Noun Complements and Clause Types in Korean (and Japanese)*

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1. Introduction

Korean complement clauses to verbs are typically subordinated by the complementizer *ko*, yet within the complement clause a mood marker appears indicating whether the clause type is declarative, interrogative, imperative or exhortative (Cha 1999, Pak 2004):

(1) a. Mina-ka   [Swuna-ka   ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**ta**]-ko
Mina-NOM Swuna-NOM that problem-ACC solve-PAST-DEC-C
cwucangha-ess-ta
claim-PAST-DEC
'Mina claimed that Swuna solved the problem.'

b. Mina-ka   Swuna-eykey [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul
Mina-NOM Swuna-DAT   that problem-ACC
phwul-ess-**nya**]-ko mwul-ess-ta
solve-PAST-INT-C ask-PAST-DEC
'Mina asked Swuna whether she solved the problem.'

c. Mina-ka   Swuna-eykey [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**la**]-ko
Mina-NOM Swuna-DAT   that problem-ACC solve-IMP-C
malha-ess-ta
say-PAST-DEC
'Mina told Swuna to solve the problem.'

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    d.   Mina-ka   Swuna-eykey [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**ca**]-ko
          Mina-NOM Swuna-DAT   that problem-ACC solve-EXH-C
          ceyanha-ess-ta
          suggest-PAST-DEC
          'Mina suggested to Swuna to solve the problem together.'

There is general consensus among Korean linguists that such clauses are truly syntactically subordinated, and are not presented as embedded quotations. Extraction from all these complement clauses is acceptable.

    This paper is a preliminary exploration of clauses which are complements to nouns. Interestingly, the clause-typing particles in (1) appear just the same in (2), followed by the 'prenominal' ending *nun*:

(2)   a.   [Swuna-ka   ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**ta**]-nun   cwucang
              Swuna-NOM that problem-ACC solve-PAST-DEC-PNE claim
              'the claim that Swuna solved the problem'
    b.   [Swuna-ka   ku mwuncey-lul phwul-ess-**nya**]-nun cilmwun
              Swuna-NOM that problem-ACC solve-PAST-INT-PNE question
              'the question if Swuna solved the problem'
    c.   [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**la**]-nun myenglyeng
                that problem-ACC solve-IMP-PNE order
              'the order *pro* to solve the problem'
    d.   [*pro* ku mwuncey-lul phwul-**ca**]-nun ceyan
                that problem-ACC solve-EXH-PNE suggestion
              'the suggestion *pro* to solve the problem together'

Such clauses also show evidence of being subordinated; and once again, extraction from all these noun complement clauses is in general acceptable.

    I will refer to the complements in (2) as 'complex form' clauses. These are not the only types of prenominal clauses that Korean has. Other noun complement clauses, and all relative clauses, have a 'simple form' in which the prenominal marker is *nun* (present tense), replacing the usual clausal tense marker, and with no other marker of mood or clause type. Nouns of experience or sensation as in (3) require the 'simple' complement. Abstract nouns of communication or attitude require the complex form (4). Finally, there are two nouns in Korean, *sasil* and *kes*, which take either (declarative) form (5). *sasil* is usually translated as 'fact', but in fact its meanings must include at least 'fact, eventuality, possibility', because it can be used in meanings that are semantically non-factive.

(3)   a.   [sayngsen-i tha-nun] naymsay
              fish-NOM   burn-PNE smell
              'the smell of fish burning'

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    b. *[sayngsen-i tha-n-ta-nun]   naymsay
        fish-NOM burn-PRS-DEC-PNE smell

(4) a. [Mina-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun]
        Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE
        somwun/sosik/cwucang
        rumor/news/claim
        'the rumor/news/claim that Mina stole the jewelry'
    b. *[Mina-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] somwun/sosik/cwucang
        Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   rumor/news/claim

