

Turn-taking and Verbal Affixes in Korean Conversation*

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With the politeness that characterized everything he did, Mervin Selkirk said to Norda Allison, "Excuse me, please". Then he leaned forward and slapped the child's face--hard. "Little gentlemen," he said to his seven-year-old son, "don't interrupt when people are talking." Then Mervin Selkirk settled back in his chair, lit a cigarette, turned to Norda Allison and said, "As you were saying...?" But Norda couldn't go on. ...
--- from Gardner (1959) *The Case of the Deadly Toy*.

This paper tries to characterize turn-taking in Korean conversation through an examination of grammatical aspects of turn constructional units, basically in terms of sequential production approach. To explore the question of what constitutes turn-constructional units and how transition relevance places are predicted in Korean conversation, I examined types of turn constructional units in terms of some grammatical categories. The examination shows that sentence-enders such as *-e(yo)* and *-ci* function as the most significant predictors of turn-taking in Korean. The analysis of the data shows that clausal connectives except *-nuntey* do not play a significant role in determining TRPs. The examination of the data shows that lexical or phrasal elements that function as reactive tokens also play a role in signaling TRPs. Finally I will show that the apparent violation of turn-taking rules has the functions such as the display of affiliation or disagreement with an ongoing turn.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, many discourse-functionalists have been interested in analyzing naturally occurring conversation as a way of understanding the nature of human communication in context. Many studies of natural conversational data in discourse analysis and conversation analysis (CA) have shown diverse aspects of talk-in-interaction. Among many studies in CA, one of the most fundamental research topics lies in the area of research on turn-taking and the sequential organization of talk, as explicitly articulated in Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) and others (Oreström 1983).

The research of turn-taking is prerequisite and fundamental in the study of talk-in-interaction in the sense that turn-taking can clarify the principles that govern the sequential organization of conversation as a type of situated social action. Furthermore, it can reveal many grammatical aspects of talk-in-interaction. The research of turn-taking deals with questions such as (i) what constitutes turn-constructural units (TCUs), (ii) how transition relevance places (TRPs) are predicted, (iii) what rules are observed in turn-taking, (iv) how the projection of unit-types is accomplished and so on. So far, in the study of turn-taking, the question of what constitutes turn-constructural units has mostly been understood in terms of syntax. However, until recent years, there has not been much research that has seriously dealt with the syntactic properties of turn constructural units. In recent years, there have been some studies which suggest that turn-taking is regulated not only by syntax but also by prosody (i.e., intonation) and pragmatics (Goodwin 1981, Ford and Thompson 1996). Other researchers such as Duncan and Fiske (1977) suggest that turn exchanges are characterized by factors such as gaze, gesture, pitch, syllable length, intonation, and syntactic completion.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss some aspects of turn-taking in Korean conversation, mostly dealing with the syntactic properties of TCUs in terms of the sequential production approach developed by Sacks et al. (1974). As a preliminary task of characterizing the turn-taking system in general in Korean conversation, this study is devoted to exploring the role of syntax in the construction of turns through an examination of some portions of Korean conversational data. The research questions that will be addressed are: (i) what constitute turn-constructural units in Korean conversation, (ii) to what extent Korean verbal affixes function as predictors of turn

completion as validated by actual speaker change, (iii) how the projection of unit-types is accomplished, and (iv) what interactional functions are involved in the overlapping of turns.

In exploring these research questions, I will first examine characteristics of turn-constructural units by examining what syntactic forms turns in Korean conversation take. That is, I will first examine the distribution of various syntactic units (sentences, clauses, noun phrases, and so on) as a way of characterizing TCUs as interactional units in conversation. Second, I will try to find out to what extent sentence-enders and clausal connectives function as predictors of turn completion by examining the distribution of various turn constructural units in terms of syntax. In the study of turn-taking, the question of the point at which turn-taking may take place has been the one of the objects of research. In the CA literature, the end of a turn-constructural unit that constitutes a point at which speakers may change is called a transition relevance place (TRP). As a way of characterizing TRPs in Korean, I will examine syntactic properties of turn-constructural units. Particularly, the properties of clausal connectives and sentence-enders will be examined in terms of possible syntactic completion points. The examination of the unit-types will show the roles of Korean sentence-enders in the change of speakers. The analysis will show that in Korean conversation sentence-enders function as significant predictors for the turn completion points. In addition, this paper will investigate the roles of some frequently used affixes such as *-e(yo)*, *-ci*, and *-(nu)ntey* in the change of speakers. Furthermore, I will examine what interactional factors are involved in the cases where turns are overlapped or interrupted. That is, I will show that speaker change at non-TRPs are associated with the display of affiliation or disagreement with an ongoing turn. Finally, I will suggest that the study of turn-taking should be extended to the research that investigates not only syntactic factors but also phonological and pragmatic factors that govern the exchange of turns in conversation.

2. Previous Studies and Context of Research

In the study of talk-in interaction, it is generally accepted that the exchange of turns between speaker and hearer is one of the most fundamental features of conversational interaction. In normal conversation, alternation of turns from one speaker to another is realized in an orderly

manner without any notable silence and simultaneous talking. turn-taking operates on the turn allocation system that requires minimal units over which it operates. These units, often called unit-types or turn constructional units, are syntactic units. According to Sacks et al. (1974: 709), types of turn-constructional units and turn-size variation do not determine the possible places or order of turn-allocation. In characterizing the turn-taking system in conversation, one of the serious questions that should be asked is what types and properties of TCUs can account for the projectability or predictability of split-second speaker transition.

