Telicity and Case Alternation in Motion Verb Constructions*

Jai-Hyoung Cho
(Ajou University)

Cho, Jai-Hyoung. 2003. Telicity and Case Alternation in Motion Verb Constructions. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, *11*(4), 211-227. This paper provides an account that associates the Case alternation fact with aspectual semantics witnessed in intransitive motion verb constructions in Korean. It is shown that the direct internal argument may not play such a crucial role in the definition of aspectual structure as far as the intransitive motion verbs are concerned that take a place-NP as their complement. It is proposed that the apparent Acc-marker in the intransitive motion verb constructions has a unique property that gives rise to the so-called focus effect. It is further suggested that this focus effect in turn terminates an event of the argument in the sentence, which leads the event to the telic interpretation.

Key words: Case alternation, telic, atelic, focus effect

1. Intransitive Verbs with Objects

The connection between telicity/atelicity and case marking on arguments is well documented in the literature. Detailed case studies include Scottish Gaelic (Ramchand 1997), and Finnish (Kiparsky 1998), among many others. It is also manifested in Korean that the place-NP complement of a dozen of intransitive motion verbs frequently shows a Case alternation between Accusative (henceforth, Acc) and Locative (Loc). Let us consider the following example:

(1) a. Suna-ka   hakkyo-**ey** ka-(e)ss-ta.
          -Nom   school-Loc   go-Past-Dec
      'Suna went to school.'
    b. Suna-ka   hakkyo-**lul** ka-(e)ss-ta.
          -Nom   school-Acc   go-Past-Dec
      'Suna went to school.'

What renders (1) rather peculiar is that the intransitive verb *ka-ta* 'to go' selects either Acc-marked NP or Loc-marked NP as its place complement. This is unusual in the sense that intransitive verbs by definition are not entitled to subcategorize (or c-select) their objects cross-linguistically.[1] Out of scores of motion verbs in Korean, the following dozen intransitive verbs in particular are sensitive to the Acc vs. Loc Case alternation when preceded by a place-NP argument:

(2) *olu-ta* 'to climb', *tuleka-ta* 'to enter', *ka-ta* 'to go', *kwulu-ta* 'to roll', *ki-ta* 'to creep', *nal-ta* 'to fly', *yehayngha-ta* 'to travel', *hayngcinha-ta* 'to march', *tali-ta* 'to run', *sanchaykha-ta* 'to stroll', *heyemchi-ta* 'to swim', *ket-ta* 'to walk', *tha-ta* 'to ride'[2]

It is not implausible to say that the entities in (2) are of intransitive characteristics in terms of the theory of argument structure. Then, there arises a non-trivial question to be asked: What could be the motivation of the Case alternation between ACC and LOC? Put it another way, why should there be a connection between a semantic property of verbs and case morphology on direct objects.[3]

---

1) Consider the syntax of intransitive verbs, say, in English:
   a. Mary *went [NP school].
   b. Mary went [PP to school].
2) Among the list of verbs in (2), *tha-ta* is a polysemy in that it is used either as a transitive (glossed as 'to drive/ride') or as an intransitive verb ('to get on'). Naturally, we are focusing on the intransitive use only, followed by either Loc-marked or Acc-marked NP as a place complement.
3) Interestingly enough, intransitive verbs other than motion verbs in Korean do not show the Acc vs. Loc Case alternation:

We have seen some researches demonstrating that motion verbs in Korean, regardless of the transitive vs. intransitive dichotomy, tend to be associated with a telic event when accompanied by a direct object whereas they are likely to designate atelic interpretation when preceded by something like an adjunct (Loc-NP). It is well known that the majority of motion verbs in Korean can co-occur with what Martin (1975) calls traversal objects. Traversal objects are marked by the ACC Case marker as in (3):

(3) John-i   kyetan-**ul** naylyeo-ass-ta.
       -Nom stairs-Acc step down-Past-Dec
   'John stepped down the stairs.'