(5) a. [cikwu-ka twunggu-n]   sasil
        earth-NOM be.round-PNE fact
        'the fact that the earth is round.'
    b. [cikwu-ka twunggul-ta-nun] sasil
        earth-NOM be.round-DEC-PNE fact
        'that the earth is round' (as a proposition)

Japanese shows similar patterns with the complementizer *toyuu*. The examples below are from Terakura (1983):

(6) a. *[sakana-o yaite-iru] toyuu nioi-ga   su-ru
        fish-ACC grilling-be TOYUU smell-NOM do
    b. [sakana-o yaite-iru] ∅ nioi-ga   su-ru
        fish-ACC grilling-be   smell-NOM do
        'I smell fish being grilled.'

(7) a. [sora tobu enban-ga tyakuriku-sita] toyuu   uwasa-ga
        flying saucer-NOM land-did   TOYUU rumor-NOM
        tuwatte-iru
        circulating-be
    b. *[sora tobu enban-ga tyakuriku-sita] ∅ uwasa-ga
        flying saucer-NOM land-did   rumor-NOM
        tuwatte-iru
        circulating-be
        'There's a rumor circulating that a flying saucer landed.'

(8) a. kare-wa [sityoo-ga   wairo-o   tukatta] toyuu zizitu-o
        he-TOP mayor-NOM bribe-ACC used   TOYUU fact-ACC
        mitome-ta
        admit-PAST
    b. kare-wa [sityoo-ga   wairo-o   tukatta] ∅ zizitu-o
        he-TOP mayor-NOM bribe-ACC used   fact-ACC
        mitome-ta
        admit-PAST
        'He admitted the fact that the mayor committed bribery.'

Following the style of analysis in Portner (1997) and Ginzburg and Sag (2000), I assume that a verb or noun semantically selects for the type of its complement, explicitly marked as a declarative (a proposition), or an interrogative, etc. For nouns there is also the issue of the simple or the complex form.

Making a semantic distinction between facts and events on the one hand and propositions on the other (see e.g., Vendler 1967, Lee et al. 1999, Ginzburg and Sag 2000), my **preliminary claim** is that the **simple modifying clause denotes a fact or event**, an object in the world, while the **complex form denotes a proposition**, an object that is a description of a possibility. (A fact is a possibility that is true in the real world.) This explains the data in (3)–(5). This claim is inspired by suggestive remarks in Lee et al. (1999), and by the analysis of Japanese *toyuu* in Terakura (1983). *toyuu* is essentially the 'complex form' for Japanese prenominal modifiers, though its usage is wider than the Korean complex forms. According to Matsumoto (1998), *toyuu* presents a fact- or event-description in a form as if it were represented by someone as part of an attitude (of saying, describing, believing).

It has been noted that in English, bare *that*-clauses can denote both propositions and facts:

(9) a. John believes [(*the fact) that the earth is round]. (proposition)
     b. John knows [(the fact) that the earth is round]. (fact)

Here I will try to explore the interpretational possibilities for the simple and complex forms in Korean, when modifying nouns.

Example (10-a) has a simple fact-denoting clause as complement to 'not believe', and what it means is that the subject would not believe the fact, which is not actually ungrammatical, but sounds irrational on the part of the subject. With complex form as in (10-b), it simply means that the subject did not believe the proposition (which could be true or false); the interpretation is non-factive, even though the head noun is *sasil* or *kes*.

(10) a. $^{??}$ku-nun [Mina-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] kes/sasil-ul
          he-TOP Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   thing/fact-ACC
          mit-ci   anh-ass-ta
          believe-COMP NEG-PAST-DEC
          'He didn't believe the fact that Mina stole the jewelry.'
      b. ku-nun [Mina-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun]
          he-TOP Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE
          kes/sasil-ul   mit-ci   anh-ass-ta
          thing/fact-ACC believe-COMP NEG-PAST-DEC
          'He didn't believe (what people say/think) that Mina stole the jewelry.'

