Special Feature

15th century Korean Grammar from a Viewpoint of Linguistic Typology and Historical Grammar

PARK Jinho
Introduction

The 15th century has a special significance for the historical study of the Korean language because Hunmin jeongeum was invented in this period, by which one became able to write the Korean language very precisely. In order to study Korean before the 15th century, one must depend on the Sino-Korean orthography, much coarser than *hangeul*, and to make things worse, with limited data. In contrast, from the 15th century, there is abundant data, and the orthography is fine-grained, so one can come closer to the linguistic facts. Given this situation, it is natural that the historical study of Korean began from the 15th century. Therefore, after the language of the 15th century had been studied sufficiently, on this basis, that of the period before the 15th century was studied retrospectively, while that of the later period was studied prospectively. In other words, the 15th century has been the bridgehead for the historical study of the Korean language.

15th century Korean has been studied more extensively than other periods, due to the more precise and homogeneous orthography, but many aspects remain to be investigated thoroughly. So far, the grammatical study of 15th century Korean has been done mainly from an internal perspective, which means that researchers have been reading textual material from this period meticulously and describing the observed grammatical patterns. As a matter of fact, such an approach has contributed much to describing the linguistic facts objectively and faithfully, but if it has limitations, one needs to attempt other approaches.

A major source which can provide an external perspective is linguistic typology. Linguistic typology has been applied inductively to many languages of the world, and has led to the discovery of linguistic universals and patterns of variation. In virtue of such efforts, the grammatical organizations of many languages, various means of expressing grammatical categories, and how geographically adjacent languages show similar patterns have been revealed. In particular, tense-aspect-modality and transitivity have been studied very precisely, so these studies provide the framework on the basis of which one can look into 15th century Korean.

In addition, the diachronic perspective is also very important. Many linguistic materials before the 15th century have been discovered in the last 30 years. The amount of *eumdo*gugyeol 音讀口訣 material from the late Goryeo period equals that of *bangeul* material, and in the *sedok*gugyeol 釋讀口訣 material, grammatical elements are written very precisely, so the grammatical study of the Goryeo period Korean has produced remarkable results. In the past, there had been a large gap between the grammar of the Silla language using the *hyangga* material and that of 15th century Korean, but in virtue of gugyeol materials, this gap has been bridged. The grammatical study of gugyeol material, in turn, has shed light on the decipherment of *hyangga*. These studies have many implications for the grammatical study of 15th century Korean.

In this paper, I will take a new look at the grammar of 15th century Korean on the basis of linguistic typology and the Sino-Korean materials of the Silla and Goryeo periods. I hope that my approach from the external perspective will enable more insightful analysis than previous ones.

Tense-aspect System

The Problem

The tense-aspect-system of 15th century Korean has some peculiarities. In most languages which have a tense distinction between past and non-past, if they encode one of them as a zero marker, it is non-past that is encoded as a zero, and past is usually encoded as an overt marker. In contrast to this tendency, in 15th century Korean, non-past is expressed as an overt marker, and it is past that is expressed as a zero marker. For instance, the non-past form of the verb ga- (to mean “go”) is ga-nya-da ‘go-PRS-DEC’ or ga-nya-nil ‘go-PRS-DEC’, whereas its past tense form is ga-a-da ‘go-AOR-DEC’ or ga-a-nil ‘go-AOR-DEC’.

In fact, there were two past tense forms. In addition to ga-a-da and ga-a-nil, there are two additional past tense forms of the verb ga:- ga-deo-la ‘go-IMPERF-DEC’ and ga-deo-nil ‘go-IMPERF-DEC’. In other words, -deo- as well as ø marked past tense.

---

1. This practice in grammatical study is quite different from that in phonological study. In phonological studies of 15th century Korean, foreign materials such as Joseongwanyeokeo and the external perspectives have played important roles.

2. The statements in this and the previous paragraphs are about verbs. Adjectives show a different pattern, in which ø encodes present and -deo- past.
In addition, there were -geo- and -eo is- which are related to past tense although they are less frequent than ø and -deo-. One of the two usages of -eo is-, through the intermediate stages of -es- and -eos-, became the prefinal ending -eoss- in modern Korean. Some instances of -eo is-, -es-, and -eos- in the 15th century correspond to the modern -eos-, and others correspond to the modern -eo is-.

On the basis of these facts, the following questions can be raised. First, how did the unusual system arise in which past is encoded as ø? Second, how were the grammatical elements which express past-related meanings differentiated? I will discuss the first question in the next section, and examine the second question from a typological point of view in this section.

