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A Draft Proposal for a Theory of Aspect in Korean

Abstract

A tentative and selective inquiry into the category of aspect in Korean is proposed for consideration. First certain linguistic terms expedient for the description of this category have been clarified. A concept of the aspective dimension, as a set of homogenous aspective meanings, has been introduced, and three such dimensions have been distinguished.

Two working hypotheses about the Korean aspect are presented for discussion. Next, the significators of completion in this language are examined and amply exemplified. Also the problem of aspective indeterminacy of the Korean preterite is tested with the help of adversative sentences bound by aspective opposition. Aspective implications are constructed to show that a perfective sentence implies the corresponding imperfective one. Finally, some difficulties of translating perfectivized Korean sentences are indicated.

Keywords: Korean, aspect, aspective dimension, perfectivization, aspective implication

1. Introductory Remarks

The aim of this paper is to present several selected problems concerning the semantic category of aspect in Korean as well as to indicate possible difficulties, which may be encountered in Korean-Polish translation related to this category. However, we hasten to state at the very outset that a comprehensive approach to the Korean aspect is neither intended nor possible in what is at present offered for consideration.

Inspecting an abundance of publications on aspect, particularly in Slavonic languages, one cannot resist the impression that almost all or even more has already been said about this category. In the situation of being inundated with a vast mass of literature on aspect one may ask whether it is still decent at all to contribute anything to the description of this category, because any such publication may be suspected as an intentional attempt to increase with impunity the informational inflation.

Nevertheless, instead of withdrawing into the linguistic underground it was decided to dare entering the shaky but enticing ground of the Korean aspect. The reason for this is that this category, to our knowledge, has thus far received less attention, than it should, and that uncovering its specificity may be useful for both theoretically and practically oriented approaches to aspect, including translational applications. Needless to say, the invoked specificity may also deepen our insight into general aspectology as well as into the lexical and grammatical coding of language categories. Such a conclusion can also be drawn from the research already done in this field (cf. Sohn 1995; Lee 1982; Rhee 2008; Chung 2012).

Inquiring into the Korean aspect we shall be guided by the following general linguistic hypotheses:

Hy 1.1. Aspect is a semantic category operating in every ethnic language.

Hy 1.2. The signification of aspect by lingual expressions is language-specific, that is, cross-lingually diversified.

Hy 1.3. Every semantic category reflects in a specific manner a corresponding component of extralingual reality (or, in other words, every semantic category results from the lingual apprehension of certain properties of the entities of this reality).

And, what is more, our desire is that the tentativeness of the current contribution to the studies on Korean aspect would not be questioned.

2. Terminological Clarifications

Before proceeding to the aspectological deliberations proper it seems reasonable to introduce in advance certain terms, which will be utilized subsequently, in order to facilitate the course of the discussion, the more so, because some of these terms are not in frequent linguistic use. In brief, the clarification of these terms should thus promote clear aspectological communication.

Aspect may be understood in a narrow or in a broad sense. In this latter sense the term *aspectuality* is preferred, which thus comprises aspect as well. The discipline dealing with aspectual reality is termed *aspectology*. In what follows, aspect shall be treated only in the narrow sense, and the adjective *aspective*, in contrast to *aspectual*, shall refer only to it.

A fundamental principle, which should be observed while inquiring into the category of aspect, or into any other lexical or grammatical category, is maintaining a clear distinction between two kinds of entities, namely, meanings and their significators.

Generally speaking, an event extends in time and it may or may not terminate or be completed with respect to a *reference event*, that is, the event indicated may or may not continue further relative to the reference event. Furthermore, the action, being a constituent of an event and operating on an object within this event, may affect this object partially or totally. Events are designated by sentences. The properties of an event are reflected in

the meanings signified by the sentence designating this event and in the phrases, which are constituents of this sentence.

Accordingly, in order to characterize sentences aspectively, and thereby to capture aspective properties of the events designated by these sentences, the following three *aspective dimensions* or parameters by necessity commend themselves:

    (i)   the dimension of the state of completion (termination),
    (ii) the dimension of object prehension, and
    (iii) the dimension of the significators diversity.