In (11), the predicate 'be revealed' or 'came to light' presupposes the truth of its complement, and so it is natural with the simple form; but with the complex form, the example is marked, for it seems that the speaker does not want to commit to the truth of the complement, yet the predicate presupposes it:

(11) a. [Mina-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] sasil/kes-i
          Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   fact/thing-NOM
          tule na-ss-ta
          be.revealed-PAST-DEC
          'The fact that Mina stole the jewelry was revealed (came to light).'
      b. $^{??}$[Mina-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun]
          Mina-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE
          sasil/kes-i   tule na-ss-ta
          fact/thing-NOM be.revealed-PAST-DEC
          'That Mina stole the jewelry was revealed (came to light).'

2. Noun-Modifying Constructions in Korean

All relative clauses in Korean take the simple form, even with head nouns like *somwun* 'rumor'. With the complex form, the relative clause simply gains an additional embedding structure:

(12) a. [Chelswu-ka   na-eykey allye cwu-n] somwun
          Chelswu-NOM I-DAT   tell-PNE   rumor
          'the rumor$_i$ that Chelswu told me t$_i$'
      b. [Chelswu-ka   na-eykey allye cwu-ess-ta-nun] somwun
          Chelswu-NOM I-DAT   tell-PAST-DEC-PNE   rumor
          'the rumor$_i$ that (people say that) Chelswu told me t$_i$'
          *'the rumor$_i$ that Chelswu told me t$_i$'

Relative clauses are usually taken to express presupposed information, which would be a fact in the conversational common ground. Alternatively, if they are predicates semantically, then there is no question of whether they can denote propositions or facts.

With nouns of perception like *naymsay* 'smell', only the simple form is possible, and there may be two reasons for this: the meaning of the clause is as an event, and these constructions may be quite like relative clauses – sometimes they are called pseudo-relatives or gapless relatives:

(13) a. [sayngsen-i tha-nun] naymsay
          fish-NOM   burn-PNE smell
      b. *[sayngsen-i tha-n-ta-nun]   naymsay
          fish-NOM   burn-PRS-DEC-PNE smell
          'the smell of fish burning'

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As I discussed in the introduction, there is the full range of semantic complement types for nouns. Different classes of nouns require a specific clause type suffix before the prenominal marker *nun*, depending on their semantics:

(14)   a. *[John-i   chayk-ul ilk-un] cilmwun
                John-NOM book-ACC read-PNE question

          b. [John-i   chayk-ul ilk-ess-nya-nun]   cilmwun
                John-NOM book-ACC read-PAST-INT-PNE question
                'the question whether John read a book'

(15)   a. *[*pro* chayk-ul sa-nun] ceyan
                  book-ACC buy-PNE suggestion

          b. [*pro* chayk-ul sa-ca-nun]   ceyan
                  book-ACC buy-EXH-PNE suggestion
                'the suggestion that we buy a book'

(16)   a. *[*pro* chayk-ul ilk-nun] myenglyeng
                  book-ACC read-PNE order

          b. [*pro* chayk-ul ilk-ula-nun]   myenglyeng
                  book-ACC read-IMP-PNE order
                'the order that we read a book'

In what follows I will concentrate on 'declarative' meanings, relating to the difference between facts and events, and propositions. In declarative noun-complement constructions, the simple and complex forms show more direct variation. The following examples repeat some of my initial observations:

(17)   a. [Minswu-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun]
                Minswu-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE
                somwun/sosik
                rumor/news
                'the rumor/news that Minswu stole the jewelry'

          b. *[Minswu-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] somwun/sosik
                Minswu-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   rumor/news

(18)   a. [Minswu-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun] cwucang
                Minswu-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE claim
                'the claim that Minswu stole the jewelry'

          b. *[Minswu-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] cwucang
                Minswu-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   claim

(19)   a. [sayngsen-i tha-nun] naymsay
                fish-NOM   burn-PNE smell
                'the smell of fish burning'

          b. *[sayngsen-i tha-n-ta-nun]   naymsay
                fish-NOM   burn-PRS-DEC-PNE smell