Typologists have discovered the following recurrent patterns as they investigated tense-aspect systems in many languages:

1. The binary system of past and non-past as well as the tertiary system of past, present, and future is equally frequent.
2. If a language has a sufficiently grammaticalized aspect system, it is usually a binary system of perfective and imperfective.
3. The distinction between perfective and imperfective usually appears in the past tense, and is infrequent in the present tense.
4. Among aspectual values which are not as grammaticalized as perfective and imperfective, perfect, progressive, or resultative aspects are frequently attested.
5. A language can have both the more grammaticalized aspectual distinction of perfective vs. imperfective and less grammaticalized aspectual values.

The Opposition between ø and -deo-

The question of the opposition between ø and -deo- can be answered in large part by 2. That is, ø encodes past perfective, while -deo- encodes past imperfective. This position was presented by Choi (2015) and Ito (2009).

It is helpful to look at the adnominal inflections of verbs in modern Korean, in order to have a sense of the opposition between ø and -deo-. The tense-aspect system has experienced substantial change from the 15th century to modern times, and the driving force of this change was the grammaticalization of -eos-. This element has taken the status of the main past tense marker, and the tense-aspect system was reorganized at a large scale due to this change. However, except for Gyeongsang provincial dialects, -eos- did not intrude into adnominal inflections, so the adnominal inflections are maintaining their state from the 15th century. What is the difference between nilg-ø-eun 'read-AOR-ADN' and nilg-deo-n 'read-IMPERF-ADN'? Both express that the action of reading was performed at a point in the past, but the former gives the impression that this action was completed, whereas the latter suggests that the action was ongoing in the past, not completed. The difference between nilg-ø-da and nilg-deo-la or nilg-ø-eunila and nilg-deo-nila is essentially the same as this.

To digress, in inflections other than adnominal, as -eos- was established as a main past tense marker, the former past tense markers ø and -deo- underwent substantial changes. In verbal inflection, for encoding past tense, ø came to be no longer used except for adnominal forms, and -deo- survived by acquiring mirative and evidential meanings although the frequency was lowered due to these additional meanings.

Prefinal Ending -geo-

-geo- appears frequently in the 15th century materials although not as frequent as ø or -deo-. As a matter of fact, -geo- in the 15th century has two usages, and this is the result of a merging of two distinct elements from the previous period. One was written as “’” (gyeo) in the Sino-Korean orthography, while the other was written as “” (geo). The former encoded meaning irrelevant to tense-aspect (probably modality or mood), whereas the latter had meaning related to tense-aspect.

What is the precise nature of this latter element? In simple terms, it can be considered a perfect aspect marker. Perfect aspect expresses that a past event is relevant to the present. The construction “have + past participle” in English is a representative perfect marker.

A past event can have present relevance in many ways:

3. These two aspectual values are also called “aorist” and “imperfect” respectively.
① Its temporal position is near the present, so its effects remain in the present. (recent past, near past, or immediate past)
② It started at a point in the past, but has been continuing up to the present. (durative)
③ The subject referent has the experience of the event up to the present. (experiential)
④ The event occurred in the past, and was completed in the past, but the resultant state is obtained in the present. (resultative)

The “have + past participle” construction in English has all of these four senses. "-Geo-" appears to have fewer senses. In sentence-final inflections, the recent past meaning is salient. O-na-da ‘come-PERF-DEC’ ("-na-" is an allomorph of "-geo-") expresses that the event of coming occurred immediately before the speech time. Bam-i gip-geo-da ‘night-NOM deep-PERF-DEC’ expresses that it has become a deep night a moment ago. "-Geo-" cannot refer to an event in the remote past. In adnominal inflections, usages other than recent past are prevalent. Dina-geo-n ‘pass-PERF-ADN’ is translated into jina-ø-n ‘pass-AOR-ADN’ of modern Korean. The reason that the author used "-geo-" instead of Ø, is that the event of time passing is continuing up to now, so this usage can be considered an instance of durative.

-Eo is- Construction

-Eo is- has variants: -eo- and -eos-. Some scholars (such as Seunguk Lee, Dongwan Han, and Eonhak Chung) insist that different forms must have different meanings, but the position that these variants had essentially the same meaning in the 15th century is more firmly established because these appear interchangeably in the same contexts (Choi 2015; Park 2018). When an element is grammaticalized, erosion of form and semantic bleaching occur in parallel, but their pace is not always synchronized. One can proceed significantly, and the other can fall behind. In a similar vein, when a person gets old, many changes such as hypomnesia, hair whitening, hypokinesia, and loss of skin elasticity occur at once, but some of them can proceed in advance of others.

