Object Asymmetries in Korean [1]

Hyun-Ju Park

National University of Singapore

artp9338@nus.edu.sg

The aim of this paper is to suggest that Korean exhibits object asymmetry by showing that there is only one argument that demonstrates the "primary object" syntactic properties of case marking, reciprocalisation and the passive, despite clauses with more than one argument bearing accusative marking, such as in the morphological causative construction.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper [2] is to look into double accusative-marked objects in a single clause, and to argue that they are asymmetrical with respect to case marking, reciprocalisation and the passive in Korean. Let us begin with example (1) [3]:

> (1) a. * nay-ka ***ku   yeca-lul   simpwulum-ul***   sikhi-ess-ta.
>
>   I-N   the   woman-A   errand-A   make-PA-DEC
>
>   'I made the woman do some errand.' (Yang 1998: 247)

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[2] I would like to thank Arto Anttila, Vivienne Fong, K.P. Mohanan, and my supervisor Tara Mohanan for their valuable comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this paper. All the shortcomings or mistakes are of course my own.

[3] Abbreviation: N: Nominative D: Dative A: Accusative I: Instrument PA: Past
DEC: Declarative CAUS: Causative morpheme KEY: -key complementizer
E: suffix –e NI: Nominalizer

b. Mary-ka ***ttal-lul***   ***sakwa-lul***   mek-I-ess-ta.

Mary-N daughter-A apple-A eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

'Mary fed (her) daughter an apple.'

Given (1), in which the objects of the simple triadic predicate *sikhi-* 'make some do', the causative verb formed with *mek-* 'eat', and the causative morpheme *-I-* bear double accusative marking, the following questions are raised: (i) What contexts does double accusative marking allow? (ii) Is double accusative marking in Korean morphological causatives analogous to the o-marked morphological causatives in Japanese (Mohanan 1988, Matsumoto 1992, and Manning, Sag and Iida 1996) involving clause-embeddedness? and (iii) Does the double accusative marking in (1) suggest that Korean, in which a (direct) object is marked with the accusative marker *–lul/ul*, is typologically a symmetrical object language like Kichaga, discussed in Bresnan and Moshi (1990) and Alsina (1996)? Based on these questions, let us consider object asymmetries in Korean in a clause with a non-derived predicate.

2. Object Asymmetries in Korean
2.1. Case Marking

The accusative marker in Korean marks not only a direct object but also a non-direct object. This is shown by example (2):

(2) a. nae-ka ***path-ey⁴***   mwul-ul cwu-ess-ta.

I-N field-D water-A give-PA-DEC

'I watered the field.'

b. nae-ka ***path-ul***   mwul-ul cwu-ess-ta.

I-N field-A water-A give-PA-DEC

'I watered the field.' (Yang 1998: 245)

As suggested by Yang (1998: 238), examples (2a) and (2b) differ in meaning. In (2a), the argument *path* 'filed' with the dative marker is read as either being totally or partially watered, while in (2b) the

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⁴ The inanimate dative marker

accusative bearing argument *path* is watered as a whole. Such contrasting meaning may be illustrated by (3):

(3) a.   nae-ka   ***path-ey***   mwul-ul   ***ilpwu***   cwu-ess-ta.
             I-N   field-D   water-A   in part   give-PA-DEC
             'I partially watered the field.'

     b. *   nae-ka   ***path-ul***   mwul-ul   ***ilpwu***   cwu-ess-ta.
             I-N   field-A   water-A   in part   give-PA-DEC
             INT: I partially watered the field.

                                                (ibid.)

That the accusative-marked argument in (3b) is semantically incompatible with the adverb that denotes partiality, as argued in Yang, indicates that the accusative marker involves a semantic notion of 'total affectedness'. Given (2) and (3), we can say that the accusative maker in Korean does not necessarily associate with the grammatical function of direct object. However, a direct object in Korean is by default marked with the accusative marker *–ul/lul*. Examples are given in (4) and (5):

(4) a.   Bill-i   ***John-ul***   ttayli-ess-ta.
             Bill-N   John-A   hit-PA-DEC
             'Bill hit John.'

     b. *   Bill-i   ***John-eykey***   ttayli-ess-ta.
             Bill-N   John-D   hit-PA-DEC
             'Bill hit John.'