The first of these dimensions is comprised of three meanings: **Completion**, **Incompletion** and **Completive Indeterminacy**. The second dimension, in turn, is formed by the meanings of **Partitivity** and **Totivity**. Thus, six combinations of these five meanings are theoretically possible. The third dimension enables one to account for the diversity of the coding of aspective meanings in corresponding significators.

However, the contents of the aspective meanings of Completion and Incompletion may not be entirely clear. Whether they are simple or composite meanings and, in addition, their relationship to Terminativity and Resultativity is not adequately clarified. Nevertheless, the aspective meanings seem to be sufficiently intuitive, and we shall accept them as primitive concepts, although explaining them is rather approximate.

Having distinguished above three aspective dimensions, the statement on panglottal relevance of the category of Aspect may now be slightly reformulated. We may namely postulate that aspective meanings as components of language knowledge of native linguators are present in every language. But the coding of these meanings in appropriate significators differs in any two languages compared (cf. Schwenk 2007 b; 2007 c: 3).

The sentences, in particular their constituent predicate phrases signifying aspective meanings, may be subdivided into:

    (i)   perfective,
    (ii) imperfective and
    (iii) neutral.

The perfective sentences signify Completion. The imperfective sentences signify Incompletion but as aspectively unmarked they are able, due to context or other factors, to signify Completion or completive Indeterminacy.

In addition to aspective meanings, sentences or specifically their verb-forms may convey other aspectual meanings such as: Inchoativity, Resultativity, Iterativity, Semelfactivity, Momentarity, etc. It shall be stated that an expression signifying an aspective meaning is bound by the relation of **aspective opposition** with a corresponding expression signifying a different aspective meaning from the same aspective dimension.

By signifying Completion a perfective sentence designates a corresponding completed event, that is, one that has terminated already with respect to a reference event. However, prior to having reached the state of being completed, an event must have passed through the state of being incompleted. This latter state must temporally precede the former, although the time of phasing out incompletion into completion may be very short, especially in the case of momentary events. Thus, in the normal course of events, a completed event

presupposes a corresponding incompleted one as a part. In other words, a completed event occurs after its corresponding incompleted subevent has occurred.

For the sake of convenience the terms perfectivization and imperfectivization are used. By *perfectivization* an operation of turning a given non-perfective sentence or verb-form into corresponding perfective ones is meant. The sense of *imperfectivization* is *mutatis mutandis* analogous.

3. Towards a Korean Aspectology

In light of the empirical hypothesis (Hy 1.1) put forth above, Aspect is present in every language, but its manifestation, that is, signification, is cross-lingually diversified and moreover specific for any particular language. Consequently also Korean, similarly to other languages, is not aspect-free.

The aspective reality of Korean shall be thus inquired into within a corresponding particular *aspectology*, a linguistic subdiscipline intended to describe and explain this reality. Obviously, a particular aspectology devised for Korean will necessarily incorporate a general aspectological component and it will be divided into theoretical and practical part.

The theoretical aspectology intended for Korean could be thus conceived of as a class of theories about the aspective reality of this language. Since grammars are in fact linguistic theories intended for the corresponding languages, one may also safely speak about grammars of Aspect for Korean. Consequently, a *grammar of aspect* is simply a theory of this category.

An important step towards a description of Aspect in Korean is the determination of relevant aspective dimensions, which should specify a parametrization of the aspective space accessible for this language and thereby facilitate the description of lingual objects in terms of the corresponding aspective meanings of which these dimensions are comprised. In other words, these objects as significators should be associated with the aspective meanings, which they convey.

In the current inquiry use shall be made of the three dimensions distinguished above and their validity shall be tested for aspective purposes. In particular, the examination will focus on the identification of aspective meanings signified or co-signified by the Korean preterite forms, while devoting special attention to the signification of Completion, a function of perfective significators. It is uncertain, whether the assumption of three aspective dimensions is already sufficient, in order to exhaustively account for the aspective content of lingual objects in Korean.