-Eo is- in the 15th century is the ancestor of the modern -eo is-, but the former had a much broader meaning than the latter—i.e., the former also had the function of -go is- in modern Korean. -Go is- seldom appears in the 15th century, and had only the resultative use, combined with transitive verbs which refer to actions of wearing or putting on. Intransitive resultative (expressed by -eo is- in modern Korean), progressive and transitive resultative (expressed by -go is- in modern Korean) were all expressed by -eo is- in the 15th century. That is, anj-aj is- ‘sit.down-PERF-exist’ in modern Korean corresponds to anj-aj is- of the 15th century, and both ga-go is- ‘go-PERF-exist’ and ga-aj is- ‘go-PERF-exist’ correspond to ga-aj is- of the 15th century. Even ip-go is- ‘put.on-PERF-exist’ in modern Korean corresponds to nip-eo is- ‘put.on-PERF-exist’ of the 15th century. The converbal ending -deo had a much wider use than -go, and this was not confined to the context of the auxiliary is-, but obtained also in clause combining. Bae-leul ta-go gang-eul geonneo ‘ship-ACC ride-PERF-PAT-DEC’ in modern Korean translates to boy-edel ta-a gang-sal geonneo- of the 15th century. This wide usage of -eo is- in 15th century Korean reminds us of -te iro in modern standard Japanese and zhe 這 in Mandarin Chinese.

Naturally, -eo is- was a new-comer in the tense-aspect system of 15th century Korean. -Geo- was also peripheral in comparison to Ø and -deo-. I can make this assertion on the basis of frequency. 15th century Korean had the opposition between perfective and imperfective as a main axis, and also had perfect aspect as a peripheral addition. Such a system is widespread among languages of the world. For instance, in French before “avoir + past participle” was grammaticalized, the opposition between simple past (past perfective) and imperfect (past imperfective) was the main axis in the past tense, and the “avoir + past participle” construction had the perfect aspect function similar to “have + past participle” in English. In modern French, the simple past has fallen out of use, and “avoir + past participle” took its place.

Functions of a and -deo- in the Narrative Discourse

When a language has an opposition between perfective and imperfective in the past tense, these two are usually used differently in the narrative discourse. Perfective is used in foreground events, which advance the main plot of the story, whereas imperfective is used in background events which support the main events. If a language does not have perfective and imperfective but has similar aspectual markers, you can also see similar phenomena. For instance, in English, simple past tense tends to be used in foreground, whereas past progressive or past perfect tends to be used in background. Also in modern Korean, -eos- tends to be used
in foreground, -eoss- is used when describing background events which had occurred before, and -go is-eoss- is used when describing background events which were obtained at the same time as the main events.

(1) a. 자수는 10년 만에 술회와 재회했다. (foreground: -eoss-)
    b. 술회는 3년 전에 이미 남편을 이의하고 혼자 되어 있었다. (background: -eoss-)
    c. 두 사람은 한동안 아무 말 없이 길을 걷었다. (foreground: -eoss-)
    d. 거리는 성탄을 즐기기 위해 나온 젊은 연인들로 북적거리고 있었다. (background: -eoss-)
    e. 술회가 침묵을 깨고 입을 열었다. (foreground: -eoss-)

Then you can expect that in 15th century Korean, ø was used in foreground, and -deo- in background. There are many examples confirming this expectation.

(2) a. 六師の弟子 劍渡差 （foreground: -deo-）
    b. 舍利弗이 만사바라가 舍利弗이 만사바라가 (foreground: ø)
    c. 菩薩이 일흐믈 무르신대 (foreground: ø)
    d. 菩薩이 바다다가 (foreground: -deo-)
    e. 菩薩이 바다다가 (foreground: no opposition)

(3) a. 西天에 모로메 프를 줄바꿈 (foreground: no opposition)
    b. 王이 韓된 도와요 (foreground: no opposition)

In (2), ø is used in foreground events, while -deo- is used in background events, as expected, in front of the converbal ending -ni. In (2f), the converbal ending is -geonnal, and -deo- cannot appear in this environment, so there is no opposition of ø and -deo-.

It is notable that -deo- is used not only in background, but also in foreground, not infrequently.

(4) a. 王이婆娑門을 만히 読者이 tapping (foreground: -eoss-)
    b. 舍利弗이 만사바라가 舍利弗이 만사바라가 (foreground: -deo-)
    c. 舍利弗이 만사바라가 (foreground: no opposition)

In statistics obtained from Volume 3 of Seokhosangjeol, ø was used in foreground 69 times, and there was no instance of ø used in background. In contrast, -deo- was used in background 43 times and in foreground 42 times. The number of instances of -deo- in foreground is comparable to that in background. On the basis of this fact, one could argue that -deo- in 15th century Korean was not an imperfective marker, but I think this is an overstatement. Linguists’ conception of the prototype of perfective and imperfective was formed mainly on the basis of Slavic and Romance languages, and on the basis of observing these languages, the expectation was also formed that perfective is used in foreground and imperfective in background. If one rules out a candidate just because it fails to satisfy one of many expectations about the prototype, this judgement does not accord with the spirit of prototype theory. From the point of view of prototype theory, -deo- in 15th century Korean is somewhat off the focal point of imperfective prototype, in that it is used as frequently in foreground as in background, but in other respects, it shows enough properties of imperfective. Only -deo- can be used in background, but either ø or -deo- can be used in foreground, so one has to investigate the semantic or functional difference between these two in foreground in the future.