(5) a. *   nae-ka   path-ey   ***mwul-ey/lo***   cwu-ess-ta.
             I-N   field-D   water-D/I   give-PA-DEC

     b. *   nae-ka   path-ul   ***mwul-ey/lo***   cwu-ess-ta.
             I-N   field-A   water-D/A   give-PA-DEC

In (4a), the object of the simple dyadic predicate *ttayli-* 'hit' *John* bears accusative marking. (4b) shows us that the object argument cannot be marked with any case marker other than the accusative. Given (4), we can account for the ungrammaticality of example (5) because the primary object bears non-accusative marking. This means that a primary object cannot be marked with any case marker other than the accusative. With respect to case marking, the double accusative-bearing objects in (5) are asymmetrical in that the primary object necessarily bears accusative marking.

2.2. Reciprocalisation

In Korean, when the phrase *kak* 'each' occurs with the phrase *selo* 'each other', the former c-commands the latter, as in English. An example of Korean reciprocalisation is given below:

(6) a. nay-ka   ***kak*** namca-eykey   ***selo-uy***   kanpang-ul   cwu-ess-ta.
         I-N   each man-D   each other-G   bag-A   give-PA-DEC
         'I gave each man each other's bag.'

     b.* nay-ka ***selo-uy***   namca-eykey   ***kak***   kanpang-ul   cwu-ess-ta.
         I-N   each other-G   man-D   each   bag-A   give-PA-DEC
         'I gave each other's man each bag.'

As demonstrated by (6), the indirect object is asymmetrical to the direct object in that it cannot be reciprocalised. The asymmetry between the indirect and direct object is invariant even if the indirect object is in the accusative case, as shown in (7):

(7) a.   nay-ka   ***kak   namca-lul***   ***selo-uy***   kanpang-ul   cwu-ess-ta.
          I-N   each man-A   each other-G bag-A   give-PA-DEC
          'I gave each man each other's bag.'

    b.* nay-ka ***selo-uy***   ***namca-lul***   ***kak***   kanpang-ul   cwu-ess-ta.
        I-N   each other-G   man-A   each   bag-A   give-PA-DEC
        INT: I gave each man each other's bag.

Reciprocalisation therefore suggests that there is one direct object among the accusative-marked arguments in Korean.

2.3. The Passive

The asymmetry between the objects is also shown by passivisation. Example of this are given in (8):

(8)   a.   nae-ka   ***path-ul***   ***mwul-ul***   cwu-ess-ta.
                I-N   field-A   water-A   give-PA-DEC
                'I watered the field.'

        b.   ***mwul-i***   (na-eyuhaye)   ***path-ey***   cwu-e   ci-ess-ta.
                water-N   I-by   field-D   give-*E*   become-PA-DEC
                LIT: Water was given to the field (by me).

        c. * *mwul-i*   (na-eyuhaye)   ***path-ul***   cwu-e   ci-ess-ta.
                water-N I-by   field-A   give-*E*   become-PA-DEC
                INT: Water was given to the field (by me).

        d. * ***path-i***   (na-eyuhaye)   mwul-ul/i   cwu-e   ci-ess-ta.
                field-N I-by   water-A/N   give-*E*   become-PA-DEC
                INT: The field was given water (by me).

In a double accusative-marked object construction, the second argument bearing accusative marking, as in (8a), becomes the passive subject, as shown in (8b), while the first argument bearing the accusative marker cannot be the passive subject, as in (8d). The double accusative marked objects are asymmetrical with respect to the passive such that only a primary object can be the passive subject. Note that, as in (8c), no accusative marking is allowed in the passive in Korean, which indicates that there is no primary object. To summarise, case marking, reciprocalisation and the passive show us that double accusative-marked objects are asymmetrical.

3. Morphological Causatives in Korean

3.1. Morphological Causatives

Now let us consider double accusative marking in Korean morphological causatives, which I refer to as MC from now on. A verb of which the logical subject is affected can be morphologically causativised in Korean, such as *mek-* 'eat', *ip-* 'wear', *ilk-* 'read', *nok-* 'melt', and so on. An example of MC is given in (9):[5]

    (9)   a.   ttal-i   sakwa-lul   ***mek*-ess-ta.**

                    Daughter-N   apple-A   eat-PA-DEC

                    'The daughter ate an apple.'

                b.   Mary-ka   ***ttal-lul   sakwa-lul***   mek-I-ess-ta.

                    Mary-N   daughter-A apple-A   eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

                    'Mary fed (her) daughter an apple.'

A simple dyadic predicate as in (9a) is causativised, as shown in (9b). Since the causative morpheme introduces an additional argument, the causer *Mary*, the causative verb in (9b) has three arguments. The causee can bear accusative marking. Firstly, I show that double accusative marking in MC does not involve clause-embeddedness, unlike the Japanese *–(s)as(e)* causatives (Mohanan 1988, Matsumoto 1992, and Manning, Sag and Iida 1996), providing evidence from subject honorification, the distribution of negative polarity items, the clause-bound reflexive, and control in a participle clause.