In recent years, the question of how the allocation of turns is realized has received much attention. With respect to this question, Wilson et al. (1984) provide a systematic review of three major approaches to turn allocation: stochastic modeling, the signaling approach, and the sequential production approach. The stochastic modeling tries to understand the turn-taking mechanism by analyzing measurements of physical properties of the acoustic signal associated with conversation (Jaffe and Feldstein 1970). But this approach has problems in the sense that the question of turn transition is treated as an entirely probabilistic process. The signaling approach to turn allocation, on the other hand, tries to explain the exchange of turns in terms of an exchange of signals (Duncan and Fiske 1977). That is, this approach claims that the frequent alternation of turns in everyday conversation is governed by the exchange of conventional vocal or gesticulatory signals. In this respect, this approach tries to identify the signals with their constituent cues and the rules governing turn-taking in face-to-face conversation. This approach has a serious problem in analyzing discourse data such as telephone conversation where turn-taking still takes place in spite of the fact that overt cues or signals are not available.

The third approach, called the sequential production approach that is developed in the tradition of conversation analysis, tries to understand turn-taking in terms of interactional, sequential context (Sacks et al. 1974). In this approach, the turn-taking mechanisms by which conversation is organized are conceived as highly sensitive to the context to which the participants themselves are oriented. In this model, as Sacks et al. (1974) assume, a speaker has the right and obligation to produce one unit-type, at the end of which a 'transition-relevance place' occurs, at which change of turn may properly take place, though it need not. Thus, a turn is constructed of one or more unit-types produced by a single speaker. Unit-types are assumed to be projectable in that they allow the hearer to

anticipate the completion of the speaker's utterance. According to Sacks et al. (1974: 702-3, 720-2), unit- types in English include sentences, clauses, phrases, and single words where whether a particular construction functions as a unit-type at a given point in a conversation depends on the context at that point. Sacks et al. (1974) propose a turn-taking mechanism in the sequential production model that furnishes a set of options that, on the occurrence of a transition-relevance place, becomes available in a particular sequence defined by a set of rules.

With respect to the sequential production model, Wilson et al. (1984: 173) point out:

The weakest aspect of the sequential-production model approach as it has been developed thus far is the lack of adequate understanding of how transition-relevance places are constructed and recognized by speakers and hearers.

Sacks et al. (1974: 722) acknowledge that the recognition of TCUs on the part of speakers must involve a number of factors, saying that the interaction of syntactic and turn-taking structures awaits serious investigation. In a similar way, Levinson (1983: 297) states that turn constructional units are syntactic units identified as turn-units in part by prosodic, and especially intonational, means.

Wilson et al. (1984), concluding their review of three major turn-taking mechanisms, state that some combination of the signaling and sequential production approaches is necessary for an adequate understanding of turn-taking. That is, in conversational events, verbal and nonverbal, linguistic and nonlinguistic factors are all resources for the participants in mutually constructing the conversation.

So far, we have seen that there has been much discussion on the questions of what constitutes turn constructional units and how turn-taking is accomplished at transition relevance places. As shown, the size and units of turn-constructional units vary, and a number of verbal and non-verbal factors are involved in understanding the question of how transition-relevance places are constructed and recognized. Our goal in this paper is to contribute to an understanding of such questions by examining linguistic properties of TCUs and TRPs in Korean conversation. More specifically, as a preliminary task of understanding turn-taking mechanisms in Korean conversation, this paper mostly deals with the question of what roles verbal affixes play for speakers to predict TRPs and how speakers take turns at

the TRPs.

3. Data and Methodology

3.1. Data base

In exploring turn-taking mechanisms in Korean conversation, I chose two excerpts from face-to-face multi-party conversations in Korean.¹ The total length of the two excerpts is about 13 minutes and 30 seconds, consisting of 365 turns and about 750 intonation units. The length of the original first conversation was about twenty three minutes, but I used only the first part of it, which lasted four minutes and twenty seconds. This excerpt consists of 115 turns and 255 intonation units. The original second conversation lasted about thirty minutes, but I used only the first part of it, which lasted about nine minutes. This excerpt consists of about 250 turns and 503 intonation units.

The data for this research came from conversations between peer groups who are graduate students at the same department. The participants of this conversation are male and female graduate students, who are familiar with each other and there is little difference in age. The conversations took place in the department office and the phonetics lab where graduate students often have informal talks. The settings of the conversations were very informal. In this respect, the data may have some limitations on generalizing observed facts in a single term as a turn-taking system of Korean conversation.

As has been discussed, turn-taking involves not only linguistic but also non-linguistic factors such as *gaze, laughter, and gestures*, but this research is limited to the linguistic aspects of the interaction because the subjects were not video-taped, but only audio-recorded. In this respect, this research is not holistic and the scope is limited. In spite of these expected limitations, the data are useful in exploring types of TCUs and in understanding the mechanisms of turn-taking in Korean conversation.

¹The data used in this paper came from S. H. Park (1996), which appear at the end of her dissertation. I appreciate her for allowing me to use the transcribed data and recorded tapes.

3.2. Research Methods

To explore types of turn-constructural units and to understand the nature of transitional relevance places, I coded some aspects of turn constructural units in terms of a certain limited number of grammatical features. The coding of categories is useful in doing a quantitative analysis in an easy and efficient way.

In doing this research, first I carefully transcribed the conversational data while showing various aspects such as speaker change, simultaneous talks, speaker's continuation and interruption, and so on. Based on the transcribed data, I examined types of unit types in terms of whether they are multiple-clausal sentences (or complex sentences), sentences, clauses, phrases, words, or fragmentary turn-units. The examination showed to what extent each category of unit-types constitutes transition relevance places. Particularly, the examination of the distribution of clausal connectives and sentence-enders showed the roles of verbal affixes in projecting the turn-relevance places.

