

Investigating perspective-sensitivity during the resolution of Korean anaphors

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Understanding perspective-sensitivity is central for theories of cognition and language processing. We test how interpretation of two perspective-sensitive elements—subjective adjectives (e.g. *tasty*, *fun*) and certain anaphors (e.g. *picture of herself/her*)—interacts in Korean.

Perspective-sensitivity of anaphors: Contrary to syntactic Binding Theory, reflexives and pronouns have been claimed to be perspective-sensitive (e.g.[7,11]). [4] found that in English picture-NPs (**PNPs**) like “*Nora told/heard from Amy about the picture of her/herself*”, reflexives’ interpretation is modulated by a preference for **sources-of-information** (subj of *told*, obj of *heard*, [7]), while pronoun interpretation is modulated by a preference for **perceivers-of-information** (subj/*heard*, obj/*told*, [10]). However, the crosslinguistic robustness of these effects is unknown.

Perspective-sensitivity of subjective adjectives: Adjectives expressing opinions (e.g. *funny*, *scary*) are inherently perspective-sensitive, interpreted relative to attitude-holders (e.g.[8])

Perspectival Uniformity: It has been claimed that perspective-taking is a monolithic process, in that *all* perspective-sensitive elements in the same linguistic domain must **uniformly refer to the same perspectival center** (e.g.[1]). Under this uniformity view, in *Nora told/heard from Amy about the funny picture of herself*, the perspective-sensitive *herself* refers to whoever finds the picture *funny* (referent of *herself* = attitude-holder of *funny*). However, experiments suggest that English does not fit this prediction ([3]). Thus, the status of Perspectival Uniformity is debated.

Korean allows us to test the crosslinguistic robustness of Perspectival Uniformity and the source/perceiver biases of pronouns and reflexives. Unlike English, Korean reflexives include (Table1): ***cakicasin*** (‘self’), commonly viewed as needing a local antecedent (cf.[6]) and ***caki*** (‘self’) which can be bound by a long-distance (LD) antecedent and is commonly viewed as requiring antecedents that are perspectival centers (e.g. [12,10]; cf.[2]). In addition to a richer reflexive paradigm, Korean personal pronouns ***ku/kunye*** (‘he/she’) have both pronominal and demonstrative properties ([10,5]), differing grammatically from English personal pronouns.

We used a forced-choice experiment to (i) identify which Korean forms show perspective-sensitivity along the source/perceiver dimension, to assess the broader validity of [4]’s claims that reflexives and pronouns exhibit complementary perspective sensitivity, and to (ii) test whether Korean perspective-sensitive anaphors and subjective adjectives exhibit Perspectival Uniformity.

Method (N=90, 36 targets, 42 fillers: People read sentences with PNPs modified by subjective adjectives (Table1), and answered two questions: *Who is shown on the photograph?* (anaphor resolution) and *Whose opinion is it that the photograph is [subjective adjective]?* (attitude-holder identification). We manipulated (i) the verb (*told/heard from*)—to manipulate source- and perceiver status of the subject and object—and (ii) whether the PNP contains *caki*, *cakicasin* or *ku/kunye*.

Results: Who-shown questions (anaphor resolution; Fig.1): Both reflexives (*cakicasin*, *caki*) show a *source preference* (more obj choices with *hear* than *tell*; glmer, p ’s<.001). But pronouns (*ku/kunye*) show no signs of perspective-sensitivity (p >0.1). Interactions confirm only *caki* and *cakicasin* are sensitive to the verb manipulation, not *ku* (interactions, p ’s<.001). **Whose-opinion questions** (attitude-holder identification; Fig.2) reveal a strong preference to interpret the *source* (subj/*tell*, obj/*hear*) as the attitude-holder of the adjective, regardless of form or verb (p ’s<0.001).

Do perspective-sensitive *caki/cakicasin* and subjective adjectives show Perspectival Uniformity? Not fully. Fig.3 shows that though antecedent choice and attitude-holder identification converge with *tell* (subject is antecedent => subject is opinion-holder), they clearly diverge with *hear* (subject is antecedent =/=> subject is opinion holder). Similar patterns are found when the reflexive is interpreted as referring to the object (Fig.4; *tell* conditions).

Our results both replicate *and* identify limits of source/perceiver effects, suggesting that the source bias may be a core property of the entire class of reflexives crosslinguistically, while the perceiver bias may not extend to elements that are not purely anaphoric. Lack of Perspectival Uniformity challenges views that analyze perspective-taking as a monolithic process, and favors accounts acknowledging different sub-types (e.g. referential vs. evaluative perspective-taking).

