A/E Pelita as an Aspectual Marker in Korean Auxiliary Verb Constructions: An Experimental Comparison with Spanish Optional *se*

Nakyung Yoon

A/E Pelita as an Aspectual Marker in Korean Auxiliary Verb Constructions: An Experimental Comparison with Spanish Optional *se*

Nakyung Yoon
Korea University
joy2001@korea.ac.kr

Abstract

The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, it aims to experimentally examine two approaches to Korean *a/e pelita* auxiliary verb constructions (AVCs)—an aspectual approach and an expressive approach. Second, it seeks to determine whether the *a/e pelita* AVC differs from its unmarked base construction in terms of telicity. Two acceptability judgment tasks (Experiment I) were conducted to assess Korean speakers' acceptability judgments of *a/e pelita* AVCs with eventives and statives. A truth value judgment task (Experiment II) was also conducted to assess the strength of event completion inference in comparison with Spanish optional *se*. Results from Experiment I indicate that, as predicted by the aspectual approach, *a/e pelita* functions as a telic marker with eventive predicates. Results from Experiment II suggest that, unlike Spanish optional *se*, *a/e pelita* yields a stronger inference of event completion and marks exhaustivity more strongly than the base construction, particularly depending on the specific verb.

1 Introduction

In Korean auxiliary verb constructions (AVCs), it has been argued (Sohn, 1973, 2001) that the auxiliary a/e pelita triggers an inference of event completion[1]. Building on this, Choi (2003, 2005) proposed that the auxiliary functions as an aspectual (Asp) head, always yielding a telic interpretation and determining the aspectual properties of the entire predicate.

By contrast, Jung and Kim's (2017) expressive approach challenges Choi's analysis, arguing that a similar auxiliary, *nay*, is compatible only with for-adverbial phrases (typically associated with atelicity), but not with in-adverbial phrases (typically

associated with telicity). Further evidence supporting their claim involves the occurrence of a V2 in the AVCs with stative predicates and the morphological distribution of a passive suffix[2]. Notably, Choi's approach predicts that, given that *v* is associated with hosting an external argument, a passivized AVC should position the passive morpheme structurally below the Asp head. This prediction is borne out with *a/e pelita*, as illustrated in (1), contrary to the expectations of Jung and Kim's (2017) analysis regarding nay.

(1) a. Phokpal-lo   inhay   ku
         explosion-INST result from that
         tosi-ka
         city-NOM

         phakoy toye   peli-ess-supnita.
         destroy become-PASS peli-PAST-DEC

         'The city was completely destroyed by the explosion.'

     b. Netflix-eykye motwu mek-hi-e
         Netflix-DAT   all   eat-PASS-e

         peli-ess-ta.
         peli-PST-DEC

         'All was ultimately eaten up by Netflix.'

In both (1a) and (1b), the passive morpheme precedes the auxiliary, supporting the aspectual approach rather than the expressive analysis. Furthermore, Jung and Kim's (2017) expressive approach does not account for the inference of event completion, as illustrated in (2).

(2) a. Ku-ka   pap-ul   mek-e
         He-NOM meal-ACC eat-e
         peli-ess-ta.
         peli-PAST-DEC
         'He ate up the meal.'

---

[1] Auxiliary verb constructions (AVCs) refer to complex verbal structure in which two serial verbs within one clause jointly express a single event, with the second verb (V2) occurring directly after the first verb (V1) (cf. J. Yoon, 2018)..

[2] Hong (2015: 111) identified one such instance, and a subsequent Google search reveals additional cases in which AVCs occur with stative predicates.

b. Yengho-nun apeci swul-ul masi-e
Yengho-NOM father wine-ACC drink-e
peli-ess-ta.
peli-PST-DEC

'Yengho drank up his father's wine.'

While Choi (2003, 2005) maintains that the auxiliary verb functions as an Asp head marking telicity and thus, determining the overall aspectual properties of the predicate, Verkuyl's (1972) compositional perspective holds that aspect is derived from the interaction between the semantic and lexical properties selected by tense morphology, together with modifications introduced by aspectual operators such as adverbials. From this viewpoint, aspect is compositional.

Moreover, Sohn (1973: 241) previously argued that the main verb and the auxiliary *a/e pelita* share a selectional property: they allow only verbs of action (which generally correspond to eventive predicates) to be embedded in their complements (e.g., pap-ul mek-e peli-ess-ta 'I finished eating (the meal)'). This selectional restriction likely stems from the nature of *a/e pelita* as a telic marker, since the inference of event completion arises only with event predicates. Consequently, *a/e pelita* is generally incompatible with stative predicates. According to Sohn's analysis, when *a/e pelita* appears with stative predicates, it is not functioning as an aspectual marker. Rather, such uses reflect a distinct construction, governed by a separate set of semantic or expressive functions.

