

# Implementation of Presence and Absence of Blocking Effects: A Categorical Grammar Approach to Chinese and Korean \*

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**Abstract.** Among the languages that allow long-distance reflexives, some languages have blocking effects, whereas others don't. The goal of this paper is to provide computational algorithms that can handle presence and absence of blocking effects of long-distance reflexives. We will examine the blocking effects in Chinese and Korea and develop computational algorithms for handling blocking effects in those two languages. The algorithms will be developed by incorporating Chierchia's Binding Theory into Steedman's Combinatory Categorical Grammar (CCG). Through the analyses and implementations, this paper illustrates how blocking effects can be implemented computationally.

**Keywords:** long-distance reflexive, blocking effects, Chinese, Korean, CCG

## 1. Introduction

In some languages, long-distance reflexives are allowed in addition to their sentence-bound counterparts. Among the languages that allow long-distance reflexives, some languages have blocking effects, but others don't. Chinese is one language that has blocking effects and the sentence (1) demonstrates an example of blocking effects (Cole, et al., 2000:14).<sup>1</sup>

- (1) Blocking Effect in Chinese  
 Zhangsan<sub>i</sub>          renwei   wo<sub>j</sub>          zhidao   Wangwu<sub>k</sub>          xihauan          ziji<sub>i/\*j/k</sub>  
 Zhangsan          think   I          know   Wangwu          like          self  
 'Zhangsan thinks I know Wangwu likes self.'

Here, the reflexive *ziji* cannot refer to *Zhangsan* because *wo* blocks co-reference between *ziji* and *Zhangsan*. Let's compare this sentence with (2). (2) is the Korean counterpart of sentence (1).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cole et al. (2000) included state-of-art introduction to long-distance reflexives, and various approaches to long-distance reflexives are tried by Pica (1987), Manzini & Wexler (1987), Battistella (1989), Katada (1991), Haung & Tang (1991), Cole & Sung (1994), etc. Discussions on Chinese long-distance reflexives are contained in Huang (1982), Hung (1984), Tang (1989), Haung & Tang (1991), among others.

<sup>2</sup> We have similar phenomenon in the following sentence (Moon, 1996:15).

- (i) *John<sub>i</sub>-un* [ *nay<sub>j</sub>-ka caki<sub>i/\*j</sub>-lul*          *ttayli-ess-ta-ko* ]          *syangkakha-n-ta.*  
 John.TOP I.NOM self.ACC          beat.PAST.DECL.COMP          think.PRES.DECL  
 'John thinks that I beat him.'

Here, the reflexive *caki* can refer to *John* across the pronoun *nay*. If Korean had blocking effects, this phenomenon would be impossible since the pronoun *nay* blocks the co-referential relations between *caki* and *John*.

- (2) No Blocking Effect in Korean  
*Chelsoo*<sub>i</sub>-*num* [ *nay*<sub>j</sub>-*ka* [ *Younghee*<sub>k</sub>-*ka* *caki*<sub>i/\*j/k</sub>-*lul* *co.aha-n-ta-ko* ]  
 Chelsoo.TOP I.NOM Younghee.NOM self.ACC like.PRES.DECL.COMP  
*a(l)-n-ta-ko* ] *sayngkakha-n-ta*.  
 know.PRES.DECL.COMP think.PRES.DECL  
 ‘Chelsoo thinks that I know that Younghee likes him/herself.’

As the co-reference relations in (2) indicate, *caki* CAN refer to *Chelsoo*, though *nay* is located between them. Therefore, we can say that there is no blocking effect in Korean long-distance reflexives.

The goal of this paper is to provide computational algorithms that can handle presence and absence of blocking effects. The algorithms will be developed by combining Steedman (1996, 2000)’s Combinatory Categorical Grammar (CCG) and Chierchia’s Binding Theory, which will be called a CCG-like system.

This paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, Categorical Grammar and Chierchia (1988)’s Binding Theory will be introduced. Section 3 introduces a CCG-like system and demonstrates how blocking effects can be handled in the CCG-like system. Section 4 provides computational algorithms for presence and absences of the blocking effects, and Section 5 summarizes this paper.

## 2. Binding Theory in Categorical Grammar

Categorical Grammar was first introduced by Ajdukiewicz (1935) and later modified and advanced by Bar-Hillel (1953), Curry & Feys (1958), and Lambek (1958). In this framework, we have two basic categories *n* and *s*, and other categories come from the combinations of these two categories. All the syntactic phenomena are described and analyzed by the functor-argument relations of the constituents.

