

From fear to grammar: The case of avoidives

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Abstract

This paper addresses avoidives, the grammatical means of precautioning the hearer against probable and undesirable events, from crosslinguistic and grammaticalization perspectives. An analysis of avoidives in English and Korean shows that the two languages do not share much commonality with regard to lexical sources but that their source constructions have undergone changes characteristic of grammaticalization over time. We argue that the development of an avoidive into an apprehensive is among the cross-linguistically common channels, through insubordination, whereby the main clause of a biclausal expression becomes elided and the subordinate clause becomes the main clause, carrying the pragmatically inferred meaning from ellipsis, e.g., warning, as part of the meaning of the construction. The development from biclausal to monoclausal structure, however, is not deterministic, as evidence by the Korean scenario in the reversed direction shows. We also argue that negation and temporal are common source concepts in the grammaticalization of avoidives, and that some of the Korean lexical sources have not yet been observed across languages. © 2023 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

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1. INTRODUCTION

It has been observed that a large number of languages have grammatical means of signaling fear, largely known as apprehensionals (APPRs), with two fundamental concepts, i.e., high probability and undesirability (Vuillermet 2018; Vuillermet and Schultze-Berndt 2018; Kuteva, Aarts et al. 2019; Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019). Accordingly, the term “apprehensional” has been used in specialized literature (see Kuteva 2009, 2010 on the notion of semantically elaborate grammatical categories), and it encodes an undesirable verb situation that is to be avoided. The undesirable situation is portrayed as highly probable but not realized, and the canonical apprehensional structure consists of two parts: one

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depicting the negative, apprehension-causing situation, and another outlining the preemptive – or precautionary – action. In less canonical extensions of this structure, the precautionary action may be elided or simply implied by context (Evans 1995: 264, Lichtenberk 1995: 293).

Apprehensionals were first identified in a number of Australian, Austronesian and Amazonian languages. Dixon (1980) established the apprehensional in Yidiny (ISO 639-3 yii/yidi1250) as an inflexion which specifically marks the verb of a subordinate clause and denotes an undesirable event that is to be avoided; the main clause involves steps to be taken to effect the avoidance.¹ There is clear causality involved: the verb situation in the main clause causes the avoidance of the undesirable verb situation in the subordinate clause. The apprehensional in Yidiny is expressed by two suffixes combined, i.e., *-l* (which is one of the non-past verb suffixes in Yidiny, see Dixon 1980: 380) followed by the suffix *-ji*:

(1)	Yidiny				
	<i>Yijju</i>	<i>waguuja</i>	<i>garba-ŋ</i>	<i>gudaga-ŋgu</i>	<i>bajaa-l-ji</i>
	this.ABS	man.ABS	hide-PRES	dog-ERG	bite-APPR
	'The man is hiding, lest the dog bite him (i.e., for fear that the dog might otherwise bite him).'				
	(Dixon 1980: 380)				

Austin (1981: 224) is also one of the earliest publications where this structure was identified as a grammatical distinction; in his description of Diyari (ISO 639-3 dif/dier1241), it is referred to as the *lest*-clause (see also Kuteva et al. 2017). The same term is also used by Dench (1988) (cf. the *lest*-construction in Dench 1988: 108) in his description of Marthunira (ISO 639-3 vma/mart1255) as well as in Smith's (2015) description of Papapana (ISO 639-3 ppn/papa1265).

Other labels used for the same grammatical category include terms such as the “adverse consequence clause”, the “negative purpose clause”, the “evitative” and the “precautioning” (for a discussion of the terminology relevant to apprehensionals, cf. Vuillermet 2018 among others). Notice that there exists a term formally similar to the term apprehensional, namely the “apprehensive” (APRV), which has often caused terminological confusion in specialized literature. Whereas apprehensionals typically involve biclausal constructions that combine a precautionary clause and an apprehension-causing clause (see [1] above), the apprehensives are typically expressed by monoclausal structures, as demonstrated in the following example from Kayardild (ISO 639-3 gyd/kaya1319) (note that the author uses the label APPR (apprehensive), we label it as APRV (apprehensive) to avoid notational confusion; see below for terminology):

(2)	Kayardild		
	<i>wakurr-inja</i>	<i>daman-da</i>	<i>dara-a-nyarr</i>
	dugong.hide-MOBL	tooth-NOM	break-M-APRV
	'(Careful, you) might crack your teeth on the dugong hide.'		
	(Evans 1995: 264, modified)		

In spite of the fact that in many languages the formal expressions of the apprehensional and the apprehensive are the same, here, we follow Angelo and Schultze-Berndt (2016) (see also Vuillermet 2018; Vuillermet and Schultze-Berndt 2018) and treat apprehensives as distinct from apprehensionals for the following reasons. First, morphosyntactically, the apprehensive specifically marks main clauses, whereas the canonical apprehensional structure marks subordinate clauses. Second, semantic-pragmatically, the apprehensive is embedded in the discourse-pragmatic setting; it specifically encodes the speaker–hearer interaction.² The apprehensional, on the other hand, is about the subject's attitude to the propositional content of a subordinate clause (whereby it is also possible for the subject to coincide with the speaker in certain contexts). Thus, the apprehensive typically encodes the speaker's fear, and as consequence, apprehensives only occur in direct speech. By contrast, the fear expressed in the apprehensional is not (obligatorily) that of the speaker but primarily that of the subject of the precautionary clause. Third, there are languages such as Ese'eja (ISO 693-3 ese/ese1248; Vuillermet 2018) where the apprehensive and the apprehensional (the “precautioning” in Vuillermet's termi-

¹ ISO 639-3 language codes are taken from Ethnologue (Eberhard et al. 2022; <https://www.ethnologue.com>) and Glottolog codes from Glottolog (Glottolog. n.d; <https://www.glottolog.org/glottolog/language>).

² Evans' definition of the apprehensive in Kayardild (Evans 1995: 264) is explicit about this feature of the apprehensive *-NHarra*: “This expresses the undesirability of an event, and the need to avert it. There is usually an implied injunction that the hearer be careful.”

nology) coexist as formally distinct grammatical morphemes, thus manifesting a clear ‘division of labour’ with respect to all three of the above criteria.

On the basis of meta-analysis of the more recent publications on the grammatical means expressing fear/apprehension in natural languages, in the present study, we will be using a classification that is more fine-grained than a classification based only on the distinction between the canonical apprehensional and the apprehensive as described above. More precisely, here, the domain of apprehensionals will be referred to as: (i) the whole functional domain involving fear/apprehension, and (ii) involving high probability of an undesirable verb situation that is to be avoided.

One may well argue that the term “apprehensionals” is actually misleading for the following reason. Whereas the historically erstwhile contexts which gave rise to the structures under discussion appear to have involved fear/apprehension, these structures have come, over time, to refer to undesirable situations that are not necessarily due to fear/apprehension (see 3.1.1 below). In other words, it is hardly justifiable to speak of a “grammar-of-fear” when trying to give the domain of all the above structures a coherent shape. At this stage of research, however, we will stick to the already established usage of the term apprehensional in order to avoid terminological confusion all the more so that this terminological issue is not crucial with respect to the study of what we propose to term the “avoidive” (AVD) here (see below).

Within the domain of apprehensionals, we will distinguish between linguistic expressions that have the following functions, illustrated with examples in English, in which a number of lexical and grammatical forms or constructions are used to mark diverse notions of apprehensionals:³

(3) Subcategories of apprehensionals

a. Apprehensive

- (i) *Watch out!, Look out!*
- (ii) *Beware (lest the dogs bite you)!*
- (iii) *A war might break out.*
- (iv) *Don't move. Never come closer.*

b. Precautioning

(b-1) Avoidive

- (i) *I work in order not to starve.*
- (ii) *I study so as not to fail.*
- (iii) *He ran fast lest he (should) be eaten by the tiger.*
- (iv) *He left early for fear that he would be caught in traffic.*

(b-2) In-case

- (i) *Take an umbrella in case it rains.*
- (ii) *Use a mosquito repellant lest mosquitos bite you.*

c. Timitive (for a feared entity)

I don't go into the bushes for fear of snakes.

d. Fear function (for a complementizer of a fear-involving verb's complement, cf. [Lichtenberk 1995](#), [Vuillermet 2017](#), [Dąbkowski and Anderbois, forthcoming](#))

- (i) *I fear that a tiger attack me.*
 - (ii) *I'm worried that he might be killed in action.*
-

Given the definition of the apprehensionals above, we regard the ‘Precautioning, Avoidive’ function in (3b-1) to be the prototypical exponent of this domain. Notice that [Vuillermet \(2018\)](#) uses the term “avertive” for what we refer to as the avoidive here. We propose the term “avoidive” in order to prevent a terminological confusion resulting from the fact that the term “avertive” has been established as a label for a cross-linguistically identifiable grammatical category that involves the past as well as counterfactuality as two of its semantic components. More precisely, the avertive has been described as a semantically elaborate grammatical category with the meaning of an action narrowly averted in the past,

³ Notice that [Dixon \(1980\)](#) uses the term “aversive case” for this grammatical distinction which is part of nominal morphology.

i.e., “was on the verge of V-ing but didn’t Verb” (Kuteva 2000, 2001; Heine and Kuteva 2002b; Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019; Kuteva, Aarts et al. 2019 and 2020). The avoidive, on the other hand, involves a verb situation which is highly probable and does not involve the past as a definitional criterion.