Under Sohn's (1973, 2001) analysis, which treats *a/e pelita* as a telic marker, its compatibility with for-adverbial phrases—typically licensed only with atelic predicates, as in (3)—poses a challenge. Accounting for this requires an additional assumption. Consider the examples in (4).

(3) a. John drank a beer in 10 minutes /?for 10

minutes.

b. John drank down a beer in 10

minutes/*for 10 minutes.

(4) a. Chelswu-nun ilcwuil mane/dongan
Chelswu-NOM a week in/for

Cencayng-kwa Phyenghwa-lul
War-and Peace-ACC
ilke-ess-ta.
read-PAST-DEC

'Chelswu read War and Peace in a week/for a week.'

b. Chelswu-nun ilcwuil mane/dongan
Chelswu-DAT a week in/for

Cencayng-kwa Phyenghwa-lul
War-and Peace-ACC
ilke-peli-ess-ta.
read-peli-PAST-DEC

'Chelswu read up War and Peace in a week/for a week.'

In (4a) the combination of a consumption verb and a quantized noun as the direct object yields an accomplishment predicate, as confirmed by its compatibility with an *in*-adverbial diagnostic (MacDonald, 2017; Martínez-Vera, 2022). The acceptability of the for-adverbial in (4a), however, can be explained by Park (2011: 347-350), who proposes that a for-adverbial in Korean may allow two possible interpretations. When a for-adverbial co-occurs with an accomplishment predicate, it can yield a reading in which the event is reinterpreted as an atelic activity. In a similar line, Borer (2005) describes for-adverbials as atelicizers[3]. In this view, the for-adverbial shifts the aspectual interpretation of the predicate, resulting in a compatible (though marked) sentence.

Similarly, the acceptability of both in- and for-adverbials in *a/e pelita* AVCs, as shown in (4b), does not provide a clear diagnostic for telicity. Although *a/e pelita* is presumed to function as a telic marker, the presence of a for-adverbial appears to coerce an achievement predicate into an activity reading. This pattern suggests that the telic marker somehow does not block aspectual coercion, in which compositional aspect interacts with contextual or pragmatic factors to override the expected telic interpretation in Korean AVCs.

Building on Verkuyl (1972) and Rhee (2008), I propose that this flexibility stems from the auxiliary *a/e pelita* having the potential to express speaker subjectivity[4]. This expressive function does not preclude co-occurrence with a for-adverbial and may still result in a telic interpretation at the VP level. This assumption is supported by a stative predicate such as *nolla-* 'surprise' or *sulphe-* 'sad'

---

[3]It should be noted, however, that a for-adverbial may serve as an appropriate diagnostic of telicity, depending on the context (cf. Kim, Ko, and Yang, 2020)

[4]A parallel can be drawn with Spanish optional *se*, which, like the Korean auxiliary *a/e pelita*, has been analyzed as following a grammaticalization path (Armstrong and MacDonald, 2021).

as it can express subjectivity but at the same time result in a telic interpretation when combined with *a/e pelita*[5].

Spanish optional *se*, a reflexive clitic pronoun, and the Korean auxiliary *a/e pelita* have been claimed to exhibit similar grammatical and semantic/pragmatic patterns (Strauss, 2003). Both can optionally occur with certain eventive (e.g., *María se comió el helado.* 'María ate up the ice-cream.' vs. *Yengho-nun apeci swul-ul masy-e peli-ess-ta.* 'Yengho drank up his father's wine.') and stative transitives (e.g., *Julio se supo la lección.* 'Julio came to know the lesson.' vs. *Yengho-nun pimil-ul al-a peli-ess-ta.* 'Yengho came to know the secret.') and are argued to function as aspectual markers always inducing telicity effect (Sanz, 2000; Sanz and Laka, 2002). More recent studies, however, suggest a different analysis for Spanish optional *se*: these constructions can be treated as instances of double object constructions, with *se* restricted to a limited set of stative predicates and no longer necessarily inducing telicity effects (Campanini and Schäfer, 2011; MacDonald, 2017; Martínez-Vera, 2022; Martin and Arunachalam, 2022). In contrast, the Korean auxiliary verb construction (AVC) has received considerably less attention than its Spanish counterpart (Sohn, 2001; Choi, 2003, 2006; Jung and Kim, 2017).

The goal of this paper is to provide experimental support for the proposed telic interpretation, which poses an apparent challenge to Sohn's analysis of *a/e pelita* as a telicity marker. Specifically, the study investigates whether *a/e pelita* systematically gives rise to a telic interpretation when combined with eventive predicates, making such AVCs telic according to the standard telicity diagnostics (e.g., *every day*, *to do so*). The study also aims to compare *a/e pelita* AVCs to their Spanish counterpart, double object constructions (DOCs) with optional *se*, with respect to exhaustivity and the inference of event completion.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the research hypotheses and the methodology of the current experimental study. Section 3 presents the results, and Sections 4 and 5 present the discussion and conclusion.