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(20) a. [cikwu-ka twunggu-n] sasil
          earth-NOM be.round-PNE fact
          'the fact that the earth is round.'
      b. [cikwu-ka twunggul-ta-nun] sasil
          earth-NOM be.round-DEC-PNE fact
          'that the earth is round'

Lee et al. (1999) present similar examples like (21):

(21) a. pi-ka   o-nun   / *o-n-ta-nun   kwangkyeng
          rain-NOM come-PNE   come-PRES-DEC-PNE scene
          'the scene of (it) raining'
      b. pi-ka   *o-n   / o-ass-ta-nun   cwucang
          rain-NOM come-PNE   come-PAST-DEC-PNE claim
          'the claim that it rained'
      c. pi-ka   o-n   / o-ass-ta-nun   sasil
          rain-NOM come-PNE   come-PAST-DEC-PNE fact
          'the fact that it rained'

Here, *kwangkyeng* 'scene' requires an event-denoting complement and *cwu-cang* 'claim' requires a proposition-denoting complement. *sasil* 'fact' requires a fact-denoting complement and might appear to allow the complex form of the complement to be coerced to denote a fact even if it usually denotes a proposition. However, I think what is more relevant here is that *sasil* does not have to mean 'fact', and hence the complex form in (21-c) might have a true propositional interpretation.

3. Facts and Propositions

Propositions are descriptions which can be the content of attitudes, and so on, and facts are true states of affairs in the world. The oddness of (22-b) shows that propositions tend to be associated with the complex form and facts with the simple form:

(22) a. [cikwu-ka twunggul-ta-nun] sasil-ul mit-ni?
          earth-NOM be.round-DEC-PNE fact-ACC believe-Q
          'Do you believe that the earth is round?'
      b. ??[cikwu-ka twunggu-n] sasil-ul mit-ni?
          earth-NOM be.round-PNE fact-ACC believe-Q
          '??Do you believe the fact that the earth is round?'
      c. [cikwu-ka twunggu-n] sasil-ul a-ni?
          earthNOM be.round-PNE fact-ACC know-Q
          'Do you know the fact that the earth is round?'

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(22-c) seems to presuppose the truth of the embedded proposition. Note that (22-a) has the noun *sasil* even though the whole phrase is interpreted non-factively, with 'believe'.

According to Ginzburg and Sag (2000), a fact-denoting clause can be equated with the noun 'fact', as in (23-a). The Korean example in (23-b), based on an example in a Korean dictionary entry for *sasil*, looks similar but has a more complex interpretation.

(23)   a.   The fact is that Tony solved the problem first.
        b.   sasil-un Tony-ka   ku mwuncey-lul ceyil mence
               fact-TOP Tony-NOM the problem-ACC first
               phwul-ess-ta-nun   kes-i-ta
               solve-PAST-DEC-PNE thing-be-DEC
               'In fact (*sasil*), it is the case (*kes*) that Tony solved the problem first.'

More relevant examples seem to be those in (24). (24-b) is odd, and it is interpreted like 'That people say that Mary stole jewelry is a fact'.

(24)   a.   [Mary-ka   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] kes-un   sasil-i-ta
               Mary-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   thing-TOP fact-be-DEC
               'That Mary stole the jewelry is a fact.'
        b. ^{??}[Mary-ka   posek-ul   hwumci-ess-ta-nun] kes-un
               Mary-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE thing-TOP
               sasil-i-ta.
               fact-be-DEC

Ginzburg and Sag also show that facts can have causal powers (after Vendler 1967):

(25)   a.   [ku-uy   pwumo-ka   pwuca-i-n] kes-i   ku-eykey
               he-GEN parents-NOM rich-be-PNE thing-NOM he-DAT
               amwu towum-i   toy-ci   anh-ass-ta
               any   help-NOM become-COMP NEG-PAST-DEC
               '(The fact) That his parents are rich was no help for him.'
        b. ^{??}[ku-uy   pwumo-ka   pwuca-i-ess-ta-nun]   kes-i
               he-GEN parents-NOM rich-be-PAST-DEC-PNE thing-NOM
               ku-eykey amwu towum-i   toy-ci   anh-ass-ta
               he-DAT   any   help-NOM become-COMP NEG-PAST-DEC
               'That his parents were rich was no help for him.'

