Some Remarks on Korean and English Deictic Verbs

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1. Introduction

The present studies is a preliminary version of my ongoing work on the distribution of Korean and English deictic verbs. So the goal of this paper is relatively modest and simply aims to describe some semantic and pragmatic differences between *ota* and *kata*, meaning 'come' and 'go' respectively in Korean. As the relevant literature discusses, these verbs are indeed context dependent, and here in the present work, I attempt to come up with a compact formula that determines the distribution of the words. Since the focus of inquiry, throughout the paper, is only on the data where each of the two verbs is used as one single independent verb, the generalization reached will be of tentative character that needs to be further refined against a great number of other data not dealt with here.

2. The Distribution of Deictic Verbs

Lee (1978) argues that his notion of "deictic center" determines the distribution of the two verbs, whereas for Joe (1985) it is the speaker's empathy that plays a decisive role. Contra what the previous studies show, I believe that the proper generalization that can be drawn from data (1) through (6) below is:

> When the directionality of movement is toward the speaker's location, *ota* 'come' is used, and if it is away from the speaker's location, *kata* 'go' is used.

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In this section, several sentences will be examined in turn against the condition in (1) to verify its validity. In the following data, the speaker's location is implied though not explicitly expressed.[1]

(1) a. John-i   samchung-ey naylye/olla ka-assta.
        John-Nom third floor-to down/up   go-past
        'John went down/up to the third floor.'
    b. John-i   samchung-ey naylye/olla o-assta.
        John-Nom third floor-to down/up   come-past
        'John came down/up to the third floor.'

In (1a), *kata* is used and John's movement is to the third floor. It is implied that the speaker was not on the third floor at the event time, that is, the time of John's moving to the third floor. In (1b), however, what the usage of *ota* implies is that the speaker was on the third floor at the event time. Let's look at some more data.

(2) a. John-i na-eykey o/*ka-aissta.
        John-Nom me-to come/go-be Pres
        'John came/*went to me and he is here.'
    b. Mary-ka ku-eykey *o/ka-aissta.
        Mary-Nom him-to come/go-be Pres
        'Mary *came/went to him and he is there.'
(3) Nayil   seysi-ey hakkyo-ey o/ka-ala.
    tomorrow 3-at   school-to come/go-Imp
    'Come/Go to the school at 3 tomorrow.'

In (2), the choice of *kata* over *ota* and vice versa is determined by the present location of the speaker. In (2a), John's movement is to the speaker and only *ota* can be used. In (2b), Mary's movement is to a third party whose location is away from the speaker, and only *kata* is acceptable. In (3), if *ota* is used, it means that the future location of the speaker will be the school at the event time, the time of the addressee's moving to the place of goal. *Kata* being used, on the other hand, presupposes that the future location of the speaker will

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1) The following abbreviations are used in the data of this paper: Nom = nominative case; past = past tense marker; Pres = present tense marker; Prog = progressive; Imp = imperative mood; Top = topic marker; Fut = future tense marker; *(asterisk) = ungrammatical or unacceptable.

not be the school at the event time. So, if the future movement of the hearer is away from the speaker's location, *kata* must be used.

Please note that the event times in (1), (2) and (3), the time of the action of the mover, are past, present, and future respectively, and the choice of *kata* over *ota* and vice versa is determined with respect to the past, present, and future location of the speaker. If the movement is toward the speaker, *ota* is used. If the movement is away from the speaker, *kata* must be used. Here, the speaker's location at the event time and the action of the mover (an entity that undergoes a change of location) also at the event time are crucially related to each other.