---

[5]A reviewer raised an important point regarding the behavior of these additional stative predicates when combined with *a/e pelita*. Although this is an important issue, due to space limitations, we leave it for future studies to further investigate this phenomenon. We appreciate the reviewer's valuable comment.

2 Research Method

2.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions are the following:

- Research Question 1: Does the presence of *a/e pelita* give rise to a telic VP even when combined with eventive predicates, and does this telic effect extend to stative predicates?

- Research Question 2: Does *a/e pelita* trigger a strong inference of event completion only with a consumption verb? Alternatively, does verb type affect the strength of the event completion inference?

The hypotheses and prediction are:

- Hypothesis 1: *a/e pelita* gives rise to a telic VP when it occurs with eventive predicates but not with stative predicates (Sohn, 1973, 2001).

- Hypothesis 2: *a/e pelita* differs from Spanish optional *se* in its semantic properties and thus, is not expected to pattern the same way as optional *se*.

- Prediction: Unlike Spanish optional *se*, the strength of the event inference completion in *a/e pelita* AVCs is expected to vary depending on the specific verb.

2.2 Participants

Eighty-six native speakers of Korean residing in South Korea were recruited through social media and participated in the experiments online: Experiment I ($n = 44$; $n = 42$) via PCIbex Farm; Experiment II ($n = 42$) via Google Form. Participants received monetary compensation.

2.3 Task, Materials, and Procedure

The experiment consisted of two main tasks: two acceptability judgment tasks (AJTs) and a truth value judgment task (TVJT). The AJTs were designed to test the acceptability and unacceptability of *a/e pelita* AVCs with both eventive and stative predicates, as judged by Korean speakers. The TVJT was used to assess the strength of the event completion inference in comparison with Spanish optional *se* (Martin and Arunachalam, 2022).

In the AJTs, the test materials were presented in two versions: one used standard telicity diagnostics (i.e., *mayil* 'every day', *kulehkey han-ta* 'to do

so'), while the other employed for-adverbial and entailment diagnostics. A between-subjects design was adopted because the two versions differed in tense: the first was presented in the present tense, while the second used the simple past tense in the Spanish version (MacDonald, 2017; Martin and Arunachalam, 2022).

Participants were asked to judge the acceptability of the sentences on a 7-Likert scale (1: totally unacceptable–7: totally acceptable). There were 48 items—16 target items and 32 fillers—in each test version. The target items had four conditions that varied in terms of the construction (base vs. *a/e pelita* AVC) and the type of diagnostics (*every day*, *to do so*). The version of the test with other telicity diagnostics had the same design. Sample target items are shown in (5)–(8).

AJT Version I:

(5) a. Minsu-nun   mayil   khephi
       Minsu-NOM everyday coffee
       han can-ul
       a cup-ACC

       masi-n-ta.
       drink-PRES-DEC

       'Minsu drinks a cup of coffee every day.'

   b. Minsu-nun   mayil   khephi
       Minsu-NOM everyday coffee
       han can-ul
       a cup-ACC

       masi-e peli-n-ta.
       drink-e peli-PRES-DEC

       'Minsu drinks down a cup of coffee everyday.'

(6) a. Chanswu-nun   mayil   ku
       Chanswu-NOM every day the
       iyaki-lul
       story-ACC

       mitnu-n-ta.
       believe-PRES-DEC

       'Chanswu believes the story every day.'

   b. Chanswu-nun   mayil   ku
       Chanswu-NOM every day the
       iyaki-lul
       story-ACC

       mit-e   peli-n-ta.
       believe-e peli-PRES-DEC

       'Chanswu believes the story every day.'

(7) a. Yengho-nun   achimey khephi-lul
       Yengho-NOM morning coffee-ACC

masi-ko   Cinswu-to
drink-CONJ Cinswu-also
kulehkey-han-ta.
do.so-PRES-DEC

'Yengho drinks a coffee in the morning, and Cinswu does so too.'

   b. Yengho-nun   achimey khephi-lul
       Yengho-NOM morning coffee-ACC
       masi-e peli-ko   Cinswu-do
       drink-e peli-CONJ Cinswu-also
       kulehkey-han-ta.
       do.so-PRES-DEC

       'Yengho drinks down a coffee in the morning, and Cinswu does so too.'