Steedman (1996, 2000) extended previous studies in Categorical Grammar and developed Combinatorial Categorical Grammar (CCG). The most important characteristic of his system is that predicate-arguments relations are projected by the combinatory rules of syntax, and other operations are based on these predicate-arguments relations (Steedman, 2000:38). The most fundamental combinatory rule is functional application, which is delineated in (3). Here, *f* is the semantic interpretation of the functor category, and *a* is that of the argument.

- (3) Functional Application (Steedman, 1996:13)  
 a.  $X/Y : f \quad Y : a \quad \rightarrow \quad X : fa \quad (>)$   
 b.  $Y : a \quad X \setminus Y : f \quad \rightarrow \quad X : fa \quad (<)$

Chierchia applied Categorical Grammar to explain Binding phenomena in English, and he described syntactic constraints of reflexives and pronominals as follows (Chierchia, 1988:134).

- (4) Binding in Categorical Grammar  
 a. A reflexive must be bound to an F-commanding argument in its minimal NP or S domain.  
 b. A non-reflexive pronoun must not be co-indexed with anything in its minimal NP or S domain.  
 where F-command is simply c-command at function-argument structure.

Agreement in number and gender must hold between pronouns and their antecedents, in order to pronouns can refer to their antecedents. The constraint for checking agreement is stated in (5a).



The system that this paper develops is a CCG-like system, which has been introduced in Lee (2002a, 2002b, 2003a, 2003b). It is basically an incorporation of Chierchia's ideas into Steedman's Combinatory Categorical Grammar (CCG). This system is similar to Steedman's system in that surface combinatorics triggers other operations, especially reflexive resolution algorithms in this paper. It is different from Steedman's in that it uses attribute-value ordered pairs (**avop**) in (8) to describe syntactic dependencies of constituents. The six attributes are explained in (9).

- (8) Structure of Attribute-Value Ordered Pair  
 <PHON,CAT,(AGR),TRANS,NPS,(SLASH)>
- (9) Six Attributes
- a. PHON
    - (i) phonological/morphological form
    - (ii) concatenates a word to a stream of words
  - b. CAT
    - (i) has categorial information
    - (ii) such as S, NP, S\NP, and so on
  - c. AGR
    - (i) agreement feature
    - (ii) index, type, gender, and number
  - d. TRANS
    - (i) semantic interpretation
    - (ii) based on Montagovian semantics
  - e. NPS (NP Index Store)
    - (i) something like a Cooper-storage
    - (ii) stores indexes of NP
  - f. SLASH
    - (i) similar to that of HPSG
    - (ii) deals with crossover phenomena

The functional application on the CAT values triggers operations on TRANS and NPS values, and all the reflexives are resolved by these operations. NPS is similar to Chierchia's LPS, but different in (i) that NPS stores the indexes for other types of NPs in addition to pronouns and (ii) that NPS is not local. That is, the indexes stored in NPS can be percolated up beyond the minimal S domain. AGR and SLASH are parenthesised in (8), because the values for these two attributes will be omitted from the actual representations.

The reflexive resolution algorithms in the CCG-like system can be described as follows. Each constituent in the input sentence is combined with the others by functional applications in (3). After this combination, if there is [+refl] in the NPS store, it triggers reflexive resolution algorithms. The resolution algorithms perform some operations on TRANS and NPS values, and all the reflexives are resolved with their antecedents.

### 3.2. Blocking Effects in the CCG-like System

Now, let's see how presence and absence of blocking effects can be handled in the CCG-like system. First, in order to process long-distance reflexives, Chierchia's algorithms in (7) must be revised slightly. Among the conditions that are enumerated in (7), the conditions that prohibit long-distance reflexives are (7bi) and (7biv). Both conditions say that reflexives must be resolved in the minimal S domain, and that [+refl] indexes cannot be percolated up beyond the minimal S boundary. In order to handle sentences in (1) and (2), these conditions have to be deleted. (10) and (11) are the algorithms after this revision. (10) is for Chinese and (11) is for Korean.

