

A Pragmatic Study of Agentive and Time Expressions in Korean*

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Ahn, Jeong Khn. (2021). A pragmatic study of agentive and time expressions in Korean. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 29(2), 143-161. The present study undertook four surveys to examine 1) how Koreans describe incidents using agentive or non-agentive expressions, 2) how they are affected by agentive or non-agentive expressions when they blame someone for an incident, and 3) how they express time and interpret it in certain contexts. The surveys were given to two online undergraduate classes at a Korean university in 2020. Based on the responses, the study found that 1) Koreans used agentive expressions more often than non-agentive ones when they described incidents which occurred intentionally, 2) they generally used passives rather than agentive or non-agentive expressions when they described incidents which occurred unintentionally, and 3) they were more affected by agentive expressions than non-agentive ones when they called someone to recount an incident. The study also found that Koreans generally saw time proceed from the past to the future uni-directionally and horizontally on a time-line, and they expressed time in spatial terms rather than in temporal terms on the one hand and in time-moving metaphors rather than ego-moving metaphors on the other.

Key Words: ergative, agentive and non-agentive expressions in Korean, time in spatio-temporal terms for Koreans, time in metaphors for Koreans

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1. Introduction

Agentive is the expression in which agent of predicate is indicated like the following;

- (1) The man broke the vase.
- (2) He kicked the ball.
- (3) Romeo loved Juliet.

In passives of these sentences, objects moved to subject positions but agent still remains as it was like the following;

- (4) The vase was broken by the man.
- (5) The ball was kicked by him.
- (6) Juliet was loved by Romeo.

Subject in passives is the recipient or patient, not agent. Unlike (5) and (6), (4) can be expressed in non-agentive particularly when we did not know agent of breaking the vase or the agent 'the man' broke the vase by accident, not with intention, like the following;

- (7) The vase broke.

Non-agentive sentence (7) is syntactically and semantically different from passive (4) and the difference still holds true even if agent in 4) was omitted like the following;

- (8) The vase was broken.

Passives like (8) still allude to agents although they are missing in the sentence. The sentence (9) where agent is missing or omitted (on purpose) is still treated as agentive.

- (9) _____ broke the vase.

Agentive sentence (9) looks strange and not grammatical at first glance because agent is missing but it seems all right particularly for Koreans since Korean is well-known for its missing or omitting agent in utterances like the following;

- (10) A) (너) 어디 가니?
 'you' 'where' 'are going'
 "Where are you going?"
 B) (나) 학교 간다.
 'I' 'school' 'am going'
 "I am going to school."
- (11) A) (너) 뭐 하나?
 'you' 'what' 'are doing'
 "What are you doing?"
 B) (나) 공부 한다.
 'I' 'study' 'am doing'
 "I am studying."

Agent is not limited in animate like the following (12);

- (12) The wind opened the door.

Like non-agentive sentence (7), 'The vase broke.', agentive sentence (12) can be expressed in non-agentive sentence (13) below because agent 'the wind' opened the door unintentionally.

- (13) The door opened.

Sentences (12) and (13) were taken from Choe (1981) where he discussed agentive case in English. Sentences (or utterances) that have been mentioned so far on agentive and non-agentive are sufficient to proceed the present study, even though there are other studies which mostly dealt with double subjects and their agentivity in Korean (Kim, K., 2008; Yoon, 2009; Kim, J., 2012; Igor, 2015) and the problem of transitivity in other language (Amidu, 2010).

The purpose of the present study was to examine 1) how Koreans describe an incident using agentive or non-agentive, 2) how they are affected by agentive or non-agentive when they blame someone for an incident, and 3) how they perceive time, express it, and interpret it in certain contexts, since no previous studies on Korean had examined them at a pragmatic level. Here, agent or non-agentive was not directly related

to time but they both were included in the study as the present study examined how Koreans express them in certain contexts.