Kuno's (1973: 97) characterization of traversal objects that "the motion designated by the verb takes place covering the entire dimension of the NP continuously and undirectionally" leads those researchers to the claim that some motion verbs give rise to the telic interpretation. This reasoning seems to be supported by Tenny's (1994) claim that the direct object of a verb plays a crucial role in aspectual structure because the argument can aspectually measure out (or, culminate) the event to which the verb refers. When used as a transitive verb, motion verbs seemed to render this conjecture feasible. Let us first consider the aspectual semantics of a motion verb *kenne-ta* 'to go across', which manifests a transitive use only:

(4)   kwunin-tul-i wuihemhan tali-**lul**/*-**eyse**   kenne-(e)ss-ta.
       soldier-Pl-Nom dangerous bridge-Acc/-Loc go across-Past-Dec
       'Soldiers went across the dangerous bridge.'

---

   a. Suna-ka   chimtay-**eyse**/*-**lul** ca-(e)ss-ta.
         -Nom bed-Loc/-Acc   sleep-Past-Dec
      'Suna slept on the bed.'
   b. koyangi-ka kil-**eyse**/*-**ul**   cwuk-ess-ta.
      cat-Nom   street-Loc/-Acc die-Past-Dec
      'A cat died on the street.'

The predicate *kenne-ta* 'to go across' in (4) turns out to be a transitive verb by the token that an adjunct is not allowed as a place-NP complement. On a par with Tenny (1994), we can say that (4) displays a telic reading because the transitive verb delimits, culminates, wholly affects, or measures out the accompanying direct object.

   Next, let us turn to an intransitive motion verb, which is accompanied by either an object or an adjunct as its place-NP complement:

(5) a. Suna-ka   kongwen-**eyse**   kel-ess-ta.
           -Nom   park-Loc   walk-Past-Dec
        'Suna walked at the park.'
     b. Suna-ka   kongwen-**ul**   kel-ess-ta.
           -Nom   park-Ac   walk-Past-Dec
        'Suna walked at the park.'

The motion verb *ket-ta* 'to walk' in (5a), which is not preceded by an argument but an adjunct, is said to denote an atelic interpretation. If it is true, as Comrie (1976) argues among many others, that an aspectual situation is not described by verbs alone but rather by the verb with its arguments, (5a) does not constitute a situation that leads up to a well-defined terminal point, beyond which the process cannot continue. On the other hand, the same verb in (5b), which selects an Acc-marked argument, refers to a telic interpretation. The event of walking is represented to have a definite end point in time because the direct object *kongwen* 'park' is delimited by the following verb. Put in Tenny's (1994) fashion, the telic reading in (5b) is attributed to the specificity of the direct object. This line of reasoning, however, is subject to a conceptual and/or empirical problem (See section 3 for a detailed discussion).

   Let us lastly consider the semantics of an intransitive verb *tha-ta* 'to get on' as an illustration.[4]

---

4) We need to distinguish the intransitive vs. transitive use of this verb as a polysemy. When used as a transitive verb, *tha-ta* cannot be glossed as 'to get on' but as 'to drive/ride' interpretation. In terms of aspectuality, the transitive

(6) Suna-ka   samsip pwun   maney   cacenke-**ey**/-**lul**
        -Nom thirty   minutes   in   bike-Loc/-Acc
     tha-(e)ss-ta.
     get on-Past-Dec
     'Suna got on the bike in thirty minutes.'

It is observed in (6) that the aspectual semantics of *tha-ta* 'to get on'
is insensitive to the Case alternation of the accompanying argument.
Regardless of the Case of the preceding argument, the motion in (6)
displays a telic reading in the sense that the action of getting on the
bike is completed in thirty minutes. This example, among many others,
casts a doubt on the assertion that the direct internal argument plays a
crucial role in aspectual structure.
   In this paper, I will provide an account of some intransitive motion
verbs that associate this Case alternation fact with aspectual semantics
of a sentence. Contra Tenny (1994), and adopting Jackendoff (1996) and
Kiparsky (1998), I will show that the so-called direct internal argument
may not play such a crucial role in the definition of aspectual structure
as far as some intransitive motion verbs in Korean are concerned that
take a place-NP as their complement. A careful attention need to be
taken to the situation that some intransitive motion verbs in Korean
frequently allow the Acc-marked complement to precede along with the
normal Loc-marked one. It is also needed to pay attention to the
generalization that the complement of this group of verbs is restricted
only to place-NP. I will first associate the fact that intransitive verbs
weirdly tend to select objects instead of adjuncts with the semantics of
aspectual structure. Put it differently, I will propose that the apparent
Acc-marker in the intransitive motion verb construction is implemented
with a unique property that gives rise to the so-called focus effect.
This focus effect in turn is argued to culminate the aspectual event of