For a pertinent discussion of Korean aspect the substantiation or refutation of the following two hypotheses would thus be a matter of great consequence.

Hy 3.1. Korean preterite verb forms (created by the affix *-eoss-/-ass-*), outside of context, are aspectively unspecified or indeterminate.

Hy 3.2. Korean has the means to perfectivize or imperfectivize preterite verb forms. Of course, our efforts shall be directed towards the substantiation of these hypotheses.

4. Signification of Completion in Korean

4.1. An overview

Before proceeding to the examination of some means of Completion signification in Korean a general idea of this operation is worthy of being outlined. In signifying this meaning Korean exhibits both certain panglottal traits and also certain peculiarities. An effective comparison with other languages presupposes thus at least a brief survey of the significators in question.

Generally speaking, the lingual means utilized for the signification of Completion in Korean are diversified, and among them the following can be distinguished:
- (i)   lexical,
- (ii)   grammatical (semical),
- (iii) syntactic and
- (iv) contextual.

Usually these means, within a sentence or a text, may complement one another in obtaining adequate significators for Completion, and are not always separable from one another.

Anticipatorily it should be stated that the significators for Completion in Korean are less grammaticalized (semicalized) than, for example, in Polish, where they usually assume the shape of affixes. Korean does not make use of affixal signification for the purposes at issue.

4.2. Perfectivization induced by adverbials lexically related to quantity or time

Korean has certain adverbs and adverbial phrases, which by virtue of their lexical meaning, associated with quantity or time, perfectivize the verb that they qualify, hence the perfectivization of this sort operates at the level of the syntagm. Among other adverbs this function is fulfilled by the following:
- (i)   *beolsseo*   'already',
- (ii)   *da*   'all, everything',
- (iii) *kkeut-kkaji* 'to the end, completely'.

The perfectivization with the help of the above significators finds exemplification in the following sentences.

(4.2.1) *Gica-neun beolsseo tteonatta*. 'The train already left.'

(4.2.2) *Junbi-neun beolsseo da dweeo itta*. 'Preparations were completed long ago.'

(4.2.3) *Nae-ga docak-haesseul ttae, geu-neun beolsseo tteona-go eopseotta*. 'He had already gone when I arrived.'

(4.2.4) *Gyeongcar-i dwinmun-eul tonghae bakk-euro beolsseo nagatta*. 'The police had already gone out by the back door.'

(4.2.5) *Geu-neun acim-eul da meogeotta*. 'He ate all his breakfast./He ate the whole breakfast./He completely ate his breakfast.'

(4.2.6) *Haksaeng-eun caeg-eul da ilgeotta*. 'The student read the book to the end./ The student read the whole book.'

(4.2.7) *Eomeoni-neun don-eul da sseosseumnida*. 'Mother spent all the money.'

(4.2.8) *Haksaeng-eun geu caeg-eul kkeut-kkaji ilgeotta*. 'The student read the book through to the end.'

The adverb *da* also combines with the auxiliary verbs *hada* and *dweda* 'become, be made/ completed'.

(4.2.9) *Geu-neun ir-eul da haetta*. 'He finished all his work.'

(4.2.10) *Doro gongsa-ga da dwe-eotta*. 'The road construction has been completed.'

The predicates qualified by *da* express the Completion combined with Totivity. What is more, *da* and *beolsseo* may simultaneously qualify one and the same predicate.

4.3. Perfectivization by hybrid nomino-verbal predicates

Korean abounds in predicate constructions consisting of a Sino-Korean noun combined with a native Korean verb, such as *hada* 'do, be' or *dweda* 'become, get.' These constructions may be treated as hybrid compound verbs (cf. Sohn 1999: 218, 254). They may alternatively be treated as consisting of a noun, lexically related to Completion, Accomplishment, Conclusion, etc., and an auxiliary verb *hada* or *dweda*, whereby the noun in question becomes verbified. These hybrid predicates may be exemplified as follows.

