Tensed-S Condition (TSC) and the Determination of Binding Domain of Anaphors in Korean

<u>Category: Formal/Syntax</u>

While there is consensus that Specified Subject Condition (SSC) characterizes the local domain where anaphors are bound (Binding Domain, BD), the status of TSC has been controversial. Though the assumption that SSC and TSC jointly define the BD can rule out (1a), the well-formedness of (1b), where *himself* violates TSC, is a problem.

(1) a. *John thinks that *himself* is to blame
    b. John said that [pictures of *himself*] are on display

One response to this impasse is found in Chomsky (1981), where the definition of BD is modified (by appeal to an auxiliary definition of 'Accessibility') to allow (1b) as an exception to TSC. Another response (Pollard and Sag1992) holds that the BD is defined by the presence of a superior co-argument, which is another way of saying that only SSC is relevant in defining the BD. Under this view, TSC-violating anaphors don't have a BD because there is no structurally prominent potential antecedent. However, this does not lead to ungrammaticality, and these anaphors become acceptable if there is a way to license them extra-grammatically, as exempt anaphors. In this view, as in similar views like Reuland (2011), syntax is not solely responsible for binding. What goes wrong in (1a) under this account is that the anaphor has the wrong case (= accusative). Evidence that (1b) involves an exempt anaphor comes from the fact that TSC-violating anaphors allow both strict and sloppy readings under VP-ellipsis, unlike locally bound anaphors.

(2) a. John is proud of *himself*. So is Bill (=is proud of Bill(**strict**)/*?John(**sloppy**))
    b. John said that pictures of *himself* are on display. So did Bill (=said that pictures of Bill/John are on display)

Now, the equivalent of(1a) is well-formed in Korean. This is so not only for long-distance anaphors (LDA's) like *caki* and *casin*, which are expected to be able to violate TSC, but even for local anaphors like *caki-casin* and *pronoun-casin*.

(3) John-un [*caki-casin*-i/*ku-casin*-i   chencayla-ko]   mitnunta
    J-top   self-nom   genius-comp   believes
    'John believes himself to be a genius.'

(3) favors Pollard and Sag's account that locates the ill-formedness of (1a) on case-marking. However, the well-formedness of (3) by itself does not count as conclusive evidence for Pollard and Sag, since we haven't established that the anaphor in (3) is an exempt anaphor. Indeed, the consensus in the literature on Korean (as well as Japanese, and Chinese, which are similar to Korean) thus far is that TSC-violations arise due to the parameterization of BD in these languages. Only SSC defines the BD (for local anaphors) in languages like Korean.

    The question of whether TSC-violations in Korean are due to a parameterized BD or the possibility of exempt binding has never been addressed to the best of our knowledge. We therefore investigated this question using an experimental design, where we asked 40 Korean native speakers to judge the acceptability of sentences containing different types of binding (local, TSC-violating, SSC-violating) with both long-distance and local anaphors. We then asked them to rate the likelihood of strict/sloppy readings in a subsequent sentence containing VP-ellipsis.

    The acceptability rating of locally (clause-mate) bound *caki-casin* and *pronoun-casin* did not differ significantly from TSC-violations (Acceptability scores: *caki-casin*: local – mean = 3.85, TSC – mean = 3.85; *pronoun-casin*: local – mean = 3.77, TSC – mean = 3.83). However, the rate of sloppy readings for TSC violations differed significantly from that for local binding (sloppy reading possibilities: *caki-casin*: local – rate = 96.5%, TSC – rate = 73%, SSC – rate = 68%; *pronoun-casin*: local – rate = 95.3%, TSC – rate = 70%, SSC – rate = 59%), and strict readings increased considerably compared to local binding (strict reading possibilities: *caki-casin*: local – rate = 2%, TSC

– rate = 27.5%, SSC – rate = 30%; *pronoun-casin*: local – rate = 3%, TSC – rate = 30%, SSC – rate = 37%). We take this result to indicate that TSC-violating local anaphors in Korean are licensed as exempt anaphors, and not as core anaphors bound in a larger BD. Comparison with genuine long-distance anaphors bolsters this interpretation. For the LDA *caki*, the acceptability of local binding did not differ from that for LD-binding (TSC violations, as well as TSC/SSC violations). However, for *caki*, the rate of sloppy reading gradually decreased (from local binding to TSC and SSC) and did not differ as much compared to the case of local anaphors (sloppy reading possibilities with *caki*: local – rate = 83%, TSC – rate = 76%, SSC – rate = 69%). Also, the rate of strict reading also showed less contrasting pattern among local, TSC and SSC (strict reading possibilities with *caki*: local – rate = 10%, TSC – rate = 24%, SSC – rate = 30%). This is expected if *caki* is an LDA that is not restricted by SSC or TSC.

There is a clear lesson we can draw from these results. If the results of our study are representative, there is no parameterization of the BD for local anaphors (cf. Huang and Liu 2001 for a similar claim). Of course, the distinction between LDA's and local anaphors is real and must be accounted for somehow (Cole, Hermon, Sung 1990 and Reuland 2011 are representatives of early and recent attempts to account for the distinction between local and LDA's), but for local anaphors, languages are not divided in terms of those that choose SSC and TSC to define the BD versus those that only choose SSC to define the BD. The question is why. Under a theory where BD's can be parameterized (Yang 1983; Manzini and Wexler 1987; Progovac 1992), there is no ready answer. However, if the BD is rooted in something more fundamental like argument structure (as in Pollard and Sag 1992, and similar approaches like Reinhart and Reuland 1993), we can see why languages that have local anaphors (reflexivizers, in the theory of Reinhart and Reuland) will behave uniformly with respect to the determination of the BD.

Selected References

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