4. Turn-Constructural Units in Korean Conversation

In the system of turn-taking in conversation that is proposed by Sacks et al. (1974), the length, types of turn-constructural units, and relative distribution of turns are not specified in advance. Some of their observations are: (i) turn size is not fixed, but varies, (ii) length of conversation is not specified in advance, (iii) relative distribution of turns is not specified in advance and (iv) various 'turn-constructural units' are employed; e.g., turns can be projectedly 'one word long', or they can be sentential in length. With respect to the turn-constructural component, Sacks et al. (1974) state that there are various turn-constructural units with which a speaker may produce in the course of conversation. According to them (1974: 702), turns can be constructed from what they call 'unit-types', and unit-types in English include sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical constructions. In a similar way, Schegloff (1982: 74-5) states, "speakers construct utterances in turns at talk out of describable structured units, with recognizable possible completions. In English, some lexical items (e.g., "hello", "yes", "who"), some phrasal units, some clausal units, and sentences constitute such 'turn-constructural units.'" This statement assumes that these syntactic units are in fact what constitute 'turn-constructural units' and the range of unit types

is determined by grammatical categorization.

As a first step to the understanding of the question of what constitute 'turn-constructional units' in Korean conversation, let us first examine the distribution of unit-types in terms of syntax in the present data. Unit-types in Korean can be classified into multi-clausal units, single-clausal units, phrasal units, lexical units, and non-determinable units. Multi-clausal units refer to the syntactic constructions that have more than one finite clause. Of course, this category itself can be complex in the sense that the length of turns varies from two-clausal units to an 'infinitely' long turn. For example, in a discussion meeting where turns are allocated for each speaker by the chair, we can imagine that the turn length of each speaker may be very long. The single-clausal units refer to the units that have a finite predicate with optional arguments or other modifying elements. Phrasal units refer to the phrases or single lexical words. The following excerpt shows examples of unit types in Korean conversation:²

- (1) A. 1 J: uum,
 uhm
 2 uhuh,
 well
 3 onul ti mainus meyc. il-i-ci?
 today D-minus what day-be-COMM
 'how many days do I have from today?'
 B. 4 Y: eti ka-a,

² In this paper, the examples are broadly transcribed but they basically follow the transcription conventions developed by Du Bois et al. (1992). The transcription of Korean examples follows the conventions of the Yale system of Romanization. In glossing Korean examples, I use the following abbreviations:

ACC:	Accusative	ATTR:	Attributive
CIRCUM:	Circumstantial	CL:	Classifier
COMM:	Committal	COND:	Conditional
DECL:	Declarative	DEF:	Deferential
HEARSAY:	Hearsay marker	HON:	Honorific marker
IE:	Informal ending	LOC:	Locative
NEC:	Necessitive	NM:	Nominative marker
NOML:	Nominalizer	PL:	Plural marker
POSS:	Possessive	PROP:	Propositive
PST:	Past tense marker	PURP:	Purposive
REASON :	Reason connective	SUPPOS:	Suppositional
TM :	Topic marker		

- where go-IE
 a sihem po-le,
 well exam take-PURP
 'where are (you) going? Well, going for the exam?'
- C. 5 J: eti ka-yo,
 where go-HON
 sihem poa-ya-ci.
 exam take-should-COMM
 'Where am (I) going? I have to prepare for the exam.'
- D. 6 Y: chi,
 well
- E. 7 S: mwusun sihem?
 what exam
 'What kind of exam?'
- F. 8 Y: yay-ka tayhakwen sihem po-nun ay-ka-yo,
 this:guy-NM graduate:school exam take-ATTR guy-NM-HON
 'this guy, who is going to take a graduate school exam,'
- G. 9 S: ung,
 uh-huh
 'I see.'
- H. 10 Y: ... yelum-ey po-nun ay-ka,
 summer-LOC take-ATTR guy-NM
 'who is going to take it this summer'
- I. 11 S: ung,
 uh-huh
- J. 12 Y: kulssey yelum panghak ttay,
 well summer vacation time
 'well, during the summer vacation'
- 13 mikwuk-ey yehayng ka-ass-ta o-n ay-ey-yo.
 America-to trip go-PST-DECL come-ATTR guy-be-DEF
 'who went on a trip to the United States,'
- 14 [yay-ka] --
 this:guy-NM
 'this guy'
- K. 15 [eti-lul] chi-nuntey,
 which-ACC apply-CIRCUM
 'Which program is she going to apply for?'
- L. 16 [kulayse] cikum cip-ey ccingpakhye isscahna-yo.

so now home-at stay be-HON
 'so, I am just staying home these days.'

In the above, each line represents an intonation unit, and each turn is marked with speakers. As can be seen in the above, the turn-constructional units have various syntactic forms. That is, Turns A, B, C, K and L have clausal connectives or sentence-enders (Turn J has a sentence-ender, but it ends with a noun phrase), and thus they constitute clausal or sentential units. Turns D, G, and I are constructed of a single lexical item. They are often called reactive tokens, and thus they constitute lexical units (cf. Schiffrin 1987 and Chafe 1994). Particularly, reactive tokens in Turns 7 and 8 do not constitute a primary full turn. Finally, Turns F, H, and J in fact constitute one turn when we consider the fact that reactive tokens in G and I do not constitute a primary full turn. This fact shows that the notion 'primary speakership' is needed to differentiate a full turn from a 'backchannel' turn. Backchannels, according to Ford and Thompson (1996: 152), can be defined as "short utterances produced by an interlocutor who is playing primarily a listener's role during the other interlocutor's speakership."

As has been discussed, the length and types of turn constructional units vary and thus it is difficult to make any generalization about the types of TCUs. However, the examination of the distribution of the unit types used in the conversation will be useful in understanding the nature of TCUs in Korean conversation. The examination shows the following distribution of unit types in the present data.

