

Deixis in East Asian languages

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1. Deixis: a theoretical perspective

- subjective elements, intersubjective elements, and the 'dyad of conversation'
 - linguistic subjectivity: Bréal (1964 [1900]); Bühler (1990 [1934])
- Traugott/Dasher (2005): “subjectivity did not become a significant topic of research within the international community of linguists until Benveniste raised the question whether 'language could still function and be called language' unless it was deeply marked...by the expression of subjectivity' (1971 [1958])”
- Uehara (2006: 75-76) “subjectivity, as an 'intangible, seemingly nebulous concept' (Langacker 1985: 147), has played a rather minor role as the object of linguistic investigation. Some, mostly functionally and cognitively oriented linguists (Benveniste 1971 [1966]; Ohye 1975; Lyons 1982; Langacker 1985; Iwasaki 1993, inter alia), however, have brought the issues of linguistic subjectivity to the fore”
 - Lyons (1982: 105-106): “a further question [...] is whether different natural languages differ in respect to the degree of subjectivity that they impose upon their users”

2. East Asian languages

- although these languages are genetically unrelated, they share many areal features due to their geographic proximity and to the fact that they have been in contact with one another for many years and have mutually influenced each other in various ways

3. Deixis in expressions of motion events

- a basic motion verb *come* is a subjective verb (Langacker 1985)
 - the lexical distinction *come/go* is not universal (some languages without *come*: Jinghpaw, Rawang, Russian) (De Lancey 1981)

- manner verbs and (non-subjective) directional verbs
- Jap.

- (1) *Kare wa koko e ?unten shita/unten shite kita*
He TOP here to drove /driving came
'He drove here' (lit. 'He came here driving')
- (2) *Ken ga heya kara dete itta/kita* (from Shibatani 2003: 260-261)
Ken NOM room from exit went/came
'Ken went/came out of the room'

“Japanese, especially interactive, colloquial speech, strongly prefers various kinds of coding of the speaker's stance... [those sentences without coming/going verbs are felt to be not sufficiently revealing about the speaker's stance – in this case, the spatial orientation of the speaker with respect to the goal or source location of the directed motion. That is, these sentences do not give extra-propositional information that the hearer feels entitled to know (e.g. where were you when this happened?)” (Shibatani 2003: 263)

Kor.

- (3) *Ce salam-un yeki-ey ?kel-ess-ta/kel-e-wassta*
The man-TOP here-to walked/walking came
'The man walked here' (lit. 'He came here walking')

Transportation and transmission events

Jap.

- (4) *Sore o koko e *motta/motte kita*
It ACC here to held/holding came
'[He] brought it here' (lit. '[He] came here holding it')
- (5) *Saa, asoko e kore o motte iki-mashyoo/*ki-mashyoo*
Well, there to these ACC having go-let's/come let's
'Well, let's take/??bring these over there'

Kor.

- (6) *kukes-ul yeki-ey *kacyessta/kacye wassta*
it-ACC here-to held/holding came
'[He] brought it here' (lit. '[He] came here holding it')

Jap.

- (7) *Ken ga Hanako ni booru o nageta*
Ken NOM Hanako to ball ACC threw
'Ken threw the ball to Hanako'
- (8) *Ken ga boku ni booru o *nageta/nagete kita*
Ken NOM me to ball ACC threw/throwing came
'Ken threw me the ball'

Deictic expressions of transaction events (deictic verbs of giving)

Jap.

- (9) *Mary ga boku ni hana o kure-ta/*age-ta*
Mary NOM me to flower ACC give-PAST
'Mary gave me flowers'
- (10) *Boku ga Mary ni hana o *kure-ta/age-ta*
I NOM Mary to flower ACC give-PAST
'I gave Mary flowers'

Ainu

- (11) *Tonuto a hok wa arki an na*
rice wine we buy and come we so
'We shall buy rice wine and come (back) here'
- (12) *Cep an e kore na, e cise un se wa oman wa...*
fish I you give so you house ALL carry and go and
'I give you a fish, so take it to your home and...'