Avoidives are realized in various forms with semantic-functional characteristics across languages but are, in essence, marked by a coordinator or subordinator which links two clauses, one expressing a precaution taken (“precautionary situation” Lichtenberk 1995; “preemptive situation” Evans 1995) and the other expressing an expected undesirable/feared situation (“apprehension-causing situation” Lichtenberk 1995).

It is the avoidive function that will be our primary concern in the present paper. We will first take a closer look at this function in two genetically and geographically remote languages, English (ISO 639-3 eng/stan1293) and Korean (ISO 639-3 kor/kore1280) in section 2. In section 3, grammaticalization scenarios are reviewed with reference to the widely accepted grammaticalization parameters and the grammaticalization patterns of the two languages are compared. In section 4, we will expand the scope by looking at the grammaticalization of apprehensives from avoidives, and identify two major source concepts of avoidives, i.e., negation and temporal. Section 5 summarizes the findings and concludes the paper.

2. AVOIDIVES IN ENGLISH AND KOREAN

2.1. Avoidives in English

English has a few avoidives, e.g., *lest*, *for fear of*, *for fear that*, *in order not to*, *so as not to*. Their primary function is to introduce a clause that expresses something to be prevented or guarded against. Their primary sources and usages are exemplified in the following:

(4) *less*: *lest* (should/would), i.e., (scalar) negation

*He ran fast **lest** he (should) miss the train.*

(5) *order*: *in order not to*, i.e., negation + *order*

*I finished homework **in order not to** be reprimanded.*

(6) *so*: *so as not to*, i.e., negation + manner

*I study **so as not to** fail.*

(7) *fear*, worry, be afraid: *for fear (that)*, *for fear of*, *be afraid that/lest*, etc., i.e., *fear*-denoting expressions

a. *They wouldn’t let their cat outside **for fear (that)** it would get run over. (Cambridge Dictionary)*

b. *I didn’t want to move **for fear of** waking her up. (Cambridge Dictionary)*

c. *They **were afraid** to complain about the noise **lest** they annoyed the neighbors. (Cambridge Dictionary)*

As exemplified in (4) through (7), English avoidives have four major categories of sources, i.e., *less* (scalar negation), *order* (negation + *order*), *so* (negation + manner), and *fear*. The English avoidive connective *lest*, in its appearance, is opaque with respect to its lexical source. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED, online edition) indicates that its origin is traceable to the Old English phrases *h̄y l̄es ñe*, *h̄e l̄es ñe*, *h̄e l̄este*. The phrasal expression *h̄y l̄es ñe* (lit. that.INSTR-less-that, i.e., “so that less that” [López-Couso 2007; Yae 2014; Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019: 292]) can be translated as ‘thereby less’ and the form (and its variants) changed to Middle English *h̄i les e*, *last(e)*, *leste*, *les*, *lesse*, *leest*, *lyst*, etc. (see OED, *lest*, conj. for more detail). The oldest attestation is found in the Biblical text dated c.1000, listed in OED.

-
- (8) *Ne synga ñu ñe-læs ñe on sumon ñingon wyr̥s getide.*
 ‘Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.’ (KJV)
 (c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: John* (Corpus Cambr.) 5: 14)
-

Notice that there are other expressions for avoiding an undesirable situation but not necessarily one that involves the element of fear/apprehension, e.g., *in order not to*, *so as not to*. The avoidive *in order not to* is not found in the head entry in OED, and the first attestation in the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA) dates from 1820. Similarly, the avoidive *so as not to* is not listed in OED, and the earliest data found in COHA dates from 1812. The two attestations are shown in (9) and (10):

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- (9) *The brushes were most numerous and perplexing in the neighbourhood of the river, a course we were obliged to keep, **in order not to** part company with the boats.*
 (1820 *Journals of Two Expeditions into Interior New South Wales*; COHA)
-

-
- (10) *Molly talks very low and earnest to Eliza, but **so as not to** be understood.*
 (1812 *The Miser*, COHA)
-

Finally, there exists a group of linguistic expressions - “transparently” involving the *fear* morpheme – that have moved away from their historical use with nominal phrases following them (i.e., *for fear of* +NP) to a use where they are followed by a clausal complement (i.e., *for fear of/to/that* +clausal complement).

In the entry of *for fear*, the first attestations with clausal complement are found in the 17th c. data in OED citations, as shown in (11):

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- | | | |
|------|----|--|
| (11) | a. | <i>To depart out of those quarters. . . for feare to bee murdered.</i>
(1600P. Holland tr. Livy Rom. Hist. [1609] xlix. Epit. 1238; OED) |
| | b. | <i>Must we not Wish, for fear of wishing III?</i>
(1693 J. Dryden tr. Juvenal in J. Dryden et al. tr. Juvenal Satires x. 212; OED) |
-

Therefore, in such cases, we can speak of incipient grammaticalization (see also 3.2 for frequency of use).

2.2. Avoidives in Korean

Korean is a typologically distinct, genealogically unrelated, and geographically distant language from English. Therefore, a brief description of the language is in order. The typological characteristics that are relevant to the discussion are the morpho-syntactic features. Korean is an agglutinating, head-final, SOV language, strongly favoring suffixes and postpositions. As a pro-drop language, it allows, and even prefers, omission of arguments and postpositional particles. For its head-final nature, all polymorphemic connectives (such as avoidives), by definition, involve a connective morpheme in the final slot of the construction. In rare occasions, however, a part of the construction including the connective may be eroded or elided, leaving a non-connective as the final element, which, then triggers the functional reinterpretation of the remaining construction as a connective. In orthography, Korean practices the convention of inter-lexical spacing, i.e., a word with its morphological trappings is separated from another with a white space. In this paper, for visual conspicuity, periphrastic polylexemic forms are transcribed with a period between words.

Korean has a large number of apprehensionals, which have grammaticalized to a varying extent. For instance, [Rhee and Kuteva \(forthcoming\)](#) list thirteen grammatical forms and constructions that are used as apprehensionals in Korean. The majority, ten out of thirteen apprehensionals, are used as avoidives. The forms and usages of avoidives are exemplified in the following examples, recited with minor modification from [Rhee and Kuteva \(forthcoming\)](#):

- (12) *mosha-*: *-ci.moshakey*, *-ci.moshatolok* (<*ci-mos-ha-key/tolok* [NOMZ-cannot-do-MOD/PURP])
- a. *sanyangkwwun-i* *cumsayng-ul* *cap-nuntey* *ku* *cumsayng*
 hunter-NOM animal-ACC capture-while that animal
po-ci.moshakey *mom-ul* *swumky-e*
 see-AVD body-ACC hide-and
 'When a hunter is capturing an animal, (he) hides himself lest it can see (him).'
- (1903 *Sinhakwelpo* 3)
- b. *cikum* *makwi-ka* *kyelcinha-ko* [...] *hananim-skuyse*
 now Satan-NOM strengthen-and God-NOM:HON
helakha-si-n *tey* *ka-ci.moshatolok* *ha-ni*
 allow-HON-ADN place go-AVD do-as
 'Now Satan has formed an encampment and works lest (we) reach the place God has allowed us to enter, so ...'
- (1903 *Sinhakwelpo* 3)
-
- (13) *anh-*: *-ci.anhkey*, *-ci.anhtolok* (<*ci-an-ha-key/tolok* [NOMZ-not-do-MOD/PURP])
- a. (The Jews to Prophet Samuel)
wuli-lulwihaya *cwuk-ci.anihakey* *ne-uy* *cwu* *hananim-skuy*
 we-for die-AVD you-GEN lord God-to
kuytoha-ap-rose
 pray-HON-OPT
 '[Since we have done wrong] please pray for us to your Lord God lest we die (for our sins).'
- (1903 *Sinhakwelpo*)
- b. *satto-key* *mianh-ci.anihatolok* *cal* *yeccwu-ecwu-si-ki-lul*
 magistrate-to be.sorry-AVD well talk-BEN-HON-NOMZ-ACC

pala-o
 hope-END
 'I hope you speak to the magistrate well (explaining my delay) lest he feels unhappy about me.'
- (orally transmitted from the mid-18th c., recorded 1916, *Paypicangcen*)
-
- (14) *-lka-*: *-lkka*, *-lkka.mwusewe*, *-lkka.pwa*, *-lkka.siphe* (<*-l-kka* [FUT-Q]; *-l-kka-mwusep/po/siph-e* [FUT-Q-fear/see/think-CONN])
- a. *cachis* *pal-ul* *hestiti-lkka* *cosimsuley*
 by.chance foot-ACC misstep-AVD cautiously
cingkemtali-lul *kenne-n-ta*
 stepping.stone-ACC cross-PRES-DEC
 '(He) is crossing the stream by the stepping stones cautiously lest he would misstep.'
- (Modern Korean, constructed)
- b. [The magistrate who appeared without notice protested why there were no toast songs in the drinking party, but]
kisayng-tul-un *chaykmangha-lka.mwusewesye* *mos*
 entertainer-PL-TOP scold-AVD cannot
ha-te-n *cha-i-la*
 do-RETR-ADN point-be-DEC
 '(in fact) the entertainers had not (sung) lest the magistrate might scold (them for partying)'
- (1896 *Toklipsinmwun*)

c.	<i>ai-ka</i> child-NOM <i>kacyew-ass-e-yo</i> bring-PST-END-POL 'I brought a thick jacket lest my child feel cold.' (Modern Korean, constructed)	<i>chwuw-ulkka.pwa</i> be.cold-AVD	<i>twukkew-un</i> thick-ADN	<i>cakheys-ul</i> jacket-ACC
d.	<i>ku-lul</i> he-ACC <i>phiha-yss-ta</i> avoid-PST-DEC '(I) avoided (going to the cafeteria) during the lunch hour lest I come across him.' (Lee and Lee 2010: 506)	<i>manna-key</i> encounter-MOD	<i>toy-lkka.siphe</i> become-AVD	<i>cemsimsikan-ul</i> lunch.hour-ACC

