The Fine Structure of the Discourse Layer: Evidence from Kyeongsang Korean

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Abstract:

We investigate the syntactic and prosodic properties of two discourse markers in Kyeongsang Korean in light of recent investigations into the syntactic structure of the discourse layer in the root clause (Haegeman & Hill, 2013, Heim, Keupdijo, Lam, Osa-Gómez & Wiltschko, 2014, Speas & Tenny, 2003). Specifically, we investigate the two particles aika and ma and show how they lexicalize various heads in the discourse layer. We also propose (following Heim et al., 2014) that rising intonation is a distinct morpheme that instantiates a functional head. This proposal develops a current trend in investigating syntactic aspects of discourse properties of language and adds to a small but growing body of literature in this field.

1 Introduction

Discourse-related material (vocatives and speech act particles) → extra-clausal, not syntactic.

(1) a. **Minswu-ya, eti ka?**
   Minsoo-VOC where go
   ‘Hey, Minsoo, where are you going?’

b. **wuwa, nalssi-ka coh-ney-yo**
   wow weather-NOM good-EXCL-POL
   ‘Wow, it’s nice out?’

Recently syntactic underpinning to these discourse markers (Haegeman & Hill, 2013, Heim et al., 2014, Speas & Tenny, 2003).

Build on early investigations within the generative semantic tradition

speech acts were represented with an additional layer above the matrix clause (Ross, 1970).
declarative sentence:

(2) I SAY TO YOU John ate an apple.

Speas & Tenny (2003): structure of the discourse layer has been adapted to contemporary clausal structure.

Expanded CP (Rizzi, 1997) ➔ additional discourse layer above root ForceP

Same phrase structural properties as the rest of the clause.

Properties encoded by the discourse layer:

i. attention-seeking

ii. consolidating/bonding (Haegeman & Hill, 2013).

The discourse layer also includes a representation of the speaker and addressee (Barrie & Kim, 2014, Haegeman & Hill, 2013, Kim, 2014).

Empirically: South Kyeongsang Korean (SKK)

Interaction between the particles *ai* *a* and *ma* with intonation with various speech acts.

i. declaratives

ii. biased polarity questions

iii. conformational polarity questions.

We adapt the methodology developed in Heim et al. (2014) to examine the SKK data here.

*aika* ➔ a belief that the proposition under consideration is true (*p=1*)

*Can indicate either the speaker’s beliefs or*

*Can indicate the speaker’s call on the addressee to accept the proposition as true.*

*Speaker’s beliefs (or intentions) and the speaker’s call on the addressee ➔ encoded by distinct functional projections.*

*aika* can appear in one or both of these heads.
➤ *ma* → speaker’s negative attitude toward the addressee.

➤ Rising intonation corresponds to a polarity question.

**OUTLINE:**

➤ Section 2: describes the empirical foundation of this study, presenting the different contexts that were used to elicit the speech acts involved.

➤ Section 3 presents the various frameworks that have been proposed recently for a syntactic account of the discourse layer.

➤ Section 4 presents the analysis, where we show how the various particles and intonational contours can be accounted for using the machinery introduced in section 3.

➤ Section 5 is a brief conclusion and discussion of the repercussions of this study.

2 **Data – The Left Periphery in South Kyeongsang Korean**

➤ SKK is spoken in the south-eastern part of Korean peninsula.

➤ Geographical boundary of SKK: generally includes Pohang, Busan to the North and Keoje, Jinju to the South.

➤ SKK: differences from standard Korean: vocabulary, grammar and phonological properties

➤ Most noticeable difference: pitch accent system.

➤ SKK has at least two different pitch contours (High and Low) → contrastive in meaning.

➤ Much variation in pitch accent system → our study is based on the speech of Busan

➤ Particles *aika* and *ma* (Lim, 2009, 2011).

➤ Both particles interact with each other and with intonation to give rise to various discourse-related meanings.
First scenario: the speaker (S) knows that the addressee (A) entered the library, but the addressee does not know that the speaker knows that the addressee entered the library (at least as far as the speaker knows).

(1) **Context:** S knows A entered the library. A does not know S knows:

\[
\text{Ni ecey tosekwan ka-ss-ta-aika→/\flat (flat or falling intonation)}
\]
you yesterday library go-PST-DEC-AIKA

‘(I know that) you went to the library.’

Next scenario, the speaker strongly suspects that the addressee entered the library and is asking for confirmation.

(2) **Context:** S strongly suspects A entered the library and wishes to confirm this:

\[
\text{Ni ecey tosekwan ka-ss-ta-aika↗ (rising intonation)}
\]
you yesterday library go-PST-DEC-AIKA

‘You went to the library yesterday, right?’