---

verb *tha-ta* 'to drive/ride' displays an atelic reading in the neutral context:
    Mary-ka   han sikan tongan cacenke-**lul**/*-**ey** tha-(e)ss-ta.
        -Nom   one hour   for   bike-Acc/-Loc   ride-Past-Dec
    'Mary rode a bike for an hour.'

the argument in the sentence, which eventually leads it to the telic interpretation.

2. Association of Affectedness with Aspectual Structure

Adopting and then developing Hopper and Thompson's (1980) proposal, Yeon (1993, 1998) entertain an interesting generalization that taking the Acc marker indicates that the motion designated by the verb takes place covering the entire dimension of the NP, while taking the Loc marker indicates that the motion takes place over some partial dimension of the NP. I will extend his generalization that mainly concerns affectedness into aspectual semantics by associating affectedness with the telic vs. atelic dichotomy. The wholly affected argument of intransitive motion verbs, which is marked Acc, leads to a telic reading in the sense that the event of the argument is exhausted (or culminated/completed) by the motion verb. On the other hand, the partially affected argument of intransitive verbs, which is marked Loc, ends up with the atelic interpretation in the sense that the event of the argument is not exhausted (or not culminated/completed) by the verb. The unexhausted event amounts to saying, in Comrie's (1976) fashion, that the aspectual situation does not reach a well-defined terminal point, beyond which the process cannot continue. Consider the following:

(7) a. Suna-nun sakwa-lul sippwun-man-ey mek-ess-ta.
        -Top apple-Acc 10 minutes-in   eat-Past-Dec
     'Suna ate the apple in ten minutes.'
   b. Suna-nun sakwa-lul sippwun-tongan mek-ess-ta.
        -Top apple-Acc 10 minutes-for eat-Past-Dec
     'Suna ate the apple for ten minutes.'

(7a) is telic in the sense that the apple is gone. You can confirm this by adding a conjunct like *but didn't finish it* to (7a) and (7b), respectively. *Suna ate the apple in ten minutes **but didn't finish it** is bad because the first and the second conjunct is not compatible with

each other. On the other hand, (7b) is atelic in the sense that the apple is not gone. You can again make sure it is by a conjunct juxtaposition. *Suna ate the apple for ten minutes **but didn't finish it*** is fine because the first and the second clause of (7b) does not show any contradiction. Here is an example, this time, concerning telicity with regard to Case alternation:

(8) a. haksayng-tul-i   cenkwuk-**e**   ka-(e)ss-ta.
        student-Pl-Nom   whole.nation-Loc   go-Past-dec
        'Students went to the whole nation.'
     b. haksayng-tul-i   cenkwuk-**ul**   ka-(e)ss-ta.
        student-Pl-Nom   whole.nation-Acc   go-Past-dec
        'Students went to the whole nation.'

Though a little bit subtle, (8) reveals a contrast concerning the spatial dimension of the country where the students went.[5] Students went to some parts of the whole country in (8a), whereas students went to every part of the country thoroughly in (8b). This contrast leads us to draw a conclusion that (8b), unlike (8a), displays a telic reading in the sense that the event of going around the whole country is completed by the exhaustiveness of the Acc-marked argument. Again, we need to take a notice to the fact that an intransitive verb selects an object. There are a couple of independent motivations that support this association of holistic/partitive affectedness (or *exhaustiveness* in our term) with telic/atelic aspectuality, respectively.

