

Antecedents and anaphors in Korean

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1 Introduction

Korean has two types of anaphors. The first type is *jasin*, *jagi*, and *jagi jasin* ‘self’, the second is *na jasin* ‘myself’, *neo jasin* ‘yourself’, etc. The first kind is called Simple Expression (SE) (Reinhart and Reuland (1993: 658)); it will be referred to as G1 (Group 1) anaphors in this report. They lack features of gender, number, and person (ϕ -features (Chomsky (1981: 330)), and thus they are interpreted in terms of the ϕ -features of their antecedents. The second type, which is more like English anaphors, consists of a pronoun determiner and *jasin*. The anaphors of this second type have ϕ -features, and they can be independently interpreted (e.g. *keu jasin* is a third person masculine singular: ‘himself’). This type is referred to as SELF anaphors (Reinhart and Reuland (1993: 658)), and they will be called G2 (Group 2) anaphors below. This report will discuss only G2 anaphors.

Section 2 will deal with the two types of anaphors. Section 3 will introduce the relationship between antecedents and anaphors. Three characteristics of G2 anaphors will be introduced:

- (a) Optional Antecedent Drop: the antecedents of G2 anaphors can be dropped.
- (b) Obligatory Antecedent Drop: in complex sentences, if the subject in the matrix clause is the same as the one in the embedded clause and the subjects are third person, at least one of them must be dropped.
- (c) Subject Anaphors: G2 anaphors can be in subject position in passive sentences.

In section 4, Obligatory Antecedent Drop will be discussed in more detail in complex sentences. We will also look at the question of why Korean G2 anaphors

have these characteristics. Section 5 discusses plausible answers and their problems. Let's start with the types of Korean anaphors.¹

2 Types of Korean anaphors

As noted above, Korean has two types of anaphors. G1 anaphors lack some features such as gender, number, and person (ϕ -features (Chomsky (1981: 330))), and thus they are interpreted in terms of the ϕ -features of their antecedents. In (1) and (2), *na* 'I' is the first person singular pronoun, and *keu* 'he' is the third person singular masculine pronoun, but their anaphors are the same: *jasin*. The anaphor *jasin* is never changed, but it is interpreted as co-referential with the pronouns. This is because the G1 anaphor *jasin* does not have ϕ -features, and receives the features from the antecedent.

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|-----|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| (1) | Na_i-neun | jasin_i-eul | sarangha-n-ta. |
| | 1SG_i-TOP | self_i-OB | love-PRESENT-DECL |
| | | | 'I love myself.' |
| (2) | Keu_i-neun | jasin_i-eul | sarangha-n-ta. |
| | 3SG_i-NOM | self_i-ACC | love-PRS-DECL |
| | | | 'He loves himself.' |

Other anaphors *jagi* and *jagi jasin* are similar to *jasin*, but their pragmatic functions are a little different. For example, *jagi* cannot occur with pronouns as *jasin* can (e.g. **na jagi* "I-self", **neo jagi* "you-self", etc). The phrase *jagi jasin* is the combination of *jasin* and *jagi* to emphasize the meaning, but it needs an antecedent. In this report, G1 anaphors will not be dealt with.

What about G2 anaphors? They consist of a pronoun and the G1 anaphor *jasin*. The pronoun part of G2 anaphors is decided based on the features of the antecedent. For example, the pronoun *na* 'I' is first person singular, thus, *na jasin* 'myself' is first person singular anaphor (see (3)). The pronoun *keu* 'he' is third person masculine singular, so *keu jasin* 'himself' is third person masculine singular anaphor (see (4)). That is, the pronoun of the G2 anaphor agrees with the antecedent.

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|------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| (3) | Na_i-neun | na jasin_i-eul | yongseoha-yeoss-ta. |
| | 1SG_i-TOP | myself_i-OB | forgive-PAST-DECL |
| | | | 'I forgave myself.' |
| (3a) | Na_i-neun | na jasin_i-eul | yongseoha-yeoss-ta. |
| | 1SG_i-NOM | 1SG self_i-ACC | forgive-PST-DECL |

¹ I am very thankful to Edith Moravcsik and Fred Eckman for discussing and proofreading this report.

‘I forgave myself.’

- (4) **Keu_i-neun** **keu jasin_i-eul** yongseoha-yeoss-ta.
3SG_i-TOP **himself_i-OB** forgive-PAST-DECL
 ‘He forgave himself.’
- (4a) **Keu_i-neun** **keu jasin_i-eul** yongseoha-yeoss-ta.
3SG_i-NOM 3SG **self_i-ACC** forgive-PST-DECL
 ‘He forgave himself.’

In the next section, we will see three characteristics of Korean G2 anaphors concerning the relationship between G2 anaphors and their antecedents.