In cases where the mover is the speaker, the location of the speaker at the present time and the directionality of movement at the event time seem to be crucially related, as can be seen in the following examples:

(4) a. Na-nun hakkyo-ey ka-assta.
        I-Top   school-to   go-past
        'I went to the school.'
    b. Na-nun hakkyo-ey o-assta.
        I-Top   school-to   come-past
        'I came to the school.'
(5) a. Na-nun hakkyo-ey ka-goissta.
        I-Top   school-to   go-Pres. Prog.
        'I am going to the school.'
    b. *Na-nun hakkyo-ey *o-goissta.
        I-Top   school-to   come-Pres. Prog.
        'I am coming to the school.'
(6) a. Na-nun hakkyo-ey ka-lkesita.
        I-Top   school-to   go-Fut
        'I will go to the school.'
    b. Na-nun hakkyo-ey o-lkesita.
        I-Top   school-to   come-Fut
        'I will come to the school.'

In (4a), it is implied that the present location of the speaker is not the school, and the past movement of the speaker was to the school, which is not the speaker's current location. So the movement of the past event time was away from the speaker's present location, hence *kata* should be used. In (4b), it is implied that the current location of the speaker is the school, and the past

movement of the speaker was to the school, which is the speaker's location at the present time. So the past movement performed by the speaker was toward the speaker's present location, hence *ota* is correctly used. In (5), the present location of the speaker is any arbitrary point between the point of departure and the place of goal. If we randomly pick out one point as the current location of the speaker, the speaker's movement toward the place of goal can be regarded as a continual process of distancing away from that "fixed" current location of the speaker, that is, the point picked out randomly. Viewed in this way, the movement would be away from the speaker's present location, and thus only *kata*, not *ota*, must be used in (5). In (6a), it is implied that the present location of the speaker is not the school, and the future movement of the speaker will be to the school, which is not the speaker's present location. So the movement of the future event time will be away from the speaker's current location, hence *kata* should be used. In (6b), with *ota* being used, the present location of the speaker is the school, and an analogous explanation can be provided here.

In (1), (2) and (3), we had to consider all of past, present, and future locations of the speaker according to different event times involved, while in (4), (5), and (6), only the speech time location of the speaker is considered in spite of different event times involved: (4)-past, (5)-present, and (6)-future. This would not be surprising if Partee (1973) is right in stating that tenses are related to referential expressions and that the present tense (speech time) is analogous to the speaker "I". Then, this would be the reason why only the speech time location of the speaker is significant in (4) through (6), in which the entity that undergoes a change of location is the speaker rather than some third persons as in (1), (2), and (3).

In view of the explanations provided for (1) through (6), the tentative assumption I set out at the beginning will adequately account for all the relevant data.

3. Concluding Remarks

It seems that English *come* and *go* behave differently in distribution from their Korean counterparts. So, any serious future research on the issue of

deicticity should delve into what semantic and pragmatic factors the cross-linguistic differences can be attributed to.

In Korean, there are a number of complex verbs, one part of which is either *ota* or *kata*, such as *tolakanta* 'go back', *tolaonta* 'come back', *tulekanta* 'go in', *tuleonta* 'come in', *palkakanta* 'go bright', *palkaonta* 'come bright', *tuliekanta* 'hear-go', *tulieonta* 'hear-come', *nakanta* 'go out', *naonta* 'come out', *ilhaykanta* 'work-go', and *ilhayonta* 'work-come'. Left out in the present paper is a discussion about the pragmatics of these coming-going compound verbs. Also, deictic place adverbs like *yeki* 'here' and *keki* 'there', which seem to show distributional differences similar to *ota* and *kata*, are known to interact in interesting ways with the deictic verbs.

It remains to be seen through future studies how the abundance of data involving all these can be incorporated into the analysis proposed in the present preliminary work.

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■ Abstract

Some Remarks on Korean and English Deictic Verbs

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This paper aims to describe pragmatic differences between two deictic verbs, *ota* 'come' and *kata* 'go'. It seems that the speaker's location and the action of the mover (an entity that undergoes a change of location) at the event time should be crucially related to each other in accounting for their distribution in discourse. In cases where the mover denotes the same entity as the speaker, the location of the speaker at the present time and the directionality of movement at the event time seem to interact in an interesting way. The generalization I draw from the data is: *When the directionality of movement is toward the speaker's location, ota 'come' is used, and if it is away from the speaker's location, kata 'go' must be used.*