The connection of affectedness and the aspectual property of telicity can be supported by the locative alternation in English and Korean:

(9) a. Bill loaded **the truck** with hay.
     b. Bill loaded **hay** onto the truck.

---

5) Of course, I have to admit the variation of the judgment concerning this pair. The point is, however, that even the slightest contrast in it supports my claim here that the difference is attributed to telic/atelic dichotomy, which is again associated with Case alternation.

(10) a. Tom-i   **tam-ul**   paint-lo chilhay-ess-ta.
            -Nom wall-Acc   -Inst apply-Past-Dec
        'Tom painted the wall with paint.'
     b. Tom-i   paint-lul   tam-**ey**   chilhay-ess-ta.
            -Nom   -Acc wall-Loc   apply-Past-Dec
        'Tom applied paint on the wall.'

It is evident that while *the truck* and *tam* 'wall' in (9a) and (10a) are interpreted as holistically affected entities, they are read as partially affected objects in (9b) and (10b), respectively. This distinctive reading in turn is associated with aspectual structure of the examples. In a neutral context, (9a) and (10a) designate a telic reading, whereas (9b) and (10b) stand for an atelic interpretation. Another supporting evidence for the connection of affectedness and telicity comes from the conative alternation in English:

(11) a. Margaret **cut** the table.
     b. Margaret **cut at** the table.   (Levin 1993: 6)

Unlike (11a), the conative construction in (11b) does not show the entailment that the action denoted by the verb *cut* was completed. This contrast in entailment again leads to the association of holistic vs. partitive affectedness with telic vs. atelic aspectuality: (11a) has a telic reading and (11b) an atelic interpretation.
    This association seems to hold in the discussion of intransitive motion verbs in Korean. Consider the following:

(12) a. Mary-ka   kongwen-**eyse** talye-ss-ta.
            -Nom   park-Loc   run-Past-Dec
        'Mary ran in the park.'
      b. Mary-ka   kongwen-**ul** talye-ss-ta.
            -Nom   park-Acc   run-Past-Dec
        'Mary ran along (or through) the park'

While (12a) shows an atelic reading, (12b) displays a telic interpretation. Because *tali-ta* ′to run′ in the former is followed by an adjunct (Loc-marked NP), it cannot by definition delimit or exhaust its place complement, which results in the partial affectedness and an atelic interpretation. On the other hand, the same verb in the latter is accompanied by an object (Acc-marked NP), leading to the holistic affectedness and a telic reading. Take a notice that the only syntactic difference between (12a) and (12b) is the Case of the complement (*i.e.*, Loc vs. Acc). Hitherto, I have tried to show how the concept of affectedness or exhaustiveness can be incorporated into defining telicity, an aspectual property.

3. Telicity/Atelicity and Case Insensitivity

As Kiparsky (1998) points out, although telicity by and large correlates with boundedness (analogous to affectedness or delimitedness), it is not exactly the right semantic criteria for characterizing the conditions under which objects are Acc-marked. There are both a class of bounded atelic verbs whose object is Acc and a class of unbounded telic verbs whose object is non-Acc, regardless of the NPs nature. Jackendoff (1996) independently supports the idea that affectedness and argument structure are not directly connected with measuring out and telicity. The reason is that in motion verb constructions, a theme no longer directly measures out the event. On a par with Jackendoff (1996) and Kiparsky (1998), I will provide a couple of examples that display an invariant atelic reading regardless of Acc vs. Loc Case alternation:

(13) a. ai-ka   keytan-**ey** 5 pwun tongan/*5 pun maney
     kid-Nom stairs-Loc   minute-for   minute-in
     kwull-essta.
     roll-Past-Dec
     'The kid rolled the stairs for/*in five minutes.'
    b. ai-ka   keytan-**ul** 5 pwun tongan/*5 pun maney
     kid-Nom stairs-Acc   minute-for   minute-in

kwull-ess-ta.[6)]
roll-Past-Dec
'The kid rolled the stairs for/*in five minutes.'
(14)   ai-ka   keytan-**ul** com te/sangtanghi/salcak
kid-Nom stair-Acc   some more/considerably/slightly
kwull-ess-ta.
roll-Past-Dec
'The kid rolled the stairs some more/considerably/slightly.'
(15)   ai-ka   keytan-**ey**/-**ul** kwulu-ko-iss-ta.
kid-Nom stair-Loc/-Acc roll-Prog-Pres-Dec
'The kid is rolling the stairs.'
Entailment: The kid has rolled the stairs.