3. The relationship between antecedents and anaphors

Let’s start with the first characteristic mentioned in section 1: Optional Antecedent Drop. Unlike in English, the antecedents of Korean G2 anaphors can be dropped: sentence (5) has the antecedent and the anaphor, while (6) overtly has only an anaphor (but not in English; see (7)). That is, unlike in English, the antecedent *na-neun* ‘I’ can be dropped in the sentence with G2 anaphor *na jasin* ‘myself’.

- (5) **Na_i-neun** **na jasin_i-eul** yongseoha-yeoss-ta.
1SG_i-TOP **myself_i-OB** forgive-PAST-DECL
 ‘I forgave myself.’
- (6) **Na jasin_i-eul** yongseoha-yeoss-ta.
myself_i-OB forgive-PAST-DECL
 “Forgave myself_i.”
- (7) *Forgave myself

There arise two questions: why can antecedents of Korean G2 anaphors be dropped? (I will deal with this question later.) <After G2 anaphors are dropped, is there truly nothing in their position? My answer to the second question is “Negative”:>

→ possibly rephrase to: {After G2 anaphors are dropped, is nothing left behind or is there a trace? My answer to that is that there is a trace.}

Most linguists agree that there is a null element in the position where constituents are dropped. This is supported by Korean native speakers who do not have linguistic knowledge: they will say that the dropped element is still there. So, what is that element?

In the Minimalist Program the null element is considered to be either the silent element Δ (Monahan 2003, Polinsky & Potsdam 2002), or *pro* (Cormack & Smith 2002, 2004). The difference between the two has to do with the concept of the control relationship. The relationship of antecedents and anaphors is interpreted as a control relationship. The two analyses are differentiated by whether or not the null element is in a finite clause or an infinitive clause. Supporters of the silent element Δ consider the relationship as Backward Control. This is because the null element is regarded as controlled by the controller (in this report it is usually the subject in the embedded clause) in the clause. Meanwhile, scholars such as Cormack and Smith call the element *pro*, and the subject in the matrix clause controls *pro* in the embedded clause. The *pro* is the antecedent of the anaphor and it controls the anaphor. Thus, this relationship is called Forward Control. Both sides mostly dealt with the Korean verb *seoldeuk-ha-ta* ‘persuade’. They, however, did not really discuss Korean anaphors even though the term *control* came from the relationship of antecedents and anaphors.

In this report, I will not focus on which analysis is more plausible (i.e. whether backward control is right or forward control is right). Rather, I will talk about the relationship between anaphors and antecedents, and their characteristics in the Korean data. The remaining null element after the antecedent is dropped will be referred to as *pro* because of convenience, and because, according to Radford (1997, 269), “*pro* is a covert nominative-case pronoun.”

The second characteristic: Obligatory Antecedent Drop is intriguing. It can only be observed in complex sentences. In complex sentences, if the subject in the matrix clause is the same as the one in the embedded clause and the subjects are third person, at least one of them must be dropped. Look at Table 1 below (all constituents refer to third person pronouns or proper nouns). The three top lines show that the *pro*, antecedent and anaphor are co-indexed. However, in the two bottom lines the two antecedents have different indexes, and the antecedent in the embedded clause is co-indexed with the anaphor in the same clause. If the two antecedents have the same indexes, the sentence is not grammatical (see the bottom line). We will investigate Obligatory Antecedent Drop through some more data in the next section.

<Table 1 – Co-indexation>

Antecedent (Matrix clause)	Antecedent (Embedded clause)	Anaphor (Embedded clause)
<i>pro</i> _i	<i>pro</i> _i	anaphor _i
antecedent _i	<i>pro</i> _i	anaphor _i
<i>pro</i> _i	antecedent _i	anaphor _i
antecedent _j	antecedent _i	anaphor _i

*antecedent _i	antecedent _i	anaphor _i
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Let's move on to the third characteristic: Subject Anaphor. Unlike English anaphors those in Korean can be placed in subject position in passive sentences. In (9), the Korean anaphor *na jasin* 'myself' has the subject marker, whereas the corresponding English anaphor occurs with the preposition *by* in (10).

- (9) **na jasin-i** yongseo-**toi**-eoss-ta.
myself-SUB forgive-PASSIVE-PAST-DECL
 “*pro*_i Myself was forgiven”

- (10) I was forgiven by **myself**.

The reason for Anaphor Subjects is more complicated. <The subject position of the Korean G2 anaphors and passive formation are needed yet to be researched.>

→ perhaps rephrase to: {The subject position of the Korean G2 anaphors and passive formation are topics that require further research.}

This may be elaborated on in a later version of this paper.

4. More data on Obligatory Antecedent Drop

I will use *malha-ta* 'say' as the verb of the matrix clause and *-ko* as the complementizer 'that'. Let's look at the data. (11) through (13) all mean 'He said that he forgave himself.'

