

## Contrastive Focus and Exempted Anaphor *Caki* in Korean\*

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### Abstract

This paper explores the effect of contrastive focus on the binding possibilities of the Korean anaphor *caki* ('self'). Contrastive focus on *caki* has a special effect in that it improves the acceptability of an atypical binding pattern. To account for this fact, I propose (i) that *caki* with contrastive focus needs to be treated as an exempted anaphor in terms of Pollard and Sag (1992, 1994), (ii) that the binding possibilities of the exempted *caki* is determined by a discourse constraint not by a syntactic constraint, and (iii) that the discourse constraint needs to include the familiarity presupposition in Heim (1982) and linear order.

### 1. Introduction

It has been proposed that there are two types of constraints on anaphor binding in various languages. These are the syntactic and discourse (or pragmatic) constraints as proposed by Roberts (1987), Reinhart and Reuland (1991, 1993), Iida (1992), Pollard and Sag (1992, 1994), Baker (1994), and Xue, Pollard and Sag (1994), among others. The dichotomy between syntactic and discourse constraints seems to pertain in Korean too.

The proposals of this paper are as follows. First, contrary to the general belief that the discourse constraint only affects long-distance anaphor binding (the case where an anaphor and its antecedent are not coarguments), the coargument binding possibilities of Korean *caki* ('self') are affected by the discourse constraint when contrastive focus is introduced. Second, the focused *caki* should be treated as an "exempted" anaphor in terms of Pollard and Sag (1992, 1994), i.e., the focused *caki* is exempted from a syntactic constraint, and this exemption allows it to be subject to a discourse constraint not to a syntactic constraint. Third, the syntactic constraint hinges on "syntactic prominence" of an antecedent. The syntactic prominence is determined by two factors concerning the anaphor and its antecedent: obliqueness and linear order. Fourth, discourse constraint hinges on "discourse prominence" of an antecedent. The discourse prominence is partially determined by linear order and a set of presuppositions (the familiarity presupposition in Heim (1982) and the presupposition of contrastive focus).

## 2. *Caki*-Binding in Korean

The typical pattern of *caki*-binding constructions in Korean is the case where the subject is an antecedent, and the complement is *caki*. Sentences of this pattern are all acceptable regardless of the effect of linear order, as shown in (1):

- (1) a. Nwu<sub>i</sub>-ka caki<sub>i</sub>-hantey phyenci-lul ssess-ni?  
 who-Nom self-to letter-Acc wrote-Q  
 ‘Who<sub>i</sub> wrote a letter to himself<sub>i</sub>?’  
 b. Caki<sub>i</sub>-hantey nwu<sub>i</sub>-ka phyenci-lul ssess-ni?  
 self-to who-Nom letter-Acc wrote-Q

The sentences in (2) are the reverse of the typical pattern, i.e., *caki* is a subject, and its antecedent is a complement. The sentences in this atypical pattern are all unacceptable, regardless of the linear order: <sup>1</sup>

- (2) a. #Caki<sub>i</sub>-ka nwukwu<sub>i</sub>-hantey phyenci-lul ssess-ni?  
 self-Nom who-to letter-Acc wrote-Q  
 Lit. ‘To whom<sub>i</sub> did himself<sub>i</sub> write a letter?’  
 b. #Nwukwu<sub>i</sub>-hantey caki<sub>i</sub>-ka phyenci-lul ssess-ni?  
 who-to self-Nom letter-Acc wrote-Q

As shown in (3), however, when *caki* or its antecedent is contrastively focused by focal delimiters such as *-nun* and *-man* (‘only’) or by focal stress, acceptability of the atypical binding pattern is much improved to the point of being at least marginal.