The examples in (13) – (15) turn out to exhibit an atelic reading of rolling events regardless of Case alternation. Each of the pairs in (13) displays an atelic interpretation in the sense that it is not compatible with *in an hour* but *for an hour* adjunct, only the former of which can coincide with the terminal aspect of an event. The diagnostic test in (14) is attributed to Kiparsky's (1998) suggestion that a predicate is intrinsically unbounded-that is atelic-if it can be modified by such degree adverbs as *(some) more, a lot, very much, considerably* or *slightly*, referring to the extent of a single eventuality. The entailment relation in (15) also makes an efficient diagnostic test deciphering aspectuality. As pointed out by Comrie (1976), an atelic reading prevails if the sentence in a form of progressive implies the situation in a form with perfect meaning.

Here is another example, which supports the observation that a sentence can display an atelic reading regardless of Acc vs. Loc Case alternation. It seems to be the case that *takaka-ta* 'to approach' verb is also immune to Case alternation in terms of aspectual semantics:

---

6) If it is the case that the subject rolls the stair on purpose, however, a telic reading wins over an atelic interpretation. Instead of *kwulu-ta* 'to roll', the compound verb *kwullenayli-ta* 'to roll down' to descend seems to display an invariant telic reading only.

(16) kyengchal-i swulcip-**ey**/-?/??**ul** takaka-ko-iss-ta.[7]
      police-Nom pub-Loc/-Acc   approach-Prog-Pres-Dec
      'Police are approaching the pub.'
      Entailment: Police have approached the pub.
(17) *kyengchal-i swulcip-**ey**/-**ul** ta takaka-(e)ss-ta.
      police-Nom pub-Loc/-Acc all approach-Past-Dec
      'Police finished approaching the pub.'

The sentence (16) exhibits an atelic reading even when followed by Acc-marked NP-place complement, which constitutes an counterexample to the standard argument that a direct object culminates the event that the verb refers to. When modified by a grade adverb *ta* 'all' in (17), the verb should reach the end point of the motion, leading to a telic reading. The fact that (17) is not good amounts to saying that *takaka-ta* 'to approach' does not reveal a telic interpretation.

We can also find a couple of motion verb constructions, where a verb displays an invariant telic reading without regard to the Case alternation:

(18) wuli nwuna-ka hyenkwan-**ey**/-**ul** tuleka-ko-iss-ta.
      our sister-Nom porch-Loc/-Acc   enter-Prog-Pres-Dec
      'My sister is entering the porch.'[8]
      Entailment: My sister has not yet entered the porch.
(19) Mary-ka   san   cengsang-**ey**/-**ul** han sikan
          -Nom   mountain peak   -Loc/-Acc one hour

---

7) As one anonymous reviewer points out, there are some speakers who do not accept this Acc-marked NP. But majority of my informants reported they would accept this Case marking without any difficulty.

8) Though the English gloss hints a transitive verb, *tuleka-ta* in Korean is canonically an intransitive verb that sometimes allows an accompanying object. Compare:
  a. Mary-ka   caki-uy   pang-**ey**/-**ul**   tuleka-(e)ss-ta.   (Korean)
        -Nom   self-Gen room-Loc/-Acc   enter-Past-Dec
     'Mary entered self's room.'
  b. Mary entered/*entered into her room.   (English)

```
*tongan/maney   ol-ass-ta9)
 for/in              climb-Past-De
```
'Mary climbed the mountain peak *for an hour/in an hour.'