Previous studies on how people expressed agentive or non-agentive in real use were very few. However one study which was worth mentioning was Fausey & Boroditsky (2008) where they indicated that English speakers used agentive expressions more often than did Spanish speakers when they thought an incident occurred accidentally. Fausey & Boroditsky (2010, p. 1337) also indicated that those who were given agentive descriptions of an incident blamed agent of the incident more than those who were given non-agentive descriptions of the incident.

1.1. Surveys on Agentive in Korean

Following Boroditsky (2010), the present study undertook two similar surveys on causality and agency of an incident. One survey was designed to see how Koreans express agentive and the other was how they were influenced by agentive expressions when deciding on the causality of an incident.

1.2. Survey 1

After seeing that professor dropped the pen in the online class, some undergraduate students at a Korean university were asked to write about what they had seen online and email it to the professor. The following were some of their responses in Korean which were divided into agentive and non-agentive expressions.

1.2.1. Agentive expressions

Agentive was divided further into two categories in the study; One was agentive in which agent of dropping the pen (i.e., the professor) was expressed and the other not expressed but the syntactic structure was still agentive.

(1) Agentive in which agent was expressed like the following:

- a. 교수님께서 펜을 떨어뜨렸습니다.
(The professor dropped the pen.)
- b. 그가 펜을 떨어트렸다.
(He dropped the pen.)
- c. 교수님이 펜을 손에서 떨어트리셨습니다.

- (The professor dropped the pen from his hand.)
- d. 교수님께서 펜을 책상에 떨어뜨리셨습니다.
(The professor dropped the pen to the desk.)
- (2) Agentive in which agent was not expressed but the syntactic structure was still agentive like the following;
- a. 펜을 떨어뜨리셨습니다.
(_____ dropped the pen.)
- b. 들고 계시던 펜을 떨어뜨리셨습니다.
(_____ dropped the pen holding.)
- c. 손에 들고 있던 펜을 책상에 떨어뜨리셨습니다.
(_____ dropped the pen holding in his hand to the desk.)
- (3) Non-agentive in which agent of dropping the pen was not expressed and ‘the pen’ was used as nominative, not accusative, like the following;
- a. 펜이 떨어졌습니다.
(The pen dropped.)
- b. 교수님의 손에 있던 펜이 떨어졌다.
(The pen in the professor’s hand dropped.)
- c. 교수님이 들고 있던 펜이 책상위로 떨어졌다.
(The pen holding in the professor’s hand dropped to the desk.)

Of the total 61 responses, agentive expressions occurred in 54 responses (88.6%) and non-agentive expressions in only 7 responses (11.4%), as shown in Table 1 below;

Table 1. Agentive and non-agentive expressions

		responses	%
Agentive	indicating agent	37	60.7
	omitting agent	17	27.9
Non-agentive		7	11.4
Total		61	100.0

Of the 54 agentive expressions, 37 responses (60.7%) expressed agent ‘the professor’ explicitly as in ‘The professor dropped the pen.’ and the other 17 responses (27.9%) omitted agent but the syntactic structure still remained as agentive as in ‘_____ dropped the pen.’ And 7 non-agentive responses (11.4%) were like ‘The pen dropped.’ As shown

in Table 1, unlike English, omitting agent in agentive expressions in Korean is quite permissible and totally understandable in context for Koreans.

The findings clearly indicated that most of them (88.6%) interpreted the professor's dropping the pen as an intentional act, thus used agentive expressions more often than non-agentive ones.¹⁾ Instead, if that was an accident, they would use non-agentive expressions, 'The pen dropped.'

In summary, the study indicates that there are three possible expressions; 1) agentive expressions in which agent is explicitly expressed as in 'The professor dropped the pen.', 2) agentive expressions in which agent is omitted but still remains as agentive syntactically as in '____ dropped the pen.' and 3) non-agentive expressions as in 'The pen dropped.' Although Korean language is well known for omitting agent when it is understandable in context as in "어디 (where) 가니 (be going)?" ("Where are (you) going?" and "마쳤지 (have done)." ("(I) have done (it).", this study clearly indicates that agent is explicitly expressed in most cases when he/she was doing something intentionally.