(15)	<i>-lla: -lla (<-l-la [FUT-DEC])</i> [In preparation of funeral] <i>pang</i> <i>tewu-lla</i> <i>pwul</i> <i>stay-cimal-ko</i> <i>ko-y</i> <i>tuleka-lla</i> room be.hot-AVD fire make-PROH-and cat-NOM enter-AVD <i>kwistol</i> <i>mak-ela</i> flue.opening block-IMP 'Don't make fire (for floor-heating) lest the room become too hot (for the corpse) and block the flue opening lest a cat enter (through it [which is ominous according to superstitions].)' (ca. 1870 <i>Pakhungpoka</i>)				
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(16)	<i>-lseyla: -lseyla (<-l-sa-i-la [FUT-occasion-be-DEC])</i> [Attracted by the spring breeze I stroll to the stream, only to find countless fallen flowers in the water] <i>cye</i> <i>kos-a</i> <i>senwen-ul</i> <i>nam</i> <i>al-lseyla</i> <i>stenaka-cimal-wala</i> that flower-VOC fairy.land-ACC other know-AVD flow.and.go-PROH-IMP 'Oh, you, flowers, don't flow down (the stream) lest others would find out about the fairyland (upstream).' (ca. 1767 <i>Haytongkayo Cwussipon</i>)				
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One notable peculiarity is that there are sentence-enders such as interrogative (in (14a)) and declarative (in (15) and (16)) that function as avoidives. This is unexpected considering that avoidives are connectives in biclausal constructions. This is a result of structural reanalysis and functional reinterpretation of two juxtaposed sentences (see 4.1 for more).

3. GRAMMATICALIZATION

3.1. Grammaticalization parameters

The development of avoidives constitutes an instance of grammaticalization, i.e., change from lexical to grammatical forms. In grammaticalization theory, diverse grammaticalization mechanisms have been proposed to date, e.g., Lehmann (2015 [1982]), Hopper (1991), Bybee et al. (1994), Kuteva, Heine et al. (2019), among others. Following Kuteva, Heine et al. (2019), we view the development with respect to desemanticization, extension, decategorialization, and erosion.

3.1.1. Desemanticization and extension

English avoidives involve the lexical category items such as adverbs (*lés* and *so*) and nouns (*order* and *fear*), e.g., *lés* 'less' (as part of the construction *ñý lés ñe* 'so that less that, whereby less'), *so* (of *so as not to*), *order* (of *in order not to*) and *fear* (of *for fear to*, *for fear of*, *for fear that*). All of these have arguably undergone desemanticization, whereby the lexical meanings are bleached, though at varying degrees. In other words, avoidives do not make reference to the reduction of amount of degree (*lés* 'less'); a status, rank in hierarchy, a mode of progression, etc. (*order*); manner (*so*); or an emotion of pain from perceived danger (*fear*), since the avoidive is more of a concern for a possibility of undesirable events to be prevented or guarded against.⁴

The summary in (17) lists the above lexical forms, their lexical core meanings and their meanings in the avoidive structures, whereby it becomes clear that these forms have undergone semantic bleaching to varying degrees:

(17)	a.	<i>lés</i>	'less'	smaller dimension, absence	prevention
	b.	<i>order</i>	'rank, mode of progression'	hierarchy, sequence	purpose
	c.	<i>so</i>	'in that style'	manner suggested	intention
	d.	<i>fear</i>	'fearful emotion'	emotional pain, terror	concern

What is readily observable in the above summary is that the first three lexical sources have undergone a much higher degree of desemanticization in their grammaticalization development than the fourth one, which involves the lexeme *fear*. In other words, in English, we are dealing with three relatively easily identifiable grammaticalization paths – see (17a), (17b) and (17c) above – and one very incipient grammaticalization path (see [17d]).

At this point, we need to draw attention, however, to an issue of central importance to students of grammaticalization: the process of grammaticalization involves, as a rule, lexical units as part of particular constructions. Hence, it is necessary to regard the lexical sources of the avoidives in English as part of the concrete structures in which they have started on the way to grammaticalization. Accordingly, (18) below summarizes our observations on the individual developments of the source structures of the avoidives in English:

(18)	Source structures of the avoidives in English			
	a.	<i>ñý lés ñe</i>	'so that less that'	smaller dimension/scalar NEG
	b.	<i>order + not</i>	'rank, mode of progression' + NEG	hierarchy/sequence + NEG
	c.	<i>so + not</i>	'in that style' + NEG	manner suggested + NEG
	d.	<i>for fear of/that</i>	'fearful emotion'	emotional pain, terror

The source lexemes of Korean avoidives are *po-* 'see', *mwusep-* 'be fearful', *siph-* 'think', *ha-* 'do', and *sa* 'occasion'. These have all gone through semantic bleaching as well. For instance, *po-* 'see' in *-lkka.pwa* does not refer to visual perception; *mwusep-* 'be fearful', similar to the English *fear* or *afraid*, does not refer to the genuine feeling of fear; etc. This can be seen in (19) below which lists the lexical forms that are involved in the grammaticalization of the avoidives in Korean, their lexical core meanings and their meanings in the avoidive structures.

(19)	a.	<i>po-</i>	'see'	visual perception	experience, be in
	b.	<i>mwusep-</i>	'be fearful'	feeling of fear	be concerned
	c.	<i>siph-</i>	'think'	cogitation	possibility
	d.	<i>ha-</i>	'do'	action, locution	be
	e.	<i>sa</i>	'time/opportunity'	temporal event	be in

It is to be noted that the semantic contents of some of these lexical forms vary considerably. For instance, *po-* is highly polysemous (see below) and *siph-* barely carries a lexical function (see below). The verb *ha-* is a light verb denoting 'be/do/say', which primarily functions as an operator converting forms of diverse category into those that can function as a declensional word, i.e., a verb or adjective. When it is recruited in the formation of an avoidive, it combines with the neg-

⁴ OED also notes that in modern use of *for fear*, the sense of the noun (*fear*) is "often weakened" and thus it rather means "in order to avoid or prevent".

ative *mos* ‘cannot’ and *an* ‘not’ (as in ‘so that × cannot/do not’). The noun *sa* is defunct in Modern Korean, and its vestige survives in only a few fossilized forms, as in the avoidive *-sey/a*, the adverb and discourse marker *kul/sey* ‘well, yes’, etc.

It is crucial to consider not only the individual lexemes in isolation but the particular structural patterns in which these lexemes occur (Bybee et al. 1994: 9, Hopper and Traugott 2003[1993]: 1). The summary in (20) below presents the individual constructions in which the lexical sources of the avoidives in Korean have started on the way of grammaticalization:

(20)	Source structures of the avoidives in Korean (for details, cf. Rhee and Kuteva, forthcoming)
a.	<i>po-</i> ‘see’ in -lkkapwa < <i>-l-kka-po-a</i> [FUT-Q-see-CONN/END] ‘(I) see, (saying) “Will x...?”’/‘as (I) see, (saying) “Will x...?”’
b.	<i>mwusep-</i> ‘be fearful’ in -lkkamwusewe < <i>-l-kka-mwusep-e</i> [FUT-Q-be.fearful-CONN/END] ‘(I) am fearful, (saying) “Will x...?”’/‘as (I) am fearful, (saying) “Will x...?”’
c.	<i>siph-</i> ‘think’ in -lkkasiphe < <i>-l-kka-siph-e</i> [FUT-Q-think-CONN/END] ‘(I) think, (saying) “Will x...?”’/‘as (I) think, (saying) “Will x...?”’
d.	<i>ha-</i> ‘do’ in -cimoshakey and -cimoshatolok < <i>-ci-mos-ha-key</i> [NOMZ-cannot-do-MOD] and < <i>-ci-mos-ha-tolok</i> [NOMZ-cannot-do-PURP] ‘in the mode in which X does not’ and ‘in order that X cannot’
e.	<i>sa</i> ‘time/opportunity’ in -lsey/a < <i>-l-sa-i-la</i> [FUT-opportunity-be-DEC] ‘this occasion is that X will occur!’

