Maximize Presupposition! and the Korean demonstrative ku
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The Korean demonstrative ku

Two reported uses of Korean demonstrative ku:  

- Exophoric “proximal-to-hearer” uses (Sohn 1994)  
  - Context: Mary is reading a book that’s in her hand. John is standing far away from Mary. He points at the book and says:  
    (1) ku chhay ka-to-ik-kwun-yey, caymi-o-sala. ku book 1-too-read-PAST-EXPL fun-PAST-REPORT ‘I have read ku book too, it was fun.’

- Anaphoric uses (Jiang 2012, Ahn 2017)  
  - Context: There is a cockroach near Mary. John knows she is unaware of its presence, as he would have jumped otherwise. John, who is far away from Mary, points to the cockroach and says:  
    (2) ku kwaca maiss-e? ku snack tasty? ‘Is ku snack good?’

Recently however, Ahn (2017) has claimed that ku does NOT have true exophoric uses, but only anaphoric or hearer-old ones.

Fieldwork

- Four Korean native speakers rated utterances with ku and other demonstratives ece from 1 (“completely odd”) to 5 (“completely natural”).
- We target two main questions:
  1. (A-1) Is exophoricity sufficient to license ku?
  2. (A-2) Is hearer-oldness sufficient to license ku?

(A-1) Zoom-in uses: These uses pick out one among many potential referents.

(1) ‘I have read ku book too, it was fun.’

(A-2) Zoom-out uses: These uses bring a new referent to the hearer’s attention.

(1) ‘I have read ku book too, it was fun.’

(B) Is hearer-oldness sufficient to license ku?

(B-1) Anaphoric uses, where the referent is not physically present.

(2) ‘I saw some person yesterday. ku person was wearing a weird hat.’

(B-2) When the referent is physically present.

(3) ku salam isang han moça-lul sou-ko ku person weird hat-ACC wearing iss-e.
  COP-PRES ‘ku person is wearing a weird hat.’

Results

(A) Is exophoricity sufficient to license ku?

(A-1) ku is felicitous in zoom-in contexts.

(A-2) ku is felicitous in zoom-out contexts...as long as the referent is also hearer-old.

Context: There is a snack next to Mary that belongs to her, but she is not attending to it at the moment. John, who is far away from Mary, points to the snack and says:

(4) ku kwaca maiss-e? ku snack tasty? ‘Is ku snack good?’

Context: There is a cockroach near Mary. John knows she is unaware of its presence, as she would have jumped otherwise. John, who is far away from Mary, points to the cockroach and says:

(5) ya, ce/ku pakwipelu cosim-hay? VOC ce/ku cockroach careful(-do) ‘Hey, be careful of ce/ku cockroach!’

(B) Is hearer-oldness sufficient to license ku?

(B-1) ku is felicitous in anaphoric uses (consistent with Ahn 2017).

(B-2) ku cannot be used for hearer-old referents that are not additionally “hearer-proximal”.

Context: Mary is holding a book. John asks, “Where did you get that book?” Mary says:

(6) i/ku chhay appa-ka cewu-sin ke-ya.
  i/ku book dad-LOC give-HON thing ‘My dad gave me i/ku book.’

Discussion

- ku does have true exophoric uses (contra Ahn 2017 who claims it is infelicitous in zoom-in and zoom-out contexts). But, these exophoric uses are modulated by hearer-oldness.
- Similarly, ku may only refer to hearer-old referents that are physically present in the scene when they fulfill certain distance restrictions.
- Thus, both exophoricity and hearer-oldness play a role in the semantics of ku, but they are not independent of each other.
- An ambiguity analysis therefore cannot be motivated.

Analysis using Maximize Presupposition!

- Each demonstrative i-, ku and ce picks out a unique referent, but the referent is determined based on their associated presuppositions.

Lexical item | Presupposition
--- | ---
| | + proximal to speaker
| i/ | Voy. + distant from speaker ∧ distant from hearer
| ce/ | ku book (anti-presuppositional requirement; Lauer 2016)
| ku | ku man (anti-presuppositional requirement)
| | + distant from speaker + psychological proximal to hearer (because the snack belongs to them)
| | + distant from speaker + psychologically distant from hearer (imperceptibility/disassociation)

Maximize Presupposition! determines the suitable demonstrative in context.

- When the presupposition corresponding to a stronger item is not known to be true or false, either the stronger or weaker item may be used.

(7) wuili aphantu-ey koyang-ka han mari sa-nuntey,
  our apt-LOC cat-NOM one-CLS live-EXPL, i/ku kid-NOM
  yay/hay-ka koowel hayss-nunci al-a? what do-whether know?
  ‘There is a cat in my apartment. Do you know what i/ku kid did?’

Conclusions

- ku has anaphoric (hearer-old) AND exophoric uses, but these uses are not independent of one another.
- A unified analysis using MP! can explain the full distribution of ku.
- Given MP!’s success in accounting for ku, it is a promising way to analyze other cross-linguistic demonstratives across languages that encode distance, familiarity, and attention.