1.3. Survey 2

In contrast, Survey 2 was designed to see how Koreans express an incident which occurred unintentionally. After seeing a picture online which depicted that "The storm broke the window into pieces," some undergraduate students at a Korean university were asked to recount what had happened in the picture and email it to the professor. The following were some examples of their responses in Korean:

- (1) 태풍으로 창문이 깨졌다.
(The window was broken by the storm.)
- (2) 태풍으로 인해 창문이 깨졌다.
(The window was broken because of the storm.)
- (3) 태풍이 와서 창문이 깨졌다.
(The window was broken when it stormed.)

1) Fausey & Boroditsky (2008) mentioned that Americans tended to express agent when they thought the incident occurred intentionally. In addition, speaker's use of agentive also showed language difference: English speakers described the incident using more agentive expressions than did Spanish speakers.

- (4) 창문이 깨졌다.
(The window broke.)

As examples above indicated, none of them used agentive expressions as in “태풍이 창문을 깼다.” (The storm broke the window.) What is more remarkable was that non-agentive expressions as in (4) “The window broke.” appeared only in a few instances; 3 (5.0%) out of the total 59 responses in the survey, which was not what we had expected since the incident “the storm” had occurred unintentionally, as shown in Table 2 below. The rest 56 responses (95.0%) were passive expressions as in (1), (2), and (3) “The window was broken (by the storm).” For Koreans it is clear that they used passives rather than non-agentives when an incident occurred unintentionally and agent of the incident was evident.

Table 2. Agentive, Non-agentive, and Passive expressions

Expression		responses	%
Agentive	The storm broke the window.	0	0.0
Non-agentive	The window broke.	3	5.0
passive	The window was broken.	56	95.0
Total			100.0

1.4. Survey 3

This survey was designed to see how their judgement on an incident was affected by agentive or non-agentive expressions in a news item. News item taken in the survey was “Fire by elementary students” which was reported in recent days. “Fire by elementary students” below was a rewritten text by the writer of the study based on a number of the news.

Fire by elementary students

The young brothers A (10) and B (8) were in a critical condition who suffered severe burn injuries while cooking instant noodles for lunch, 11:10 a.m, 14 September at a villa in Michuhol District, Incheon. When the fire broke out, the elder brother A called 119 for help and fire fighters arrived at the scene and put out the fire 11:29 a.m. The boys’

mother C (30) had been absent from the night before the accident.

The boys were in flames while cooking noodles on their own as Coronavirus 19 pandemic had forced them to attend classes online. They had been provided meals at school under the government's livelihood subsidy.

The school had run After School Child Care Service even during the classes online because of the Coronavirus 19 but the boys' mother C did not want them to take the Care although she had lived in poverty after she divorced due to domestic violence, said Incheon Education Ministry. The Michuhol District Office, Incheon, the main body of the Dream Start Program, which provided a Custom-Tailored Unified Service with children under 12 who were vulnerable, however, did not realize it until recently and the Service would not be implemented if the mother did not want it since it had not been enforced but recommended. And it was also found that the mother C, saying "We don't need that.", had rejected the help from the Michuhol District which advised her to take rice, Kimchi, and other aid supplies.

It was found in an investigation office that the mother C said she had been participating in Self Support Program in local government but the Program stopped because of the Coronavirus 19 and that she had been absent from the night before the accident to make a living, helping her friend sticking boxes on each other. She had applied for Family Living On Welfare and was designated as such since 2015 but her status had changed into Family Living On Welfare with some strings attached on 25 July last year. One who is Family Living On Welfare with some strings attached would receive Self Support Salary if he/she took part in Self Support Program. For Self Support Salary she received 1,600,000 won or so on June and July respectively from the government, but it was found that she received only 130,000 won on August.