(4.3.1) *wanseong*' completion, perfection';
wanseong hada 'complete, accomplish, finish, perfect';
Geu-neun geu saeob-eul wanseong haetta. 'He brought the project to completion.' 'Doprowadził ten projekt do końca.'
wanseong dweda 'be/get finished'; *Geonmur-eun da wanseong dweeotta*. 'The building is finished.' 'Budynek został ukończony.'

(4.3.2) *wansu* 'successful execution, accomplishment, completion';
wansu hada 'bring (something) to a successful conclusion; accomplish; complete; carry through';

(4.3.3) *wanseung* 'a complete (sweeping) victory';
wanseung hada 'win/score a complete/sweeping victory (over)';

(4.3.4) *wanyeok* 'a complete translation; a translation in full';
wanyeok hada 'make a complete translation (of)';

(4.3.5) *wanjeon* 'perfection, completeness, wholeness';
wanjeon hada '(be) perfect; complete; whole';
wanjeon hage hada 'complete, perfect; make perfect; bring (a thing) to perfection';
wanjeon-e kakkapta 'be nearly perfect';
wanjeonhi itta 'entirely forget'.

The productivity of the verbification of the Sino-Korean nouns is really amazing.

4.4. Perfectivization induced by lexical meaning of the verb or context

The preterite forms of certain Korean verbs, owing to the meanings they lexify, are usually interpretable as perfective or favor such interpretation. Thus, the sentences given below signify Perfectivity rather than Imperfectivity.

(4.4.1) *Busan-haeng gica-ga Seoul-eseo watta*. 'The train from Seoul to Busan arrived.'

(4.4.2) *Oneul gyosunim-i daehag-e ilccik wassumnida.'* Today the professor arrived early at the university.'

(4.4.3) *Nugun-ga mun-eul dadeotta*. 'Someone closed the door.'

(4.4.4) *Eoje na-neun sigye-reul irheotta*. 'Yesterday I lost my watch.'

(4.4.5) *Geu-neun gyeorhon haetta*. 'He married.'

It would be rather difficult to imagine contexts in which the preterite verb forms occurring in the above sentences could be interpreted as imperfective. The conclusions, which could be derived from these sentences, also indicate Perfectivity.

4.5. Perfectivization by auxiliarization

Korean has auxiliary verbs by means of which perfective predicates may be created from the main verbs. The auxiliaries signifying the aspective meaning of Completion thus perfectivize the main verb, and, simultaneously, they also supply additional aspectual or modal meanings to the resulting predicate construction (cf. Ihm et al. 2001: 343 ff).

All of these perfectivizing auxiliaries have their corresponding homophonous fully lexical verbs frequently used in Korean. However, it should be noted that the meanings of the auxiliaries deviate from those of their respective fully lexical verbs (cf. Sohn 1999: 387). Let us now inspect some of the latter, and their translations into English.

(4.5.1) *beorida* 'to throw away, to give up, to discard';

(4.5.2) *naeda* 'take/ bring out; apply, produce, turn out';

(4.5.3) *ciuda* 'put/take/clear away/off, work off, put in order';

(4.5.4) *nota* 'put (down), place, lay, set';

(4.5.5) *duda* 'put (down), place, set, lay, leave (behind)';

(4.5.6) *meokta* 'eat';

Proceeding now to the exemplification of the auxiliary counterparts of the just adduced verbs in their function of creating perfective predicates, Korean sentences are provided with appropriate English translations. However, for an effective and conspicuous exemplification of the extra-aspective signification, these Korean sentences should also be associated with appropriate conclusions derived from them.

As already indicated above, among the meanings, which the perfectivizing auxiliaries may co-signify or connote, aspectual and modal meanings can be found. The auxiliary *beorida* may signify that:

(i)   the action expressed by the main verb attained a result diverging from the intended, expected, or desired one;

(ii) the action was performed reluctantly or unwillingly;

(iii) the performance of the action was unpleasant for the agent, and when it terminated s/he sensed a relief.

