

Speech Act Phrases in Korean Nominal Structures*

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1 Introduction

According to Speas & Tenny (2003), speech act phrases are realized in the clausal domain. Haegeman & Hill (2013) further argue that speech act projections are in fact a complex structure which decomposes into a speaker-sensitive speech act layer (i.e., saP) and an addressee-sensitive layer (i.e., SAP) (henceforth sa/SAPs). Miyagawa (2017), Portner et al. (2019), and Zu (2015, 2018) observe that these speech act projections are present in root clauses but are absent in embedded clauses. Here, I propose that sa/SAPs are also present in the nominal domain. Adopting Ritter & Wiltschko (2018, 2019), I demonstrate that the locus of politeness-related features in Korean nominals are encoded in the nominal sa/SAPs instead of the clausal sa/SAPs. From a broader perspective, I emphasize that Korean nominals are not necessarily limited in size. I advocate the view that they are sa/SAPs which diverges from alternative analyses suggesting that they are DPs or (bare) NPs.

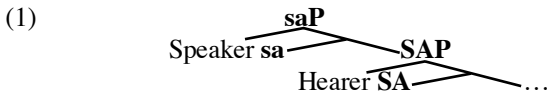
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Just as the fine layers of clauses encode politeness, the fine layers of nominals encode politeness.

The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 looks into the previous literature on sa/SAPs. Section 3 discusses the multiple appearances of sa/SAPs in different parts of the grammar. Section 4 deals with the theoretical implications of positing multiple nominal sa/SAPs in Korean. Section 5 concludes.

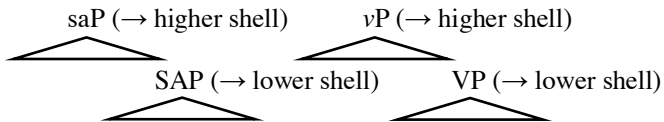
2 Previous literature on speech act structures

According to Ross' (1970) performative analysis, syntactic representations make reference to discourse participants (i.e., the speaker and the hearer). Building on this idea, Speas & Tenny (2003) argue that the pragmatic roles of these participants are built into the syntax. The syntactic projection which governs these pragmatic factors is referred to as the Speech Act Phrase. Adding precision to this analysis, Haegeman & Hill (2013) claim that there are in fact two separate tiers of representing speech acts. One is for the speaker (i.e., saP) and the other is for the hearer (i.e., SAP):



According to Haegeman & Hill (2013), saP/SAP resembles the shell structure of vP/VP. By assuming Larsons' (1988) way of constructing vP/VPs, we can establish a parallel shell configuration for saP/SAPs:

(2) Parallel shell configurations for saP/SAPs and vP/VPs



In comparison to the single-layered configuration, the two-layered structure of sa/SAPs better captures the distribution of particles, vocatives, and complement clauses under Haegeman & Hill's (2013) view.

It is worth mentioning at this point that the distribution of sa/SAPs is syntactically restricted. To illustrate, they are recognized as a part of syntax that appear only in the uppermost domain of a matrix clause. Here, a matrix clause is identical to what Emonds (1969) refers to as the *root*:

(3) Root

A root will mean either the highest S in a tree, an S immediately dominated by the highest S, or the reported S in direct discourse.

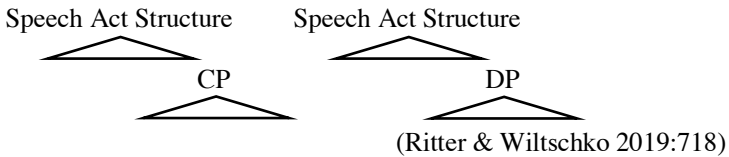
(Emonds 1969:6)

In the literature, it has been claimed that sa/SAPs give rise to allocutive agreement.¹ Oyharçabal (1993) and Zu (2015) suggest that speech act projections are not embeddable since allocutive agreement is only observed in the root clause. This leads Zu (2015, 2018) to conclude that sa/SAPs surface only once per a given sentence.

Portner et al. (2019) discuss a slightly different take on speech act projections. Despite there being a single locus for discourse information within the root clause (i.e., cP in their term), they distinguish utterance-oriented (politeness) markers from content-oriented (politeness) markers. Unlike the former, the latter is able to surface within embedded clauses. Hence, the embeddability of certain discourse-relevant markers is possible under Portner et al.'s (2019) scrutiny.