As shown in the source constructions, there are a number of grammatical morphemes in addition to the lexemes indicated in (19). Notable among these are *-a/e*, which functions as a connective or a sentence ender, the interrogative sentence ender *-kka*, and the clausal connectives *-tolok* (Purposive) and *-key* (Mode). The purpose and mode markers *-tolok* and *-key* have a number of functions, including one resembling the English infinitive *to* as in *in order to* (Kim 2011). Arguably, not only the lexical forms but also the grammatical forms have undergone semantic-functional bleaching, as is evident in the fact, for example, that the interrogative sentence ender *-kka* in avoidive does not signal a speech act of questioning but its extended notion, i.e., an indeterminate nature of a feared event.

Semantic bleaching is often coupled with extension, which refers to the use of a form in new contexts. As the constructions developed into avoidives, the constructions could then be used, in addition to their older contexts of use, in scenarios when an undesirable situation is emphasized and a preemptive action is suggested.

Discussions of the lexical origin of a grammatical form involve a thorny issue inherent in identifying the lexical meaning of a grammaticalizing form. The problem arises from two sources, i.e., continuous semantic change of the core lexeme and semantic change through interaction of the components that constitute the source construction.⁵

In the first case, lexical forms continuously change in meaning, often the earlier meanings lingering at varying degrees of prominence. For this non-discrete, fluid nature of semantic extension, it is often difficult to pinpoint out of multiple related meanings the particular meaning that served as the basis of grammatical meaning (cf. Bybee et al. 1994: 10–11). For instance, the Korean visual perception verb *po-* ‘see’ is among the most polysemous and heterosemous words, with 28 lexical semantic designations across such conceptual domains as perception, attention, cognition, supervision, experience, acquisition, evaluation, and interaction, and, in addition, as many as 21 grammatical meanings as a postposition or auxiliary, including apprehensional/avoidive in the latter, etc. (Rhee 2019). Similarly, the semantics of the verb *siph-* ‘think’ has considerably bleached, i.e., its original cogitation meaning is nearly non-existent and the verb indicates desiderative or denotes inclination to think in a particular way (see Kim 2008, 2010, Rhee 2021b).

⁵ We are thankful to the anonymous reviewers for bringing up this important issue. This merits an in-depth discussion, but in the interest of space we will limit our exposition to the necessary minimum.

Due to multiplicity of available meaning at the time of grammaticalization, identifying a particular meaning as the departure point of grammaticalization is not always straightforward.

In the second case, grammaticalization nearly invariably involves a construction rather than a single lexeme, especially so in agglutinating and inflecting languages (cf. “source construction” Bybee et al. 1994: 9; “a highly specific context” Hopper and Traugott 2003[1993]: 1). When the source constructions grammaticalize, there is an intricate interaction between the participating formants, both lexical and grammatical.⁶ This has been shown with reference to the English periphrastic immediate future, *be going to*, by Hopper and Traugott (2003[1993]: 1–3, 51, 89–90), who note the contributions of directionality (*go*), purposive (*to*), progressive (*be -ing*), among others, in the emergence of the *go*-future. For these reasons, the identified ‘ultimate’ source meaning of a core lexical item in a grammatical construction cannot be regarded as either the direct or the sole contributor of grammaticalization (see Rhee 2021a: 272–273).⁷ Such complexities notwithstanding, grammaticalization lexica (Heine et al. 1993, Heine and Kuteva 2002a, 2002b, Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019) and a large body of grammaticalization studies list grammatical targets by their lexical sources, which should be taken with informed consideration of these inherent methodological difficulties.

3.1.2. Decategorialization and erosion

The lexemes recruited in the source constructions of avoidives have, in general, gone through decategorialization, i.e., loss in morphosyntactic properties characteristic of lexical or less grammaticalized forms. For instance, nouns (e.g., English *order*, *fear*) have the categorial properties of being able to be modified by an adjective; to occur with an article; and to be pluralized, if applicable; etc. Verbs/adjectives (e.g., Kor. *anha-* ‘do not do’, *mosha-* ‘cannot do’, *mwusep-* ‘be fearful’, *po-* ‘see’, *siph-* ‘think’, etc.) can no longer occur with a modifying adverb, a TAM marker, etc., as exemplified in (21) and (22).

(21)	a.	<i>in order not to</i>	<i>*in orders not to</i>	<i>*in an order not to</i>	<i>*in strict order not to</i>
	b.	<i>for fear that</i>	<i>*for fears that</i>	<i>*for a fear that</i>	<i>*in intense fear that</i>
(22)	a.	<i>-lkka.mwusewe</i>	<i>*-lkka maywu mwusewe (maywu ‘very (much)’)</i> <i>*-lkka.mwusew-ess-e (-ess- PST)</i>		
	b.	<i>-lkka.pwa</i>	<i>*-lkka caseyhi pwa (caseyhi ‘thoroughly’)</i> <i>*-lkka.po-ko.iss-e (-ko.iss- PROG)</i>		

Erosion, also known as phonetic reduction, is a common concomitant of the other processes, especially desemanticization and decategorialization. Among the avoidives, among the most prominent one that displays erosion is the English avoidive *lest*, whose lexical origin is opaque. According to the OED as well as the detailed description of the history of *lest* in English offered in López-Couso (2007), *lest* is traced back to the OE phrase *ñý læs ñe* ‘thereby less’ in which *ñý* is instrumental of the demonstrative and relative pronoun; *læs* is the adjective with the meaning of ‘less’; and the last formant *ñe* is a relative particle. OED also states that in Middle English, the first word of the phrase (*ñý*) was dropped, and the remaining *les ñe* became *les te* in accordance with the general rule that ‘*ñ*’ after ‘*s*’ changed into ‘*t*’. The overall change from the periphrastic *ñý læs ñe* to the monolexemic *lest* is an excellent example of the loss of phonetic substance in the course of morphosyntactic “coalescence” (Haspelmath 2011; “compacting” Langacker 1977, Hopper and Traugott 2003[1993]: 140).

⁶ An anonymous reviewer thus points out that the avoidives *in order not to* and *so that may not* cannot be analysed as developments solely from the source lexemes *order* and *so*, respectively, a position this paper wholeheartedly supports. It is true that they are the ‘most’ lexical forms in the respective formant, but the avoidive function is a product of all participating forms, both lexical and grammatical.

⁷ An anonymous reviewer suggests that by the time the constructions involving *po-* ‘see’ and *siph-* ‘think’, they must have already undergone the semantic change into a ‘possibility’ marker. Even though it cannot be chronologically ascertained, the scenarios are quite plausible. Another reviewer suggests that the ‘see’ and ‘think’ lexemes are in fact a part of the auxiliaries signalling ‘possibility’. This is also a good possibility, considering that avoidive and possibility are among the auxiliary functions of the grammatical forms of these verbs, as suggested in Kim (2010) and Rhee (2019).

Some Korean avoidives also exhibit erosion, especially *-lla* and *-seyla*. The avoidive *-lla* developed from the future-denoting morpheme *-li-* (traceable to *-li-*) and the sentence-ender/connective for declarative (with exclamative flavor) *-la* (cf. Lee 1994: 74; 2015; Lee 1997; Jang 2002: 194; Rhee and Koo 2020), thus suggesting the change [*-lila* > *-lla*].⁸ The change associated with *-seyla* is more subtle and opaque; Rhee and Kuteva (forthcoming) hypothesize its source as *-l-sa-i-la* [PROS.ADN-occasion-COP-END] (cf. Doh [2018: 216] suggests *-l-sa-i-eyla* but remains indeterminate), thus suggesting the change from quadrisyllabic *-lsaila* to trisyllabic *-seyla*.

Viewed holistically, however, the overall change from the source constructions to the present avoidives do not show much reduction except for those briefly described above. This suggests that many (or most) of them are young grams in English and Korean and that the old grams are being replaced by the newer ones. For instance, the older grams in Korean, such as *-lla* and *-seyla*, have somewhat archaic flavor and, likewise, the use of the oldest English avoidive *lest* seems to be on the decline and carries an archaic flavor (cf. Dąbkowski and Anderbois, forthcoming; see, however, Section 3.2 below).

3.2. English and Korean compared

A comparative analysis of the avoidives in English and Korean brings forth a number of aspects that merit theoretical discussion. First, the two languages have grammatical means of encoding both fear and the intention to prevent the occurrence of a feared situation, i.e., avoidive markers. This means that even though the avoidive is highly specific as compared to other more general functions of grammatical forms (e.g., markers of plurality, tense, aspect, syntactic role, etc.), the two typologically and genealogically different languages have developed such a highly subjective and affective grammatical function which belongs to the group of the so-called semantically elaborate grammatical categories (Kuteva 2009). This fact is in support of the hypothesis that there exist cross-linguistically identifiable commonalities in the cognitive-affective experience of language users, independent of culture-specific constructs.

Also interesting to note is that the two languages have multiple forms that are of differential historical depths ('layering' Hopper 1991). Some forms are of long origin: the English *lest* is first attested in OE in the forms of *l̥e-l̥æs l̥e* (c.1000) and *l̥e l̥æste* (1100), and the Korean *-seyla* is attested in the poem *Cengupsa* dated from the Baekje Dynasty times, i.e., around the mid-8th century. The Korean avoidive *-llka* is first attested in the 15th c. data. Because it is essentially a future interrogative form, not all occurrences of *-llka* denote the avoidive or, more generally, apprehensional function. It is, however, often accompanied by the psych-verbs, and the construction yielded a possibility meaning, which further proceeded to avoidive marking. Unlike these older forms, however, there are much younger forms in the more recent layers, both in English and Korean. This state of affairs evidences that the form-function isomorphism is not a norm in language, but renewal of multiple forms that constantly enter a functional domain is what is common instead.