The Michuhol police said on 16 this month that the mother C had long been under investigation for suspected child neglect and abuse and the police charged her with the violation against Child Welfare Law and sent her to a prosecutor's office last month. It was also known that a Child Protection Special Agency in Incheon had consulted her on the matter, recommending that she should improve the physical environment in the house by cleaning but things had not changed. Therefore, the Agency requested a police investigation on her with child neglect and abuse and asked for the abused child protection order to the Incheon Family Court on 12 May. The Court, however, dismissed it on 27 last month but ordered the case to be handled by a local child welfare center, believing that it would be more helpful for the family to get counseling therapy than face

forcible separation of the children from the mother. Thus it had been expected that the mother C take the therapy once a week for 6 months and the young brothers A and B for 12 months. The therapy, however, did not take place as the Coronavirus 19 spread again. In addition, the older boy A diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) seemed more vulnerable to the fire. After all, the young brothers A and B had been in the blind spots.

-> (To A group) They caused the fire and the mother C was not at the site.

-> (To B group) The fire broke out and the mother C was not at the site.

In the study, this same news item was given to two undergraduate groups at a Korean university, A and B, except in the last sentence, as indicated in the text: The A group was given agentive “이들은 불을 냈고” (They caused the fire) and the B group non-agentive “불은 났고” (The fire broke out) in order to examine how their judgment on the fire was influenced by the difference between agentive and non-agentive.

The A group in which agentive was given in the last sentence recounted that the mother was solely responsible for the fire (12 responses, 26.7%), partly (10 responses, 22.2%), the Michuhol District Office (6 responses, 13.3%), the society (6 responses, 13.3%), the children (5 responses, 11.1%), the institutions (court and consultation agency) (3 responses, 6.7%), the father (2 responses, 4.4%), and the virus (1 response, 2.2%) out of the total 45 responses, as shown in Table 3 below.

The B group in which non-agentive was given in the last sentence recounted that the mother was partly responsible for the fire (12 responses, 26.7%), solely (9 responses, 20.0%), the society (8 responses, 17.8%), the Michuhol District Office (5 responses, 11.1%), the institutions (court and consultation agency) (5 responses, 13.0%), the father (3 responses, 6.7%), the children (1 responses, 2.2%), the virus (1 response, 2.2%), and the school (1 response, 2.2%) out of the total 45 responses, as shown in Table 3 below.

As shown in Table 3, for both A and B groups the mother was (solely and partly) responsible for the fire most (48.9% for the A group and 46.7% for the B group), the District Office, the society, and the institutions all together the next most (33.3% for the A group and 40.0% for the B group), and the virus (2.2% for both groups) and the school least (2.2% for the B group only). The responsibility of the children for the fire was shown not great for both groups (11.1% for the A group and 2.2% for the B group) but the group difference was not negligible, indicating that agentive expressions would affect

Table 3. Who is responsible for the fire?

Responsibility	The A group (agentive) responses	%	The B group (non-agentive) responses	%
The mother solely	12	26.7	9	20.0
The mother partly	10	22.2	12	26.7
The Michuhol District Office	6	13.3	5	11.1
The society	6	13.3	8	17.8
The institutions	3	6.7	5	11.1
The father	2	4.4	3	6.7
The children	5	11.1	1	2.2
The virus	1	2.2	1	2.2
The school			1	2.2
Total	45	100.0	45	100.0

their judgment on whom to blame the fire.²⁾

In conclusion, 1) Koreans used agentive more often than non-agentive when they recounted an incident which occurred intentionally, 2) They generally used passive rather than non-agentive when they recounted an incident which occurred unintentionally, and 3) They tended to be more affected by agentive expressions than non-agentive ones when they judged on the causality of an incident.

2. Time Expressions

Agent is defined in the thematic relation of the cause to an event, not a syntactic part such as subject in a sentence. Therefore, sentences mentioned earlier as in “The storm broke the window.” or “The window was broken by the storm.” had the agent ‘the storm’ regardless of its syntactic position in the sentence. As Dowty (1991) proposed, the notion of agency involved volition, sentient, and cause of a change of state. In this regard, ‘the storm’ is an agent. However, such a notion of agent including Dowty’s sometimes

2) The effect of agentive descriptions of the incident was also found in other studies such as Fausey & Boroditsky (2010, p. 1337) where they indicated that those who read the agentive descriptions of the incident blamed the agent of the incident more than those who read the non-agentive descriptions of the incident.

fails for verbs expressing relationships in time. Take the following sentences (Taken from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agent-\(grammar\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agent-(grammar)));

- (1) April precedes May.
- (2) May follows April.

