## On the Nature of Indeterminate Expressions in Chinese and Korean: Focused on *WH*-phrases in Conditionals Daeho Chung (Hanyang University)

This work aims to characterize the featural properties and the licensing mechanisms of the indeterminate expressions (I-Exs) in Chinese and Korean, both of which are ambiguously interpreted, by specially comparing the behaviors of the so-called *wh*-conditional construction in the two languages. It will be argued that I-Exs in Chinese differ from the Korean counterparts w.r.t. their featural compositions and their licensing mechanisms, which are responsible for various parametric differences in the two languages.

Chinese bare (or wh-) conditionals (Cheng & Huang 1996, Liu 2016, 2018a, 2018b, a.o.) are exemplified in (1) and (2). I-Exs in this construction are interpreted as if they are variables bound by the same operator such that the two I-Exs, one in the antecedent clause and the other in the consequent clause, co-vary in their reference, as indicated in the English translations. (See Gu 2009 and Huang 2018 on the properties of the operator.) Literal translations of (1) and (2) into Korean will be like (3) and (4), where the two I-Exs do not co-vary. To get a co-varying reading, the I-Ex in the consequent clause has to be replaced by an overt/null pronoun, as in (5) and (6).

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(1) shei xian lai, she (jiu) xian chi. (2) ni yao shenme, wo (jiu) mai shenme gei ni.

Who first come, who (then) first eat

You want what, I (then) buy what give you

'(If) x comes first, (then) x eats first.'

"Whoever comes first eats first.'

"Whatever you want x, (then) I will buy x for you.'

"Whatever you want, I will buy it for you.'

(3) nwu-ka mence o-myen, nwu-ka mence mek-nun-ta.

Who-Nom early come-if, who-Nom early eat-Pres-DEC

'(If) someone comes first, (then) someone eats first.'

(4) (ney-ka) mwues-ul wenha-myen, nay-ka mwues-ul sacwu-keyss-ta.

You-Nom what-Acc want-if
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You-Nom what-Acc want-if

I-Nom what-Acc buy:give-will-DEC

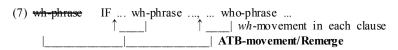
If you want something, I will buy something for you.

(5) nwu-ka mence o-myen, e/ku-ka mence mek-nun-ta. Who-Nom early come-if, e/he-Nom early eat-Pres-DEC

'(If) someone comes first, (then) someone eats first.'

(6) (ney-ka) mwues-ul wenha-myen, nay-ka e/kukes-ul sacwu-keyss-ta. You-Nom what-Acc want-if I-Nom e/it-Acc buy; give-will-DEC 'If you want something, I will buy something for you.'

This work attributes the above discrepancy between Chinese and Korean to the differences in the featural property and the licensing mechanism of the I-Exs in the two languages. More specifically, Korean I-Exs are indefinite expressions with a [-wh] feature and as such they are licensed in situ. In contrast, Chinese I-Exs bear a [+wh] feature and they undergo an overt (ATB, in the cases of wh-conditionals,) wh-movement but the tail of the chain(s) is pronounced, as schematically represented in (7). (cf. Bruening and Tran 2006 and Cheung 2006)



The claim made in this work gains support from various facts. First, as can be seen in (1)~(4), I-Exs in Korean, but not in Chinese, are subject to the so-called novelty condition, which constrains indefinite NPs (Heim 1982, Chierchia 2000). The fact goes against Cheng and Huang (1996), who analyze I-Exs as indefinite nouns unselectively bound by a universal quantifier provided by default in conditionals. The fact cannot be accounted for by Chierchia's (2000) pronoun analysis, either: I-Exs in Chinese wh-conditionals behave like R-expressions, not like pronouns, as pointed out by Bruening and Tran (2006). Neither by Crain and Luo's (2011) equational statement analysis, as the I-Exs take isomorphic forms in wh-conditionals,

but not in equational sentences: (8) vs. (9).