The auxiliary *naeda* may signify that despite difficulties the action was carried out with tenacity to a successful completion. The auxiliary *ciuda*, in turn, signifies that the action was completed quickly, thoroughly, and without exception.

(4.5.7) *Na-neun geu-ege don-eul jueo-beoryeotta*. 'I gave him some money.' (I didn't really want to, but he insisted).

(4.5.8) *Nae-ga geu-ege don-eul da jueo-beoryeotta*. 'I gave him all the money I had (and unfortunately now nothing is left).'

(4.5.9) *Na-neun geu ireul kkeunnae-beoryeotta*. 'I took care of that matter once and for all.' (It was really bothering me. I'm relieved it's all over).

(4.5.10) *Geu-neun bab-eul meogeo-beoryeotta*. 'He ate all the rice there was.' (Nothing's left, unfortunately).

(4.5.11) *Na-eui jeonca-ga ga-beoryeotta*. 'The streetcar took off without me.' (Too bad, I didn't manage to get there in time).

(4.5.12) *Geu-neun bab-eul meogeo-ciweotta*. 'He ate up all the rice.' (Nothing's left at all).

(4.5.13) *Geu-neun acim-eul meogeo-ciweo-beoryeotta*. 'He managed to finish off breakfast in a hurry.' (He managed to get through the entire breakfast before very long).

(4.5.14) *Geu-neun gyeou siheom-eul cireo-naetta*. 'He just barely passed the exam.' (It wasn't easy but he managed before the deadline).

(4.5.15) *Geu-neun pibuam-eui weonin-eul balghyeo-naetta*. 'He finally managed to determine what had caused the skin cancer.'

(4.5.16) *Wecul-hal ttae nanbang-eul kkeo-noatta/-dueotta*. 'I turned off the heat before I left (and it's still off).'

(4.5.17) *Geu-eui jeonhwa beonho-reul ijeo-meogeotta*. 'I forgot his phone number.'

5. Aspective Indeterminacy of the Korean Preterite

The Korean preterite verb forms, if they are not lexically tinted as perfective, seem to be indeterminate aspectively or in certain contexts imperfective. If this assumption would be true, then the coordination, by means of the adversative conjunction *-jiman* 'but' of two sentences bound by aspective opposition and such that the corresponding second sentence is negative perfective, should result in a sensible compound sentence.

In order to test this assumption let us consider the following Korean sentences, provided with English and Polish translations.

(5.1) *Geu-neun pyeonji-reul sseot-jiman, da sseuji(neun) anatta.*
'He wrote a letter, but he did not finish it.' (He himself did not want to finish it).
'(On) pisał list, ale go nie napisał.'

(5.2) *Geu-neun pyeonji-reul sseot-jiman, kkeunnaeji(neun) mothaetta.*
'He wrote a letter, but he could not finish it.'
'Pisał list, ale nie mógł go skończyć.'

(5.3) *Geu-neun pyeonji-reul sseot-jiman, da anseotta.*
'He wrote a letter, but he did not finish it entirely.'
'Pisał list, ale go nie skończył.'

(5.4) **Geu-neun pyeonji-reul da sseot-jiman, sseuji(neun) anatta.*
*'He wrote a letter entirely, but he did not write it.'
*'Napisał list, ale go nie pisał.'

In the above coordinate Korean sentences (5.1)–(5.3) the preterite verb form of the first sentence cannot be perfective, that is, cannot signify the meaning of Completion, because if it did the whole compound sentence would be self-contradictory, and thus nonsensical, since the second sentence is negative perfective by virtue of signifying the negation of Completion. Consequently, the first perfective sentence and its negation in the second are incompatible within the same compound sentence (cf. (5.4)). Accordingly, the second sentence in (5.1), (5.2), and (5.3) compellingly imperfectivizes the first one, which, as aspectively neutral, is susceptible to determinate aspectivization in a context exerting aspective specification. And, this, in turn, means that if the first sentence would not be coordinated with and opposed to the second negative perfective one, it would be felt as aspectively indeterminate rather than imperfective.