(10) Revised Chierchia's Algorithms for Chinese

$$a. (S \setminus NP_n) / NP_n + NP \Rightarrow S \setminus NP$$

<sub>0</sub>                      <sub>1</sub>                      <sub>2</sub>

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| (i) $NPS(0) \cap NPS(1) = \emptyset$                  | non-coreference   |
| (ii) $SLASH(2) \cap (NPS(1) \cup NPS(2)) = \emptyset$ | crossover         |
| (iii) $NPS(2) = NPS(0) \cup NPS(1)$                   | NPS-percolation   |
| (iv) $SLASH(2) = SLASH(0) \cup SLASH(1)$              | slash-percolation |

$$b. NP_n + S \setminus NP_n \Rightarrow S$$

<sub>0</sub>                      <sub>1</sub>                      <sub>2</sub>

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| (i) $SLASH(2) \cap (NPS(1) \cup NPS(2)) = \emptyset$ | crossover         |
| (ii) $NPS(2) = NPS(0) \cup NPS(1)$                   | NPS-percolation   |
| (iii) $SLASH(2) = SLASH(0) \cup SLASH(1)$            | slash-percolation |

c. Reflexives

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (i) $\frac{A}{n [+refl] \in NPS} \Rightarrow \frac{A}{n \notin NPS}$ |  |
| (ii) conditions: (a) $A = S \setminus NP$ (b) $FT(A) \approx FT(n)$  |  |
| (iii) translation: $\lambda x_n [A'(x_n)]$                           |  |

(11) Revised Chierchia's Algorithms for Korean

$$a. NP + (S \setminus NP_n) \setminus NP_n \Rightarrow S \setminus NP$$

<sub>0</sub>                      <sub>1</sub>                      <sub>2</sub>

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| (i) $NPS(0) \cap NPS(1) = \emptyset$                  | non-coreference   |
| (ii) $SLASH(2) \cap (NPS(1) \cup NPS(2)) = \emptyset$ | crossover         |
| (iii) $NPS(2) = NPS(0) \cup NPS(1)$                   | NPS-percolation   |
| (iv) $SLASH(2) = SLASH(0) \cup SLASH(1)$              | slash-percolation |

$$b. NP_n + S \setminus NP_n \Rightarrow S$$

<sub>0</sub>                      <sub>1</sub>                      <sub>2</sub>

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| (i) $SLASH(2) \cap (NPS(1) \cup NPS(2)) = \emptyset$ | crossover         |
| (ii) $NPS(2) = NPS(0) \cup NPS(1)$                   | NPS-percolation   |
| (iii) $SLASH(2) = SLASH(0) \cup SLASH(1)$            | slash-percolation |

c. Reflexives

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (i) $\frac{A}{n [+refl] \in NPS} \Rightarrow \frac{A}{n \notin NPS}$ |  |
| (ii) conditions: (a) $A = S \setminus NP$ (b) $FT(A) \approx FT(n)$  |  |
| (iii) translation: $\lambda x_n [A'(x_n)]$                           |  |

(7c) is deleted here, since we will not use this category combinatorics. Note that the conditions (7bi) and (7biv) are deleted in (10) and (11). Also, note that NP follows  $(S \setminus NP_n) / NP$  in (10a) but NP precedes  $(S \setminus NP_n) \setminus NP$  in (11a). This is just a language-specific property.

Revised algorithms in (10) and (11) are for handling long-distance reflexives. Now, it's time to develop algorithms for handling blocking effects. For this purpose, this paper adopts Reflexive-Antecedent Pairing Algorithm in (12) that are developed in Lee (2002b, 2003a).

(12) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairing Algorithm

For the reflexive  $r$  and all the potential antecedents  $a$ , make a pair ' $r = a$ ' if category of  $a$  is NP.

These processes start from the closest antecedent from the reflexive  $r$  and continue until all the possible antecedents are exhausted. In addition to this algorithm, to handle differences between

Chinese and Korean, we have algorithms in (13) and (14) for blocking effects.

- (13) Blocking Effect Algorithm for Chinese  
When we meet a reflexive-antecedent pair whose agreement feature is not compatible, delete all the reflexive-antecedent pairs after this pair.
- (14) Blocking Effect Algorithm for Korean  
When we meet a reflexive-antecedent pair whose agreement feature is not compatible, delete only this reflexive-antecedent pair and comparison processes continue.

Now, let's take (1) and (2) again, and see how these algorithms work.

First, according to the algorithm in (12), Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for sentence (1) and (2) can be calculated as in (15) and (16).