Table 1. Distribution of Unit Types in Korean Conversation

	Data A	Data B	Total
multi-clausal	72	50	122 (33.6 %)
single clausal	97	39	136 (40.5 %)
phrasal/lexical	65	23	88 (24.2 %)
Non-determinable	14	3	17 (4.7 %)
Total	248	115	363 (100 %)

Table 1 shows that the proportion of multi-clausal units is 33.6%, that of single clausal units 40.5%, and that of phrasal/lexical units 24.2%. The remaining 4.7% are the units that cannot be categorized because they are truncated or inaudible. This distribution shows that, as far as the present data are concerned, the length of turns are relatively short and turn-taking

takes place frequently among the speakers.

With respect to the size of turn, Sacks et al. (1974: 709) state that turn size is not fixed, but varies. They claim that turn size is determined by the turn-taking rule that provides for the possibility that any current speaker may get a chance to produce more than a single instance of a unit-type. The turn-taking system does not define maximum turn size, and the turn-constructural component does not determine turn size. Turn size is totally related to the current speaker's turn-termination technique usable at any transition-relevance place. This is true when we consider turn size from the perspective of the current speaker. Table 1 shows that at least 33.6% of the total turns constitute multi-clausal turn constructural units. However, when we consider the interactional aspect of conversation, turn-taking rules are solely responsible for the turn size. As we have seen, the reactive tokens are inherently short, and the relatively frequent use of reactive tokens in the present data is closely related to the shortness of the size of turns in conversation.

5. Turn-taking and Transition Relevance Places

The diversity of unit types in Korean raises the question of what constitutes the TCUs and how TRPs are projected. With respect to the questions of characterizing turn-taking and locating transition relevance places, Sacks et al. (1974: 721) state:

"possible transition-relevance places recur discretely in the course of a turn. Examination of WHERE such 'next-turn starts' occur in current turns shows them to occur at 'possible completion points.' These turn out to be 'possible completion points' of sentences, clauses, phrases, and one-word constructions, and multiples thereof."

In this statement, transition-relevance places or possible completion points are understood in terms of syntactic units. However, the problem is that Sacks et al. (1974) do not provide any syntactic aspect of the TRPs in detail. Of course, as has been pointed out, the possibility of being transition relevance places is determined not only by syntax but also by other factors such as intonation and pragmatics. In this regard, in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the nature of turn-taking, we should examine various sources that determine the possible TRPs. In this research, however, because of the limited nature of the present data, I will limit the

scope of this research, mostly trying to explore grammatical aspects of turn-taking at the points where turn-taking takes place. One way of identifying the roles of syntax in determining the TRPs in Korean is to examine at what syntactic points turn-taking takes place. That is, the examination of the distribution of verbal affixes at the points where turn-taking place will be critical in determining TRPs in Korean conversation. Particularly, the examination of the distribution of verbal affixes and other grammatical units will show to what extent sentence-enders play a role in projecting the TRPs.

Here, let us first examine the syntactic forms of TRPs where turn-taking takes place. The examination will show what syntactic units are possible TRPs in Korean. In doing so, first let us examine whether each turn in the data ends with a sentence-ender or a clausal connective. After that, let us check whether turns are used in other syntactic categories such as phrasal or lexical elements, or whether there are some turns that cannot be categorized into any explicit types. The examination of the data shows the following distribution of unit types.

Table 2. Distribution of Grammatical Forms at Turn-taking Points

	Data A	Data B	Total
Sentence-enders	106	60	166 (45.7 %)
Clausal connectives	27	15	42 (11.6 %)
Lexical/Phrasal units	76	30	106 (29.2 %)
Non-determinable	27	8	35 (9.6 %)
Incomplete predicate	12	2	14 (3.9 %)
Total	248	115	363 (100 %)

As can be seen in Table 2, TCUs that end with sentence-enders constitute almost half of the turns in the present data (i.e., 45.7%). On the other hand, TCUs that end with clausal connectives constitute only 11.6% of the total turn-constructional units. Table 2 also shows that 29.2% of the total turns occur in other grammatical categories such as noun phrases, adverbial phrases, and reactive tokens such as backchannels. The category termed *non-determinable* refers to the cases where the turns cannot be characterized in specific grammatical terms. Such turns are truncated in the points where there are overlaps in simultaneous talks and when repairs are made. Finally, the category *incomplete predicate units* refers to the grammatical

elements that have non-finite predicate forms such as attributive forms and the units that end with complementizers.

Table 2 shows that in Korean the points where sentence-enders occur are the most prominent possible TRPs in the point that almost half of the TRPs can be explained in terms of syntactic properties of sentence-enders. In this regard, we can say that the term 'terminal affix' is valid not only in describing the morphological property of verbal affixes but also in characterizing turn-taking in conversation. That is, the sentence-terminal affixes function as the most prominent predictors of possible turn completion points. This shows that Korean is different from English in the point that in English sentence completion points are not explicitly marked in overt grammatical forms but in Korean overtly marked sentence-enders function as possible completion points. Table 2 also shows that the points where clausal connectives occur are not prominent places for the possible TRPs, in spite of the fact that clausal connectives are used to mark the points where a unit type (i.e., clausal units) end. This can be expected when we consider the fact the major role of clausal connectives is combining clauses. Table 2 also shows that there are 106 cases (i.e., 29.2%) in which turn-taking takes place. The occurrence of those cases suggests that not all of cases of turn-taking cannot be explained in terms of syntax only, although it is clear that sentence-terminal affixes play an important role in projecting possible turn completion points.