- (3) A: Ku namca-hantey ku yeca-ka phyenci-lul ssess-ni?  
 the man-to the woman-Nom letter-Acc wrote-Q  
 ‘Did the woman write a letter to the man?’  
 B: Ani,  
 ‘No,’  
 a. Ku namca<sub>i</sub>-hantey-nun caki<sub>i</sub>-man-i phyenci-lul ssessta.  
 the man-to-Foc self-only-Nom letter-Acc wrote  
 Lit. ‘Only himself<sub>i</sub> wrote a letter to the man<sub>i</sub>.’  
 b. (?) Ku namca<sub>i</sub>-hantey caki<sub>i</sub>-man-i phyenci-lul ssessta.  
 the man-to self-only-Nom letter-Acc wrote  
 c. (?) Ku namca<sub>i</sub>-hantey CAKI<sub>i</sub>-ka phyenci-lul ssessta.  
 the man-to self-Nom letter-Acc wrote

Note that contrastive focus alone does not improve the acceptability of the atypical binding pattern. As shown in (4), when *caki* precedes its antecedent, the acceptability improvement does not occur. Hence we can say that the improvement via contrastiveness occurs only when the antecedent precedes *caki*.

(4) (in the same context as (3))

- |    |                                                                           |                                    |             |          |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| a. | #Caki <sub>i</sub> -man-i                                                 | ku namca <sub>i</sub> -hanthey-nun | phyenci-lul | ssessta. |
|    | self-only-Nom                                                             | the man-to-Foc                     | letter-Acc  | wrote    |
|    | Lit. 'Only himself <sub>i</sub> wrote a letter to the man <sub>i</sub> .' |                                    |             |          |
| b. | #Caki <sub>i</sub> -man-i                                                 | ku namca <sub>i</sub> -hanthey     | phyenci-lul | ssessta. |
|    | self-only-Nom                                                             | the man-to                         | letter-Acc  | wrote    |
| c. | #CAKI <sub>i</sub> -ka                                                    | ku namca <sub>i</sub> -hanthey     | phyenci-lul | ssessta. |
|    | self-Nom                                                                  | the man-to                         | letter-Acc  | wrote    |

Also note that when the antecedent is an indefinite, however, contrastiveness and linear precedence do not improve acceptability of the atypical pattern, as illustrated in (5):

- |        |                                                                            |                                                |             |           |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| (5) a. | #Nwukwu <sub>i</sub> -hanthey                                              | caki <sub>i</sub> -man-i/CAKI <sub>i</sub> -ka | phyenci-lul | ssess-ni? |
|        | who-to                                                                     | self-only-Nom/self-Nom                         | letter-Acc  | wrote-Q   |
|        | Lit. 'To whom <sub>i</sub> did only himself <sub>i</sub> write a letter?'  |                                                |             |           |
| b.     | #Nwukwuna <sub>i</sub> -hanthey                                            | caki <sub>i</sub> -man-i/CAKI <sub>i</sub> -ka | phyenci-lul | ssessta.  |
|        | everyone-to                                                                | self-only-Nom/self-Nom                         | letter-Acc  | wrote     |
|        | Lit. 'Only himself <sub>i</sub> wrote a letter to everyone <sub>i</sub> .' |                                                |             |           |

A nontypical pattern is the case where both the *caki* and its antecedent are complements. In this case, the acceptability sorely depends on linear order, as shown in (6):

(6) (in a context in which the speaker tried to introduce two different girls to each other via e-mail but actually introduced one of the girls to herself by mistake)

- |    |                                                                |                            |                            |                |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| a. | Ne-nun                                                         | nwukwu <sub>i</sub> -lul   | caki <sub>i</sub> -hanthey | sokayhayss-ni? |
|    | you-Top                                                        | who-Acc                    | self-to                    | introduced-Q   |
|    | 'Who <sub>i</sub> did you introduce to herself <sub>i</sub> ?' |                            |                            |                |
| b. | #Ne-nun                                                        | caki <sub>i</sub> -hanthey | nwukwu <sub>i</sub> -lul   | sokayhayss-ni? |
|    | you-Top                                                        | self-to                    | who-Acc                    | introduced-Q   |

(7) (in the same context as (7))

- |    |                                                                      |                              |                              |                |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| a. | (?) Ne-nun                                                           | nwukwu <sub>i</sub> -hanthey | caki <sub>i</sub> -lul       | sokayhayss-ni? |
|    | you-Top                                                              | who-to                       | self-Acc                     | introduced-Q   |
|    | Lit. 'To whom <sub>i</sub> did you introduce herself <sub>i</sub> ?' |                              |                              |                |
| b. | #Ne-nun                                                              | caki <sub>i</sub> -lul       | nwukwu <sub>i</sub> -hanthey | sokayhayss-ni? |
|    | you-Top                                                              | self-Acc                     | who-to                       | introduced-Q   |

In summary, the typical pattern is the case where the subject is an antecedent, and a complement is *caki*. Sentences of this pattern are all acceptable regardless of the effect of linear order, definiteness and contrastiveness. The atypical pattern is the case where the subject is *caki*, and the complement is an antecedent. This pattern is sensitive to the effects of linear order, definiteness and contrastiveness. The

nontypical pattern is the case where both the *caki* and its antecedent are complements. In this case, the acceptability sorely depends on linear order.