4. The imperfective in Romance languages can also sometimes be used in foreground: "Pierre appela (foreground: perfective) au secours. L ’instant d ’après, un policier arrivait (foreground: imperfective), définition (foreground: imperfective) la porte et libérait (foreground: imperfective) Pierre." You can see that the correlation between imperfective and background is not perfect even in Romance languages.
Prefinal Ending -\( n_A \) -

**The Question**

You can see many instances of the prefinal ending -\( n_A \) - in 15\(^{th} \) century material, and this ending has survived as -\( n_U \) - in modern Korean. It is widely accepted that this ending is combined only with verbs, not with adjectives, and that this ending and its descendant encode present tense, but there are counter-examples to both of these two generalizations.

In Sino-Korean material, there are three characters 內, 飛, and 臥 which can be related to -\( n_A \). These three characters are considered to correspond to two elements in ancient Korean, -\( n_A \) - and -\( n_U \) -. This implies that these two merged into -\( n_A \) - in middle Korean. Here arise two questions:

1. What is the correspondence between the three characters 內, 飛, and 臥 on the one hand and the two elements -\( n_A \) - and -\( n_U \) - on the other?
2. What is the grammatical and/or semantic difference between -\( n_A \) - and -\( n_U \) - in ancient Korean?

**General Situation in the 15\(^{th} \) century**

The following table represents the tense-aspect inflections of verbs and adjectives in 15\(^{th} \) century Korean, and is very similar to that of the adnominal inflections of modern Korean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>meok-Ø-da</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>past perfective</td>
<td>meok-eul-la</td>
<td>dyoh-eul-la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meok-deo-la</td>
<td>dyoh-deo-la</td>
<td>past imperfective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meok-nʌ-da</td>
<td>dyoh-Ø-da</td>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The usages of -\( n_A \) - can be classified as follows:

1. State-of-affairs obtaining at the speech time

   (5) 그저가 오네모노 보고쳐요. 善男子！來，文殊師利法王子欲見汝身。 (釋証 20:41a)

2. Scheduled future

   (9) 폐 이다. 使者 布華 利師法王子 복을 달으여 오너다...父母 善男！欲來大利師法王子。太子遣往白利師跋王：『善友從大海歸』...父母聞太子歸。 (月釋 22:64a)

**Special Usage of -\( n_A \) - in the 15\(^{th} \) century**

As the conversion from adjectives to verbs was very productive in middle Korean, you can of course see many instances in which an original adjective has been converted to a verb and combined with -\( n_A \) -. In addition, there are some instances in which an original adjective has not been converted to a verb but combined with -\( n_A \) - (Lee 2009).
In all of these examples, the verbal inflections containing -rae- assert generic/permanent facts. This accords with the property of "ਰ/ब(र)" in Sino-Korean material.

It is peculiar that -eops- is often combined with -rae- in double negation constructions. These cannot be interpreted as meaning changes-of-state either.

(11) is an encyclopedic explication of the term firebead 火珠, so “火珠나라” should be considered to be a description of the general properties of firebeads, not a change of state such as “become bright.” (12) means that a skillful person deals well with materials even though their tools or other conditions are not good. “火珠나라” in (12) means that it is easy in nature, not that it becomes calm. (13) cannot mean “disappear,” as it is the translation of "Disappear." (14) also means that sensual activities are accompanied by much pain and small pleasure by their nature, not that pain is increasing. Also in (15), as the adverb “always” always shows, “火珠나라” means that it is calm always, not that it becomes calm.

Situation in the Modern Jeju Dialect

Adjectives in the modern Jeju dialect have two present tense inflections (Ko 2007).

① Declarative without -rae-
(17) 이구들을 빼다.
(meaning: This room is warm now.)
(18) 이구들은 지금 빼다.
(19) 이구들은 늘 빼다.
It can combine with the verbal noun ending “-니” (enlh), future/irrealis “-라” (li), or the imperative ending “-요” (jweo), which implies that it cannot be a present tense marker.

It can also combine with the converbal ending “-으” (myeo) which is also a difference from -니- in the 15th century.