The role of sentence-enders as projecting the TRP is expected when we consider the fact that sentence-enders signal tense, aspect, mood, and modality of the sentence. Particularly, mood markers express commands or requests (imperative mood), or signal unreality, wishes, conjecture, or urgency (subjunctive mood). The indicative mood is used in all other situations that do not require imperative or subjunctive mood. In this regard, it is not surprising that the places where sentence-enders are used function as TRPs. Let's take a look at the following example.

- (2) S: ... a na-to com al-ca.
 well I-too a:bit know-PROP
 'Well, why don't you let me know, too?'
 IS: ... ey mwe-lul?
 well what-ACC
 'Well, what?'

- S: ... ettehkey hay-se-- ettehkey ka-si-nun ke-yey-yo?
 how do-REASON how go-HON-ATTR thing-be-DEF
 'how come -- what has made you go there?'
- IS: ... ai mwe nay-ka nay ton nay-ko epllai hayse
 well I-NM my money use-CONN apply:for do
 ka-nun ke-yey-yo.
 go-ATTR thing-be-HON
 'well, with my own money I applied for it, so I am going there.'

In (2) Speaker S uses the sentence ender *-ca* in asking for the information about what other speakers are talking about. With the use of *-ca*, she ends her turn and elects a next speaker. Then Speaker IS responds with the question word *mwe* 'what', and the turn with the question word and the next turn work as an insertion sequence between the question-answer adjacency pair. Then Speaker S elaborates her question by providing more explicit information about her question. In this case, Speaker S also uses the sentence-ender *-e(yo)* that is frequently used as a device for exchange of information (Lee 1991). Then Speaker IS provides the information requested by Speaker S along with the sentence-ender *-e(yo)*. As can be seen in example (2), the places where sentence-enders occur are syntactic completion points and they display the most prominent TRPs in Korean.

The fact that the point where the sentence-ender is used is the most probable TRPs can be evidenced in the case where there is an overlapping between the current speaker and the next speaker. Let us take a look at the following example.

- (3) J: ... myec myeng-i iss-eya toy-ay --
 how : many CL-NM be-NEC-IE
 'how many do you need?'
- ... myec salam-kkey philyohaci anhna? <----
 how : many person-POSS need doesn't : it
 'How many persons' (recommendation letters) are needed?'
- ... [han pwun-kes-man?]
 one person-POSS-only
 'One person's (recommendation)?'
- IS: ... [twu salam]
 two person
 'two persons' (recommendation letters)'

- J: ... *twu salam?*
 two person
 'two persons'?
- IS: ... *twu salam.*
 two person
 'Two persons'.

In (3), Speaker J asks the interlocutor IS about the number of recommendation letters for applying for studying abroad. In the turn of Speaker J, the point where the sentence-ender *-e* is used (the point where arrow-marked) functions as a TRP. Thus Speaker IS starts his turn, assuming that Speaker J yields his turn. However, Speaker J does not yield his turn and continues. Consequently, there occurs an overlap of the two turns. Then another turn of Speaker J that seeks a confirmation follows because of the turn overlap. This fact clearly shows the important role of sentence-enders as predictors of TRPs in Korean conversation.

Here, let us examine the distribution and properties of sentence-enders in more detail. When we consider the fact that the occurrence of sentence-enders can explain almost half of the cases of turn-taking, it would be interesting to examine the distribution of sentence-enders in conversation.

Table 3. Frequency of Sentence-enders at the Points of Turn-taking

Affixes	Data A	Data B	Total
<i>-e(yo)</i>	45	26	71 (42.8%)
<i>-ci</i>	15	15	30 (18.1%)
<i>-ta</i>	10	1	11 (6.6%)
<i>-cyanha</i>	4	5	9 (5.4%)
<i>-tay(yo)</i>	8	1	9 (5.4%)
Others	24	12	36 (21.7%)
Total	106	60	166 (100%)

As can be seen in Table 3, the sentence-ender *-e(yo)* is the most frequently used verbal affix, showing the proportion of 42.8%. When we consider the frequency of other sentence-enders, *-ci* shows the frequency rate of 18.1%, *-ta* 6.6%, *-cyanha* 5.4%, and *-tay(yo)* 5.4%, respectively. There were many other sentence-enders in the data, totaling 21.7%. However, the number of tokens for each verbal affix that belongs to the category *others* is less than five and thus I did not treat them as separate categories but put them together, as can be seen in Table 3.

Here let us discuss the roles of some sentence-enders as indicators of TRPs. First of all, as we have seen, the sentence-ender *-e(yo)* is the most frequently used verbal affix in Korean conversation. As Lee (1991) points out, this affix is used in most cases to achieve one of the most basic communicative functions: exchange of information. In other words, the use of *-e(yo)* is typically related to giving speaker's information and seeking information from the hearer, as can be seen in (4):

- (4) S: eti naka-si-nun ke-i-e-yo?
 where go:out-HON-ATTR thing-be-IE-DEF
 'are you going somewhere?'
 IJ: yengmwunkwa-lo --
 English : dept.-to
 'as an English department (student)'
 IS: hayoy nak-e-yo.
 abroad go-IE-DEF
 'I am going abroad.'
 S: a yuhak ka-si-nun ke-i-e-yo?
 oh studying:abroad go-HON-ATTR thing-be-IE-DEF
 'oh, you are going abroad to study?'
 J: kuku-l mol-ass-e.
 that-ACC not:know-PST-IE
 'I didn't know that.'

In (4), Speaker S uses the affix *-e(yo)* in asking information from Speaker IS, and in the same way Speaker IS uses *-e(yo)* in providing the information that he has. After that, Speaker J also uses *-e* in expressing her own response to the given information. In this respect, we can say that the use of the affix *-e* is most closely related to the exchange of information between speaker and hearer. In this respect, it is not surprising that the sentence-ender *-e(yo)* that signals TRPs shows the frequency rate of 42.8%.