Sentences (11) through (13) are examples of the first to third cases in Table 1: one subject in the complex sentence is dropped. In (11) and (12), *keu-neun* 'he' is considered as either the subject of the embedded clause or that of the matrix clause. Thus, (11) shows that *pro* is placed in the subject position of the matrix clause, while (12) shows *pro* in the subject position of the embedded clause. If we look at the co-indexation, *keu-neun*, *pro* and *keu jasin* refer to the same person. Sentence (13) is one where both antecedents are dropped. Thus, it has two *pros*, which are co-indexed with the anaphor.

- (11) **Keu**_i-neun *pro*_i **keu jasin**_i-eul yongseoha-yeoss-ta-ko
3SG_i-TOP **himself**_i-OB forgive-PAST-DECL-COMP
 malha-yeoss-ta.
 say-PAST-DECL
 “He said that *pro*_i forgave himself.”

in English: the subjects of the matrix and the embedded clauses may or may not refer to the same person (see (18)).³

- (16) **John_i-eun** **keu_j-ka** **keu jasin_j-eul** yongseoha-yeoss-ta-ko
John_i-TOP **3SG_j-SUB** **himself_j-OB** forgive-PAST-DECL-COMP
malha-yeoss-ta.
say-PAST-DECL
‘John_i said that he_j forgave himself_j.’

- (17) ***John_i-eun** **keu_i-ka** **keu jasin_i-eul** yongseoha-yeoss-ta-ko
John_i-TOP **3SG_i-SUB** **himself_i-OB** forgive-PAST-DECL-COMP
malha-yeoss-ta.
say-PAST-DECL
‘John_i said that he_i forgave himself_i.’

- (18) **John_i** said that **he_{ij}** forgave **himself_{ij}**.

What about dropping the subjects? The subject of the matrix clause, *pro* and *keu jasin* are co-indexed and grammatical (see (11) to (13)), but in English, subject drop itself is ungrammatical (see (19a and 19b)). That is, unlike in English, if at least one of the subjects is dropped in Korean complex sentences, the subject, *pro* and the anaphor must be co-indexed.

- (19) a. ***pro_i** Said that **he_{ij}** forgave **himself_{ij}**
b. ***He_i** said that **pro_{ij}** forgave **himself_{ij}**

We have looked at the characteristics of Korean G2 anaphors in some Korean data. Now, we will take to the question raised in section 3: why are these characteristics found in Korean?

5. Plausible explanations

First, let’s talk about the Optional and Obligatory Antecedent Dropping. The reason for Antecedent Dropping is related to the fact that Korean is a pro-drop language. Subject drop is <predominant> → {prevalent?} when the subject is repeated or when the speaker and the listener have the same referent in mind. Let’s look back at the composition of G2 anaphors: the first person singular pronoun *na* ‘I’ and the G1 anaphor *jasin* ‘self’ in *na jasin* ‘myself’. The pronoun

³ I am thankful to Young-Hyun Heo, Ah-Rong Lee, and Su-Yeon Seo (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) for discussing the data.

na has ϕ -features, thus when the speaker says a sentence with *na jasin*, the person who *na jasin* refers to is the speaker. The speaker and listener definitely know who *na jasin* refers to. Korean pro-drop mechanism can be implemented. This explains why Korean G2 anaphors do not need antecedents.

When Korean native speakers do not drop the subject, this usually happens in emphatic sentences or in cases of new information. That is, if the speaker produces the subject, it is understood as emphasized. In complex sentences, if both subjects are spoken, this indicates that the subjects are emphasized, and therefore they have a higher probability of different references. Thus, *keu* 'he' cannot be *John* in (17). However, if the speaker drops one of the subjects, the subjects are understood as referring to the same person.

6. Conclusion

This report introduced the characteristics of Korean antecedents and anaphors. Korean has two types of anaphors: G1 anaphors (called Simple Expression by Reinhart and Reuland) and G2 anaphors (called SELF anaphor by Reinhart and Reuland). Only G2 anaphors were dealt with in this report. They consist of a pronoun and the G1 anaphor *jasin*. Korean G2 anaphors have three characteristics: (a) the antecedent of the anaphor can be dropped (Optional Antecedent Drop). (b) If subjects in matrix and embedded clauses have the same reference and the two subjects are third person, one of them must be dropped (Obligatory Antecedent Drop). (c) The anaphor can be put in the subject position of passive sentences (Subject Anaphors). Why does Korean have these characteristics? Optional and Obligatory Antecedent Drop have to do with Korean being a pro-drop language. Thus, like all subjects, antecedents can also be dropped relatively freely. In addition, the first and second persons do not have ambiguity of reference. This is why conditional antecedent drop occurs in sentences which have third-person antecedents of matrix and embedded clauses. Subject Anaphors must be further researched because they are related to Korean passive formation.

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