Another issue is that in the functional domain of avoidives, the member forms are in functional competition and thus show varying strengths through a differential degree of 'specialization' (Hopper 1991). For instance, Rhee and Kuteva (forthcoming) show that in MoK, *-llka.pwa* and *-ci.anhkey* are highly productive, i.e., very frequently used⁹ (see [20a] above), and *-llka*, *-ci.moshakey*, and *-ci.anhtolok* are moderately productive (see [20d] above) whereas *-seyla*, and *-llka.mwusewe* are unproductive (see [20b] and [20e] above). It is interesting to note that a form's productivity in contemporary Korean is not coextensive with its historical depth. For instance, *-seyl*, with the longest developmental history is in fact very unproductive, and *-llkapwa* with the shortest developmental history is the most productive form of all. In English, the oldest gram *lest*, dating from OE, is still productive (e.g., COCA returns 5,104 hits) despite some authors stating it as 'archaic' (e.g., Dąbkowski and Anderbois, forthcoming).¹⁰ For fear that/of (3,611 hits) and so as not to (2,397 hits) are moderately productive as well, but *in order not to* (428 hits) is the least productive. The productivity of the avoidive use of *afraid* cannot be ascertained from the number of hits from the corpus search because the constructions are still not (yet) entrenched.

In summary, we can say the following about the development of avoidives in English and Korean: English has at least five grammatical forms and constructions developed – or developing – from structures containing such lexical units

⁸ It is well-known that the MK *-li-* had the conjecture-marking function, closely related to possibility and caution, depending on the context (see Ko 1981: 83-84; Lee 1997: 32-35; Choi 2015: 81; Doh 2018: 216).

⁹ In this study, we use the terms "productivity" and "frequency of use" interchangeably.

¹⁰ Note that a quick search for the use of *lest* in social media indicates that in Modern English, *lest* is most frequently used not as part of an avoidive structure but as part of the phraseological unit *lest we forget*, with thanks to Janine Rehbehn (p.c.). Example (Janine Rehbehn): Twitter @WizePenguin (17.05.2022), Federal MP Peter Dutton covers up \$39 million fraud and theft at the Australian Border Force [https://kangaroocourt.ofaustralia.com/2020/10/24/federal-mp-peter-dutton-covers-up-39-million-fraud-and-theft-at-the-australian-border-force/LEST WE FORGET! -](https://kangaroocourt.ofaustralia.com/2020/10/24/federal-mp-peter-dutton-covers-up-39-million-fraud-and-theft-at-the-australian-border-force/LEST%20WE%20FORGET!%20-).

as *less*, *order*, *so*, *fear*, and *afraid*. Korean has even more numerous forms, numbering about ten, which developed from structures involving the lexical sources *mosha*- ‘cannot do’, *anh*- ‘do not do’, *mwusep*- ‘be fearful’, *po*- ‘see’, *siph*- ‘think’, and *sa* ‘time/opportunity’. When it comes to the source constructions containing the above lexemes in English and Korean, we have to point out that there are other important grammatical forms involved; English examples include the purposive-infinitive *to*, conjunctions *as* and *for*, and a complementizer *that*; Korean examples include the negative nominalizer *-ci*, the mode-marking converb *-key*, a purposive converb *-tolok*, the future-tense marker *-l-*, the interrogative ender *-kka*, a declarative ender *-la*, and a clausal-connective *-e*. In terms of the constructional sources, we have not been able to find a lot of similarity except with respect to (i) the notion of negation (negative polarity/scalar negation; *less*, *mos*, *anh*), (ii) the purposive (*order*, purposive-*to*, mode converb *-key*, purposive converb *-tolok*), (iii) the connective (complementizer *that*, conjunctions *as* and *for*, converbs *-key* and *-tolok*, clausal connective *-e*), and (iv) the lexeme “fear.” In terms of conceptual motivation, negative purpose and fear are among the most prominent in the two languages (see also [Sections 4.1 and 4.2](#) below).¹¹

From a grammaticalization perspective, the two languages show commonalities in a number of aspects. The overall contemporary state of the functional domain of avoidives and their historical developmental patterns show that the forms in the paradigm represent multiple layers. Considering varying degrees of use frequency of respective avoidives in Modern English and Modern Korean, they can be said to have differential degrees of specialization. It is notable that the degrees of specialization are not coextensive with the historical depth, i.e., the older forms are not necessarily more frequently used than the young ones. It has also been shown that grammaticalization parameters, i.e., desemanticization, extension, decategorialization, and erosion, are largely well-observed in both languages. If these criteria are used to identify the degree of grammaticalization, in both languages the avoidives involving ‘fear’ lexemes have advanced to a lesser extent as compared with others.

4. TO AND FROM AVOIDIVE ACROSS LANGUAGES

In the previous sections, we have identified the source structures for avoidives in two particular languages, English and Korean, and how they grammaticalized in history. We now broaden our view by looking at crosslinguistic states of affairs focusing on the further developments from avoidives and the commonly attested paths leading to the emergence of avoidives. Due to the expanded scope, however, descriptions are necessarily brief.

4.1. From avoidive to apprehensive

In this section – on the basis of data from typologically different languages – we will argue that the avoidive itself can often become the source structure for grammaticalization of another subcategory of apprehensionals, namely the apprehensive (APRV), a subcategory of apprehensional (APPR), often used for giving warnings (thus, also termed as ‘admonitive’, ‘avertive’, ‘objurgative’, ‘warning clitic’, etc., [Vuillermet 2018: 259](#)). If the apprehensive specializes in issuing warnings, in particular, the label admonitive (ADM) may also be used.

More precisely, in what follows, we will show that in some languages, the avoidive serves as the source structure from which the subordinating connective encoding the avoidive – along with the subordinate clause – come to be used as independent main clauses. The use of formally subordinate clauses as independent main clauses has been shown to be a cross-linguistically persistent phenomenon, identified by [Evans \(2007\)](#) and termed by him “insubordination”.¹²

One of the cross-linguistic developments that [Evans \(2007\)](#) uses to make a case for insubordination is precisely the development of the avoidive (the “lest”-clause) into an apprehensive. Thus, [Evans \(2007: 392-393\)](#) identifies insubordination as the underlying mechanism in the rise of the apprehensive in Kayardild. In Kayardild, the “lest”-form *-NHarr* (note the variants), originally used in subordinate clauses, as in (23a), has an extended, insubordinated use for giving a

¹¹ As an anonymous reviewer points out, the combination of the negative (i.e., English *not* and Korean *-ci.mos-ha-* and *-ci.anh-*) and the purpose (i.e., English *so that* and *in order to*, and Korean *-tolok* and *-key*) accounts for the conceptual motivation behind a number of avoidives. Indeed, this is a common pattern observed by [Lichtenberk \(1995: 300\)](#), [Vuillermet \(2012, 2018\)](#), [Thompson et al. \(2007\)](#), among others.

¹² In such cases the situation of discourse contains all the information the Hearer needs in order to interpret the Speaker’s intention. It has been noted that insubordination is responsible for the emergence of a large number of grammatical forms in Korean ([Sohn 2003](#), [Kim 2018](#), [Rhee 2020](#)).

warning, as in (23b), taken from [Evans \(2007\)](#), with the original gloss APPR, relabeled as AVD and APRV for consistency following our typology.¹³

(23)	a.	Kayardild				
		<i>walmathi</i>	<i>karn-da</i>	<i>rajurri-n,</i>	<i>ba-yii-nyarra</i>	<i>yarbuth-iiwa-nharr!</i>
		on.top	grass-NOM	walk-NEG.IMP	bite-PASS-AVD	snake-V.I.ALL-AVD
		'Don't walk across the grass, in case you get bitten by a snake.'				
		(Evans 2007: 392, modified)				
	b.	Kayardild				
		<i>nyinka</i>	<i>ba-yii-nyarra</i>		<i>kulkiji-yiwa-nharr</i>	
		you.NOM	bite-PASS-APRV		shark-V.I.ALL-APRV	
		'(Watch out/Do something,) you might get bitten by a shark.'				
		(Evans 2007: 392, modified)				

[Evans \(2007: 393\)](#) points out that there exists comparative evidence that the subordinate use historically precedes the insubordinated one. Notice that in Kayardild, the form *-NHarra* "derives from a verb complementized by the 'having' case, *-marra*. The extension to independent use then probably occurs through omission of the imperative, whose content is usually obvious if one knows the undesirable consequence, and which is in any case a face-threatening act" ([Evans 2007: 393](#)).