In the following two sections, I suggest a new theory of Korean *caki*-binding based on the notion of *syntactic* and *discourse prominence*, which I will argue provides a better account of *caki*-binding facts in Korean.

### 3. Syntactic Prominence and Syntactic *Caki*-Binding Condition

The syntactic factors which determine the relative prominence among the arguments of a lexical head are their obliqueness and linear order. The independent linguistic motivations for each factor are discussed in sections 3.1 and 3.2. Then, in sections 3.3, we discuss the syntactic *caki*-binding condition.

#### 3.1. Obliqueness

Pollard and Sag (1992, 1994) assume the obliqueness hierarchy in (8) which states that the Subject is less oblique than the Primary Object, the Primary Object is less oblique than the Secondary Object, and so on.

(8) Subject < Primary Object < Secondary Object < Obliques ...

Pointing out some serious problems in the GB binding theory, they propose that the binding principles can be reformulated in terms of *local o-command* defined in (9).

(9) Local O-Command: *X locally o-commands Y* iff X is less oblique than Y.  
Here, X and Y are arguments of the same lexical head.

Not every language makes all of the distinctions of the obliqueness hierarchy in (8). (See Gary and Keenan (1976) for Kinyarwanda, a Bantu language.) In this paper, I assume that the distinction between the PO and the SO does not exist in the obliqueness hierarchy in Korean, and that they are treated as having the same degree of obliqueness. There seems to be at least one independent motivation for this. In Korean, the SO can be distinguished from the PO by case markers: the SO is marked by *eykey* or *hanthey* ('to') whereas the PO is marked by *lul*, an accusative case marker. However, in casual speech, this morphological distinction is often not made and both objects exhibit accusative case markings. In this case, unlike English, the order between the objects is free, as shown in (10), and passivization is allowed only when both accusative NPs become nominative, as shown in (11):

(10) a. Nay-ka      Mary-lul    sakwa-lul    cwu-essta.  
      I-Nom        M-Acc        apple-Acc    give-Past  
          'I gave Mary an apple.'

b. Nay-ka      sakwa-lul      Mary-lul      cwu-essta.  
 I-Nom      apple-Acc      M-Acc      give-Past

- (11) a. \*/?Mary-ka      sakwa-lul      cwue-ci-essta.  
           M-Nom      apple-Acc      give-Passive-Past  
           ‘Mary was given an apple.’  
 b. \* Sakwa-ka      Mary-lul      cwue-ci-essta.  
       apple-Nom      M-Acc      give-Passive-Past  
       Lit. ‘An apple was given Mary.’  
 c. Mary-ka      sakwa-ka      cwue-ci-essta.  
       M-Nom      apple-Nom      give-Passive-Past  
       ‘An apple was given to Mary/Mary was given an apple.’

Passivization is generally assumed to be a test to distinguish the PO from the SO. However, even this test does not distinguish between them in Korean. Thus, we may say that at least in this construction, they are morphologically and syntactically indistinguishable.

On the basis of the construction mentioned above, I propose that the obliqueness hierarchy in (12) applies to Korean. This means that a subject is less oblique than a complement, and that complements are all equally oblique.

- (12) Subject < Complements < ...

Although relative obliqueness of an anaphor and its antecedent is crucial for the syntactic anaphor binding condition, we cannot explain all binding facts solely based on the obliqueness of the arguments. In section 3.2, we will discuss the other factor affecting syntactic binding possibilities, linear precedence.

### 3.2. Linear Precedence

Even though Korean allows considerable freedom in constituent order, sentences with different constituent orders have distinct discourse functions. Following Givón (1975), Kim (1985) claims that one of the factors most crucial in the constituent order variation in a sentence is the Principle of Information Flow:

- (13) The constituents in a sentence tend to be sequentially ordered in such a way that a constituent expressing given information comes first, a constituent expressing new information next, and a constituent expressing unpredictable information last.