(8) a. Yengho-nun   mayil   ku iyaki-lul
       Yengho-NOM every day that story-ACC
       mit-ko   Minho-do
       believe-CONJ Minho-also
       kulehkey-han-ta.
       do.so-PRES-DEC

       'Yeongho believes the story, and Minho does so too.'

   b. Yengho-nun   ku iyaki-lul   mit-e
       Yengho-NOM that story-ACC believe-e
       peli-ko   Minho-do
       peli-CONJ Minho-also
       kulehkey-han-ta.
       do.so-PRES-DEC

       'Yengho believes the story, and Minho does so too.'

AJT Version II:

(9) a. Yengswu-nun   10-pwun   tongan
       Yengswu-NOM 10 minutes for
       sakwa-lul   meok-ess-ta.
       apple-ACC eat-PAST-DEC

       'Yengswu ate an apple for 10 minutes.'

   b. Yengswu-nun   10-pwun   tongan
       Yengswu-NOM 10 minutes for
       sakwa-lul   meok-e peli-ess-ta.
       apple-ACC eat-e   peli-PAST-DEC

       'Yengswu ate up an apple for 10 minutes.'

(10) a. Minci-nun   halwu   tongan ku
        Minci-NOM one day for   that
        iyaki-lul   mit-ess-ta.
        story-ACC believe-PAST-DEC

        'Minci believes that story for a day.'

    b. Minci-nun   halwu   tongan ku
        Minci-NOM one day for   that
        iyaki-lul   mit-e   peli-ess-ta.
        story-ACC believe-e peli-PAST-DEC

        'Minci believes that story for a day.'

(11) a. Yenghuy-nun   sakwa-lul
          Yenghuy-NOM apple-ACC
          mek-ess-ciman, acik celpan-ul te
          eat-PAST-but   yet half-ACC more
          mek-eya ha-n-ta.
          eat-must do-PRES-DEC

          'Yenghuy ate (an) apple, but she still
          needs to eat the rest of it.'

      b. Yenghuy-nun   sakwa-lul mek-e
          Yenghuy-NOM apple-ACC eat-PAST
          peli-ess-ciman, acik celpan-ul te
          peli-but,   yet half-ACC more
          mek-eya ha-n-ta.
          eat-must do-PRES-DEC

          'Yenghuy ate up (an) apple, but she still
          needs to eat the rest of it.'

(12) a. Chelswu-nun   ku
          Chelswu-NOM the story
          iyakilul   mitessciman, acik
          believe-PAST-but still   more
          te   miteya   han-ta.
          believe need-to-DEC

          'Chelswu believed the story, but he
          needs to believe it more fully.'

      b. Chelswu-nun   ku   iyakilul
          Chelswu-NOM the story believe
          mite   peli-essciman, acik te
          peli-e-but still   more believe
          miteya   han-ta.
          need-to-DEC

          'Chelswu believed the story, but he
          needs to believe it more fully.'

In the TVJT, forty-two Korean speakers were
shown brief video clips (complete action vs.
incomplete action) paired with sentences (28 test
items), as illustrated in (13)–(14). The video
clips depicted either a partially completed event
(e.g., eating 50% to 80% of a cookie) or a fully
completed event (e.g., eating all of a cookie).
Since the purpose of this task was to compare
a/e pelita to optional *se*, building on previously
utilized tests, the TVJT followed the overall design
of prior studies (Arunachalam and Kothari, 2010,
2011), including the same video materials. The
test items included one consumption verb (*mek-ta*
'eat'), one creation verb (*kulita* 'paint'), and five
change-of-state verbs (*kkeokta* 'pick up', *tephta*
'cover', *kkuta* 'turn off', *tatta* 'close', *chaywuta*
'fill'). [6]However, two modifications were made
relative to Martin and Arunachalam (2022): 1)

---

[6]In the TVJT test sentences used by Martin and Arunacha-
lam (2022), the subject pronoun *Ella* 'she' was deliberately
included to prevent anticausative or *se*-passive uses of change-
of-state verbs when *se* is present (cf. Fábregas, 2021). We

fillers (28 items) were added, and 2) the number
of TRUE and FALSE responses in the fillers was
balanced.

TVJT:
[complete action video] FULL condition

(13) a. Kunye-nun khwukhi-lul mek-ess-ta.
          she-NOM   cookie-ACC eat-PAST-DEC
          'She ate (a/the) cookie.'

      b. Kunye-nun khwukhi-lul mek-e
          she-NOM   cookie-ACC eat-e
          peli-ess-ta.
          peli-PAST-DEC
          'She ate up the cookie.'

[Incomplete action video] PART condition

(14) a. Kunye-nun khwukhi-lul mek-ess-ta.
          she-NOM   cookie-ACC eat-PAST-DEC
          'She ate (a/the) cookie.'

      b. Kunye-nun khwukhi-lul mek-e
          she-NOM   cookie-ACC eat-e
          peli-ess-ta.
          peli-PAST-DEC
          'She ate up the cookie.'