In the present data, the second most frequently used sentence-ender is *-ci*. As we have already discussed, *-ci* is used to express speaker's will, commitment, or internal attitudes.

- (5) J: kanguy-ya mwe,
 lecture-as : for well
 'As for the lectures, well,'
 yukkaywel ccali cap-i-nikka,

six:month CL job-be-REASON
 'as it is a six-month job,'
 sangkwan eps-ci.
 care not : be-COMM
 'no need to worry about that.'

IS: amwu sangkwan eps-ci,
 any care not:be-COMM
 'No need to worry about that,'
 sikan kangsa-i-ntey mwe.
 hourly lecturer-be-CIRCUM well
 'you're only a part-time lecturer.'

In (5), Speaker J uses the affix *-ci* to express his internal attitudes about the matter of quitting a part-time lecturer job, rather than providing new information to the hearer. In response to Speaker J, Speaker IS also uses *-ci* to express his opinion that he agrees with Speaker J by almost repeating most of what Speaker J said. In this respect, the affix *-ci* plays an important role not only in expressing the speaker's will, judgment, or commitment but also in mutually displaying interpersonal attitudes among participants. This shows that the points where verbal affixes that express speaker's attitude are used are the points where turn-taking takes place. In (5), Speaker J also uses *-ci*, but turn-taking does not take place at the place where *-ci* is used. In this case, however, there occurs a change of word order, and thus, in such a situation, Speaker J continues his turn and other speakers do not take a turn even at the point where *-ci* is used.

In addition to these two sentence-enders, other sentence-terminal affixes are also frequently used in expressing speaker's mental state, attitudes, interpersonal relationships, source of information and so on. For example, the affix *-ta* is used to express speaker's assertive attitude, the affix *-cyanha* to seek interlocutor's sympathy or agreement, and the affix *-tay* to show that what the speaker is talking about is hearsay information. All these and other sentence-enders function as indicators of TRPs. This fact shows that the places where the sentence-enders are used are the most prominent TRPs in Korean conversation.

Now let us discuss the role of clausal connectives as indicators of TRPs. As has been pointed out, the role of clausal connectives as predictors of turn-taking is not significant. As we have seen, there are only 42 tokens (11.6%) out of the total 363 turn-constructural units. However, the

examination of the distribution of clausal connectives shows some interesting facts. The following table shows the proportion of the frequency rate of the most frequently used connectives in the present data.

Table 4. Frequency of Clausal Connectives at Turn Change Points

Affixes	Data A	Data B	Total
<i>-(nu)ntey</i>	14	4	18 (43.0%)
<i>-nikka</i>	2	7	9 (21.4%)
<i>-ko</i>	6	3	9 (21.4%)
<i>-myen</i>	3	0	3 (7.1%)
Others	2	1	3 (7.1%)
Total	27	15	42 (100%)

As Table 4 shows, the examination of the unit types that end with clausal connectives shows that *-(nu)ntey* is the most frequently used verbal affix, with the frequency rate of 43.0%. When we look at other clausal connectives, we can see that *-nikka* has the frequency of 21.4%, *-ko* 21.4%, and *-myen* 7.1%.

The examination of the frequency of the present data shows that *-nuntey*, *-nikka*, *-ko*, and *-myen* are four most frequently used clausal connectives that function as predictors of TRPs. As is well known, one of the most important functions of clausal connectives is to connect each clausal unit with another clausal unit. In this regard, the role of clausal connectives as indicators of TRPs is not significant. In this regard, it is interesting that *-nuntey*, *-nikka*, *-ko*, and *-myen* are four most frequently used clausal connectives in spite of the fact that there are many other clausal connectives. Particularly, the high frequency of *-nuntey* is worth noting. Let's take a look at the following example.

- (6) J: tut-ki-ey-nun an nanglangha-ntey?
 listen-NOML-LOC-TM not beautiful-CIRCUM
 'As for listening, (the voice) doesn't sound beautiful?'
 Y: nanglangha-e.
 beautiful-IE
 '(It sounds) beautiful.'

One of the most prominent functions of the verbal affix *-(nu)ntey*³ is

³ When the preceding predicate is an action verb, *-nuntey* is used. On the other

providing circumstantial background information for the clause that follows. However, in conversation, *-(nu)ntey* is frequently used at the end of each turn as if it is a sentence-ender (Kim 1996). In fact, when the affix *-(nu)ntey* is used at the end of each turn, it loses its clause-combining function. When it is used at the end of a turn, it is used as a marker of inviting the recipient's opinion, as can be seen in (6). That is, in (6), Speaker J does not assert his own opinion about the voice of the referent SM, but she leaves a room for the opinion of Speaker Y, yielding her right to continue the current turn. In this regard, the points where *-nuntey* are used function as the most possible transition-relevance places in Korean conversation.

As another example, we can see that there are nine cases of turn-taking that took place at points where the connective *-nikka* is used. The *-nikka* clause, which displays a causal or sequential relation, can occur after a main clause because it functions as an adverbial clause, as can be seen in (7):

- (7) IS: tangyenhi yenge-lo sse-ya-ci-yo,
 absolutely English-in write-NEC-COMM-HON
 ku salam-tul-un hankwukmal molu-nikka @@,
 that person-PL-TM Korean not:know-REASON
 'Absolutely (recommendation letters) should be written in English,
 because they/those people cannot understand Korean.'
- J: ani hankwukmal-lo sse-ko
 no Korean-in write
 ney-ka penyekhay-ese nayla kelen kes-to iss-cyanha.
 you-NM translate-SEQ turn-in that thing-too be-isn't:it.
 'Well, (what I mean is that) you write them in Korean and (the
 professors may say to you) "translate them and turn them in,"
 there may be such a case,' right?'