The statement in (13) is similar to saying that other things being equal, a more prominent constituent tends to linearly precede a less prominent constituent. As for anaphor binding, if we assume that an antecedent needs to be more

prominent than its anaphor, we can account for the fact that the relative linear order of an anaphor and its antecedent affects binding possibilities.

### 3.3. *Prominence-Command* and Syntactic *Caki-Binding* Condition

The relative prominence of an antecedent, compared with that of an anaphor, has a crucial effect on syntactic *caki*-binding in Korean. We define a new notion of *prominence-command* (*p-command* hereafter) based on the concept of local o-command in (9) and linear precedence. (See Chung (to appear) for an independent motivation for the notion of p-command.)

- (14) P-Command: X *p-commands* Y iff  
either (i) X locally o-commands Y,  
or (ii) X and Y are equally oblique and X linearly precedes Y.

And the concept of *prominence-bind* (*p-bind*) and the syntactic *caki*-binding condition in Korean are defined in (15) and (16) respectively, based on the notion of p-command.

- (15) P-Bind: X *p-binds* Y iff X and Y are coindexed and X p-commands Y.  
(16) Syntactic *Caki-Binding* Condition: A p-commanded *caki* must be p-bound.

Note that (16) is formulated such a way that only a p-commanded *caki* is subject to the condition.

Now let us consider the relevant data given in section 1. The sentences in (1) are acceptable because the subject antecedent *mwu-ka* ('who') p-commands and is coindexed with the object anaphor *caki-lul* ('self').

*Caki* in the sentences in (3) is an exempted anaphor in terms of Pollard and Sag (1992, 1994) because it is not p-commanded within the clause, i.e., *caki* is neither locally o-commanded nor preceded by an equally oblique antecedent and thus exempted from the syntactic constraint. However, the sentences are acceptable because the exempted *caki* is bound at the discourse level by satisfying the discourse constraint that will be discussed in section 4.

*Caki*'s in the sentences in (2), (4), (5), (6b), and (7b) are all exempted anaphors since *caki*'s there are not p-commanded within the clause. Thus, their ill-formedness is determined not by dissatisfying the syntactic constraint but by dissatisfying the discourse constraint.

The sentences (6a) and (7a) observe (16) due to (14ii), i.e., *caki* and its antecedent are equally oblique, and the antecedent precedes *caki*.

In the following section, we will discuss the discourse constraint and show how the constraint accounts for the given data.

#### 4. Contrastiveness and Discourse *Caki*-Binding Condition

Roberts (1994) proposes that the crucial factors for binding of pronominal variables such as the English *he* and *she* are a discourse salience of an antecedent and its familiarity to interlocutors. In this section, I suggest that these two factors are also crucial in determining the binding possibilities at the discourse level.<sup>2</sup>

As mentioned already, one of the important characteristics of the sentences in (3), (4), and (5) is that they are all involved with contrastive focus. According to Culicover and Rochemont (1983), and Kim (1990) among others, the contrastive focus that we are concerned with in this paper differs from informational focus in such a way that the contrasted expressions carry old information that is presupposed to be familiar to the interlocutors. The familiarity presupposition guarantees that the referent of the focused expression, the man, and the target of the contrast, the woman, be members of the presuppositional set. That is, the set must include the referents of the man and the woman, in order for the sentence to be felicitously uttered. In this case, *caki* in (3) is bound by the referent of the man at the discourse level.

On this approach, it is naturally explained why a sentence with an atypical binding pattern does not allow an antecedent to be an indefinite (e.g. (2) and (5)). According to Heim (1982), the difference between definites and indefinites comes from their distinct presuppositions. Definites have familiarity presuppositions while indefinites have novelty presuppositions. Then the sentences in (2) and (5) where the antecedents are indefinites are predicted to be infelicitous due to the presupposition failure. Sentences with contrastive focus presuppose the focused expression to be familiar to interlocutors, but an indefinite NP cannot be felicitously used for that expression.