Taking a departure from the analyses mentioned above, Ritter & Wiltchko (2018, 2019) claim that multiple speech act structures can appear even within a single sentence structure. This approach to handling discourse-relevant information, however, does not necessarily imply that it is possible to embed sa/SAPs per se. Instead, Ritter & Wiltchko (2018, 2019) explore the possibility of encoding speech act projections within the nominal domain. In light of Chomsky (1970) and Abney (1987), they draw a parallelism between the clausal and the nominal architectures. Under their analysis, CPs and DPs can both host a discourse-sensitive projection, namely the Speech Act Structure:

(4) Parallel clausal and nominal structures



In (4), a Speech Act Structure is layered above the DP similar to how it is layered above the CP. According to Ritter & Wiltchko (2019) (henceforth R&W), the nominal Speech Act Structure has the function of *naming* (via

¹ We come back to the notion of allocutive agreement in section 3.3.

proper names), *describing* (via common noun phrases), and *tracking* (via pronouns). In the next section, I extend R&W's discussion on multiple speech act phrases and examine the roles that nominal sa/SAPs undertake in Korean. I will mainly demonstrate the ways in which politeness is realized within a given sentence structure.

3 Multiple sa/SAPs

In this part of the paper, we observe the ways in which politeness marking is realized in Korean nominal structures. In section 3.1, I adopt Potts' (2005, 2007) concept of *expressives* and see how they are analyzed in Korean. In section 3.2, we gain theoretical support on the existence of nominal sa/SAPs. Here, I mainly examine the feature geometry of Referring Expressions (henceforth REs) discussed in Harley & Ritter (2002). In section 3.3, I collect empirical evidence showing politeness mismatches between and among sentence-internal nominals.

3.1 Politeness marking in nominals

R&W argue that speech act structures stacked above DPs carry the role of *naming*, *describing*, and *tracking*. In addition to R&W's analysis, I posit that a nominal sa/SAP is the locus for *politeness* in Korean *nPs*.² This is well in line with the view that there is a strong connection between the nominal and the clausal domain. That is, a Korean nominal on its own has the potential of conveying politeness which is similar to what a clause (e.g., a verbal predicate with the honorific marker *-si*) is capable of doing. Consider the following examples which are different varieties of Korean first person pronouns:³

(5) a. nay-ka	b. cey-ka	c. wuli-ka	d. cehuy-ka
1SG-NOM	1SG.POL-NOM	1PL-NOM	1PL.POL-NOM
'I'	'I' (Polite).	'We'	'We' (Polite)

According to Potts (2005, 2007), *expressives* such as epithets, quotations, and honorifics convey conventional implicature relevant to social relation. Based on this assumption, Lee & Kim (2018) argue that *expressives* such as *ce(y)*

² I refrain from asserting a DP for every noun in Korean (see section 4). Instead, I use *nPs* which encompass the role of NPs (see Kramer 2015 for further discussion on *nPs* and \sqrt{Ps}).

³ The following abbreviations are used in this paper: ABS = absolutive; ACC = accusative; AUX = auxiliary; C = complementizer; D = declarative; ERG = ergative; FORM = formal; GEN = genitive; NOM = nominative; NOMLZ = nominalizer; PL = plural; POL = polite; PRF = perfect; PST = past; SG = singular; Q = interrogative.

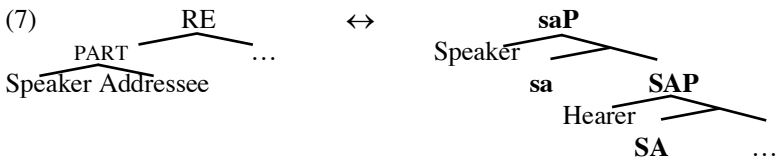
in (5b) and *cehuy* in (5d) bear a conventional implicature relevant to politeness (i.e., The *speaker* is socially inferior to or distant from the *addressee*). This suggests that the morphological alternations of *na~ce* and *wuli~cehuy* are conditioned by the interaction between the participants of conversation. The same facts hold for pronoun-noun constructions (PNCs) (see Choi (2014) and Höhn (2017) for an extensive discussion on PNCs):

- (6) a. wuli hayngpokhan enhakca-tul-i
 1PL happy linguist-PL-NOM
 ‘We happy linguists’
 b. cehuy hayngpokhan enhakca-tul-i
 1PL.POL happy linguist-PL-NOM
 ‘We happy linguists’ (Polite)

The difference between (6a) and (6b) boils down to whether the conventional implicature of politeness is triggered by the selection of pronouns (e.g., *wuli~cehuy*). In the next subsection, we discuss a theoretical aspect of pronouns which works in favor of the conjecture that speech act structures exist within the nominal architecture.