Likewise, Diyari, an Australian language described by [Austin \(1981\)](#), also presents an example of insubordination whereby the avoidive (a subordinated "lest"-clause) comes to be used as an apprehensive/admonitive in an independent main clause. As documented by [Austin \(1981: 225-229\)](#), there exists a suffix, *-yathi*, in Diyari which can be used in a subordinate clause to express an undesirable verb situation to be avoided by carrying out the main clause action. That same suffix can be attached to the verb in an independent, main clause expressing admonition, thus apprehensive in our terminology, as shown in (24) taken from [Austin \(1981\)](#) (note that the original gloss LEST is relabeled as AVD and APRV, here):¹⁴

(24)	a.	Diyari			
		<i>pulanha</i>	<i>mingka-nhi</i>	<i>kuthi-ipa-yi,</i>	<i>thanali</i>
		3DL.ACC	hole-LOC	hide-TR-PRES	3PL.ACC
		<i>nhayi-yathi</i>	<i>parpa-li</i>		
		see-AVD	some-ERG		
		'(He) hides them in a hole lest some of the others see (them).'			
		(Austin 1981: 230, modified)			
	b.	Diyari			
		<i>nhulu-ka</i>	<i>kinthala-li</i>	<i>yinanha</i>	
		3SG(NONFEM):ERG-	dog-ERG	2SG.ACC	
		TOKEN			
		<i>matha-yathi</i>			
		bite-APRV			
		'This dog might bite you.'			
		(Austin 1981: 233, modified)			

¹³ Notice that [Evans \(2007\)](#) uniformly uses the term "apprehensive" (APPR) for both the subordinated and the insubordinated use in (a) and (b), respectively. In our classificatory terminology of apprehensionals, as sketched in (3) above, (23a) is an example of avoidive and (23b) is of apprehensive.

¹⁴ Notice that [Austin \(1981\)](#) uses – uniformly – the term "lest"-clause (LEST) for both the subordinated and the insubordinated use in (a) and (b), respectively. The gloss 'TOKEN' indicates that the speaker is referring to a subset of possible referents established by the context ([Austin 1981: 67](#)).

Bulgarian (ISO 639-3 bul/bulg1262) offers another example of the development of the avoidive into an apprehensive (and admonitive), with insubordination being the underlying mechanism (Kuteva et al., forthcominga, forthcomingb). It is possible to identify no fewer than five structures encoding the avoidive in Bulgarian as listed in (25) (see Rhee and Kuteva, forthcoming):

(25)	a.	да не	(da ne)	'lest', 'in order not to'/'so as not to'
	b.	за да не	(za da ne)	'lest', 'in order not to'/'so as not to'
	c.	(за) да не би (да)	((za) da ne bi (da))	'lest'
	d.	така че да не	(taka če da ne)	'in order not to'/'so as not to'
	e.	от страх, че	(ot strax, če)	'for fear that/of'

Of these, the structure in (e) has a lexical rather than grammatical status, i.e., it is indicative of a very incipient stage of grammaticalization. The avoidive structures in (a) through (d), however, can be regarded as grammaticalized linguistic expressions (for details cf. Rhee and Kuteva, forthcoming). It is these structures that concern us here. A closer look at them reveals that the structures in (a) and (b) are shorter versions – that is, they can be morphologically derived from – the avoidive in (c); in other words, (a) and (b) can be readily traced back – historically – to (c). The structure in (d) can be related to (a), but here, we have an addition of two more components *taka če* [lit. thus-that]. The amalgamation of *taka če* and the structure in (a) is very reminiscent of the so-called “hermit crab” processes where an existing form gets buttressed/emphasized by adding further phonological substance, a process that results in a kind of renewal by adding some additional “frills” (for details about “hermit crab” processes, cf. Heath 1998; Kuteva 2012).

Notice that the four avoidive structures in (a) through (d) above – along with the subordinate clause that they introduce – have been traditionally referred to as exponents of the negative purpose clause structure in Bulgarian but, consistent with our terminology here, we will be referring to them as avoidives. The following constructed examples illustrate this:

- (26) a. Bulgarian
Avoidive: *da ne* + Verb [CONJ.PTCL-NEG-verb]:
Roditelite *í* *šte napravjat* *vsičko* *vážmožno*,
parents.DEF her will do.3PL.PRES all possible
da.ne *se* *otkaže* *ot* *sástezanieto*.
AVD REFL back.out.3SG. from competition.DEF
PRES
'Her parents will do their best, lest she back out of the competition.'
- b. Bulgarian
Avoidive: *za da ne* + Verb [for-CONJ.PTCL-NEG-verb]:
Roditelite *í* *šte napravjat* *vsičko* *vážmožno*,
parents.DEF her will do.3PL.PRES all possible
za.da.ne *se* *otkaže* *ot* *sástezanieto*.
AVD REFL back.out.3SG. from competition.DEF
PRES
'Her parents will do their best, lest she back out of the competition.'
- c. Bulgarian
Avoidive: *za da ne bi da* + Verb [for-CONJ.PTCL-NEG-be.COND-CONJ.PTCL-verb]:
Roditelite *í* *šte napravjat* *vsičko* *vážmožno*,
parents.DEF her will do.3PL.PRES all possible
za.da.ne.bi.da *se* *otkaže* *ot* *sástezanieto*.

AVD	REFL back.out.3SG. PRES	from competition.DEF
-----	----------------------------	----------------------

'Her parents will do their best, lest she back out of the competition.'

d. Bulgarian

Avoidive: *taka će da ne* + Verb [thus-that-CONJ.PTCL-NEG-verb]:

<i>Roditelite</i> parents.DEF taka.će.da.ne AVD	<i>í</i> her <i>se</i> REFL	<i>šte napravjat</i> will do.3PL.PRES <i>otkaže</i> back.out.3SG. PRES	<i>vsičko</i> all <i>ot</i> from	<i>vážmožno,</i> possible <i>sástezanieto.</i> competition.DEF
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'Her parents will do their best, lest she back out of the competition.'

All of the above avoidive structures are well-established as subordinate clause linkages that are used at the beginning of the so-called negative purpose clauses in Bulgarian, whereby the shortest structure, *da ne* [CONJ.PTCL-NEG] in (a), is the most colloquial and the most frequently used one, whereas the longest structure, *za da ne bi da* [for-CONJ.PTCL-NEG-be.COND-CONJ.PTCL] as well as the "amalgamated" structure *taka će da ne* [thus-that-CONJ.PTCL-NEG] sound somewhat formal and are used much more rarely. What is of crucial importance for this discussion is the following fact: it is only the shortest – and most frequently used – avoidive structure in (25a), *da ne* [CONJ.PTCL-NEG], that has given rise to the apprehensive in Bulgarian.

As proposed in Kuteva et al. (forthc.), the most plausible way for this to have happened involves insubordination. Thus, Kuteva et al. (forthc.) hypothesize that in one particular discourse-sensitive type of context involving an undesirable verb situation and the speaker's fear of its potential realization, what happens is that the subordinate connective *da ne* [CONJ.PTCL-NEG] and the subordinate clause get coopted for use as an apprehensive main clause. In other words, once cooptation has taken place (for details on the notion of 'cooptation' as a discourse-pragmatic strategy, cf. Heine et al. 2016, 2017), the erstwhile avoidive (a subordinate, negative purpose clause structure) takes the form of an independent main clause whose function is to relate the contents of the clause to some of the components of the situation of discourse; in this particular case, it is the speaker–hearer interaction as well as the speaker's attitude (fear, apprehension) to the verb situation that is denoted by the verb. This is shown in the following constructed example:

(27)	Bulgarian [Context: a mom turning to her husband looking at their two-year-old son] Da.ne APRV 'Watch out/be careful, he might fall down!'	<i>padne!</i> fall.down.3SG.PRES
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In case the addressee is either the subject or the object of the verb – which in Bulgarian will be marked by the 2nd person inflection on the verb or by the 2nd person in the accusative, respectively – then the apprehensive comes to function as an admonitive or a threat/warning:

(28)	Bulgarian [Context: a mom turning to her 2-year old son] Da.ne APRV 'I warn you: you may/might fall down!'	<i>padneš!</i> fall.down.2SG.PRES
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Something similar seems to also happen in languages both genetically and geographically unrelated to Bulgarian. Take, for example, Kubokota (Oceanic, Austronesian; Solomon Islands; ISO 639-3 jko/kubo1242). Here, too, the clause linkage encoding the potential adverse consequence in a complex, subordinate sentence with an avoidive clause ("adverse consequence clause" in Chambers' [2009] terminology) gets coopted for use in one particular, discourse-sensitive context where the addressee is involved either as the subject or the object (direct or indirect) of the adverse consequence

clause. In the following example, in Kubokota, the avoidive is marked with the particle *keta* ('lest' in Chambers' [2009] interlinear glosses; note that the original label LEST is relabeled here as avoidive and apprehensive), and the subject of the clause is identical with the addressee:¹⁵

(29)	Kubokota					
	<i>Qa</i>	<i>koini</i>	<i>raro</i>	<i>gu</i>	<i>beto</i>	<i>muna</i>
	1SG.R	just	cook.in.pot	LIM	then	2.FUT
	<i>gani-gani</i>	keta	<i>mu</i>	<i>burana</i>		
	REDUP-eat	AVD	2.IRR	hungry		
	'I've just cooked and you will eat, lest you be hungry.'					
	(Chambers 2009: 145, modified)					

In this example, the speaker details the evasive action she has taken to avoid the undesirable situation, or the adverse consequences of the clause introduced by *keta*. Due to frequent use of this particular structure highlighting the addressee as the subject of the avoidive clause, this structure has become a specialized expression of threats and warnings, i.e., an admonitive (apprehensive). Crucially, the use of *keta* is not restricted to dependent clauses; on the contrary, Chambers (2009: 145) shows that it frequently occurs clause-initially:

(30)	Kubokota					
	Keta	<i>mu</i>	<i>lotu</i>	<i>ko</i>	<i>mu</i>	<i>paleka</i>
	APRV	2.IRR	fall	so	2.IRR	wound
	'Be careful not to fall and hurt yourself.'					
	(Chambers 2009: 145, modified)					

In other words, we observe that in Kubokota, as with Bulgarian, that insubordination has led to the development of the avoidive into an apprehensive/admonitive structure.

