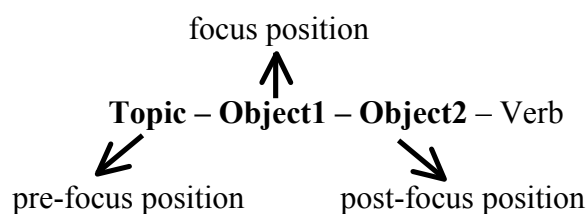


PRE- AND POST-FOCAL COMPRESSION AND QUESTION PROSODY

Focus highlights the part of an answer that corresponds to the wh-part of a wh-interrogative. This use of focus is often called *informational focus* (IF). Another use of focus is *contrastive/corrective focus* (CF), which has a limited set of alternatives. In English, the prosodic realizations of distinct focus types are controversial. Some have argued that there is no difference in the acoustic properties between the two focus types (Bolinger 1961, Cutler 1977, 't Hart, Collier & Cohen 1990), while others have argued that some acoustic properties differ between them (Couper-Kuhlen 1984, Bartels & Kingston 1994, Ito, Kraemer & Swerts 2001, Speer & Beckman 2004, Breen et al. 2010). Also, some semantic accounts on the syntax-phonology interface do not assume different subtypes of focus, with a single category of focus (Rooth 1992) or givenness (Schwarzschild 1999). In Japanese and Korean, most previous studies on prosody of focus deal with the characteristics of CF (Poser 1984, Pierrehumbert & Beckman 1988, Jun et al. 2006 among others). Although the prosodic realizations of focus have attracted intensive interest, it has not yet been explicitly discussed whether to differentiate distinct types of focus.

Also, there is a crucial theoretical issue whether WH itself receives focus. The intonation pattern of wh-interrogatives in Tokyo Japanese (TJ) has often been equated with focus intonation in that both patterns exhibit F0 expansion of a wh-phrase/focused item and following F0 compression (Ishihara 2003, Hirotnani 2005). However, neither of the previous studies on wh-prosody in TJ provided quantitative data to support that the intonation pattern of wh-interrogatives is identical to that of focus.

In this paper, the prosodic properties of distinct types of focus and wh-interrogatives are compared in Tokyo Japanese TJ and South Kyeongsang Korean (SKK). Sentences in a production test consist of 4 phrases: Topic – Object1 – Object2 – Verb. A topic phrase is to test pre-focus effects. The preceding and following objects are the targets of F0 expansion and of F0 compression, respectively. To explore the intonation pattern of wh-interrogatives and distinct types of focus, each target sentence was uttered as answers/additional questions to a prompt question/statement.



F0 and duration data demonstrate that there are limited prosodic differences between the intonation patterns of IF and CF in both languages. Also, it is revealed that the prosodic realization of wh-interrogatives differs from that of both types of focus as the former lacks pre-focus F0 compression in TJ, and involves a high flat pitch pattern in SKK. This supports the claim that the prosodic marking of focus and WH are distinct in TJ and SKK.

Selected references

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