3.2 Feature geometry & sa/SAPs

According to Harley & Ritter’s (2002) privative morphological feature geometry, a fully specified RE consists of a Participant node (i.e., PART) and an Individuation node (i.e., INDIV). Here, PART dominates the speaker node as well as the addressee node which is of great relevance to our discussion. For one, PART and sa/SAP both consolidate a well-defined interaction between the speaker and the hearer. Also, the idea that PART is dominated by RE is compatible with the notion that an sa/SAP resides within a noun phrase. To clarify, both Harley & Ritter’s and R&W’s analyses rely on a ‘control tower’, be it PART or sa/SAP, that essentially feeds participant information to the nominal domain as a whole:



Evidence from feature geometry (Harley & Ritter 2002) coupled with the explicit analogy drawn between the nominal and the clausal spine (Chomsky 1970 and Abney 1987) support the view that sa/SAPs are a part of the noun

In (9), POL appears both on the nominal and the clausal domain. One is realized as the nominative Case marker *-kkeyse* and the other is realized as *-si* in the verbal predicate. The given example could in fact be analyzed as agreement. However, this is by no means the only way that politeness marking works in Korean. Consider the following data:

- (10) halmeni-ka o-si-ess-ta
 grandmother-NOM come-POL-PST-D
 ‘Grandmother came.’ (Polite)

Note that the politeness marking in (10) is introduced only in the verbal morphology. An obvious question arises as to what the absence of a nominal politeness marker indicates. Here, I emphasize that syntactic agreement alone cannot provide an adequate solution. To add further complication to the story, different degrees of politeness are conveyed in (9) and (10). That is, (9) delivers a strong sense of formality whereas (10) delivers a weak sense of formality. This observation is not surprising given that politeness marking is doubly encoded in the former whereas it is not in the latter. If politeness marking in Korean were indeed an instance of Agree, the discrepancy recognized between (9) and (10) cannot be readily accounted for. In fact, there are many more examples displaying similar gradience. Make particular note of the morphological alternation between *wuli* and *cehuy* shown below:⁵

- (11) a. wuli-ka wa-ss-eyo
 1PL-NOM come-PST-POL
 ‘We came.’ [Politeness: *nP* (X), CP (√)]
 b. cehuy-ka wa-ss-eyo
 1PL.POL-NOM come-PST-POL
 ‘We came.’ [Politeness: *nP* (√), CP (√)]

(11a) encodes a single politeness marker which is realized in the clausal domain (i.e., *-yo*). On the other hand, (11b) carries multiple politeness markers: one in the nominal domain (i.e., *cehuy*) and the other in the clausal domain (i.e., *-yo*) (see Yim 2012 for a discussion on the multiple realizations of *-yo* within a clause). The multiple occurrences of POL in (11b) give rise to an elevated sense of formality when compared to the appearance of a single POL

⁵ Along with many others, Lee & Kim (2018) demonstrate that the morphology of Korean first person pronouns is sensitive to a specific type of politeness. In detail, the alternations between *na-ce* (first person singular pronouns) and *wuli-cehuy* (first person plural pronouns) are conditioned by humbleness (i.e., the speaker placing him/herself lower than the addressee in terms of social status).

in (11a). Furthermore, it is difficult to maintain the notion of agreement when accounting for (11a). Crucially, there appears to be an imbalance as to where POL is realized (i.e., *nP* (X), CP (\checkmark)). This sharply contrasts with (11b) (i.e., *nP* (\checkmark), CP (\checkmark)). Under the allocutive agreement-favoring approach, the mismatch between (11a) and (11b) seems to be a problem unless other postulations are made.

According to Wiltschko (2019), on the other hand, Korean pronouns (paranouns in her term) do not trigger agreement. She argues that the contrastive phi-features necessary for agreement are absent in these pronouns. Additional weight is added to her proposal when we examine certain complex syntactic configurations such as the ones provided below:

- (12) Kim-i Lee-ka **ce-uy** chinkwu-lul
 Kim-NOM Lee-NOM 1SG.POL-GEN friend-ACC
 po-ass-tako sayngkak-hay-**yo**
 see-PST-C think-do-POL
 ‘Kim thinks that Lee saw my friend.’ (Polite)

- (13) Kim-i Lee-ka **cehuy** enehakca-tul-ul
 Kim-NOM Lee-NOM 1PL.POL linguist-PL-ACC
 coha-han-tako mal-hay-ss-**eyo**
 like-do-C say-do-PST-POL
 ‘Kim said that Lee likes us linguists.’ (Polite)

In (12), *ce* is a part of the internal argument in the embedded clause. Here, *ce* cannot be in agreement relation with *-yo*, the matrix sentence-final particle. Simply put, they disobey structural locality. Interestingly, however, they both surface in (12) and well-formedness is derived.⁶ In (13), *cehuy* in the embedded PNC cannot be in agreement relation with *-yo* either. Despite the lack of agreement, well-formedness results once again. The hard-to-explain patterns exhibited in (12) and (13) hints at the notion that politeness is not solely dependent on agreement.