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shenme ren /tongyang de ren xian chi.
(8) *Shei xian lai.
    who first come what person the-same DE person first eat (from Crain and Luo 2011, 166)
(9) a. The Moming Star is the Evening Star.
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b. A man who drinks alcopops is the one/the same person who gets a hangover.

The requirement of isomorphism strongly supports a remerge (ATB movement) analysis. Second, WHY, which is hardly used as an indefinite, is allowed in (10) of Chinese wh-conditionals but not in (11) of Korean conditionals. Elma-(mankhum)-na 'how much' Adj behaves similarly (as opposed to *elma (mankhum)*, which is ambiguously interpreted). (See (12) and (13).)

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(10) ni
                     xihuan Zhangsan, wo jiu wishenme tayan ta.
                     like
                            Zhangsan, I then why
                                                        dislike him
     'The reason you like Zhangsan is the reason why I dislike him.' from Huang (2018)
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- (11) \*ney-ka way John-ul cohaha-myen, na-nun way/ku iyu-lo ku-lul silheha-n-ta. You-Nom why J.-Acc like-if I-Top why/the reason-for he-Acc dislike-Pres-DEC
- (12) \*ney-ka elma (mankhum)-ina yeppu-n os-ul wenha-myen, nay-ka e/ku kes-ul sac wu-keyss-ta. You-Nom how; much amount-INA pretty dress-Acc want-if I-Nom e/it-Acc buy; give-will-DEC (Intended) 'If you want (a certain degree of) pretty clothes, I will buy them for you.
- elma (mankhum) yeppu-n os-ul wenha-myen, nay-ka e/ku kes-ul sacwu-keyss-ta. You-Nom how;much amount pretty dress-Acc want-if I-Nom e/it-Acc 'If you want (certain degree of) pretty clothes, I will buy them for you.' buy;give-will-DEC

Thirdly, Chinese WHY, weishenne, in wh-conditionals displays an ECP effect when in an island context, another clue that movement is involved in wh-conditionals: (1) vs. (14).

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(14) a. *Ni xihuan [weishenme xie de shu], women jiu weishenme xie
       you like why write DE book
                                        we
                                              then why
      'Whatever reason x s.t. you like the book written for x, we will write books for x.'
    b. *Ni [yinwei ta weishenme likai er shangxin], wo jiu weishenme gaoxing.
       you because he why leave thus sad
                                                 I then why
       'Whatever reason x s.t. you are sad because he left for x, I will be happy for x.'
            (from Cheung 2007)
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There are also indications that I-Exs in Chinese undergo overt movement but the tail copy is pronounced: (i) They do not show scope interactions with a quantifier in an weak island (Aoun and Li 1993), intervention effects (Huang 1982), or wh-island effects (Huang 1982), unlike their Korean counterparts, which show opposite behaviors. (Examples are omitted for a space reason.) Finally, we observe that Korean bare common nouns, unless accompanied by a numeral classifier, but not I-Exs, can have an E-type pronoun construal, as (15) and (16).

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(*han tay) wenha-myen, nay-ka (ku) <u>catongcha-ul</u> sac wu-keyss-ta.
(15) ney-ka catongcha-ul
     you-Nom car-Acc
                               one Cl.
                                         want-if
                                                      I-Nom that car-Acc
     If Cheli wants a car, I will buy (him) (a/the) car.
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(16) (Ney-ka) <u>mwues-</u>ul wenha-myen, nay-ka \*(ku) <u>mwues-</u>ul sacwu-keyss-ta. You-Nom what-Acc want-if I-Nom that what-Acc buy; give-will-DEC 'If you want something, I will buy something for you.'

Based on this critical data, we adopt Elboume's (2005) approach to E-type pronouns, assuming that anaphoric elements in the consequent clause in Korean are E-type pronouns.

In conclusion, wh-conditionals in Chinese employ an ATB wh-movement, due to the featural property of the I-Exs, while the Korean counterparts employ an E-type anaphoric strategy (possibly repeating a common noun phrase.)

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