4. Social deixis

Fillmore (1966: 220): "the notion of deixis might be extended, for example, to include the so-called 'honorific systems' found in many East Asian languages, systems of categories by which the speaker reveals his relation of respect or his judgment of his social worth relative to the hearer or to the object of his speech"

Japanese distinction between *uchi* and *soto*: this distinction "not only communicates the in-group/out-group distinction but combines what in Indo-European languages would be person terms with a group focal point which is deictic [...] *uchi* is the speaker's own group, unless marked by modifiers, and thus is deictic; *uchi* is also the zero-point of the speaker's discourse" (Bachnik 1982: 14-15)

- (13) *Sensei ga kitanda-tte nee*
teacher NOM come-I hear PTC
'I hear that the teacher came (to your house)'

Jap.

- (14) *Mary ga boku ni kono hon o kureta*
Mary NOM I to this book ACC gave
'Mary has given me this book'
- (15) *Mary ga ootoo ni kono hon o kureta*
Mary NOM brother to this book ACC gave
'Mary has given *my* brother this book'
- (16) **Mary ga ootoo ni kono hon o kureta*
Mary NON brother to this book ACC gave
'Mary has given *her* brother this book'
- (17) **Mary ga John ni kono hon o kureta*
Mary NOM John to this book ACC gave
'Mary has given this book to John'

"not only the concept of *the speaker* but also that of *someone who belongs to the*

speaker plays a distinctive role in the use of some of these verbs” (Kuno 1973: Demonstratives 127)

(18) *Dare ga kono hon o anata ni kudasatta no?*
Who NOM this book ACC you to gave PTC
'Who has given this book to you?'

(19) *Mary ga anata ni kono hon o kuremashita yo*
Mary NOM you to this book ACC gave PTC
'Mary has given this book to you'

relationship between personal pronouns and demonstratives:

Japanese

speaker → *kochi, kochira* lit. 'from this side'; *konata* 'this way'

addressee → *anata* 'that way'

3rd person → *kare* 'the man over there'; *kanojo* 'the woman over there'

Late Old Jap. *anata* 'over there' > Early Middle Jap. *anata* 3rd person pronoun, lit. 'person over there' > Middle Jap. 2nd person pronoun 'you'

Kor.

“as a general rule the Korean language does not use the personal pronouns it possesses as profusely as our European languages do. In most sentences the meaning is clear without specially expressed or constantly repeated I, my, you, your, he, him and so on and the third person (he, she, it, they) is expressed by demonstrative pronouns where needed” (Ramstedt 1979: 46)

Lao

Enfield (2007: 78) “when a Lao speaker makes definite pronominal reference to a person, she cannot avoid implying or explicitly encoding some stance toward the social relationship(s) between speaker, addressee and referent. The attributes implied by these pronouns are not simply observable properties of their referents (e.g., number, sex) but are defined relationally, implicating the speaker herself in the calculation”.

Jap.

ko- series → refers to a thing, person, etc., close to the speaker

so- series → refers to those items closer to the hearer

a- series → refers to those away from both speaker and hearer

kochira → can serve to indicate the speaker

sochira → can serve to indicate the hearer

Tamba (1992: 191) “Les formes *ko/a* permettent [...] de diviser l'univers de référence commun aux interlocuteurs, en une *zone intradiscursive* balayée par *ko*, et une autre *zone extradiscursive*, ouverte par *a*. Deux schèmes bien connus de différenciation sont exploités ici: l'opposition *uchi/soto*”.

Chin. (from Paris 1992: 170)

(20) *wo, zhe ge ren, jiu shi zhe yang*
je ceci CL personne *jiu* être ceci façon
'Moi, je suis comme ça'

(21) **wo, na ge ren, jiu shi zhe yang*
je cela CL personne *jiu* être ceci façon

(22) *ni, zhe ge ren mei liangxin de*
tu ceci CL personne NEG conscience *de*
'Toi, tu es ingrat'

(23) **ni, na ge ren mei liangxin de*
tu cela CL personne NEG conscience *de*

These examples show that “la situation interlocutive est conçue en chinois non pas comme une relation vis-à-vis, mais comme une relation de co-orientation, c'est-à-dire une relation en tandem” (Paris 1992: 170).

Lao
 “What matters is where a referent stands in relation to conceived spatial perimeters. These conceived perimeters emerge from factors of the interaction, including active areas of conversational or practical engagement, physical features of the interactional space, and assumptions about addressees' access to relevant information for inference” (Enfield 2007: 100)

5. Conclusions

- 'subjective' and 'intersubjective' deixis
- areal features in East Asian languages

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