Likewise, in Hup (Vaupés-Japurá; Columbia, Brazil; ISO 639-3, *jup/hupd1244*), subordinate avoidive clauses (adverse consequence clauses) – as in (31b) below – can function as apprehensive, independent clauses, as in (31a) part of the example below. In this example, the threat is expressed by the uninflected verb stem, and we follow Epps (2008: 630) in treating this as a zero-morpheme marker for the apprehensive (note that the original label APPR is relabeled as APRV and AVD):¹⁶

(31)	Hup					
a.	<i>ʔám-ʔn</i>	<i>tih</i>	<i>g'əç!</i>			
	2SG-OBJ	3SG	bite.APRV			
	'(Watch out,) he'll bite you!'					
b.	<i>náw = yiʔ</i>	<i>diʔ</i>	<i>mĩʔ</i>	<i>bĩʔ,</i>	<i>ʔám</i>	
	good = TEL	VDIM	UNDER	work.IMP	2SG	
	hup = h₂ 'k!					
	REFL = sawing.motion.AVD					
	'Go a bit more carefully on that last part; you'll cut yourself!'					
	(Epps 2008: 631, modified)					

¹⁵ The avoidive (adverse consequence clause) is usually marked as Prospective Irrealis (IRR) indicated through the form of the subject pronoun of the clause. This form, however, is different from the Future Irrealis markers, which stand for possible or probable events (Chambers 2009: 101-4).

¹⁶ Notice that Epps (2007: 631) uses – uniformly – the term apprehensive in both (a) and (b). As indicated by the modified label, (a) is an instance of apprehensive and (b) of avoidive, according to our classification.

It is very tempting to assume that threats/warnings – and apprehensives, for that matter – derive from imperatives, for the following reasons: (i) semantic closeness between command (imperative) and implied command (apprehensive) and (ii) morphosyntactically identical structures (e.g., simple verb stem constructions) (see [Epps 2008: 630-631](#) for details).

There exist, however, serious arguments against such an analysis. Thus, there are languages where apprehensives/admonitives have a form morphosyntactically different from the imperative. In Bulgarian, for instance, the structure *da ne* + main verb (in 2nd person SG/PL) used for the apprehensive/admonitive (see (28) above, repeated here as (32)), clearly differs from the marking of the imperative mood, i.e., the verb stem with one of the suffixes *-i/-j* (SG) or *-ete/-ajte* (PL) attached to it:

(32)	Bulgarian (Apprehensive)
	[Context: a mom turning to her 2-year old son]
	Da.ne <i>padneš!</i>
	APRV fall.down.2SG.PRES
	'I warn you: you may/might fall down!'

(33)	Bulgarian (Imperative)
	Ne <i>se</i> <i>otkazvaj</i> <i>ot</i> <i>săstezanieto!</i>
	NEG REFL back.out.2SG.IMP from competition.DEF
	'Don't back out of the competition!'

Here, the former example – pronounced with the appropriate prosodic countour – illustrates an admonitive, and the latter represents a negative imperative.

The most convincing argument against an analysis collapsing the apprehensive/admonitive and the negative imperative structures into one comes, however, from examples where both the negative imperative and the apprehensive/admonitive occur within the same sentence. This can be seen in the following example from Ese'eja where the negative imperative ("prohibitive" in Vuillermet's [2018: 270] terminology) is marked by the sentence-initial form *a'a* plus the verb suffix *-ji*, whereas the apprehensive marker is the suffix *-chana* (note the notational change from APPR to APRV):

(34)	Ese'eja			
	A'a	<i>Marina</i>	<i>wowi-ji,</i>	<i>poki-chana!</i>
;	PROH	Marine	tell- PROH	go- APRV
	'Don't tell Marine, (beware of that) she may come along!' {elicited}			
	(Vuillermet, 2018: 270, modified)			

This example neatly illustrates how the two concepts contrast. Vuillermet (p.c.) describes this contrast as such: "For the apprehensive verb form *pokichana* 'watch out she may come along', a consultant made up the following context: he would plan to go to the city together with his addressee, while at the same time he would fear that a third person may come along (APPREHENSIVE), in case she hears about the plan. He thus recommends his addressee not to tell her (PROHIBITIVE)." For a detailed discussion of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic commonalities and dissimilarities between the negative imperative (prohibitive) and the apprehensive, see [Vuillermet's \(2018\)](#) full text.

From the above, it should be clear that the avoidive can give rise to an apprehensive/admonitive in languages that are both genetically and geographically remote. It should be clear that the status of the apprehensive/admonitive is highly variable; in some cases, it is the immediate result of the process of insubordination involving the avoidive ("lest"-clause) as the source structure and can be considered a cancellable – even though preferred – pragmatic inference (readily recoverable from the linguistic and/or the extralinguistic context) rather than a well-entrenched, highly grammaticalized structure. In other cases, however, it may acquire a highly grammaticalized status.

Notice that whereas the cross-linguistic grammaticalization path from avoidive to apprehensive has a syntactic characteristic change from biclausal to monoclausal structure, this does not have to be the case with the grammaticalization path that leads to the avoidive itself. Thus, the avoidive may well be the result of a grammaticalization whereby a monoclausal structure develops into a biclausal avoidive, which then may – or may not – develop further into a monoclausal

apprehensive/admonitive structure. An example of such a development comes from Korean, as was briefly noted in Section 2.2 with reference to interrogative and declarative sentence enders serving as the source of avoidives (see (14a), (15) and (16)). For instance, the monoclausal future construction main verb *-l-la* (with *-l-* being the future-tense maker and *-la* the sentence-ender) meaning “X will. . .!” was functionally reinterpreted as “(I) fear X might happen” with implicit first-person singular subjects, and with second-person and third-person subjects, it developed into an apprehensional avoidive “lest” construction. Historically, the apprehensive use, i.e., the sentence-ending function as in (35), pre-dates the avoidive use, i.e., the connective function as in (36) (for the diachronic details on this development, see Rhee and Kuteva, forthcoming):¹⁷

(35)

Korean

(cosimha-y)

(be.careful-END)

‘(Be careful!) The chickens might come inside’

(Kuteva et al., forthcominga, forthcomingb)

talk-tul(-i)

chicken-PL(-NOM)

tuleo-lla

come.in-**APRV**

(36)

Korean (= (15))

[In preparation of a funeral]

pang

room

kwistol

flue.opening

tewu-lla

be.hot-**AVD**

mak-ela

block-IMP

pwul

fire

stay-cimal-ko

make-PROH-and

ko-y

cat-NOM

tuleka-lla

enter-**AVD**

‘Don’t make fire (for floor-heating) lest the room become too hot (for the corpse) and block the flue opening lest a cat enter (through it [which is ominous according to superstitions].)’

(ca. 1870 Pakhungpoka, Rhee and Kuteva, forthcoming)

In other words, whereas the development from avoidive to apprehensive is characterized by a syntactic “metamorphosis” from a biclausal to a monoclausal structure, when it comes to the avoidive itself, it may well be the result of grammaticalization of precisely the opposite directionality of syntactic change, namely from monoclausal to biclausal structure.

To sum up, the development of the monoclausal apprehensive from the biclausal avoidive through insubordination is a commonly attested pattern, not only in the two languages of our focus, English and Korean, but also across typologically diverse languages. However, this directionality is not deterministic, in the sense that there are apprehensives that did not develop from avoidives and that even the opposite direction is also attested, as illustrated with the Korean scenario.

4.2. From negation to avoidive

On the basis of the knowledge accumulated in the last several decades regarding the grammatical tools that natural languages employ for the expression of emotions such as fear/apprehension, avoidives are arguably a subset of apprehensionals that comprise the prototypical exponent of this category. In what follows, we will try to situate our observations within the global picture of the development of avoidives (and more generally, apprehensionals) in the world’s languages. From a broader perspective, the method of intergenetic grammaticalization (Heine and Kuteva 2002a,

¹⁷ Notice that *-lla* itself is not highly productive in contemporary Korean (it has somewhat archaic flavor and is heard in the speech of elderly people). An anonymous reviewer also points out that *-lla* in (35) may be replaced with *-keyssta* (< *-keyss-ta* [FUT-DEC]), which is commonly thought to be marking a declarative statement. What is relevant in this case seems to be the mirative nuance associated with the declarative ender *-ta* (Lee 2015), even though it is not a dedicated mirative marker (see Strauss 2005, Rhee and Koo 2020). Note that *-lla* involves the declarative sentence ender *-la* with inherent exclamative flavor (see 3.1.2 above). Further, *-lla* and *-keyssta* both consist of FUT (*-l/-keyss*) and DEC (*-la/-ta*). Other enders, such as *-keyss-e* (with the universal ender *-e*), also carry, though noticeably weaker, an apprehensional nuance. This suggests that declarative and exclamative in Korean do not have discrete boundary. Despite the presence of the subtle apprehensional nuance associated with *-keyssta* and less so with *-keyss-e*, we suggest that the effect is incidental and does not qualify them to be apprehensive markers.