Table 1. Example target stimuli (<i>pro</i> -drop/null <i>pro</i> not possible in this context)			
Mina-ka	Senguni-{hantey/hanteyse}	sinmwun-ey	
<i>Mina</i> -NOM	<i>Senguni</i> -to/from	<i>newspaper</i> -DAT	
{caki/cakicasin/kunye}-uy	mwusewun	sacin-i	iss-ta-ko
{self _{LD} /self _{local} /she _{pronoun} }-GEN	scary	photograph-NOM	exist-DECL-COMP
{malhaycwu-ess-ta/tul-ess-ta}			
tell-PAST-DECL/hear-PAST-DECL			
'Mina {told/heard from} Sengun that there is a scary photograph of {herself _{LD} SELF/herself _{local} SELF/her _{pronoun} } on the newspaper.'			
Questions: Who is shown on the photograph? Mina Sengun			
Whose opinion is it that the photograph is scary? Mina Sengun Narrator			
(Instructions explained term 'narrator.' Results yielded 1 narrator-response, 0.003% of data.)			

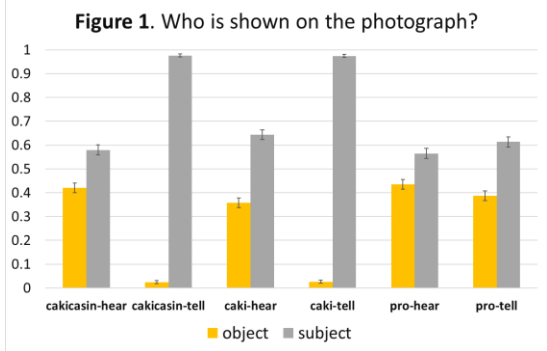


Fig.1 Who is shown? (anaphor resolution)

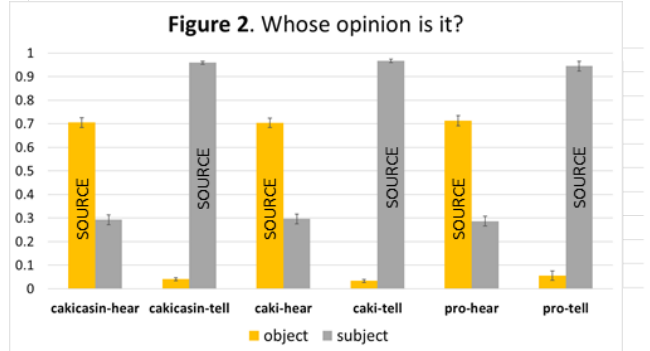


Fig.2. Whose opinion? (attitude holder)

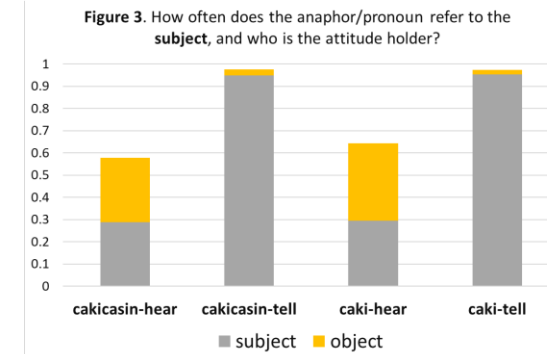


Fig.3 Trials where people interpret reflexives as referring to the **subject**, as a function of whose opinion the adjective reflects (*pronoun* conditions omitted, not perspective-sensitive)

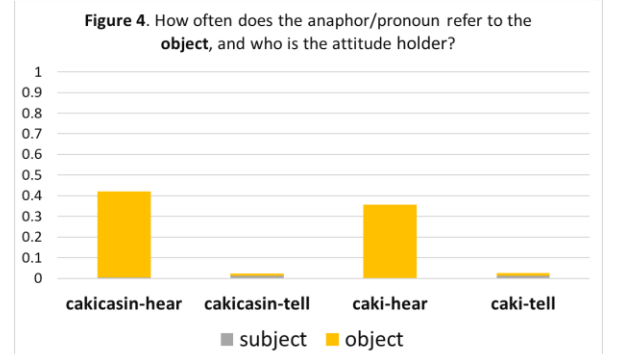


Fig.4 Trials where people interpret reflexives as referring to the **object**, as a function of whose opinion the adjective reflects (*pronoun* conditions omitted)

[1] Bylinina et al.'14. Landscape of perspective shifting. [2] Han/Storoshenko'12. Semantic binding of long-distance anaphor caki in Korean. [3] Kaiser'20. Investigating predicates of personal taste and perspectival anaphors. [4] Kaiser et al.'09. Structural and semantic constraints on the resolution of pronouns and reflexives. [5] Kim/Han'16. Inter-speaker variation in Korean pronouns. [6] Kim/Yoon'09. Long-distance bound local anaphors in Korean. [7] Kuno'87. Functional syntax. [8] Lasnik'85. Context Dependence, Disagreement, PPTs [9] Park'18. Attitudes de se and logophoricity. [10] Sohn'01. The Korean Language. [11] Tenny'03. Short distance pronouns in representational noun phrases. [12] Yoon'89. Long-distance anaphors in Korean and their crosslinguistic implications.