The coordinate sentences adduced above seem thus to confirm the assumption that the preterite verb forms of Korean verb are either unspecified aspectively or they are imperfective in an appropriate context. It is under this assumption that the sentences in question make sense. And, this is why an affirmative perfective sentence cannot be sensibly coordinated with a corresponding negative imperfective one, by means of an adversative conjunction, which may also be exemplified as follows:

(5.5) **Geu-neun acim-eul meogeo-beoryeot-jiman, ajik meokji(neun) anatta.*
(5.6) **Geun-neun acim-eul meogeo-beoryeot-jiman, ajik anmeogeotta.*

These two sentences are synonymous, and they translate as follows:

(5.7) *'He ate the breakfast, but he did not eat it yet.'
(5.8) *'On zjadł śniadanie, ale go jeszcze nie jadł.'

Recapitulating the above it may be stated that an event taking place may attain its completion or termination or it may not. If it is known that an event is not or was not completed with respect to a reference event, then this fact may be expressed by two sentences linked coordinatively by an adversative conjunction, so that the antecedent is a neutral/imperfective sentence and its postcedent is a corresponding negative perfective sentence. Thus, the resulting compound sentence is a singular aspective statement, as

illustrated in (5.1)–(5.3). Such a statement is an exemplification of a general aspective statement in the form of the following postulate:

Po 5.1. If S_i, an affirmative neutral/imperfective sentence, and S_j, a corresponding negative perfective sentence, are linked by means of an adversative conjunction, then the resulting compound sentence S_k is, under predictable conditions, aspectively correct.

6. Aspective Implications

Certain aspectively relevant semantic and syntactic interdependences between perfective and corresponding imperfective sentences may be apprehended in terms of aspective implications, in which the former function as antecedents and the latter as their postcedents (consequents), or conversely.

According to the assumption, the imperfective sentence is aspectively less specified, that is, more general in comparison to the corresponding perfective one. Hence it is this latter, which implies the former. It should be noted however that an implication with the perfective sentence as an antecedent and the imperfective one as its postcedent, constructed for a given language, need not always to be acceptable or true, since these sentences in addition to Aspect, may also differ in other semantic dimensions. The imperfective sentence may signify, for example, Iterativity, in opposition to the perfective one. Nevertheless, it is worth inquiring into the aspective implications, since they seem to make important relationships between perfective and imperfective sentences in Korean more conspicuous and thereby render aspective distinctions between the significators of Completion and Incompletion more explicit.

Let us now briefly inspect the following aspective implications:

(6.1) *Manyak geu-ga acim-eul da meogeotta-myeon, geu-neun acim-eul meogeotta.*
'If he finished eating breakfast, then he was eating it.'
'Jeśli on zjadł śniadanie, to je jadł.'

(6.2) *Manyak geu-ga acim-eul meogeo-beoryeotta-myeon, geu-neun acim-eul meogeotta.*
'If he finished eating breakfast, then he was eating it.'
'Jeśli on zjadł śniadanie, to je jadł.'

(6.3) *Geu-ga i caeg-eul ilgeo-naetta-myeon, geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeotta.*
'If he read this book to the end, then he was reading it.'
'Jeśli on przeczytał tę książkę, to ją czytał.'

(6.4) *Geu-ga eoryeoun munje-reul pureo-naetta-myeon, geu-neun i munje-reul pureotta.*
'If he solved this difficult problem, then he was working at solving it.'
'Jeśli on rozwiązał ten trudny problem, to go rozwiązywał.'

(6.5) *Geu-ga siheom-eul cireo-naetta-myeon, geu-neun sihom-eul cireotta.*
'If he passed the exam, then he had taken it.'
'Jeśli on zdał egzamin, to go zdawał.'

(6.6) *Geu-ga acim-eul meogeotta-myeon, geu-neun acim-eul da meogeotta.
      *'If he was eating breakfast, then he ate it all.'
      *'Jeśli on jadł śniadanie, to je zjadł.'