Here, we have to specify what is agent for each verb, 'precede' or 'follow'.

The present study also examined how Koreans expressed time and how they interpreted it in certain contexts although they were not directly related to agentive and non-agentive expressions in Korean but they were certainly one of the characteristic ways of expressing time in Korean.

Time is generally expressed in spatio-temporal terms (Boroditsky, 2000, 2001). Thus we would say "The past is behind us." in spatial terms and "Winter is later than Autumn." in temporal terms. It is also expressed in metaphors (Clark, 1973; Fillmore, 1971; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; McTaggart, 1908; Traugott, 1978). Thus we would say "Christmas is coming up" in time-moving metaphors and "We are coming up on Christmas." in ego-moving metaphors. Before examining how Koreans express time, let us know how they perceive time.

2.1. How Koreans Perceive Time?

What is time? The answer of it may never be easy but we have to abide by time in modern society. Without an agreed concept of time, we would have difficulty in living, travelling, making promises, and doing so many other things. Although the absolute necessity of the agreed concept of time, time has been perceived and used differently from society to society and from culture to culture. In modern world, time is believed to proceed from the past to the present to the future uni-directionally on one dimensional plane, without clearly defining what time is. Some (e.g., Albert Einstein) say that time is a relative thing to gravity, thus the heavier the gravity the faster time goes. Some say that time is an illusion and some others even say that there is no time at all. Whatever the definition of time may be, however, we think of it in our own way and live with it every minute or second. Table 4. below was the responses on the survey which asked some undergraduate students at a Korean university what time is.

Table 4. What is time?

Time	responses	%
The flow of change or event	20	32.8
The flow from the past to the future	13	21.3
The flow relative to the situations	18	29.5
The division of day equally distributed on the time-line	7	11.5
Not the flow but only the present exists	3	4.9
Total	61	100.0

As shown in Table 4, of the total 61 responses most of them (51 responses, 83.6%) thought of time as the flow that something proceeded from the past to the future, which is the belief most people hold in modern society. Interestingly, a third of them (18 responses, 29.5%), however, mentioned that time flew relatively to the situations, so that it flew fast when they were with good people but it flew slow when they did something they did not want to. Obviously that is not an Einstein's relativity of time.

2.2. In What Direction Koreans Think of Time to Move?

The majority of them thought that time flew from the past to the present to the future uni-directionally. Then, as Boroditsky (2000, p. 4) questioned, in what direction does time move? In order to see how Koreans think of time to move, some undergraduate students at a Korean university were asked to indicate where October was on the following Fig. 1;

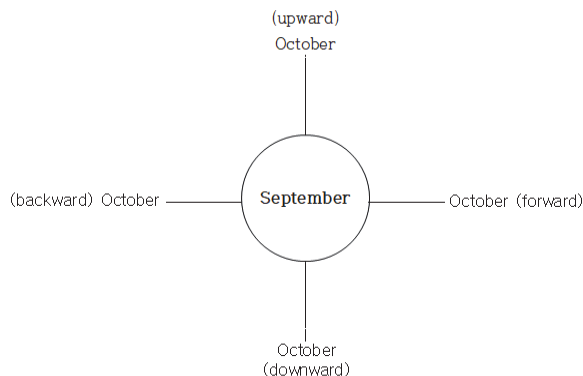


Fig. 1. Where is October?

As shown in Fig. 1, September located at the center and October was scattered in the four directions; upward, downward, forward, and backward.

In the four directions most of the students indicated that October was in the forward direction (62 responses, 84.9%) and only a few indicated it was in the downward direction (11 responses, 15.1%) out of the total 73 responses. None indicated that it was in the backward or upward direction.

Of 62 responses that indicated October was in the forward direction 41 responses (66.1%) followed the order of writing or numbers in Korean: Koreans write from left to right and locate the lower numbers from left to the higher numbers to right horizontally. Therefore October was right to September for them. The other 21 responses (33.9%) followed the order of time in which the future was before them on a horizontal time line. 11 (15.1%) responses that indicated October was in the downward direction followed the order of calendar used often in Korea in which October located below September. From this perspective October moves downward from September.