3.2. Monoclausality of MC

3.2.1. Subject Honorification

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[5] In previous studies, it has been claimed that the morphological causative in Korean is idiosyncratic, given that it is irregular and unproductive (O'Grady 1991, and Y-M Park 1991, among many others), however I argue in my Ph.D. thesis (to be completed in 2003) that the base verbs of which the logical argument is affected allow the causative morpheme.

To show the monoclausality of MC, I place MC as an object complement of the dyadic predicate *cwuliki-* 'enjoy', and the clause boundary is indicated by square brackets, as in (10):

(10) a. Halapeci-kkeyse **[**sonca-lul sakwa-lul ***mek-I-si-ki*]**-lul
          grandfather-H **[**grandson-A apple-A eat-CAUS-SH-NI**]**-A

          cwulki-***si***-ess-ta.
          enjoy-SH-PA-DEC
          'Grandfather enjoyed feeding (his) grandson an apple.'

      b. * Halapeci-kkeyse **[**sonca-lul sakwa-lul ***mek-I-ki*]**-lul
             grandfather-H **[**grandson-A apple-A eat-CAUS-NI **]**-A

             cwulki-***si***-ess-ta.
             enjoy-SH-PA-DEC

In (10a), the causative verb as a whole has the subject honorific marker *–si-*. In (10b), the causative verb does not bear subject honorification morphology, and it is ungrammatical. The contrast between (10a) and (10b) in subject honorific marking can be accounted for if we assume that the grammatical subject of the causative verb is the *halapeci* 'grandfather' in the embedded clause, indicated by the square brackets. The fact that there is only one subject in MC suggests that it consists of a single clause, given that subject honorification is a clause-bound agreement between a subject and its verb in Korean.

3.2.2. Distribution of Negative Polarity Item

The distribution of negative polarity items also suggests MC has a single syntactic clause, as shown in (11):

(11) a. Mary-***pakkey*** ttal-lul sakwa-ul ***an*** mek-i-ess-ta.
          Mary-except daughter-A apple-A NOT eat-CAUS-PA-DEC
          'Only Mary fed (her) daughter an apple.'

b. Mary-ka ***ttal-pakkey*** sakwa-ul ***an*** mek-i-ess-ta.

Mary-N daughter-except apple-A NOT eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

'Mary did not feed anyone an apple except for (her) daughter.'

c. Mary-ka ttal-lul ***sakwa-pakkey*** ***an*** mek-i-ess-ta.

Mary-N daughter-A apple-except NOT eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

'Mary did not feed (her) daughter anything but an apple.'

In (11), the negated causative verb using the negative element *an* 'not' licenses the negative polarity item *–pakkey* 'except for' on any argument. This suggests that the grammatical functions and the verb are in the same clause, provided the locality condition of the negative polarity item and the negative element are in the same clause.

3.2.3. Reflexive

The clause-bound reflexive *casin* 'self' takes the causer as antecedent, as shown in (12). This indicates that MC has one subject, and thus a single clause.

(12) Mary***i***-ka ttal***j***-lul ***casin i*j-uy*** sakwa-ul mek-i-ess-ta

Mary***i***-N daughter***j***-A self***i*j***-G apple-A eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

'Mary ***i*** fed the daughter ***j*** self ***i*j***'s apple.'

3.2.4. Control

That the PRO in the participle clause *–myense* 'while' can be controlled by either a matrix subject or object if the matrix clause is biclausal, as shown in (13), while only the subject can be the controller in MC, as shown in (14), suggests that MC is monoclausal:

(13) a. [***PROij*** thelepi-lul po-myense]

PRO***ij*** TV-A see-while

Maryi-ka   ttal*j*-lul   sakwa-ul   mek-key ha-ess-ta

Mary*i*-N   daughter*j*-A apple-A eat-*KEY*   do-PA-DEC

'Mary *i* fed the daughter *j* an apple while PRO *ij* watching TV.'

       b.   *Maryi-ka*   ttal*j*-lul   [PRO*ij* thelepi-lul   po-myense]

             Mary*i*-N   daughter*j*- A   PRO*ij* TV-A   see-while

             sakwa-ul   mek-key   ha-ess-ta

             apple-A   eat-*KEY*   do-PA-DEC

(14)   a.   [**PRO*i*j***   thelepi-lul   po-myense]

             PRO*i*j*   TV-A   see-while

             Maryi-ka ttal*j*-lul   sakwa-ul   mek-I-ess-ta

             Mary*i*-N   daughter*j*-A apple-A   eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

             'Mary *i* fed (her) daughter*j* an apple while PRO *i*j* watching TV.'

       b.   *Maryi-ka*   ttal*j*-lul   [PRO*i*j* thelepi-lul   po-myense]

             Mary*i*-N   daughter*j*- A   PRO*i*j* TV-A   see-while

             sakwa-ul   mek-I-ess-ta

             apple-A   eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

Having shown that double accusative marking in MC involves no clause-embeddedness, I argue that MC is another source of object asymmetry in exactly the same way as non-causative double accusative-marked clauses.

