

PhD Thesis Defence
Korean Anaphora: An Experimental Investigation
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This dissertation explores the syntactic and interpretative properties of three Korean anaphoric devices, (i) third-person pronouns, (ii) VP anaphors (VPAs), and (iii) null objects (NOs), using experimental syntax methodologies.

There is no general consensus among previous studies as to whether Korean third-person pronoun *ku* 'he' (and its feminine counterpart *kunye* 'she') can be construed as a bound variable (Hong 1985, M. Y. Kang 1988, Suh 1990, N. K. Kang 2000, Koak 2008). Three interconnected experiments were conducted to investigate this issue, and the findings demonstrated that some speakers of Korean consistently accepted the quantificational binding of *ku*, while others consistently did not. This result is highly suggestive of an existence of inter-speaker variation in the bound variable construal for *ku*. Taking into consideration the historical background of *ku* and its present status, I conclude that child learners of Korean may not receive sufficient evidence regarding *ku* from the primary language input data. Given this, adopting Han et al.'s (2007) two-grammar hypothesis and Déchaine and Wiltschko's (2002) pronominal typology, I propose that some speakers of Korean randomly acquire FP *ku*, which complies with the "pronominal grammar", while other speakers of Korean acquire DP *ku*, which complies with the "demonstrative grammar".

On the basis of the finding that there is variation across Korean speakers in the quantificational binding of *ku* (i.e., the bound variable construal for *ku*), the present study investigates the syntax of VPAs and NOs in Korean. The existing proposals on their syntactic identities can be grouped into two ways, the ellipsis approaches (Cho 1996, S. W. Kim 1999, Ha 2010, J. S. Kim 2012) and the pro-form approaches (Yoon 2004, Ahn & Cho 2010, Bae & Kim 2012, M. K. Park 2013). In two independent experiments designed to diagnose the presence of "hidden" structure within VPAs and NOs, I examined the (un)availability of sloppy readings for VPAs and NOs with antecedents containing *ku*. Given the standard view that the sloppy reading in ellipsis is due to a pronoun in the ellipsis site being bound (Sag 1976, Williams 1977), if VPAs or NOs have elided structure that hosts *ku*, the distribution of sloppy readings for them should correlate with that of quantificational binding of *ku*.