2.4   Data Analysis

All analyses were conducted using R. For the AJT,
the *lmer4* package for linear mixed-effects model
was used (Bates, 2011). A linear mixed-effects
model was carried out with subjects and items as
random factors. For the TVJT, descriptive analyses
were conducted.

3   Results

3.1   Experiment I

Mean acceptability scores showed that native
speakers of Korean ($n = 44$) found *a/e pelita* AVCs
with eventive predicates and telicity diagnostics to
be acceptable, with only slight variability (see Fig-
ures 1 and 2).

A linear mixed-effects model was fit with pred-
icate type, construction type, and diagnostic type
as fixed effects, and with participants and items
as random intercepts. The analysis revealed sig-
nificant main effects of predicate type ($\beta = 0.77$,
$p = .0106$) and construction type ($\beta = -0.57$,
$SE = 0.233$, $t(8) = -2.470$, $p = .0387$), indicat-
ing that eventive predicates were rated significantly
higher than stative predicates, and base construc-
tions were rated higher than auxiliary constructions.

---

adopted the same approach to ensure greater comparability
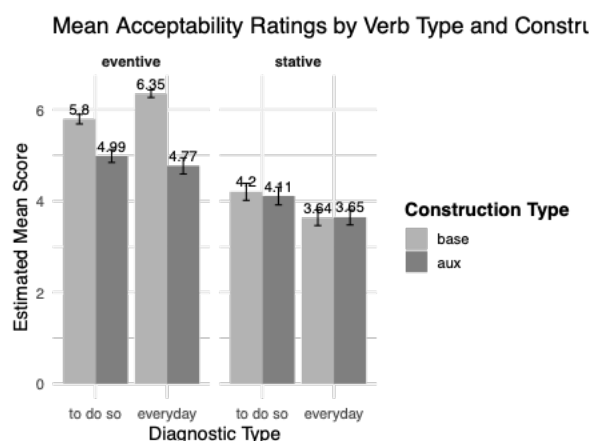between our study and theirs.

Figure 1: Mean acceptability ratings by predicate type, diagnostic, and construction.
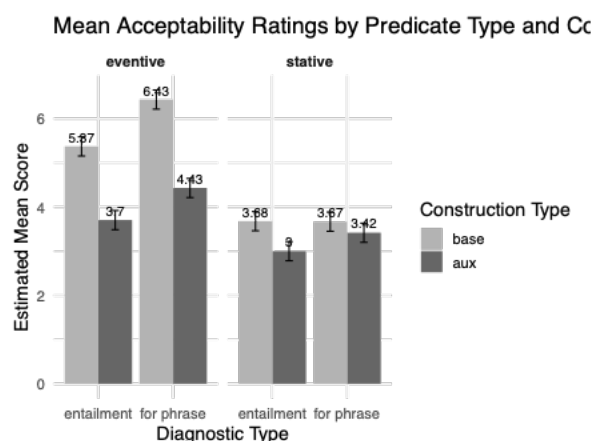

Figure 3: Mean acceptability ratings by predicate type, diagnostic, and construction.
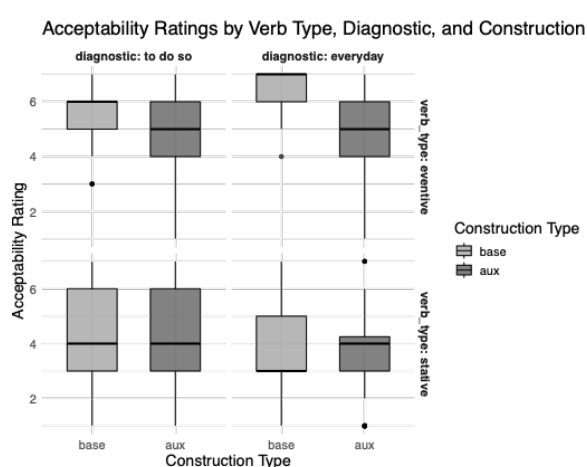

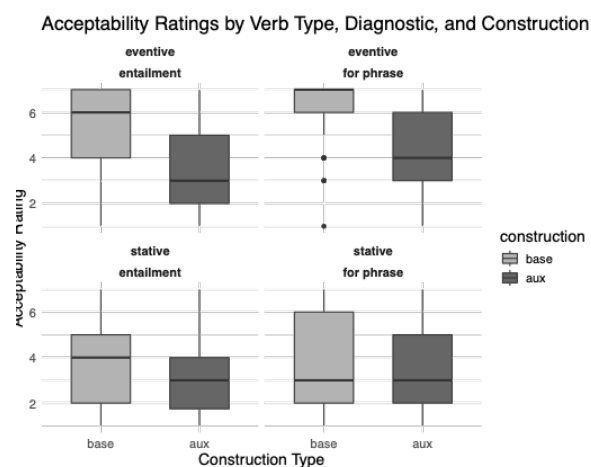Figure 2: Acceptability ratings by predicate type, diagnostic, and construction.