4. MC and Object Asymmetries

4.1. MC and Case Marking

Firstly, objects in MC are asymmetrical with respect to case marking. As shown in (9b), *sakwa* 'apple' only bears accusative marking, while the causee can be marked with either the dative or the accusative marker. This implies that *sakwa* is the primary object in MC, due to the fact that the direct object gets the accusative marker by default in Korean:

(9)　　a.　　Mary-ka　　ttal-lul　　***sakwa-ul***　　mek-I-ess-ta.

　　　　　　Mary-N　　daughter-A　apple-A　　　eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

　　　　　　'Mary fed (her) daughter an apple.'

　　　b. *　Mary-ka　　ttal-lul　　***sakwa-eykey***　　mek-I-ess-ta.

　　　　　　Mary-N　　daughter-A　apple-D　　　eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

　　　　　　'Mary fed (her) daughter an apple.'

4.2. MC and Reciprocalisation

That only the object of the base verb can be reciprocalised suggests that the accusative-marked causee is not the direct object, as shown in (15) and (16):

(15) a.　　nay-ka　　**kak　ai-eykey**　　*selo-uy*　　　　***ppang-ul***　mek-I-ess-ta.

　　　　　　I-N　　　each　child-D　　each other-G　bag-A　　　eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

　　　　　　'I fed each child each other's bread.'

　　　b.*　nay-ka　***selo-uy***　　　　***ai-eykey***　　**kak　ppang-ul**　mek-I-ess-ta.

　　　　　　I-N　　each other-G　　child-D　　each　bread-A　eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

　　　　　　'I fed each other' child each bread.'

(16) a.　　nay-ka　　***kak　ai-lul***　　　*selo-uy*　　　　***ppang-ul***　mek-I-ess-ta.

　　　　　　I-N　　　each　child-A　　each other-G　bag-A　　　eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

　　　　　　'I fed each child each other's bread.'

b.* nay-ka ***selo-uy***   ***ai-lul***   ***kak ppang-ul***   mek-I-ess-ta.

     I-N   each other-G   child-A   each   bread-A   eat-CAUS-PA-DEC

     'I fed each other' child each bread.'

The causee in dative case as shown in (15b) and in accusative case as shown in (16b) cannot be reciprocalised. This indicates that the accusative causee is not a direct object.

4.3. MC and The Passive

The passive also shows us that the double accusative-bearing objects in MC are asymmetrical such that the object of the base verb becomes the passive subject, as demonstrated by (15a), but not the causee, as shown in (17b):

(17)   a.   ***sakwa-ka***   (Mary-eyuhay)   ttal-eykey   mek-I-e   ci-ess-ta.

            Apple-N   Mary-by   daughter-D eat-CAUS-*E*   become-PA-DEC

            LIT: An apple was eaten by the daughter (by Mary).

      b. * sakwa-ka   (Mary-eyuhay)   ***ttal-lul***   mek-I-e   ci-ess-ta.

            Apple-N   Mary-by   daughter-A   eat-CAUS-*E*   become-PA-DEC

      c. *   ttal-ka   (Mary-eyuhay)   ***sakwa-ka***   mek-I-e   ci-ess-ta.

            daughter-N   Mary-by   apple-N   eat-CAUS-*E*   become-PA-DEC

5. Concluding Remarks

The object asymmetries exhibited by a simple triadic predicate are consistently observed in MC because while the accusative-marked causee does not have the properties of a primary object, the accusative-marked argument of the base verb has because it obligatorily bears accusative marking, can be reciprocalised, and can be the passive subject; that is, there is only one primary object in MC.

The fact that Korean has only one primary object can be captured in the theory of AOP (Asymmetrical Object Parameter) in Bresnan and Moshi (1996) and Alsina (1996), because there is only one internal argument that is semantically unrestricted, having [-r] which maps onto a primary object.

The asymmetries of double accusative-marked objects can be accounted for if we assume that the semantically restricted argument associated with the semantic notion of [+affectedness] yields double accusative marking at the level of constituent structure, but its grammatical function remains invariant at the level of functional structure. That is, the accusative marker on the causee associates with the semantic notion, but does not associate with the grammatical function of direct object; case marking may vary in the given context, while case feature remains still.

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