As mentioned in the previous sections (specifically, section 2 and 3), Abney (1987) draws a structural parallelism between the clausal and the nominal

⁶ Note that *ce* cannot surface without the presence of the sentence-final *-yo* (Lee & Kim 2018:138). It could be that the clausal *sa/SAP* requires the presence of a politeness marker. Here, I do not disregard the application of agreement as a whole. Perhaps, there could be an agreement relation between two independent *sa/SAPs*. This seems to be an interesting topic worth investigating in the future. As of now, I highlight the view that there is more than just agreement to consider when accounting for all the data relevant to Korean politeness.

syntax. In relation to Abney's claim, I argue that *both* syntactic domains project sa/SAPs. This allows us to do away with what seemingly looks like optional agreement. Let us revisit the examples given in (11). Instead of analyzing (11a) and (11b) as outcomes of non-obligatory agreement, I argue that there are two independent sa/SAPs conditioning the presence or the absence of politeness: one for the nominal spine and the other for the clausal spine. They each give rise to their own independent status of politeness.

(14) [_{sa/SAP} [_{CP} ... [_{sa/SAP} [_{nP} Ø~POL]] ... Ø~POL ...]]

In (14), the realization of a POL does not necessarily guarantee the realization of an additional POL elsewhere. Thus, the (in)consistency of politeness marking in the two territories, namely *nP* and *CP*, is properly worked out. For instance, the politeness mismatch between the plain and the honorific-denoting nominative Case markers (e.g., *-i* and *-kkeyse*) in Korean is nicely captured under our resulting analysis. Consider the following example in which the cooccurrence of the two Case markers is manifested:

(15) Kim *sensanygnim*₁-i sayngkak-ha-si-ki-ey
 Kim teacher-NOM think-do-POL-NOMLZ-EY
 Kim *sensanygnim*₁-kkeyse haksayng-tul-ul coha-ha-si-pni-kka
 Kim teacher-NOM.POL student-PL-ACC like-do-POL-FORM-Q
 'do you (teacher Kim) think you (teacher Kim) like students?'

In (15), the subject *Kim sensanygnim* is realized with either *-i* (NOM) or *-kkeyse* (NOM.POL). Under the strict agreement-based theory, the distribution of *-i* and *-kkeyse* cannot be easily clarified. In principle, only the *-kkeyse*-bearing argument (the goal) should undergo Agree with *-si* (the probe). This, however, is not the case as *-i* is available even in the presence of *-si* (e.g., *Kim sensanygnim-i sayngkak-ha-si-ki-ey*). Thus, further elaboration seems necessary in advocating this view.

Moreover, assuming a mono-speech act structure is not without problem. In (15), *-i* (NOM) surfaces in the matrix clause whereas *-kkeyse* (NOM.POL) surfaces in what appears to be an embedded clause. Based on the widely held assumption, the realization of *-kkeyse* (NOM.POL) in the embedded clause is rather peculiar. Hence, the theories favoring the existence of a single speech act phrase faces an apparent challenge.

To sum up, it seems plausible that certain aspects of pragmatic information are stored within the nominal architecture. In the next section, we observe some of the implications that this prediction brings to the theoretical sphere.

4 Implications on nouns and clauses

There has been a long-standing debate on Korean nominal syntax. Two opposing views have been proposed in the literature. Choi (2014) along with others have argued that Korean nominal structures are DPs. On the other hand, Bošković (2012) and Bruening et al. (2018) have argued that they are (bare) NPs. While the debate is an ongoing one, I would like to point out that sa/SAPs may host any one of these noun phrases so long as unprecedented restrictions do not hold. I leave open the possibility that Korean nominals are DP-less which is a departure from previous analyses including Wiltschko's (2019). Here, I reiterate that the projection dominated by nominal sa/SAPs in Korean may be bigger than a bare NP, but also smaller than a full-fledged DP (see section 3).

It is plausible to assume that clausal sa/SAPs also project over a configuration that is smaller than a CP, for instance a TP. In fact, Ishihara (2014) reports that speech act structures host a TP in Japanese predicate doubling constructions. These constructions are used in a colloquial context where the relation between the speaker and the hearer become crucial. While much is left to be investigated, a cross-linguistic study on this topic may provide an in-depth understanding of the sa/SAPs showcased in nouns and clauses.

5 Conclusion

By drawing a parallelism between the nominal and the clausal configurations in the sense of Abney (1987), I have argued that sa/SAPs are present in both domains. Adopting Harley & Ritter's (2002) feature geometry, I demonstrated that the Participant node for Referring Expressions corresponds specifically to nominal sa/SAPs. I have also pointed out that politeness mismatches between the nominal and the clausal spines are not readily resolvable by syntactic agreement alone. Hence, I posited a noun phrase sa/SAP which triggers a conventional implicature for Korean expressives. In addition to naming, describing, and tracking, I emphasized that politeness is conveyed via nominal sa/SAPs. The implication here is that nominal expressions sensitive to politeness in Korean are not merely DPs or (bare) NPs, but something different in size.

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