- (15) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for (1) (Step I)  
a. ziji = Wangwu  
b. ziji = wo  
c. ziji = Zhangsan
- (16) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for (2) (Step I)  
a. caki-lul = Younghee-ka  
b. caki-lul = nay-ka  
c. caki-lul = Chelsoo-nun

Then, compatibility between the reflexive and its antecedents are checked from (a) to (c). Because the reflexive and the antecedents in (15b) and (16b) are not compatible, (15b) and (16b) are deleted as in (17) and (18).

- (17) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for (1) (Step II)  
a. ziji = Wangwu  
b. ~~ziji = wo~~  
c. ziji = Zhangsan
- (18) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for (2) (Step II)  
a. caki-lul = Younghee-ka  
b. ~~caki-lul = nay-ka~~  
c. caki-lul = Chelsoo-nun

Because we meet a Reflexive-Antecedent Pair whose agreement feature is not compatible, Blocking Effect Algorithms in (13) and (14) are applied, and we reach the final results as in (19) and (20).

- (19) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for (1) (Final)  
a. ziji = Wangwu  
b. ~~ziji = wo~~  
c. ~~ziji = Zhangsan~~
- (20) Reflexive-Antecedent Pairs for (2) (Final)  
a. caki-lul = Younghee-ka  
b. ~~caki-lul = nay-ka~~  
c. caki-lul = Chelsoo-nun

Following the Reflexive-antecedent Pairs in (19), (21) is analyzed as in (22), where (21) is the







from NPs[i] to NPs[j]. The algorithm searches this domain backwards, i.e., from NPs[j] to NPs[i], and makes a Reflexive-Antecedent Pair ‘rPHON = aPHON’. Here, rPHON is the phonological/morphological form of the reflexive, and aPHON refers to that of the possible antecedents. Then, the algorithm adds this pair to RAPairs, where all the reflexive-antecedent pairs are stored. After all the NPs are exhausted, the algorithm returns RAPairs.

The next step is to check agreement feature of each pair in RAPairs, to rule out the pairs where the reflexive and a possible antecedent are not compatible. (27) and (28) are those algorithms, where (27) is the implementation of (13) and (28) is that of (14).

(27) Algorithm for Blocking Effects (Chinese)

```
function set Chinese_blocking_effects (set ra)
var
  boolean flag;
  string RAString, RAREfl, RAAnte;
  set RAPairs, RASet;
begin
  flag := true;
  RAPairs := ra;
  RASet := {};
  while flag = true and RAPairs is not exhausted do
    begin
      get one RAString from RAPairs;
      RAREfl := reflexive form of RAString;
      RAAnte := antecedent form of RAString;
      if (FT(RAREfl)?FT(RAAnte)) flag := false;
      if (flag = true) then RASet := RASet + RAString;
    end;
  return(RASet);
end;
```

(28) Algorithm for Blocking Effects (Korean)

```
function set Korean_blocking_effects (set ra)
var
  boolean flag;
  string RAString, RAREfl, RAAnte;
  set RAPairs, RASet;
begin
  flag := true;
  RAPairs := ra;
  RASet := {};
  while RAPairs is not exhausted do
    begin
      get one RAString from RAPairs;
      RAREfl := reflexive form of RAString;
      RAAnte := antecedent form of RAString;
      if (FT(RAREfl)?FT(RAAnte)) flag := false;
      if (flag = true) then RASet := RASet + RAString;
      if (flag = false) then flag := true;
    end;
  return(RASet);
end;
```

If the agreement feature between the reflexive and its possible antecedent is not compatible, *flag* is set to be false. When *flag* is false, different actions are taken between Chinese and Korean. In Chinese, as the algorithm in (27) demonstrates, we get out of the while loop, and returns the reflexive-antecedent pairs whose agreement feature is compatible up to now. In Korean, as the algorithm in (28) shows, we filter out only that reflexive-antecedent pair, and continue

comparison processes until all the pairs in RAPairs are exhausted. Along with these algorithms, we can handle presence and absence of blocking effects in Chinese and Korean effectively.

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have developed algorithms for handling blocking effects of long-distance reflexives. Chinese has blocking effects, but Korean doesn't have. We found that long-distance reflexives in these languages can be analyzed efficiently in the CCG-like system and that the presence and absence of blocking effects can be implemented by some operations on the reflexive-antecedent pairs.

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