In short, for most of Koreans the future was in the forward direction on a horizontal time line and for some others it was in the downward direction.³⁾

2.3. How Koreans Express Time?

2.3.1. Time in spatio-temporal terms

Time is expressed in spatial terms so that we would say “The past is behind us.” or “The future is before us.” It is also expressed in temporal terms so that we would say “Morning is earlier than noon.” or “Winter is later than Autumn.” These two different terms indicating time are used interchangeably, so that “Morning is before noon.” is the same as “Morning is earlier than noon.” Although they are used alternatively, which one is pragmatically used more for Koreans? To find it, the following Survey 4 was given to some undergraduate students at a Korean university;

Survey 4. What’s the relation of September to October?

September is _____ October.

3) This is in line with the findings of Boroditsky (2000, p. 23) in which “English speakers use predominantly horizontal terms to talk about time, while Mandarin speakers use both horizontal and vertical terms.”

The study found that most of them used the spatial terms (74 responses, 92.5%) rather than the temporal terms (6 responses, 7.5%) expressing the sentence such as “September is before October.”, as shown in Table 5 below;

Table. 5. September is _____ October.

Time expressions		responses	%	%
The spatial terms	before	55	68.8	92.5
	next to	14	17.5	
	ahead of	5	6.3	
	prior to	2	2.5	
The temporal terms	the previous month of	2	2.5	7.5
	earlier than	1	1.2	
	the former month of	1	1.2	
Total		80	100.0	100.0

As shown in Table 5, the spatial terms such as ‘before’, ‘next to’, and ‘ahead of’ were largely used (74 responses, 92.5%) when they indicated the relation of September to October. Among them the spatial term ‘before’ was mostly used (55 responses, 68.8%) out of the total 80 responses. However, the temporal terms such as ‘earlier than’ and ‘prior to’ were rarely used (6 responses, 7.5%). In short, most of Koreans used the spatial terms in great numbers than the temporal terms in expressing time.

2.3.2. Time in metaphors

Time is expressed in metaphors, too. Metaphors used in expressing time are ego-moving metaphor and time-moving metaphor (Clark, 1973; Fillmore, 1971; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; McTaggart, 1908; Traugott, 1978). The difference of the two metaphors was well stated in Boroditsky (2000) as follows;

... the ego-moving metaphor, in which the ‘ego’ or the observer’s context progresses along the time-line toward the future as in ‘We are coming up on Christmas’. ... the time-moving metaphor, in which a time-line is conceived as a river or a conveyor belt on which events are moving from the future to the past as in ‘Christmas is coming up’. These two metaphors lead to different assignments of front and back

to a time-line (Boroditsky, 2000, p. 5).

At first glance, “Christmas is coming up” is more natural for Koreans than “We are coming up on Christmas.” since rarely have they used the latter. Instead, they have been quite familiar with the following expressions in time;

- a. 봄이 오면 산에 들에 진달래 피네. (가곡 ‘봄이 오면’)

When spring comes, azaleas are blooming on the mountains and fields.
(From a popular Korean song, ‘When spring comes’)
- b. 첫눈 오면 만나자.
When first snow falls, let’s meet.
- c. 기말 시험이 일주일 앞에 왔다.
The final exam is coming up in a week.
- d. 크리스마스 때 뭐 할래?
When Christmas is coming, what will you do?

As we see, these are expressions where time-moving metaphor is used. Unlike English speakers, rarely have Koreans used ego-moving metaphor as in “We are coming up on Christmas.” Take the following expressions in Korean to examine time in metaphors more.

- e. 내년이면 나는 20살이 된다.
I will be 20 years old next year.
I will be 20 years old in the coming year.

In English, next year is the coming year in which time-moving metaphor is used because it is coming toward us, not we are coming toward it. What about in Korean? Are we coming toward the next year? or is the next year coming toward us? For most of Koreans, the next year is coming toward them.