It appears mainly in sentences expressing generic/permanent truths, not episodic events.

These examples show that -new- combined with adjectives indicates permanence or generic/gnomic truth.

**Situation in Seokdokgubyeol**

The character “新” (myeo) is considered to encode present tense, and the meaning and distribution (only combining with verbs, not with adjectives) are similar to those of -ni- in the 15th century. It never combines with the verbal noun ending “-니” (enlh), future/irrealis “-라” (li), or imperative endings. There are 84 instances, and 6 additional instances of the variant “新” (myeo).

The character “新” (myeo) can combine with verbs, adjectives, or the copula. There are 465 instances.

② Declarative with -new
(20) 이 구들은 돼요.
(meaning: This room is warm always.)
(21) 이 구들은 지금 돼요.
(22) 이 구들은 느렸어요.
③ Interrogative without -new
(23) 이 구들은 돼요?
(meaning: Is this room warm now?)
(24) 이 구들은 지금 돼요?
(25) 이 구들은 느렸어요?
④ Interrogative with -new
(26) 이 구들은 느렸어요?
(meaning: Is this room warm always?)
(27) 이 구들은 지금 느렸어요?
(28) 이 구들은 느렸어요?

The character “新” (myeo) can combine with verbs, adjectives, or the copula. There are 465 instances.
In the middle portion, "-는 말니" is not written, and in the last sentence (39b) "-는 말니" appears instead of "-는 말니." The subject of the matrix verb 願 is 菩薩, and the subject of the embedded clause S2 is 衆生. When S2 in (40) is an instance of indirect speech, "-는 말니" can be considered to be similar to -gwadyeo in the 15th century. If S2 in (40) is an instance of direct speech, "-는 말니" can be considered as a kind of imperative ending. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact meaning of "-는 말니," but it can be the same element in (37) and (38) which encodes permanence or gnomic truth, in that (39) is a general statement about what it is to get ilcheseungmyogongdeok 一切勝妙功德.

Some instances of "-는 말니" appear in sentences expressing episodic events.

As the sentences in (41) are describing specific events which occurred in a specific Buddhist ceremony, "-는 말니" in these sentences cannot be considered to encode permanence or gnomic truth. Such instances appear in the Old Translation of Humane King Sutra, and they are different constructions in the construction of hope in the 15th century. The ending -gwadyeo is used in the embedded subject. If S2 in (40) is an instance of indirect speech, "-는 말니" can be considered to be similar to -gwadyeo in the 15th century. If S2 in (40) is an instance of direct speech, "-는 말니" can be considered as a kind of imperative ending. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact meaning of "-는 말니," but it can be the same element in (37) and (38) which encodes permanence or gnomic truth, in that (39) is a general statement about what it is to get ilcheseungmyogongdeok 一切勝妙功德.

As the sentences in (41) are describing specific events which occurred in a specific Buddhist ceremony, "-는 말니" in these sentences cannot be considered to encode permanence or gnomic truth. Such instances appear in the Old Translation of Humane King Sutra, and they are different constructions in the construction of hope in the 15th century. The ending -gwadyeo is used in the embedded subject. If S2 in (40) is an instance of indirect speech, "-는 말니" can be considered to be similar to -gwadyeo in the 15th century. If S2 in (40) is an instance of direct speech, "-는 말니" can be considered as a kind of imperative ending. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact meaning of "-는 말니," but it can be the same element in (37) and (38) which encodes permanence or gnomic truth, in that (39) is a general statement about what it is to get ilcheseungmyogongdeok 一切勝妙功德.
The character 飞 (mu) is essentially the same as “- する -” in seokdokgugyeol.

(42) 恶虫 落于虚/ducnuon 三業 (鐵僞業障歌)
(43) a. 有矣 白鸥覴(宿zhoon) 尾如 加知谷寺谷中 入 成造为肺臓/hoon muo
   亦之(한사노다) 白鸥覴(宿zhoon) 男/及 就中 (慈悲碑陰 3-4)
b. 韓國 師門徒等乙 不動入院 完論 作法理上是在味
   出納/為臓 事是去等 右事須貼 (白巖寺貼文)

The character 飞 (mu) does not appear in idu 吉讀, and appears only once in hyangga.

(44) 乘生 安為飛等/佛體 顏叱 喜賜以留也 ( 항상중생가)

In (44), -mu- appears in the protasis of a complex sentence stating a generic fact.