2002b, Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019) enables us to observe that in genetically and geographically unrelated languages, it is possible to establish at least two grammaticalization paths leading to avoidives, i.e., from negation to avoidive and from temporal to avoidive.

An example of a negation-denoting structure that has developed into an avoidive comes from the Austronesian language Papapana where negative-purpose adverbial clauses function as 'lest'-clauses and these are marked by the pre-verbal negative mode marker *te* in conjunction with the general irrealis mode enclitic = *i*. The main clause may be an imperative or a prohibitive (Smith 2015: Ch. 5.1.2), as in the example below:

(37)	Papapana				
	<i>O = orete</i>	<i>egoego,</i>	<i>o = te</i>	<i>pu = i</i>	<i>pu = i.</i>
	2.SG:SBJ = walk	well	2.SG:SBJ = PROH	fall = IRR	fall = IRR
	'Walk carefully, lest you fall.'				
	(Smith 2015, cited in Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019: 292)				

In Bulgarian, the negative purpose clause is marked by means of the subordinate clause linkage consisting of the optional preposition *za* 'for', the conjunctive particle *da* and the negation marker *ne*, i.e., (*za*) *da ne* [(for)-CONJ. PTCL-NEG], and is followed by the verb in the subordinate clause. This same structure (*za*) *da ne* + verb is also used with apprehensional meaning, as the following constructed example shows:

(38)	Bulgarian				
	<i>Zatvori</i>	<i>vratata,</i>	(za)	da	ne
	close	door.DEF	(for)	CONJ.PTCL	NEG
	'Close the door, lest you get a cold.'				
					nastineš.
					get.a.cold:2SG:PRES

Another example of a negation-denoting construction that has assumed an apprehensional function comes from Malayalam (ISO 639-3 mal/mala1464) where there exists a biclausal construction, in which the first verb is marked for imperative mood and is followed by the word *illenkil* 'lest'. This form results from the fusion of two different morphemes *illa* 'no' and *enkil* 'if ... then' so that the literal translation of the word *illenkil* is 'if not, then', as exemplified in (39) (note the added label):

(39)	Malayalam				
	<i>saṭṭam</i>	<i>para</i>	illenkil	<i>ninne</i>	<i>ṇa:n</i>
	truth	tell.IMP	if.not/AVD	2.SG:ACC	1.SG:NOM
	'Tell the truth lest I will kill you.'				
	(Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019: 292, modified)				
					<i>kollum.</i>
					kill.FUT

As is obvious, a number of English and Korean avoidives indeed involve negative markers, e.g., *not* and *lest* (< 'less') in English and *mos* 'cannot' and *an* 'not' in Korean, in their source constructions. As shown above, other languages tend to involve negative markers as well in the development of avoidives. This situation is consonant with our intuition that avoidives are conceptually closely related to 'negative purpose' (see also Sections 3.2 and 4.1 above).

4.3. From temporal marker to avoidive

The second grammaticalization path that has been identified across languages in the study of avoidives (and apprehensionals) has a temporal marker as a source of its grammaticalization development. For instance, in Virgin Islands Dutch Creole (ISO 639-3 dcr/nege1244, codes based on Negerhollands), a structure that initially involved a temporal subordinate clause beginning with the temporal marker *fo* 'before' gave rise, over time, to a structure with an avoidive meaning (note the label change):

(40)	Virgin Islands Dutch Creole							
a.	<i>Ju</i>	<i>fo</i>	<i>bli</i>	<i>een</i>	<i>jaa</i>	<i>mi</i>	<i>ons,</i>	
	2:SG	MOD	stay	INDEF	year	with	1:PL	
	<i>fo</i>	<i>ju</i>	<i>nee</i>	<i>am</i>	<i>fa</i>	<i>ons.</i>		
	before	2:SG	take	3:SG	of	1:PL		
	'You must stay with us for one year, before you take her from us.'							
b.	<i>Dan</i>	<i>Anáánsi</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>ho</i>	<i>fo</i>	<i>loo</i>	<i>bet</i>	<i>padún</i>
	then	[name]	PST	have	for	go	ask	pardon
	<i>fo</i>	<i>sini</i>	<i>du</i>	<i>am</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>fort.</i>		
	AVD	3:PL	do	3:SG	LOC	prison		
	'Then Anansi had to ask for forgiveness, lest they put him in prison.'							
	(Sluijs 2015, cited in Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019: 427, modified)							

Dutch also offers an example of a temporal marker, *straks* 'soon', developing into an avoidive (apprehensional) marker (note the label change):

(41)	Dutch (Germanic; Indo-European; ISO 639-3 nld/dutc1256)					
	<i>Aai</i>	<i>dat</i>	<i>beest</i>	<i>nou</i>	<i>niet,</i>	<i>zegt</i>
	stroke.IMP	DEM	beast	now	NEG	say:3:SG:PRES
	<i>mama,</i>	straks	<i>bijt</i>	<i>ie.</i>		
	mum	soon/ AVD	bite.3:SG:PRES	3:sg		
	'Do not stroke that beast, says Mum, or else it will bite.'					
	(Boogaart 2009: 172, modified)					

In the Mangarrayi (Mangarayi) language (ISO 639-3 mpc/mang1381) of the Northern Territory of Australia, it is possible to observe a similar development. Here, a temporal connective – the adverb *barlaga* 'right now, today' – has developed into an avoidive (apprehensional) marker, cf. the form *barlaga* below (note the label change):

(42)	Mangarrayi			
	<i>Bargil</i>	<i>nama,</i>	barlaga	<i>nya-wayi-n.</i>
	hard	hold(IMP)	now/ AVD	you-fall-PRES
	'Hold on tight, or else you might fall.'			
	(Merlan 1982: 147, cited in Angelo and Schultze-Berndt 2016: 284, modified)			

From these documented cases across languages it is evident that temporal expressions are among the favored sources of grammaticalization of avoidives. The situation in English and Korean, however, is subtle. Korean has the temporal noun *sa* 'time, occasion' as its source, but the temporal notion is not prominent otherwise, either in Korean or English. The notion of futurity is essential in avoidives in view of the fact that 'expected undesirable situation' and 'precaution' are two defining conceptual components of avoidives (and apprehensionals in general). These two languages use the future-oriented linguistic forms such as inherently future-oriented adverbial *so* and the equally future-oriented infinitive marker *to* in English and the purposive and mode marking suffixes *-tolok* and *-key* in Korean. Furthermore, the morphological future marker (*-l*) surfaces in a number of avoidives in Korean, e.g., *-lkka*, *-lkkasiphe*, *-lkkapwa*, etc.¹⁸ This suggests that not only the meanings of lexical forms but also those of grammatical forms need to be carefully considered since the crucial semantic contributions may be observable only from fine-grained analyses.

Another note on the sources of avoidives is that in Korean, we find constructions involving the visual perception verb *po-* 'see' as well as the psych-verb *siph-* 'think' as the source constructions for grammaticalized avoidives, conceding that the exact departure point of semantic designation in polysemy may be disputed (see Section 3.1.1 above). To the

¹⁸ We are thankful that the relevance of future tense markers and temporality has been pointed out by one of the reviewers.

best of our knowledge, neither of these lexemes has been identified as part of a source construction for a cross-linguistically identifiable grammaticalization path.¹⁹

5. CONCLUSION

The object of the present investigation was avoidives in the domain of apprehensionals. We identified – and elaborated upon – the avoidive structures in two particular languages, English and Korean. We first identified the linguistic expressions encoding the avoidive in these two languages, after which we took a closer look at the historical sources of these expressions.

Having established a number of commonalities as well as dissimilarities between the grammaticalization developments characterizing the rise of avoidives in English vs. Korean, we took a closer look at one particular cross-linguistic development whereby the avoidive gave rise to the apprehensive (often functioning as admonitive) in genetically and geographically remote languages. We then situated our observations about (i) the rise of the avoidives in Korean vs English; and (ii) the further development of the avoidive into the apprehensive/admonitive across languages, against the backdrop of the overall grammatical typology involving apprehensionals in the languages of the world. In particular, we looked at the developmental patterns to and from avoidives. We proposed that the development of apprehensives from avoidives typically (but not necessarily, as shown in Korean) involves insubordination, and that two major channels of the development into avoidives are negation and temporal. It is neither the case that all avoidives develop from these conceptual sources nor that all avoidives develop into apprehensives, but Korean and English do exhibit such developmental patterns with varying strengths. We further concluded that Korean manifests two grammaticalization developments leading to the avoidives that – to the best of our knowledge – have not been observed in other languages so far.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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¹⁹ Notice that the criterion for assigning the status of a cross-linguistically identifiable grammaticalization path to a particular grammaticalization development is that this development is observed in at least two genetically – and geographically – unrelated languages (Heine and Kuteva 2002b; Kuteva, Heine et al. 2019).

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