Facts, of course, are the classic complements of true factive predicates, and the examples here show that the simple form is greatly preferred:

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(26) a. na-nun [PRO John-ul   chwuchenha-n] kes-ul
          I-TOP   John-ACC recommend-PNE thing-ACC
          hwuhoyha-ess-ta
          regret-PAST-DEC
          'I regretted that I recommended John.'
      b. *na-nun [PRO John-ul   chwuchenha-ess-ta-nun]
          I-TOP   John-ACC recommend-PAST-DEC-PNE
          kes-ul   hwuhoyha-ess-ta
          thing/fact-ACC regret-PAST-DEC

(27) a. [John-i   sako-lo   cwuk-un] kes-un   cengmal
           John-NOM accident-in die-PNE thing/fact-TOP really
          pikuk-i-ta
          tragedy-be-DEC
          'It is really a tragedy that John died in an accident.'
      b. ?*[John-i   sako-lo   cwuk-ess-ta-nun]   kes-un
           John-NOM accident-in die-PAST-DEC-PNE thing/fact-TOP
          cengmal pikuk-i-ta
          really   tragedy-be-DEC

4. The Speaker's Evidence

When the speaker has direct evidence of a fact or event, the complex form cannot be used. In such cases it seems inappropriate to present it as a proposition, or some kind of indirect description inherent in the meaning of the complex form which distances the speaker from the event. It seems that if one has evidence for something, it is odd to present it as (hypothetically) being told by other people.

Looking at events, perception predicates require the simple form of their complement clauses:

(28) a. [nwun-i   o-nun]   kwangkyeng
           snow-NOM come-PNE scene
           'the scene of snowing'
      b. *[nwun-i   o-n-ta-nun   / o-ass-ta-nun]
           snow-NOM come-PRES-DEC-PNE   come-PAST-DEC-PNE
          kwangkyeng
          scene

(29) a. na-nun [John-i   kil-eyse no-nun   / nol-ko iss-nun]
          I-TOP   John-NOM street-on play-PNE   is playing-PNE
          kes-ul   po-ass-ta
          thing-ACC see-PAST-DEC
          'I saw that John played (was playing) on the street.'

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b.   na-nun [nwun-i   o-nun]   kes-ul   po-ass-ta
    I-TOP   snow-NOM come-PNE thing-ACC see-PAST-DEC
    'I saw it was snowing.'

Compare (29-a) with (30):

(30)   a.   na-nun [John-i   pang-eyse nwup-e iss-ta-nun] kes-ul
    I-TOP   John-NOM room-in   is lying-DEC-PNE   thing-ACC
    tul-ess-ta/*po-ass-ta
    hear-PAST-DEC/see-PAST-DEC
    'I heard/saw that John was lying in the room.'
    b.   na-nun [John-i   pang-eyse nwup-e iss-nun] kes-ul
    I-TOP   John-NOM room-in   is lying-PNE   thing-ACC
    *tul-ess-ta/po-ass-ta
    hear-PAST-DEC/see-PAST-DEC
    'I heard/saw that John was lying in the room.'

When the speaker knows a fact, the simple form is preferred:

(31)   a.$^{?(?)}$nay-ka [John-i   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun]
    I-NOM   John-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE
    kes/sasil-ul   al-ko iss-nuntey,   ne-nun   way ttan
    thing/fact-ACC know-CONJUNCTIVE you-TOP why other
    soli-lul   ha-ni?
    word-ACC say-Q
    b.   nay-ka [John-i   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] kes/sasil-ul
    I-NOM   John-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   thing/fact-ACC
    al-ko iss-nuntey,   ne-nun   way ttan soli-lul   ha-ni?
    know-CONJUNCTIVE you-TOP why other word-ACC say-Q
    'I know that John stole the jewelry, so why do you say something else?'