The entailment in (18) is that the verb does not reach the end point that completes the whole event, when the motion is cut on the way, without recourse to the Case of the following argument. This is a typical case of telicity. The example (19) also shows that the *olu-ta* 'to climb' verb displays a telic reading regardless of Case alternation in the sense that the verb is compatible with the *in an hour* adjunct only. The verb *tha-ta* 'to get on' as an intransitive verb is another example that is not subject to the Case sensitivity in terms of aspectual structure. Let us consider the following:

```
(20) *Suna-ka      cacenke-ey/-lul    comte/chenchenhi
          -Nom   bike-Loc/-Acc       a little bit more/slowly
     tha-(e)ss-ta.
     ride-PAST-Dec
```
'Suna got on the bike a little bit more/slowly.'

When a verb displays a telic reading, it cannot be modified by such manner adverbs as *a little bit* or *slowly*. The example (20), as a telic aspectual structure, correctly supports this generalization.

Last but not the least, the following is also meant to question Tennyian argument that the direct argument gives rise to a telic

---

9) One anonymous reviewer suggested that the contrast in (19) concerning telic/atelic interpretation would disappear in the following example:
```
    Mary-ka    san -ey/-ul         han sikan tongan/maney  ol-ass-ta
       -Nom mountain-Loc/-Acc one hour     for/in              climb-Past-Dec
```
    'Mary climbed the mountain for an hour/in an hour.'
The reviewer points out that if *the mountain peak* is replaced by just *the mountain* as in (i), *for an hour* is compatible with both of the Case marking. Basically, she/he is right. But we need to take a note that telicity/atelicity is sort of relative concept. For a detailed and convincing discussion for the matter, readers are referred to Comrie (1976).

reading:

  (21) a. *Suna-ka   acik satali-**eye** olun-ta.
               -Nom still ladder-Loc climbs-Dec
        'Suna is still climbing the ladder.'
      b. Suna-ka   acik satali-**lul**   olun-ta.
               -Nom   still ladder-Acc climbs-Dec
        'Suna is still climbing the ladder.'

Contrary to expectation, (21a) displays a telic reading and (21b) an atelic reading. The former is not good because the time adverbial that designates unending event cannot be compatible with a telic aspectual structure that presupposes the culmination of an event. The fact that it is fine along with the unending time adverbial supports our analysis that the motion verb in (21b) displays an atelic reading. This pair also seems to contribute to questioning Tennyian conjectures.

4. Focus Effect and Exhaustiveness

  I have hitherto shown that the place-NP complement of intransitive motion verbs in Korean frequently manifests a Case alternation. I have also introduced Tennyian conjectures that the internal argument of a verb plays a crucial role in aspectual semantics because the argument can aspectually measure out the event to which the verb refers. Drawing on this line of reasoning, then, I am led to the conclusion that the Acc-marked argument gives rise to a telic reading, and the non-Acc-marked NP an atelic reading. I have also demonstrated that this generalization, however, runs into a non-trivial problem.
  It is important to take a notice that what makes intransitive motion verbs in Korean intransitive is that a direct argument is not required by the argument structure of those verbs. Logically enough, we have to delve into the answer of the question concerning why the Acc-marked argument is selected where the Loc-marked argument would be a norm. In the conceptual point of view, affectedness, delimitedness and

boundedness do not seem to be satisfying to describe the intransitive motion verb constructions. Strictly speaking, the place-NP complement of intransitive motion verbs is not an object per se in the sense that it is not a literal theme that can be measured out by the previous verbs. My conjecture is that, contra Yeon (1993, 1998), the apparent Acc-marking has nothing to do with the so-called transitivity issue. I propose that the Acc-marking is just for representing something like focus effect. This idea might partially be supported by the prosody facts of the following:

(22) a. Mary-ka   hakkyo-**ey** ka-(e)ss-ta.
            -Nom school-Loc go-Past-Dec
        'Mary went to school'
      b. Mary-ka   hakkyo-**LUL** ka-(e)ss-ta.
            -Nom school-Acc   go-Past-Dec
        'Mary went to school'