Final scenario, the speaker knows that the addressee has entered the library, but the addressee has denied it. The speaker utters the following to re-confirm their belief.

(3) **Context:** S knows A entered the library, but A denies it. S re-confirms their belief:

\[
\text{Ni ecey tosekwan ka-ss-ta-aika-\text{ma}→/\flat/\↗ (falling intonation)}
\]
you yesterday library go-PST-DEC-AIKA-MA

‘(We both know) you went to the library.’

(4) **Context:** S knows A cheated in the examination, but A denies it. S wants to confirm his/her belief:

\[
\text{Ni ecey khenningha-y-ss-ta-aika-\text{ma}→/\flat/\↗ (falling intonation)}
\]
you yesterday cheat-EPEN-PST-DEC-AIKA-MA

‘(We both know) you cheated in the examination yesterday.’

(5) **Context:** S knows A talked behind S’s back, but A denies it. S wants to confirm his/her belief.

\[
\text{Ni ecey k-yey-lang nay twistamkka-ss-ta-aika-\text{ma}→/\flat/\↗ (falling intonation)}
\]
you yesterday _________ my slander-PST-DEC-AIKA-MA

‘(We both know) you talked behind my back yesterday.’
(6) **Context:** S knows A stole the bag yesterday, but A denies it. S wants to confirm his/her belief.

\[
\text{Ni ecey kabang kam-ass-ta-aika-ma} \downarrow (*↗/*→) \\
\text{you yesterday bag steal-PAST-DECL-AIKA-MA} \\
\text{‘(We both know) you stole the bag yesterday.’}
\]

➢To summarize, we observe the following (U = rest of utterance):

(7) a. U AIKA (rising) – S commits to truth of U and expects A to agree
    b. U AIKA (falling/flat) – S commits to truth of U and is informing A
    c. U AIKA MA (falling) – S commits to truth of U and is focussing U for A
    d. * U AIKA MA (rising)

➢Interim observations:

➢*Aika* indicates that the speaker is committed to the truth of the utterance.

➢*Ma* is a marker of emphasis or insistence. It indicates the speaker’s desire to call on the addressee to accept the utterance as true.

➢Finally, rising intonation indicates a biased question, S expects an affirmative answer.

➢Introduce theoretical framework

➢Model of discourse that is represented syntactically above the highest ForceP.

3 **Framework**

➢Sentence-peripheral elements such as vocatives, discourse particles and intonation have not been subject to syntactic analysis until recently.

➢Some recent work in this tradition.


➢**Speas & Tenny:** akin to Larsonian shell for the double object construction (Larson, 1988).

➢Single speech act phrase with two projections as follows.
Haegeman & Hill (2013) propose that the discourse layer is split into two sets of functional projections, which encode

1. attention-seeking
2. consolidating-bonding

Within each sub-layer is a projection encoding

- S’s intentions (saP)
- call on A (SAP)

These properties cross-classify as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>attention seeking</th>
<th>consolidating-bonding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker’s Intentions</td>
<td>$sa_1$</td>
<td>$sa_2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call on Addressee</td>
<td>SA_1</td>
<td>SA_2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Heim et al. (2014) argue for the following structure for the discourse layer for English.

(10) Call on Addressee
    CoA Speaker Commitment
    SC CP

(for English) SC is encoded by a particle, CoA is encoded by an intonational contour.

Intonational contour is assumed to be a morpheme, which heads a functional projection (Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg, 1990).

Multiple particles in the SKK → adopt the structure in (9),

Also intonational contours (of the units thereof) are represented as morphemes that head functional projections.

4 Analysis

Sentence-initial discourse markers: attention-seeking devices

Sentence-final discourse markers: consolidating-bonding devices (both SKK and standard Korean)

(11) a. Ma ellun bab mek-ca
    MA promptly rice eat-HORT
    ‘Hey, let’s have a meal at once.’

    b. Ellun bab mek-ca-ma
    Promptly rice eat-HORT-MA
    ‘Let’s have a meal right away. (If you don’t come to eat, it’ll make me feel angry.)

Vocatives: once contact has been made between the interlocutors, clause-initial vocative in B’s response is ruled out.

(12) A: chelswu-ya eti ka
    Cheolsoo-VOC where go
    ‘Cheolsoo, where are you going?’
B:    # minswu(-ya) tosagwan
     Minsoo(-VOC) library
     (‘Minsoo, to the library’)

B’: tosagwan, minswu
      library Minsoo
      ‘To the library, Minsoo’

- Utterance (the ForceP) raises to the left edge of the lower, consolidating-bonding layer.
- Haegeman & Hill: same conclusion on the basis of similar data in Romanian and West Flemish.