On some occasions, these two time metaphors would produce ambiguous situations. Take the following expression which was taken from Boroditsky (2000, p. 7) to see its ambiguity.

- f. “Next Wednesday’s meeting moved forward two days.” To which day the meeting had been rescheduled? The meeting was on _____day.

This expression is ambiguous depending on what metaphor we use in interpreting 'moved forward' in time. Boroditsky (2000) explained that

If the above expression is interpreted using the ego-moving schema, then forward is in the direction of motion of the observer, and the meeting should now fall on a Friday. In the time-moving interpretation, however, forward is in the direction of motion of time, and the meeting should now be on a Monday (Boroditsky, 2000, p. 8).

In the present study, the same expression was given to some undergraduate students at a Korean university to see how they interpreted 'moved forward' in time. Their interpretation was shown in Table 6 below;

Table 6. How Koreans interpret 'moved forward' in "Next Wednesday's meeting moved forward two days."

metaphors	'moved forward'	responses	%
ego-moving	on Friday	14	19.2
time-moving	on Monday	59	80.8
Total		73	100.0

Of the total 73 responses, 59 responses (80.8%) said that the meeting was on Monday and the other 14 (19.2%) said that the meeting was on Friday, as shown in Table 6. The result clearly indicates that the majority of them interpreted 'moved forward' as it moved in the direction of the motion of time on a horizontal time-line using time-moving metaphor.

In summary, the study found that 1) most of them (51 responses, 83.6%) thought of time as the flow that proceeds from the past to the future which is in line with the belief we generally hold in modern world, 2) most of them (62 responses, 84.9%) indicated that the future was in the forward direction on a horizontal time line and for only a few (11 responses, 15.1%) it was in the downward direction, 3) most of them (74 responses, 92.5%) used the spatial terms such as 'before' rather than the temporal terms such as 'earlier than' in indicating the relation of September to October, and 4) most of them (59 students, 80.8%) interpreted 'moved forward' in "Next Wednesday's meeting moved forward two days." as it moved in the direction of the motion of time, using the

time-moving metaphor.

3. Conclusion

Since no previous studies on Korean had investigated agentive and time expressions at a pragmatic level, the present study examined how Koreans used agentive and non-agentive expressions when they recounted an incident and how they were influenced by agentive and non-agentive expressions when they put responsibility for an incident. The study found that 1) they used agentive expressions more often than non-agentive ones when they recounted an incident which occurred intentionally, 2) they mostly used passives rather than agentives and non-agentives when they recounted an incident which occurred unintentionally, and 3) they were more affected by agentive expressions than non-agentive ones when they called someone to account for an incident, reflecting our inclination to indicate who is responsible for an incident.

The study also examined how Koreans perceived time, how they expressed it, and how they interpreted it in certain contexts although they were not directly related to agentive and non-agentive expressions in Korean but they were certainly one of the characteristic ways of expressing time in Korean. In this regard, the study found that most of Koreans generally saw time proceed from the past to the future uni-directionally on a horizontal time-line and expressed it in spatial terms rather than in temporal terms. The study also found that the majority of them interpreted 'moved forward' in the utterance, "Next Wednesday's meeting moved forward two days." as it moved in the direction of the motion of time, using time-moving metaphor, thus the rescheduled meeting was on a Monday. The finding is consistent with the fact that Koreans have expressed time in time-moving metaphor as shown in a well-known popular Korean song, 'When spring comes (toward us), azaleas are blooming on the mountains and fields.'

The study suggests that further pragmatic studies on agentive and non-agentive expressions in Korean be needed in a variety of context to generalize the findings that Koreans expressed agentives when an incident occurred intentionally. As for the storm case in the study, Koreans expressed it in passives not in non-agentives, which was not totally expected since the incident 'the storm' occurred unintentionally. Is this a specific Korean phenomenon? Will English speakers express it in other ways as in agentive, "The storm broke the window." or in non-agentive, "The window broke."? For this,

cross-linguistic studies are needed. As for time, Koreans expressed it in almost the same ways as did English speakers in the United States and other countries.

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