As may be easily inferred, the aspective implications cannot be reversed, that is, turning the imperfective sentence into an antecedent, and the corresponding perfective one into its postcedent would make the resulting implication nonsensical (cf. (6.6)).

The aspective propositions as stated above in the form of implications might be viewed as **theses of Korean aspectology**, if they, of course, would resist possible objections. They turn out to be but singular (particular) statements exemplifying the general statement in the following form:

Po 6.1 If S_i, a perfective sentence, and S_j, a corresponding imperfective sentence, are in aspective opposition but do not differ with respect to other aspectual dimensions, then S_i implies S_j.

With this general statement in mind, and invoking the above singular statements the explanation scheme commends itself of necessity.

7. Aspective-Translational Challenges and Quandaries

As has already been stated above the auxiliaries that perfectivize the main verb not only convey additional aspectual or modal meanings but they also differ from each other regarding these meanings. For the sake of exemplifying their diversified semantic and pragmatic contribution one should consider below a component of what might be called a sentential **quasi-paradigm** consisting of sentences in which the Korean main verb *ikta* 'to read' is perfectivized by the adverb *da* 'all, everything', or an auxiliary verb with which it forms a compound predicate. The translations of these sentences into English and Polish are given as well as conclusions, which the native speaker would usually derive from these sentences.

(7.1) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeotta.*
(7.2) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul da ilgeotta.*
(7.3) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeo-beoryeotta.*
(7.4) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeo-ciweotta.*
(7.5) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeo-ciweo-beoryeotta.*
(7.6) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeo-naetta.*
(7.7) *Geu-neun i caeg-eul ilgeo-noatta/dueotta.*

In (7.1) the predicate designates an action of reading in the past time. Depending on the context it may signify Completion or Incompletion, therefore it might be interpreted as aspectively indeterminate. Thus, sentence (7.1) may be translated as 'He read this book.', or 'He finished reading this book.' (Polish: 'Czytał tę książkę.', 'Przeczytał tę książkę.').

Sentence (7.2) translates as 'He read this book to the end.' or 'He read all of this book.' or 'He read this whole book.' (Polish: 'Przeczytał tę książkę.'). The predicate of this sentence *da ilgeotta* signifies thus Completion and Totivity.

Sentence (7.3), similarly to (7.2) transtates as 'He read this book completely.' But, the reading turned out for him to be an unpleasant or even unwanted task, although it might have been easy to perform. Finally, when he was finished with the reading he felt relief.

Sentence (7.4) also translates as 'He read this book to the end/completely.' During reading it he encountered no difficulties. Therefore he was reading it easily and quickly.

Sentence (7.5) translates as 'He read this book completely.' The conclusions of this sentence combine those of (7.3) and (7.4).

Sentence (7.6) can be translated as 'He read the book to the very end.' (Polish: 'Przeczytał tę książkę od deski do deski.'). It implies that he had to overcome difficulties and hardships while reading this book, but successfully completed the reading to the end.

Sentence (7.7) also translates as 'He read this book completely.' And, it implies that the reading of this book was performed for a subsequent, later or future use.

The translations of the sentences (7.3) – (7.7) being similar to each other do not reflect the meaning diversification carried by these sentences, and the differences in meaning are not apparent until the conclusions are compared.

8. Concluding Remarks

Even a less thorough acquaintance with Korean aspect reveals its peculiarity. In particular, the extensive use of auxiliary verbs for the purpose of perfectivization of the main verb seems to be a characteristic feature of this operation in Korean. However, the construction of significators for completion by means of auxiliarization inevitably introduces some additional modal meanings as well, which renders equivalent translation of these significators rather difficult.

A comprehensive inquiry into Korean aspective reality will certainly broaden and deepen knowledge and understanding of the peculiarity of the category of aspect in this language, and will contribute thereby new insights to general aspectology. This in turn may invalidate our conception outlined above by revealing its inadequacy.

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