Figure 4: Acceptability ratings by predicate type, diagnostic, and construction.

The main effect of diagnostic type was not significant ($p = .273$), and no significant two-way or three-way interactions were found (all $ps > .17$).

Post-hoc Tukey-adjusted comparisons indicated that for eventive predicates in the everyday diagnostic condition, base constructions were rated significantly higher than auxiliary constructions (estimate $= 1.58$, $SE = 0.68$, $t(8) = 2.31$, $p = .0495$). No other pairwise comparisons reached significance (all $ps > .27$).

Another AJT was conducted with Korean speakers ($n = 42$) using entailment and for-adverbial diagnostics (see Figures 3 and 4).

A linear mixed-effects model was fit with predicate type, construction type, and diagnostic type as fixed effects, and with participants and items as random intercepts. The analysis revealed significant main effects of predicate type ($\beta = 0.79$, $t(623) = 4.62$, $p = .0017$), construction type

($\beta = -0.70$, $t(623) = -2.61$, $p = .0092$), and diagnostic type ($\beta = 1.67$, $t(623) = 6.20$, $p < .001$). This indicates that eventive predicates received higher ratings than stative predicates, base constructions received higher ratings than auxiliary constructions, and items in the for-adverbial diagnostic condition were rated higher than those in the entailment condition. A significant predicate type × construction type interaction was found ($p = .0095$), while all other interactions were not significant (all $ps > .15$). Post-hoc Tukey-adjusted comparisons showed that, within both diagnostic conditions, base constructions were rated significantly higher than auxiliary constructions (entailment: $p < .0001$; for-adverbial phrase: $p < .0001$). Among eventive predicates, the difference between base and auxiliary constructions also reached significance ($p < .0001$)[7].

---

[7]The residuals of the model were approximately symmet-

3.2 Experiment II

In the TVJT, participants ($n = 42$) responded with either TRUE or FALSE. The data were first analyzed descriptively by calculating the proportion of TRUE responses by condition and verb, as shown in Figure 5.
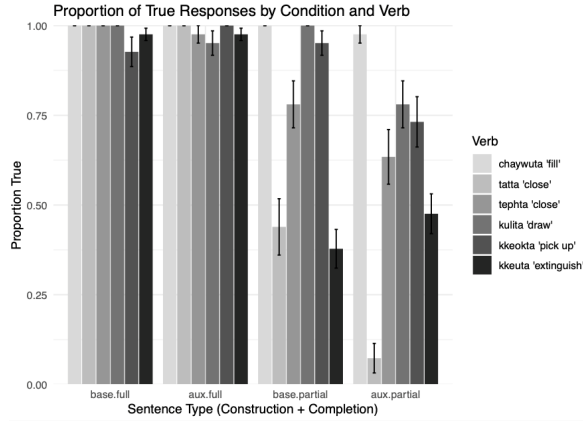

Figure 5: Proportion of TRUE responses by condition and verb.

The results indicate that, unlike Spanish optional *se*, the acceptability of *a/e pelita* AVCs was affected by particular verbs. In other words, the marked *a/e pelita* AVC variant was less acceptable than the unmarked variant under both the FULL and PARTIAL conditions. This pattern is expected, as in *a/e pelita* AVCs with eventive predicates, *a/e pelita* signals event completion[8].

The percentage of TRUE responses across all verbs tested, compared with the results for Spanish optional *se* reported in Martin and Arunachalam (2022), is presented in Table 1. Unlike DOCs with optional *se*, the marked *a/e pelita* AVC variant was less acceptable than the unmarked variant in the PART condition and was as acceptable as the unmarked variant in the FULL condition.

Unlike Spanish *se*, *a/e pelita* AVCs were gen-

---

rically distributed with a median near (Median = .041) and interquartile range from -0.81 to 0.67, suggesting reasonable model fit.

[8] We also observed an unexpected deviation in the performance of Korean speakers with the verbs *kkeokta* 'pick up' and *kkeuta* 'extinguish', as the acceptability of the marked AVC variant was higher than that of the unmarked variant. It is evident that these two items influenced the overall results. The first item involved an incomplete event in which an actress attempted to pick a banana from a bunch but failed to do so, which may have led participants to interpret the event as unsuccessful. Therefore, the acceptability ratings in both conditions (base partial vs. aux partial) were lower than in other conditions. The effect of the second item was even more pronounced, with acceptability ratings significantly lower in both conditions.

