Demonstrative as anaphoric definite and its consequences for number

Kyumin Kim
Chungbuk National University

In some languages such as English, anaphoric definiteness is expressed by an article, while in others such as Mandarin or Korean it is expressed by a demonstrative (e.g., Jenks 2018, Lee 1989). For example, in Korean (1), the demonstrative (DEM) *ku* 'that' has to appear to indicate anaphoric definiteness of the nominal *haksayng* 'student'.

(1) John-i   onul-to   ***(ku)**   **haksayng**-hako   myentam-ul   ha-n-ta.
    John-NOM   today-also   DEM   student-with   meeting-ACC   do-PRES-DEC
    'Today, John another meeting with **the student (that he met yesterday)**.

There are a substantial number of studies on the semantics and pragmatics on *ku* as an anaphoric definite (e.g., Lee 1989, Chang 2009, Anh 2017, Kang 2021, M. Kim 2023). However, a syntactic analysis of *ku* as an anaphoric definite is scarce, and the syntactic role of *ku* remains unexplained. This paper addresses the following questions: (i) Where is DEM *ku* situated in a cross-linguistic context?, and (ii) What is the syntax of DEM *ku* as anaphoric definite? I show that DEM *ku* indicates anaphoric definiteness only, not unique definiteness, similar to the strong article in German (Schwarz 2009, 2013). For example, as shown in (2), it cannot indicate unique definiteness. Moreover, I show that DEM *ku* is similar to the strong article in German in that it requires a co-referring antecedent, and is required in bridging contexts.

(2) onul   **(*ku)**   **tal-i**   ilccik   ttu-ess-ta.
    today   (*DEM)   moon-NOM   early   rise-PST-DEC
    'The moon has risen early today.'   (Kang 2021)

Building on the result that DEM *ku* is classified as an anaphoric definite, I propose that the syntactic role of DEM *ku* is to make a DP referentially visible by overtly occupying the spec-DP position. Under this view, *ku* is similar to the article in Italian (Longobardi 1994, 2001) or nP in Icelandic (Julien 2005) that has to be present for referential DPs, either on D or in Spec-DP, respectively. In Korean, as in (1), DEM *ku* also must be present for the referential DP. Korean has no overt D being an article-less language, and *ku* has to occupy the spec-DP position, as schematically shown in (3). DEM *ku* is phrasal (Chang 2009) being DemP.

(3) [DP DemP   [D' [NP   D]]
       ku   *haksayng* 'student'   Ø

Interesting consequences of the proposed account here is that it can account for an interaction between number and anaphoric definites in the language. In the anaphoric definite context such as in (4), the plural *-tul* is obligatory in contrast to the indefinite context in which the plural is optional (e.g., *haksayng(-tul)* 'students'). I propose that in the anaphoric context licensed by DEM *ku,* plural *-tul* is the realization of grammatical number such as Num head. Num has binary features [±plural] that value uninterpretable number feature on D [*u*Num]. This account also captures the strict singular interpretation of bare nouns in anaphoric definite contexts (e.g., *ku haksayng* 'the student/*the students'). The prediction is that plural *-tul* will be required on pronouns that are referential, and this is borne out by the data, *ku* '3sg'/ *ku*(-tul)* '3pl'.

(4) na-nun   **ku**   haksayng***(-tul)**-ul   manassta
    I-TOP   DEM   student-**Pl**-ACC   met
    'I met the students.'

I discuss the possibility that Korean may have two two-way number contrasts: (i) a singular-

plural contrast in anaphoric definite, and (ii) number neutral-plural contrast in indefinite contexts. This view provides a new perspective on number in Korean, which has been analyzed as one two-way number contrast (either (i) or (ii)). I further discuss Blackfoot data that also shows two two-way number contrasts, like Korean, but in two different verbal contexts (Kim et al. 2017).

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