Also note that contrastive focus by itself cannot improve the acceptability of the atypical binding pattern. Comparison between (3) and (4) shows that the effect of contrastiveness must be reinforced by the effect of linear precedence. If we do not consider the effect of linear precedence or obliqueness there, the anaphor and its antecedent are equally prominent at the discourse level, because they refer to the same individual in the presuppositional set. If we assume that an antecedent needs to be more prominent than its anaphor in order for the sentence to be acceptable, then we can explain why the antecedent must precede *caki*. I.e. other things being equal, a linearly preceding constituent tends to be more prominent than a linearly following constituent.

Another problem with the sentences in (4) is that they violate the Principle of Information Flow in (13). In (4), the given information, *ku namca-hanthey* ('to the man') precedes the new information, *caki-man-i/CAKI-ka* ('only himself').

This approach may be extended to the account of long-distance *caki* binding shown in (17):

- (17) a. ??[Nwukwu;-uy kwake]<sub>j</sub>-lul caki;-man-i/CAKI;-ka kiyekhaci moshani?  
 who-Gen past-Acc self-only-Nom/self-Nom remember do not  
 Lit. ‘Whose<sub>i</sub> past don’t he<sub>i</sub> remember?’
- b. [Ku namca;-uy kwake]<sub>j</sub>-lul caki;-man-i/CAKI;-ka kiyekhaci moshayssta.  
 the man-Gen past-Acc self-only-Nom/self-Nom remember did not  
 Lit. ‘Only he<sub>i</sub> did not remember the man’s past.’

On our approach, (17a) is considered to be ruled out by a violation of Condition C in (18):

- (18) Condition C: An R-expression must not be p-bound by a pronominal (pronoun or anaphor). (Chung (1995))

In (17a), the subject *caki* p-commands and is coindexed with the indefinite *nwukwu* (‘who’), and thus the R-expression, *nwukwu*, is p-bound by the anaphor, *caki*. Sentence (17b), where the antecedent is a definite, has exactly the same syntactic environment as (17a) and appears to be incorrectly ruled out due to the violation of Condition C. On our account, however, the acceptability of (17b) is accounted for by assuming that *caki* here is bound at the discourse level. That is, *caki* is bound by the referent of *ku namca* (‘the man’) in the presuppositional set, which is guaranteed by the familiarity presupposition of definites and the presupposition of contrastive focus.

In this section, the main concern is given to the effect of contrastive focus on the binding of discourse anaphors. This does not mean that contrastiveness is the sufficient condition that determines the binding possibilities. In Pollard and Sag (1992, 1994), two crucial factors are suggested that are relevant to discourse anaphor binding: a processing factor such as *intervention* and a discourse factor such as *point of view* (e.g., Kuno (1976)), Sells (1987), and Zribi-Hertz (1989)). For this paper to be more complete, the relationship between contrastiveness and point of view needs to be explored and a more general theory on discourse prominence should be provided. I leave this for further study.<sup>3</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have investigated *caki*-binding possibilities in Korean. What I have proposed is that an antecedent must be more prominent than *caki* at the syntactic or discourse level to satisfy the anaphor-antecedent dependency. More specifically, I have proposed (i) that *caki* with contrastive focus needs to be treated as an exempted anaphor, (ii) that the binding possibilities of the exempted *caki* is determined by the discourse constraint, and (iii) that the discourse constraint needs to include the familiarity presupposition and linear order.



## Notes

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1. The sentences marked with # indicate that they are infelicitous. In section 4, I will show that the awkwardness of these sentences results from a presupposition failure.

2. This does not mean that the distribution of the discourse anaphors such as *caki* is the same as that of the pronouns such as *ku* ('he') in Korean. The sentence in (i) is unacceptable where *caki* in (3a) is replaced by a pronoun.

(i) \*/?? Ku namca<sub>i</sub>-hanthey-nun      ku<sub>i</sub>-man-i      phyenci-lul      ssessta.  
the man-to-Foc                      he-only-Nom      letter-Acc      wrote  
Lit. 'Only he<sub>i</sub> wrote a letter to the man<sub>i</sub>.'

3. Baker (1994) uses the notion of discourse-prominent characters to give a unified account to binding of locally free reflexives (LFRs) in British English. On his account, LFRs in British English are a kind of intensives, and the intensives are appropriate only in contexts where emphasis or contrast is recognized.

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