As can be seen in (7), the adverbial clause with *-nikka* is used after the main verb that ends with the affix *-ciyo*. In this case, turn-taking takes place at the point where the clausal connective *-nikka* is used, rather than at the point where the sentence-ender *-ci* is used. This fact suggests that the word order or subordinate function of adverbial clauses is one of the

hand, when the preceding predicate is a descriptive verb, *-ntey* is used. There is no meaning difference between *-nuntey* and *-ntey*.

factors that determines TRPs.

In addition to the connectives *-nuntey* and *-nikka*, there are other affixes that are used to express inter-clausal relations. For example, *-ko* is used to list parallel or sequential actions or events, and *-myen* to show a conditional relation between two events. The examination of the data shows that turn-taking takes place when there is collaboration or disagreement among speakers at the points where clausal connectives are used. However, such cases are not frequent when we consider the fact that conversation in general proceeds by observing the sequential nature of turn-taking. In this respect, we can say that the places where clausal connectives are used are possible TRPs, but the roles of clausal connectives as indicators of possible TRPs are not significant.

Finally, the fact that the points where verbal affixes occur function as transition relevance places can be evidenced by the fact that the so-called backchannels such as *ung* frequently occurs where the verbal affixes are used. Let us take a look at the following example.

- (8) S: nemwu caymi epse-yo pwunsekhatā po-myen
 too:much interest not:be-HON analyze see-COND
 J:ung (J:ung)

As can be seen in (8), two cases of the backchannel expression *ung* occur in the places where the sentence-ender *-e(yo)* and where the verbal connective *-myen* is used. As we have seen, backchannels do not function as independent turns because they are produced in the case when an interlocutor plays a listener's role during the other interlocutor's primary speakership. Of course, backchannels can occur in other places such as points between phrases, not necessarily at the points where verbal affixes occur. A close examination shows that the most probable points where backchannels occur are the places where intonation unit completion takes place. The examination shows that the places where verbal affixes are used coincide with the points of intonation unit completion with a high frequency. In this regard, we can say that the points where verbal affixes are used function as the most probable TRPs.

6. Phrasal Units and Reactive Tokens and Turn-Taking

In the previous sections, we have discussed the roles of sentence-enders

and clausal connectives as indicators of possible TRPs. As we have seen, the places where sentence-enders are used are the most significant places for TRPs, and such syntactic completion marking can explain about half of the cases of turn-taking. However, there are many other cases that cannot be explained in terms of the properties of verbal affixes. As we have seen in Table 2, 29.2% (106 tokens out of total 363 cases) of the unit types do not end with any verbal affixes, but they function as turn-constructional units. A closer examination of the present data shows that those unit types are turns that are composed of phrases or reactive tokens. Let's take a look at an example which shows a TCU that is constructed of a phrase.

- (9) J: ceng- cengnyen-i myec sali-ntey-yo
 retire- retiring age-NM what age-CIRCUM-HON
 [yeyswu twul?] <---
 sixty two?
 'At what age do they (professors) retire, at sixty-two?'
 S: [yeyswun tases] <---
 sixty five
 'at (the age of) sixty five.'
 J: aa
 aah
 'I see.'

In (9), the turn of Speaker J ends with an NP. The turn, a response to Speaker S, is made of a single NP, which provides only the information requested by Speaker J. Such turn-constructional units are often found in the cases when an addressee is simply collaborating with the speaker, as the example in (9) shows.

In addition to the TCUs that are constructed out of phrases or TCUs that end with a phrase, there are TCUs that do not end with verbal affixes. Such TCUs are often called reactive tokens. Reactive tokens are similar in many respects to the regulatory intonation units, a type of intonation units proposed by Chafe (1994). Let us take a look at the following examples in (10).

- (10) (i) S: cayay-to kosokongpocung i-ess-tay
 that:guy-too acrophobia have-PST-HEARSAY
 '(I heard) that guy also has acrophobia.'

- H: kulayyo?
 is : that : so?
 'Really (Is that true)?'
- (ii) IS: um- umsenghak --
 pho- phonetics --
 'pho-, phonetics --'
- S: umsenghak-ulo-yo
 phonetics-in-DEF
 '(majoring) in phonetics'
- > IJ: mace
 right
 'right'

As can be seen in (10), reactive tokens such as *yey* 'yes' and *mace* 'right' are frequently used as independent, complete turns. In Chafe (1994), these kinds of reactive tokens are termed regulatory intonation units, and they are classified into four types: textual, interactional, cognitive, and validational. Chafe (1994: 64) states that regulatory units are used to regulate interaction between speakers or information flow. The turn length of these units is short and thus these are mostly expressed in the *grammatical* units such as phrases or single lexical words. Here, I would like to differentiate reactive tokens from backchannels. First of all, the reactive tokens occur as a single, independent intonation unit, although they play a secondary role in speakership. In this regard, the reactive tokens that constitute a single, independent turn are closely related to intonation. That is, the turns that are constituted of reactive tokens coincide with intonation completion. This fact suggests that turn-taking that involves reactive tokens is closely related to intonation.

Finally let us consider the role of intonation in turn-taking. The examination of the present data shows there are some turns that have sentence-enders which function as TRPs but actual turn-taking takes place immediately after a lexical phrase. Such cases of turn-taking are found in the case where there occurs a change of word order. Let us take a look at the example in (11).

- (11) J: cengyen-i myec sal-i-nteyyo kyoswu-tul-un,
 retiring:age-NM what age-CIRCUM professor-PL-TM
 'At what age do they retire, professors?'