The character 内 (mu) does not appear in seokdokgugyeol and appear frequently in hyangchal 邑札 and idu. There has been a debate on the reading of this character. The first group of scholars (such as Punghyeon Nam and Yong Lee) think that this character is used for its meaning, and read it as an. Other scholars (such as Jinho Park and Inyeong Heo) think that this character is used for its pronunciation. When adopting the latter position, the exact reading of this character in ancient Korean material is controversial. The pronunciation in the 15th century was “-” (nuy), but the pronunciation in the Silla period had probably been “-” (mu) with lip rounding. The reasons are as follows:

(a) 内 was hékouzi 合口字 with lip rounding in middle Chinese.
(b) 内 corresponds to “-” (mu) in the transliteration of personal names:
   e.g., 赫居世~不矩內.

As the pronunciation of 内 in ancient Korean was “-” (mu), and “-” (nuy) in the 15th century, one can infer that a change in the pronunciation occurred at some point in time. One cannot know exactly when such a change occurred. Therefore, some instances of 内 in hyangchal and idu correspond to “-” (mu) in seokdokgugyeol, whereas others to “-” (nuy). It is a task for the future to distinguish these two classes.

The usages of the character 内 can be classified as follows:

1. Used in sentences asserting permanent/gnomic truths
   (45) 君如 臣多支 民隱如/國惡 太平恨音吡如 (안간가)
   (46) 吾恥 不輸 悪伊腸等/花脻 折叱可 輔乎理音音如 (한화가)
   cf. (46) 吾恥 不輸 悪伊腸等/花脻 折叱可 輔乎理音音如 (한화가)

Both (45) and (46) consist of the protasis and the apodosis. Both clauses in (45) contain -nu-, whereas neither of the two clauses in (46) contains it. (46) is stating a specific fact that occurred between Suro-buin 水路夫人 and an old man who was taking a cow. In contrast, (45) is stating a general fact about a country, its king, his lieges, and the people. The prefinal ending 内 encodes the sense of permanence or gnomic truth, and corresponds to “-” in seokdokgugyeol.

The following sentence from idu also describes a general method of making Buddhist manuscripts, and contains 内.

(47) 經之 成內(입內) 法者 茄根中 香水 散入 生長令內凍(과이입내)
   (華嚴經寫經成記 2)
2. Used with -良齋 (ajyeo) or -去齋 (gojyeo) expressing hope
   (48) a. 郎也 持以支如賦烏隠/心未 際叱 良內良齋 (가기허달가)
   b. 乘生 向流中/不迷 群 無史 應内去齋 (보개화달가)

It is clear that the combinations -內良齋 (najjeo) and -内去齋 (najjeo) express the sense of hope, but it is difficult to isolate the contribution of 内 in this construction. In later idu and hangedul materials, -良齋 (ajjeo) or -去齋 (gojyeo) express hope without 内.

(c) 詞嚼, 詩篇, and 思內 were used interchangeably as terms referring to hyangga in Samguk yusa and Samguk sagi.
③ Used in sentences expressing specific/episodic events.  
(49) a. 千手觀音叱前良中 / 新以支(支)白屋尸 置內乎多(多 느오디)  
(韓千手觀音歌)  
b. 吾隱 去内如(가년다) 聲叱都 / 毛如 云遣 去内尼叱吉(가 낼고)  
(寺院碑陰)  
(50) a. 右寺原 問內乎矣(묻온ｗ)  
大山是在以 別地主 無亦在彌(慈寂碑陰3)  
b. 一品軍作隣(가니) 二十人亦 埼取五尺石築十尺方良中 排立令是  
白内乎矣(가니중 느오디)  
(淨兜寺形止記27-28)  

All the sentences in (49) of hyangga and (50) of idu refer to specific events,  
and correspond to “を” in (41) of seokdokgugyeol.  

A Hypothesis about the Origin and the Development of -nu- and -nʌ- 

A hypothesis about the diachronic change of -nu- and -nʌ- in ancient Korean, there were two prefinal endings (or auxiliary verbs in some theories):  

① -nu-: encodes present tense. combines only with verbs. written as 脤 or 内.  
② -nʌ-: encodes permanent/gnomic facts. can combine with verbs, adjectives or the copula. written as 飛/を or 内.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>character</th>
<th>transliteration</th>
<th>function</th>
<th>combinatorics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hyangchal</td>
<td>季내如</td>
<td>キネダ</td>
<td>permanency verbs, adjectives, or copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idu</td>
<td>季內知</td>
<td>キネナ</td>
<td>present tense only with verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gugyeol</td>
<td>季組知</td>
<td>キヌナ</td>
<td>present tense only with verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most instances of -nʌ- in the 15th century are mainly descendants of ①, despite their appearance. Instances of -nʌ- combining with adjectives in the 15th century and the modern Jeju dialect are descendants of ②.  

