A Bound-Variable Account of the Korean Reflexive caki

Problem  It has been argued that the binding of long-distance reflexives can be reduced to a series of local dependencies by cyclic head movement of the reflexive to a matrix \( I^0 \) position (Chomsky, 1986; Reinhart and Reuland, 1993). As a consequence, these reflexives are predicted to be subject-oriented. In Korean, the so-called long-distance reflexive caki is not strictly subject oriented, able to be bound by local and non-subject arguments (1), or even extra-sententially (2). Furthermore, caki can be bound by a non-c-commanding antecedent within the same sentence (3). After examining the interpretations of singular caki and the plural caki-tul, I develop a bound variable account of caki which avoids the need for LF movement of the reflexive.

The Data  Caki and caki-tul are also interpreted differently depending upon their antecedents, or lack thereof. An often overlooked fact is that when caki has no antecedent, it takes on an inherent reference of second person (Sohng, 2003), which extends to the plural caki-tul (4). When there is a plural antecedent available, caki-tul is directly bound by it, as a matching of plural-to-plural (5). Where caki-tul has only a singular antecedent, it is interpreted as representing a contextually-defined set to which that singular antecedent belongs (6), identified as inclusive reference by Madi-gan and Yamada (2006). Cho (1996) argues that purported observations of split antecedence with caki-tul are inclusive reference cases where another entity in the sentence happens to be a part of the contextually-defined group. Taking all of these together, it emerges that the only criterion that needs to be met is that the antecedent precede caki.

Analysis  A requirement of precedence suggests that discourse salience is an important factor in caki binding. Kim (2000) proposes a ranked hierarchy of potential antecedents for caki, naming topics as the most preferred. Gil (1998) makes an even stronger claim, arguing that caki is always bound by a topic, either overt, marked by -(n)un on a DP in a topic position above TP, or covert. Covert topicality would entail LF movement of a salient DP to that same topic position high in the tree. Testing this LF movement hypothesis is simply a matter of determining whether caki can be bound by a DP within an island that is opaque to A’ movement (7). Here, caki only gets the inherent reference reading, unable to be bound by either argument of the embedded clause. With antecedents becoming available through an LF A’ movement, caki behaves more like a bound variable, entering into a tripartite structure, similar to the result of QR. Still, cases such as (3) indicate that even movement constraints will not be a foolproof test, as the genitive DP may be an antecedent for caki. For the extra-sentential cases (and presumably extendable to island-violating cases), Gil (1998) proposes a gap in the topic position which co-refers with a salient entity in the discourse, binding caki. Inherent reference can be similarly treated, with the addressee becoming the covert topic which binds caki. To account for the plurals, I adapt ideas from Rullmann (2003), wherein plurals are sets of singular entities, and the entire domain of individuals (\( D_e \)) is comprised of the union of the set of all singular entities and the set of plurals. This allows singulars and plurals to behave the same way in terms of binding a variable. To maintain a unified account of caki, the matched plural and inclusive reference readings for caki-tul are thus ascribed to the plural morpheme -tul. The role of -tul is to introduce a plural set to which caki belongs. This membership relation is transitive, with the antecedent of caki being interpreted as a member of the plural set. For the cases where caki-tul is bound by a plural antecedent, it saturates the plural set introduced by -tul, and a matched reading results. Where there is only a singular antecedent for caki-tul, that singular antecedent belongs to the plural set, the rest of which is defined by context. The plural version of inherent reference could be explained by either of these phenomena, depending on whether there is a plurality of salient addressees.

Conclusion  In presenting an analysis which relies upon the topichood of caki’s antecedent, this paper advances an analysis of caki as a bound variable. This obviates the need to posit LF movement of caki itself, a welcome result as caki has been widely shown to violate the subject-orientatedness consequence of that analysis. Furthermore, the analysis of the plural forms retains the definition of caki as a simple bound variable, ascribing the various interpretations of caki-tul to the interaction between -tul and the antecedent of caki.
Examples

(1) John-i Mary-eykey Tom-i caki-4,5,6-lul coaha-n-ta-ko malha-yess-ta.
John-NOM Mary-DAT Tom-NOM SELF-ACC like-PRES-DECL-COMP say-PST-DECL
‘John told Mary that Tom likes self.’

(2) Na-nun Suni-eykey chayk-ul pilye cwu-ess-ta. Kulendey sasil ku chayk-un
I-TOP Suni-DAT book-ACC lend give-PST-DECL and yet in fact book-TOP
caki-i oppa-ka cenev nay-key pilye cwun kes ita.
SELF elder brother-NOM before me-DAT lend give thing be
‘I lent a book to Suni. But the fact is that self’s brother had lent it to me before.’

(3) Suni-uy sinpal-un caki-uy pal-pota hwelssin kuta.
Suni-GEN shoes-TOP self-GEN foot-than a lot big
‘Suni’s shoes are a lot bigger than self’s feet.’

(4) Caki-tul-i chakhay.
SELF-PL-NOM good
‘You all are good.’

‘John criticised them/selves to Bill and Mary.’

John-NOM SELF-PL-ACC introduce-do-PST-DECL
‘John introduced selves.’

(7) [Tom-i Mary-5-lul salang-ha-n-ta-nun] sasil-i caki2-lul
Tom-NOM Mary-ACC love-do-PRES-DECL-TOP fact-NOM SELF-ACC
nolayk-yess-ta.
surprise-PAST-DECL.
‘The fact that Tom loves Mary surprised self.’

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