On the Island Repair in Korean Fragments*

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Hyosik Kim · Bum-Sik Park. 2016. On the Island Repair in Korean Fragments. Language and Linguistics 71, 21-52. Various elliptical constructions are island-insensitive. The repair approach argues that the island-insensitivity arises because island violations can be repaired by ellipsis in PF (Merchant 2001, 2004). On the other hand, the non-repair approach argues that the island-insensitive elliptical construction is derived from alternative underlying sources that contain no islands to begin with (e.g. Barros, Elliott and Thoms 2014). In this paper, we argue that island repair in Korean fragments is real, by demonstrating that they remain island-insensitive even in the contexts where no alternative sources are available. We will also provide an account for why in certain contexts the island-sensitivity re-emerges, based on the notion of interveners induced by island-violating movement.

Keywords : Ellipsis, Fragments, Sluicing, Island violation, Island repair, Island-sensitivity, Focus movement

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1. Introduction

Since Ross (1969), it has been widely assumed that sluicing, a typical instance of ellipsis, is insensitive to the island violation as in (1):

(1) a. They hired someone who speaks a Balkan language. Guess which!
   b. Guess which they hired someone who speaks t.

According to the repair approach, the island-insensitivity arises because island violations can be repaired by eliding a constituent in PF that contains the island, as illustrated in (1b) (cf. Chomsky 1972; Lasnik 2001; Merchant 2001, 2004, 2008; Fox and Lasnik 2003; Temmerman 2013; Griffiths and Lipták 2014). Interestingly, however, not all instances of elliptical constructions are island-insensitive. For instance, while the Non-Contrastive Fragments (NCF) like (2) is island-insensitive like sluicing in (1) (Griffiths and Lipták 2014), the Contrastive Fragments (CF) like (3) is island-sensitive (Merchant 2004): 1)

(2) A: Did they hire someone who speaks a Balkan language?
   B: Yes, Albanian they hired someone who speaks t.

1) In contrast to (2), (3) involves the contrastively focused element in the antecedent and the elliptical clause. Griffiths and Lipták (2014) and Merchant (2004) both argue that (3) is not necessarily a problem for the repair approach. Griffiths and Lipták argue that the unacceptability of (3) is due to an independent reason, i.e., a violation of Parallelism. On the other hand, Merchant (2004) argues that the contrast between (1) and (3) arises since wh-movement and focus movement target a different landing site (See Section 4 for related discussion).