At some point in time in the Ancient Korean period, these two prefinal endings merged into one. How the very peculiar pattern arose in which present tense is encoded by an overt marker and past tense by zero in the 15th century Korean can be explained in part by the fact that -nʌ- was not originally a present tense marker.  

A hypothesis about the origin of the permanence marker -nu-  

Many languages use a nominal encoding in order to express permanence, for example, the bound noun “もの” (mono) in Japanese.  

Subject + predicate in terminal inflection: either temporary state reading or permanent property reading. (unmarked)  
Subject + predicate in adnominal inflection + もの + copula: only permanent property reading. (marked)  

(51) 大人は別類を備えているものです。  
(52) 子どもはよく服を汚すものです。  
(53) 人は物事が思い通りにいかなかった時、自分の為に理由を探すものだ。  

Seokdokgugyeol has a bound noun “を,” corresponding to “もの” (mono) or “こと” (koto) in Japanese.  

(54) 復も十方浮土を変も百億高座を現も百億須彌寶花を化もノモノ有モノ有モノ：  
(구인2:2-3)  
(55) 三生ノモノ 正位ノモノ 入りもカリも毛也者ノモノ 得き正位ノモノ 入りもカリも毛也者ノモノ 聖人性も證モノ毛也者ノモノ 一切無量報を得もカリモノ  
(구인11:17-19)  

It is possible for the permanence marker “を” to have originated from this bound noun. It is often the case that the source and the result of grammaticalization co-exist, which is called layering.  

Alternation according to Transitivity  

Typological Studies on Auxiliary Selection  

According to linguistic typologists’ investigations, two auxiliaries having the same meaning/function often co-exist in a given language. For instance,
in many European languages, two perfect auxiliaries combining with past particibles co-exist, corresponding to to be and have in English. In ancient Japanese, there were two perfect auxiliaries す (su) and つ (tsu). In such cases, the alternation condition is often related to transitivity of the main verb: i.e., one of them is combined with transitive verbs, while the other with intransitive verbs. In a similar vein, in modern Korean, in order to encode the resultative aspect, -to is combined with intransitive verbs, whereas -go is with transitive verbs.

In some cases, other factors can participate, in addition to transitivity. Intransitive verbs are divided into unaccusatives and unergatives. One common type of alternation is that one of the auxiliaries is combined with unaccusatives, while the other with unergatives and transitives. In some cases, the former can be restricted to a more specific subset of unaccusatives—e.g., motion verbs or verbs of going, coming, leaving, and arriving. The alternation between と and に for encoding the so-called complex past in modern French comes close to this pattern.

Prefinal Endings -geo- and -a/eo- in the 15th century

These two endings were an issue in the grammar of middle Korean for a long time. Their meanings and the relation between them were unclear. In morphophonological terms, -geo- is a consonantal ending, and alternates with -nu- after the verb と “come.” In contrast, -a/eo- is a vocalic ending, showing an alternation according to vowel harmony. Considering these morphophonological differences, these two were probably originally separate elements.

However, the opinion was presented that these two are in allomorphic relation with each other in the synchronic description of 15th century Korean, and that the alternation between these two is governed by transitivity (Ko 1980). This position is widely accepted now, also by the present author. In concrete terms, -geo- is combined with the copula, adjectives, and intransitive verbs, whereas -a/eo- is combined with transitive verbs. This is one of the most important discoveries about middle Korean grammar, and was inspired by typological research. Although this rule of alternation has a few exceptions, the number is insignificant, and most of them can be explained away from a diachronic perspective. The complete alternation pattern of the morpheme {geo} is as follows:

1. After the verb と “come”: /nu/ (consonantal ending) ex: o-na-da ‘come-PERF-DEC’
2. After non-transitives /geol ex: gip-geo-da ‘deep-PERF-DEC’
   * This alternant /geol is a consonantal ending. It is weakened into /yol after the copula, /ll/ or the semivowel /yl/. After the weakening, it is still a consonantal ending.
3. After transitives (vocalic ending)
   3.1. After yin [i] vowels: /al ex: 보이다 boada ← bo-a-da ‘see-PERF-DEC’
   3.2. After yin [i] vowels: /eo ex: 주어다 jueda ← ji-ro da ‘give-PERF-DEC’

Naturally, vocalic endings alternate according to vowel harmony. Therefore, /al of 3.1. and /eo of 3.2. are instances of vowel harmony pairs. Naturally, consonantal endings show no alternation related to vowel harmony. Therefore, /gal (discussed later) and /geol are not instances of vowel harmony pairs.

Fusion of the Morphemes {geo} and {o}

{Geo} is peculiar with regard to fusional pattern with other morphemes, as well as alternation patterns. In particular, the fusion with the prefinal ending {o} shows an interesting pattern.

