable characteristic of (36) is that the wh-phrase in the embedded object position can have embedded scope but it has difficulty in taking matrix scope. The marginality of matrix scope for the wh-phrase in (36) is attributed to the presence of the empty wh operator which checks the overtly realized Interrogative morpheme in the embedded Comp position in Korean. More specifically, the postulated empty wh operator in the embedded [Spec,CP] position of (36) blocks the movement of another empty operator which is launched out of the embedded wh-phrase to move to another possible scope position in the matrix [Spec,CP] position (cf. Watanabe (1992)). In this regard, the empty wh operator in Korean that licenses the overt Interrogative head corresponds to the empty negative operator in the NQ-less sentential negation construction in Italian that licenses the overt negative head.

5. A Summary and Conclusion

This paper started with the generalization that a checkee requires the presence of a checker, whereas the latter does not require the presence of the former. Based on the generalization, we presented a comparative description of the negative head and NPIs in Korean and NQ in West Flemish. It was found that in Korean, the negative head is a checker, whereas NPIs are a checkee. On the other hand, in West Flemish, the negative head is a checkee, whereas NQs are a checker. It was argued that NPIs in Korean and NQs in West Flemish enter into a checking relation with the negative head within the NegP projection at overt syntax. It was also found that NPIs in Korean can move out of the [Spec,NegP] position where checking takes place, but that NQs in West Flemish cannot. We

accounted for the contrast between NPIs in Korean and NQs in West Flemish by proposing that the trace of a checkee plays a grammatical role, but that of a checker does not. The proposal was seen to be superior to Haegeman's (1991, 1995) analysis. Furthermore, it also accounts for Case phenomena in Bambara as well as the fact that an intermediate *wh*-trace in English cannot qualify as an operator.

In Section 3, we investigated into three types of the sentential negation construction in Italian: preverbal NQ, postverbal NQ and NQ-less negative constructions. It was proposed that unlike Korean and West Flemish, Italian employs an empty negative operator which is optionally inserted into the [Spec,AgrP] position instead of an NQ or NQs moving there. The optionally inserted negative operator enters into a Spec-head checking relation with the negative head in the Agr position in the postverbal NQ and NQ-less constructions. In the preverbal NQ construction, however, an NQ or NQs move into the [Spec,AgrP] position and check off the negative head in the Agr position. The latter then undergoes deletion, obeying the recoverability condition.

Based on the findings in Italian, in section 4 we turned to the *wh*-constructions in English and Korean. The well-known parametric variation between the two languages, we suggested, should be analyzed on a par with the contrast between the postverbal NQ and NQ-less constructions and the preverbal construction NQ in Italian. In specific, the Korean *wh*-construction is compared to the postverbal NQ and the NQ-less constructions in that the empty *wh*-operator inserted into the [Spec,CP] position checks the phonetically realized Interrogative marker. On the other hand, the English *wh*-construction is compared to the preverbal NQ construction in that the overtly moved *wh*-phrase checks the phonetically covert Interrogative marker. The postulated empty *wh*-operator in Korean accounts for the Subjacency effects that are otherwise left being mysterious.

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