However, when the speaker's evidence is indirect, the pattern goes the other way around:

(32)   a.   nay-ka [John-i   posek-ul   hwumchi-ess-ta-nun]
    I-NOM   John-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PAST-DEC-PNE
    kes-ul   tul-ess-nuntey,   kukes-i   sasil-i-ni?
    thing-ACC hear-PAST-CONJUNCTIVE that-NOM true-be-Q
    'I heard that John stole the jewelry. Is that true?'
    b. ?*nay-ka [John-i   posek-ul   hwumchi-n] kes-ul
    I-NOM   John-NOM jewelry-ACC steal-PNE   thing-ACC
    tul-ess-nuntey,   kukes-i   sasil-i-ni?
    hear-PAST-CONJUNCTIVE that-NOM true-be-Q

And with non-factive predicates, the complex form is preferred and the simple form is quite marked:

(33)   a.   na-nun [John-i   ku pemcoy-lul cecill-ess-ta-nun]
              I-TOP   John-NOM that crime-ACC commit-PAST-DEC-PNE
              kes/sasil-ul   mit-ul   swu eps-ess-ta
              thing/fact-ACC believe-PNE ability NEG-PAST-DEC
              'I could not believe that John committed the crime.'
      b. ?*na-nun [John-i   ku pemcoy-lul cecilu-n]
              I-TOP   John-NOM that crime-ACC commit-PNE
              kes/sasil-ul   mit-ul   swu eps-ess-ta
              thing/fact-ACC believe-PNE ability NEG-PAST-DEC

It seems that the complex form is compatible with both factive and propositional complements. The simple form is used to present a fact or event, but not a proposition.

5. Summary

The data that I have surveyed here suggest the following conclusions:

(34)   a.   The simple prenominal form is used to present a fact or event, but not a proposition (see also Nam 1989).
      b.   The complex prenominal form is used to present a proposition, or indirect evidence of a fact.
      c.   The Korean noun *sasil* does not necessarily mean 'fact' when it has a modifying clause, but can also mean 'possibility' or 'eventuality' (in the sense of a state of affairs that may come to be, that a proposition describes).

6. Some Speculations about the Structure of the Noun Complement Clauses

Why are factive complement clauses expressed in a simpler form than 'propositional' complements, without any mood or force markers? This difference seems to go against the idea that factive complements are 'bigger' than non-factive ones. Kiparsky and Kiparsky (1971) famously argued that factive complements have NP-over-S structure, while non-factives are just S.

However, what is at issue is the structure that is actually inside the complement clause, and it is also well-known that the complements of factive predicates tend to resist main clause phenomena (Kiparsky and Kiparsky 1971, Hooper and Thompson 1973). This suggests that they lack structure in the upper layer of the left periphery of the clause. Haegeman (2006) proposes that non-factive complements are structurally more complex and articulated than

factive complements (see also de Cuba 2007). Adopting a modified version of Rizzi's (1997) left periphery, she assumes a CP-layer for speaker deixis, a functional layer which anchors a proposition to a speaker, a layer absent in factive complements and present in non-factive complements. Simplifying slightly, factive CPs have a 'reduced' structure, lacking a ForceP, in her analysis.

According to Haegeman, the factive interpretation of simple clauses could be seen as a default reading: their content, not being asserted, or related to any cognitive agent, is just 'taken for granted'. The Korean data seem to provide clear support for Haegeman's proposal: the non-factive complement clauses show a complex structure with a Force (or clause type) marker and the factive ones lack a Force marker. The exact nature of the extra structure in the proposition-denoting complement clauses needs further investigation.

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