Compared with (22a), in a neutral context, the Acc-marked place-NP in (22b) receives something like a high-pitched accent and then followed by a prosodic downstep. The canonical structure of an intransitive verb construction would be (22a). Notice that as an intransitive verb *ka-ta* 'to go' does not require any object in its argument structure per se. If the apparent Acc-marked argument is not structurally licensed, the remaining possibility is that it is inherently given a Case that we take to have a focus property. It naturally should be distinguished from the regular Acc Case licensed by transitive verbs.10)

   I argue that the focus phrase can be interpreted as a telic representation, in the sense that the event is measured out (or culminated/terminated) by the intransitive verb in association with focus effects. Consider the following:

---

10) An anonymous reviewer points out that the sentence *Mary-ka hakkyo-ey-lul kassta* has a telic interpretation and this interpretation is yielded by a focus marker *-lul*.

(23) a. Mary-ka   20 mile-**Ø** tali-ess-ta.
              -Nom   run-Past-Dec
         'Mary ran twenty miles.'
       b. Mary-ka   20 mile-**ul**   tali-ess-ta.
              -Nom   -Acc   run-Past-Dec
         'Mary ran twenty miles.'

A meaning contrast observed in (23) is as follows: Out of twenty miles that *Mary* ran, actually the part of the whole distance (*e.g.*, five, ten, or fifteen miles) would be run out in (23a), whereas the whole twenty miles is incessantly run out by *Mary* in (23b). We suppose that this meaning contrast is due to the abstract focus carrier in effect. There follows another example concerning this focus carrying and exhaustiveness:

(24) a. John-un   halu-**Ø**   kel-ess-ta.
              -Top one day walk-Past-Dec
         'John walked one day.'
       b. John-un   halu-**lul**   kel-ess-ta.
              -Top one day-Acc walk-Past-Dec
         'John walked one day.'

In the same fashion, while the time that *John* spent on walking would be part of twenty-four hours in (24a), the time spent in (24b) is the whole twenty-four hours. With regard to aspectuality, the former is associated with an atelic reading and the latter a telic interpretation.

5. Concluding Remarks

   I have provided an account that associates the Case alternation fact with aspectual semantics witnessed in the intransitive motion verb constructions in Korean. I have shown that the direct internal argument may not play such a crucial role in the definition of aspectual structure as far as the intransitive motion verbs are concerned. Critically reviewing the previous suggestions, I have proposed that the apparent

Acc-marker in the intransitive motion verb construction has a unique property that gives rise to the so-called focus effect. This focus effect in turn, I further suggest, exhausts/completes the event of the argument in the sentence, which leads the event to the telic aspect.

References

Comrie, B. (1976). *Aspect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hopper, P. and Thompson, S. (1980). Transitivity in grammar and discourse. *Language, 56*, 251-299.

Jackendoff, R. (1996). The proper treatment of measuring out, telicity, and perhaps even quantification. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory 14*, 305-354.

Kiparsky, P. (1998). Partitive case and aspect. In B. Miriam & G. Wilhelm (Eds.), *The projection of arguments.* CSLI Publications.

Kuno, S. (1973). *The structure of the Japanese language*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Levin, B. (1993). *English verb classes and alternation*: *A preliminary investigation.* The University of Chicago Press.

Martin, S. (1975). *Reference grammar of Japanese. Yale University Press.*

Ramchand, G. C. (1997). Aspect and predication. In *The Semantics of Argument Structure.* Oxford Press.

Tenny, C. (1994). *Aspectual roles and the syntax-semantics interface.* Kluwer, Dordrecht.

Yeon, J-H. (1993). The degree of transitivity in Korean: A functional-typological approach. *ehakyenkwu 29* (1), 107-136.

Yeon, J-H. (1998). Affectedness and the degree of transitivity in Korean: A functional typolopgical approach. In Ross King (Ed.), *Description and explanation in Korean linguisitcs.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

Jai-Hyoung Cho
Department of English Language and Literature
Ajou University
5 Wonchon-dong, Paldal-ku
Suwon, Kyonggi-do 442-749, Korea
Phone: 82-31-219-2823
E-mail: jhc@ajou.ac.kr