	Base	*a/e pelita* AVCs	- *se*	+ *se*
FULL	98.3	98.3	97	70
PARTIAL	70.4	59.2	61	46

Table 1: Percentage of TRUE responses for Korean test items with all verbs (compared to TRUE responses for all verbs in Spanish).

	mekta 'eat'	*mek-e pelita* 'eat up'	*comer* 'eat'	*comerse* 'eat up'
FULL	100	95.1	100	100
PARTIAL	100	78	88	73

Table 2: Percentage of TRUE responses for Korean test items with the consumption verb *mekta* 'eat'.

erally accepted in the FULL condition for all the verbs tested. This includes not only the consumption verb *mekta* 'eat' but also other verbs such as *tatta* 'close,' *tephta* 'close,' and *kulita* 'draw.' As shown in Table 3, however, in the PART condition, *tatta pelita* 'close completely' was accepted less often than *comerse* 'eat up.'

	tatta 'close'	*tatt-a pelita* 'close up'	*comer* 'eat'	*comerse* 'eat up'
FULL	100	100	100	100
PARTIAL	43.9	7.3	88	73

Table 3: Percentage of TRUE responses for Korean test items with the verb *tatta* 'close'.

These results suggest that, unlike Spanish optional *se*, *a/e pelita* AVCs carry a stronger inference of event completion, and that this inference varies by particular verb, reflecting the telicizing effect of *a/e pelita*. Additionally, most of the Spanish-speaking participants (38 out of 42) were from Latin American countries, which may account for the results observed for Spanish optional *se* (Martin and Arunachalam, 2022). As Martin and Arunachalam (2022) note, for LOW-APPL speakers (mostly Peninsular Spanish speakers), optional *se* constructions with consumption verbs, for example, are treated as a type of double object construction. In contrast, for LOW/HIGH-APPL speakers (primarily Latin American Spanish speakers), these constructions are not analyzed as double object constructions (MacDonald, 2017).

4 Discussion

The study addressed the following hypotheses and prediction:

247

Hypothesis 1: *a/e pelita* gives rise to a telic VP when it occurs with eventive predicates but not with stative predicates (Sohn, 1973).

Hypothesis 2: *a/e pelita* differs from Spanish optional *se* in its semantic properties and, thus, is not expected to pattern the same way as optional *se*.

Prediction 1: As a telic marker, *a/e pelita* is expected to produce a telic VP with eventive predicates but not with stative predicates.

Prediction 2: Unlike Spanish optional *se*, the strength of the event inference completion in *a/e pelita* AVCs is expected to vary depending on particular verbs.

The results of the study support our hypotheses grounded in the aspectual approach. Specifically, *a/e pelita* AVCs with eventive predicates consistently yielded telic VPs, whereas those with stative predicates did not, particularly when evaluated using standard telicity diagnostics. This seems to support the assumption that Spanish DOCs with optional *se* can be equated with Korean *a/e pelita* AVCs. However, findings suggest that the telic marker does not block aspectual coercion in which compositional aspect interacts with contextual/pragmatic factors to override the telic interpretation in Korean *a/e pelita* AVCs, which contrasts with behaviors of optional *se*. Consequently, this means that Korean *a/e pelita* differs from Spanish optional *se* in the semantic property of telicity and that Korean *a/e pelita* AVCs cannot be equated with Spanish DOCs with optional *se*.

Furthermore, in comparison to the Spanish optional *se*, the Korean auxiliary gave rise to a stronger inference of event completion, and the exhaustivity inference varied depending on the specific verb involved. The semantic contrast, in terms of telicity and atelicity, between Korean *a/e pelita* and its Spanish counterpart (optional *se*) suggests that Korean *a/e pelita* AVCs cannot be straightforwardly equated with Spanish DOCs with optional *se*. This contrast comes from differences in semantic properties: the Korean *a/e pelita* induces an event completion inference depending on the verb with which it is paired. Additionally, the Korean *a/e pelita* AVC variant is acceptable as the unmarked variant in the FULL condition with any verb, whereas the optional *se* variant is not acceptable as the unmarked variant in the FULL condition with most verbs except the consumption verb *comer* 'eat'. However, in the PARTIAL condition, the marked *a/e pelita* AVC variant was less accept-able than the unmarked variant in the PARTIAL condition. This means that *a/e pelita* AVCs carry a stronger inference of event completion; and that this inference varies with the verb, reflecting the telicizing effect of *a/e pelita*.

In second language acquisition, these semantic differences mean that L1-Korean L2-Spanish learners need to acquire the semantic conditions of Spanish DOCs with optional *se* that indicate nuanced telicity.