(13)  [sa1P [SA1P attention-seeking [sa2P [ForceP U]j [SA2P consolidation/bonding tj]]]]

**ANALYSIS**

- *aika* indicates belief in the proposition.
- In (1), speaker believes $p=1$ and is informing the addressee.
- Speaker calls on the addressee to believe $p=1$.
- propose that *aika* undergoes head movement as in (14) to indicate both properties.\(^1\)

(14)  [sa1P [SA1P [sa2P [ForceP U]j AIIA$i$ [SA2P $t_i$ $t_j$]]]]

- *aika*: “believe $p=1$”.
- *aika* merges with the head, $SA_2$, it gives rise to the meaning, “I call on you to believe $p=1$.”
- *aiga+SA$_2$ undergoes head raising to $sa_2$, it gives rise to the meaning, “I believe $p=1$.”

Example (2), only speaker believes $p$ and asks for the addressee’s confirmation of $p$.
- Thus, *aika* appears only on $sa_2$,
- RISE (the rising contour) appears on $SA_2$.

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\(^1\) Note that for convenience we have represented phrase structure as head-initial. We do not take a stance here on whether Korean is underlyingly head-initial (in the sense of Antisymmetry) or whether Korean is head-final (in the sense of the Headedness Parameter).
\(aika\) combines with \(sa2\), it gives rise to the meaning, “I believe \(p=1\).”

RISE gives rise to a biased yes/no question here.

We can derive this as follows.

RISE such that it indicates a polarity question.

RISE appears on \(SA_2\) \(\rightarrow\) speaker is asking the addressee a polarity question.

However, \(sa_2\) is modified with \(aika\), meaning that the speaker believes \(p=1\).

\(aika+sa2\) and RISE+SA2 gives rise to the meaning, “I believe \(p=1\), is that true?”

\[(sa_1P [SA1P [sa2P [ForceP U]j] RISE [SA2P AIKA t_j]]])\]

Finally, in (3) the speaker knows that \(p=1\)

Emphatically informing the addressee that they both know \(p=1\).

\(ma\) lexicalizes \(SA_2\) to indicate the speaker’s negative attitude with the addressee.

Recall from (11) \(\rightarrow\) \(ma\) indicates the speaker’s insistence or negative attitude.

Meanwhile, \(aika\) appears on \(sa_2\) and indicates that the speaker believes \(p=1\).

\[(sa_1P [SA1P [sa2P [ForceP U]j] AIKA [SA2P MA t_j]]])\]

Difference: first context: speaker is calling on the addressee to believe \(p=1\)

Here (3\(^{rd}\) context) speaker knows that the addressee knows that \(p=1\).

The speaker is merely communicating their negative attitude with the addressee.

\(aika\) does not undergo head movement from \(SA_2\) to \(sa_2\).

Absence of rising intonation in (16), that is, we account for the absence of (7)d.

Complementarity between morphemes that can lexicalize a given head.

Argue for the lack of subject-aux inversion in embedded clauses in English.

The embedded C head is filled with a complementizer, so the auxiliary can’t raise.
Interestingly, in certain dialects, the complementizer can be omitted and subject-aux inversion can take place again (Henry, 1995).

i. I wonder if John is reading *Aspects*.
ii. *I wonder if/if is John reading Aspects.*
iii. % I wonder is John reading *Aspects*.

Thus, there is space for only two particles (assuming RISE) is a particle

5 Conclusion

SKK particles AIKA and MA fall out naturally from the syntactic model of discourse structure that Haegeman & Hill propose.

Particles must have variable insertion sites.

AIKA - underspecified → head of either $sa_2P$ or $SA_2P$.

Likewise, $SA_2P$ can be lexicalized by either AIKA or MA.

Growing body of literature that the discourse properties of utterances are constrained by the same general principles of syntax.

MAIN POINTS:

First, as Haegeman & Hill found for Romanian and West Flemish,

- sentence-initial particles and vocatives in SKK: attention-seeking discourse acts
- sentence-final particles and vocatives in SKK: consolidating/bonding.

It remains to be seen whether this set of properties is universal or variable.

The precise way we derived these facts (as did Haegeman & Hill) was to assume that the ForceP raises to an intermediate position in the discourse layer.

\[
(17) \quad [sa_1P [SA_1P \text{ attention-seeking } [sa_2P [\text{ForceP U}] [SA_2P \text{ consolidation/bonding } t_j]]]]
\]
Second: *aika* is underspecified enough to undergo head movement and lexicalize two distinct heads.

Heim *et al.* and Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg: rising intonation $\Rightarrow$ morpheme that is inserted at PF as any other morpheme.

We leave it to future studies how the rising intonation can be decomposed into individual tones (as Pierrehumber & Hirschberb have done for English), and how these tones fit into the prosodic hierarchy of SKK.

**References:**