1. Before converbal endings and the adnominal ending {n}: fused into /gal. (no transitivity alternation)
   ex: 허나이 hsi-ga-ni (← hsi-ge-o-ni), 허간 hsi-ga-n (← hsi-ge-o-n)
   1.1. This /gal is a consonantal ending, weakened into /gal after /ll or the semivowel /yl./
2. Before sentence-final endings: fused into /gwal.
   (no transitivity alternation)
   ex: 허파라 hsi-gwa-la (← hsi-ge-o-da), 허판데 hsi-gwa-nde (← bo-ge-o-n)
   2.1. This /gwal is a consonantal ending, weakened into /gwal after /ll or the semivowel /lj/.
   ex: 알와라 al-ya-la (← al-gwa-la ← al-ge-o-da)
This pattern of fusion is similar to that between the morphemes \{geo\} and \{o\}. That is, \{geo\}+\{o\} is realized as /gwas/. This similarity in the fusional patterns suggests that \{o\} is originally related to \{o\}, although they are distinct morphemes in the synchronic grammar of 15th century Korean.

It is interesting that the morpheme \{geo\} in isolation shows orderly alternation by transitivity, but when it has been fused with \{o\}, the fused forms show no transitivity alternation. The fused forms begin with the consonant /g/, and behave as consonantal endings in morphophonological respects. This suggests that the fusion of \{geo\} and \{o\} occurred long ago, and that the fused forms survived after -geo and -a/eo came to be related as allomorphs of one morpheme.

-Eoza -어사, -geoza -거사, and -goza -고사

-Eoza and -geoza are different both in meaning and the internal constitution. -eosa has the same meaning as -eoya in modern Korean. That is, it expresses necessary condition or precondition. It has slim or no temporal meaning. It is considered to be a combination of the converbal ending -eo and the particle -za, so it combines freely with either transitives or intransitives.

-Geoza has the same meaning as -goeoya or -go naseoya in modern Korean. It has temporal successive relation as its core meaning. It can be analyzed as the combination of the ending -geo- and the particle -za. As it contains the allomorph -geo- of the morpheme \{geo\}, it can combine only with intransitives.

The counterpart of -geoza which has the same meaning/function and combines with transitives, is -goza. -Geoza is the combination of the converbal ending -go and the particle -za.

The alternation pattern of these elements from a onomasiological perspective is as follows:

1. When one wants to express necessary condition or precondition: use -eosa. (no transitivity alternation)
2. When one wants to express temporal successive relation:

2.1. After intransitives: use -geoza.
2.2. After transitives: use -goza.

When you search for the counterpart which alternates by transitivity, you need to look broadly, considering the possibility that candidates other than -geo- and -a/eo- can exist. Although Youngkeun Ko (1980) is a seminal work in relation to the transitivity alternation of \{geo\}, it clung to the superficial form, with the result that -geoza and -eosa were presented as counterparts with regard to the transitivity alternation, which is an important flaw in this work.

Concluding remarks

This paper showed that linguistic typology and diachronic considerations including Sino-Korean materials before the introduction of hangeul can shed light onto the synchronic grammatical study of 15th century Korean. The tense-aspect system of this period can be viewed from a typological point of view, and the diachronic research on pre-15th century material can help explain the special properties of the prefinal ending -n/. As linguistic typology and Sino-Korean research advance, they will suggest more insights and implications for the grammatical study of 15th century Korean.

References


Ko, Youngkeun. 1980. “Jungse-eo ui comi hwalyeyong e natae neun geo/eo ui...


PARK Jinho (synpjh@snu.ac.kr) is a Professor of Korean Language and Literature at Seoul National University. His research interests include linguistic typology, corpus linguistics, and diachronic morphology/syntax on which he has published several articles. Among them, his representative works are “Characteristics of the Pronominal System in Korean Viewed from a Typological Perspective” (2007), “A Diachronic Study of Delimiters in Korean” (2015), “Reconsideration of the Discontinuous Past Uses of –eos-eos-” (2015), etc.

**Abstract**

Historically, grammatical studies of 15th century Korean have been done mainly from an internal perspective. Through these efforts, many linguistic facts have been uncovered, but for future advancement, an external perspective is also needed. Linguistic typology and diachronic studies can provide such an external perspective. Linguistic typology can help describe more precisely the tense-aspect system of 15th century Korean, functions of tense-aspect markers, and alternation patterns of morphemes by transitivity. Sino-Korean materials of the old Korean period can help explain some peculiar uses of the prefinal ending “-nʌ-.”

**Keywords:** linguistic typology, grammatical history, Sino-Korean material, tense, aspect, transitivity, permanence, perfective, imperfective, perfect, resultative, alternation, allomorphy