5 Limitation and Conclusion

This study experimentally investigated whether the existing two approaches to the Korean auxiliary *a/e pelita* make accurate predictions, and whether this auxiliary differs from its counterpart, the Spanish optional *se*. Results from Experiment I support the aspectual approach (Sohn, 1973, 2001), showing that *a/e pelita* triggers a telic VP with eventive predicates in Korean, but not with stative predicates. Results from Experiment II suggest that, unlike Spanish optional *se*, *a/e pelita* carries a stronger inference of event completion than the base construction without the auxiliary. Moreover, it marks exhaustivity—unlike *se* and the English particle *up*—though the strength of this exhaustivity inference varies depending on the specific verb.

Although this study compared results obtained from Korean speakers to those obtained for Spanish speakers in a previous study to clarify the differing semantic properties of Korean *a/e pelita* and Spanish optional *se*, Martin and Arunachalam's (2022) results included data from speakers of both Peninsular Spanish and various Latin American varieties. Therefore, it is not certain that all Latin American Spanish varieties are homogeneous. Peninsular Spanish itself also showed variability. Consequently, future study should focus on the nuanced variability in different varieties of Spanish.

References

Antonio Fábregas. 2021. SE in Spanish: Properties, structures and analyses. *An International Journal of Spanish Linguistics*, 10(2): 1-236.

Dal Oh Hong. 2015. Cognitive linguistic analysis of the meanings of auxiliary verbs: Focusing

on the composition of 'beorida,' 'chiuda' and 'naeda'. *Discourse and Cognition*, 22(3): 99-123.

Gabriel Martínez-Vera. 2022. Revisiting aspectual se in Spanish: telicity, statives, and maximization. *The Linguistic Review*, 39(1): 159-202.

Grant Armstrong and Jonathan E. MacDonald, (Eds.). 2021. *Unraveling the Complexity of SE*. Springer.

Gutiérrez, J. De la Mora. 2023. Valores pragmáticos del clítico se: la desviación de la norma y las contra-expectativas del hablante. *Signos Lingüísticos*, 19(37): 96-117.

Hagit Borer. 2005. *Structuring Sense II: The normal course of events* (Vol. 2). OUP Oxford.

Henk J. Verkuyl. 1989. Aspectual classes and aspectual composition. *Linguistics and philosophy*, 39-94.

Ho-Min Sohn. 2001. *The Korean language*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ho-Min Sohn. 1973. Coherence in Korean "Auxiliary" Verb Constructions. *Language Research*.

Hyun Kyoung Jung and Lan Kim. 2017. Auxiliary Verbs as Head-adjoined Expressives in Korean: Against the Aspectual Approach.

James Hye Suk Yoon. 2018. Korean Syntax, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jonathan E. MacDonald. 2017. Spanish aspectual se as an indirect object reflexive: The import of atelicity, bare nouns, and leísta PCC repairs. *Probus*, 29(1): 73-117.

Liina Pylkkänen. 2002. *Introducing Arguments*. Doctoral dissertation, MIT.

Martin Fabienne and Sudha Arunachalam. 2022. Optional se constructions and flavors of applicatives in Spanish. Isogloss. *Open Journal of Romance Linguistics*, 8(4): 1-34.

Monserrat Sanz. 2000. *Events and predication: A new approach to syntactic processing in English and Spanish*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing.

Monserrat Sanz and Laka Itziar. 2002. Oraciones transitivas con se: el modo de acción en la sintaxis. In Cristina Sánchez (ed.), *Las construc-ciones con se*, Madrid: Visor Libros, pp. 311-343.

Seongsook Choi. 2003. Serial verbs and the empty category. In *Proceedings of the Workshop on Multi-VerbConstructions*.

Seongha Rhee. 2008. At the borderland of lexis and grammar: grammaticalizing perfective markers in Korean: grammaticalizing perfective markers in Korean. *Discourse and Cognition*, 15(3): 29-59.

So-Young Park. 2011. A syntax-driven approach to aspects in Korean: arguing against the lexical specification approach of Cho (2007), *Morphology*, 13(2): 335-361.

Sujeong Kim, Heejeong Ko, and Hyun-Kwon Yang. 2020. Telicity and mode of merge in L2 acquisition of resultatives. *Language acquisition*, 27(2): 117-159.

Susan Strauss. 2003. Completive aspect, emotion, and the dynamic eventive: the case of Korean V a/e pelita, Japanese V-te shimau, and Spanish se, *Linguistics* 41(4): 653-679.

Susan Strauss, Jihye Lee, and Kyungja Ahn. 2006. Applying conceptual grammar to advanced-level language teaching: the case of two completive constructions in Korean. *The Modern Language Journal* 90(2): 185-209.