S: ama hwankap-i elma namci [anhesi-ess-ul kul]
 probably sixtieth birthday-NM much remain not-SUPPOS
 '(I guess) his sixtieth birthday anniversary is not far away.'

As can be seen in (11), Speaker J put the topic NP at the end of sentence, ending her turn with an NP. However, in this case, the question word *myec* 'what' and the semi-sentence ender *-nteyyo* indicates the speaker's intention to end the turn, asking the next speaker to provide an answer. However, turn-taking does not take place at the point where the verbal affix *-nuntey* is used, although that point may function as a transition relevance place. The examination of the example shows that the whole turn uttered by Speaker J makes a single intonation unit, displaying a unified intonation contour and lacking a pause immediately after the point where the sentence ender *-nteyyo* is used (cf. Du Bois et al. 1992). This fact shows that intonation also plays an important role in determining the possible point of TRPs and that the factor of intonation overrides the role of verbal affix as an indicator of a TRP.

7. Turn Overlap and Interruption in Conversation

Here let us discuss the cases of turn overlap or interruption. With respect to turn overlap, Sacks et al. (1974: 706) state that occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common, but brief. In a similar way, Levinson (1983: 296) mentions that it is surprising that less than five percent of the speech stream is delivered in overlap. As many conversation analysts have observed, in conversation, the sequential production of turns is normal process. In this regard, turn overlap raises problems in the sense that it violates sequential nature of turn-taking.

Overlap takes place normally in the case where the current speaker ends his/her turn without selecting next speakers. According to Sacks et al. (1974), in such a case, if the current speaker does not select the next speaker, the first speaker gains rights to the next turn. However, in the case where the next speaker is not selected, more than one speaker may start. In such a case, overlapping takes place. Another case is where next speaker starts at a possible TRP when he/she tries to express a different opinion. Let us take a look at the following example.

- (12) Y: salam-mata com [talū-ta-nun] -- yayki-to iss-ta
 person-every a:bit different-DECL-TM story-too is-DECL
 'it is also said that every person is a bit different --'
 IS: [kuntey] B sensayngnim-un --
 by:the:way B teacher-TM
 'by the way, as for Professor B --'

As can be seen in (12), Speaker IS starts her turn at the point where Speaker Y uses a hesitation marker *com* 'a bit' to express her own idea. Consequently there is an overlap between those two speakers. When speaker IS initiates her turn in violation of the turn-taking rules, there occurs an overlap. In this case, Speaker Y's utterance becomes truncated when Speaker IS interrupts Speaker Y. Then Speaker IS realizes that she interrupted Speaker Y and thus she does not complete her own turn. Thus the turn of Speaker IS also becomes truncated. As soon as Speaker IS stops talking, Speaker Y continues and completes her turn.

With respect to the cases of speaker change at Non-TRPs, Ford and Thompson (1996) state that these apparent violations of turn-taking rules are another way of using the turn-taking system. They claim that certain overlaps are associated with the display of affiliation or disagreement with an ongoing turn. Let us take a look at the following example.

- (13) J: cengyen-i myec sal-i-nteyyo, kyoswu-tul-un
 retirement:year-NM what age-CIRCUM, professor-PL-TM
 'At what age do they retire, professors?'
 S: ama hwankap-i elma namci [anhesi-ess-ul kul]
 probably sixtieth birthday-NM much remain not-PST-SUPPOS
 '(I guess) his sixtieth birthday anniversary is not far away.'
 Y: [isip myec nyen] isip myec nyen sayng isi te-ntey
 twenty or so age twenty or so age birth be-CIRCUM
 sensayngnim.
 teacher
 'He was born in the 1920s, something like that.'

In (13), we can see that there is an overlap between Speaker S and Speaker Y. In response to the question of Speaker J, Speaker S fails to provide right information requested by Speaker J but she only expresses her guess about the present age of the professor they are talking about. In this case, Speaker

Y initiates her turn in violation of the turn-taking rules because she starts her turn at a non-TRP. However, this is another way of displaying her collaboration with Speaker S in the sense that she can provide a more directly relevant answer to the question raised by Speaker J. In this respect, the overlapping of talks cannot be seen simply as a violation of turn-taking rules, but it should be understood in terms of higher level of functions such as the display of affiliation or disagreement with an ongoing turn.

8. Summary and Conclusions

This paper has tried to characterize some aspects of turn-taking in Korean conversation. To achieve this goal, I explored the question of what constitutes turn-constructive units and how transition relevance places are predicted in Korean conversation. In addition, I examined the question of to what extent syntactic properties of turn constructive units can function as predictors of sentence completion. In doing so, I first examined types of turn constructive units in terms of sentential units, clausal units, and lexical/phrasal units. The examination shows that sentence-enders function as the most significant predictors of turn-taking. It also shows that among many sentence-enders the *-e(yo)* and *-ci* are two most frequently used affixes. The examination of clausal connectives shows that clausal connectives do not play a significant role in determining TRPs. Only *-nuntey*, as a grammaticalized affix that functions as if it is a sentence-ender, functions as an indicator of TRPs. The examination of the data shows that lexical or phrasal elements also play a role in signaling TRPs. It shows that many of the phrasal units function as reactive tokens that regulate interaction between speakers and information flow. Finally I examined the interactional functions of turn overlap. The examination shows that the apparent violation of turn-taking rules in fact has the functions such as the display of affiliation or disagreement with an ongoing turn.

As a final remark, in the study of turn-in-interaction, turn constructive units and transition relevance places have been characterized mostly in terms of syntax. However, there are some proposals that TCUs should be understood in terms not only of syntax but also intonation and other pragmatic factors. In this respect, we need further research for a better understanding of turn-taking mechanisms in conversation.

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