

## Linguistic Variations between English News Headlines in the U.S. and Those in Korea\*

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Lee, Hye-Kyung. 2012. Linguistic Variations between English News Headlines in the U.S. and Those in Korea. *Linguistic Research* 29(2), 329-350. This paper aims to address the similarities and differences between headlines of English political news in America and those in Korea. Acknowledging the contribution of the previous research towards the understanding of news headlines, the current paper investigates how the composing of news headlines is influenced by and interrelated with extra-linguistic factors such as the consideration of the target audience's knowledge states or interests. For this purpose, two sets of data are collected from major online news sites within both countries and the collected data are classified according to the working criteria, especially in terms of employed structural patterns. The results regarding the comparison of the two sets of headlines reveal that headlines in Korean data employ shorter sentential headlines and a smaller variety of tense/aspect of sentences compared to American English counterparts. It is also discovered that cultural factors such as naming conventions practiced in the linguistic/cultural communities are taken into account. These differences are attributed to the consideration of the target audience's multi-faceted states such as knowledge states, beliefs, or interests. At the same time, the two sets of data show similarities in terms of the variety of structural patterns they deploy. (Ajou University)

**Keywords** News headlines, Contrastive study, Political news, English news

### 1. Introduction

News headlines have recently received increasing research attention from a variety of disciplines including pragmatics, sociolinguistics, journalism or experimental psychology. Among the agreements met is that news headlines are an established sub-genre in media discourse, which can be read independently of the

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news articles (e.g., Bell, 1991).<sup>1</sup> Headlines owe the attention drawn to them based on their unique roles such as introducing news stories or attracting readers to actually access the news, and on the space constraints inherent to them. These operating factors force the writers of headlines to construct the optimal headlines to fulfill these goals.

Acknowledging the contribution the previous research on news headlines have made in understanding news headlines, the current paper aims to address the headlines of English political news from a rather innovative contrastive perspective. This paper attempts to compare and contrast political news headlines published in American news sites and those in Korean news sites. The audience of English news in these two communities should be different, especially in terms of the level of English proficiency, and hence, the goals of headlines to fulfill them must be differentiated. Thus, speculation can go in such a way that the writers of news headlines in these communities take the target audience's various states into consideration. The rationale behind the comparison between these two sets of headlines is to investigate how the composition of headlines is affected by or interrelated with these extra-linguistic factors regarding the readers' knowledge states, beliefs, or interests. For the purpose of this comparison, two sets of English news headlines are collected from major online news sites in both countries. The collected headlines are then classified and receive contrastive investigation.

## 2. Previous Research on News Headlines

News headlines have been studied from a variety of perspectives ranging from research on structural patterns (e.g., Bell, 1991; Dor, 2003; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Saxena, 2006) to experimental studies (e.g., Ifantidou, 2009; Kwon, 2002; Leon, 1997; Noh, 2010). Quirk *et al.* (1985: 846), for instance, suggests several syntactic features of news headlines as in (1)

- (1) a. the use of the simple present e.g. MEAT PRICE RISE AGAIN  
 b. *to* + V to express future e.g. SENATOR TO SEEK REELECTION

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<sup>1</sup> According to Bhatia (2004: 87), “genres are socially constructed, interpreted and used in specific academic, social, institutional and professional contexts, and have their own individual identity”.

- c. asyndeton<sup>2</sup> e.g. UTILITY POLE FALLS, KILLS WORKER
- d. intransitivization of transitives e.g. BRITISH VITORY SUPRISES

As for the function of headlines, news headlines have traditionally been known to summarize the news articles they introduce and to attract the readers' attention. The summarizing function of headlines thus presupposes that the headlines more or less represent the relevant news stories (e.g., Saxena, 2006). However, on the other hand, the summarizing function of headlines has been under question. This skepticism can be easily supported by both empirical observations and experiments. The data collected for the current study contain the following headlines.

- (2) a. Ex-consultant to Mayor Gets Prison for Theft (NT 12/21/11)
- b. Callista Gingrich, America's Camilla Parker-Bowles (WP 1/3/12)

The headlines in (2) need to be fleshed out by the information contained in the relevant news. (2a), for instance, does not tell us who the persons referred to as *ex-consultant* and *mayor* are and what type of theft it deals with. Until the readers read the relevant article, it is hard to recover the missing information. (2b) also reveals the similar point in that it is not clear how the individual named Callista Gingrich is related to America's Camilla Parker-Bowles. Again the relevant news fleshes out how the two NPs are connected. The skepticism is also indirectly supported by several studies such as Althaus *et al* (2001), Andrew (2007) and Leon (1997), which prove that headlines do not help comprehend/recall the article contents nor do they represent the articles.

Hence, news headlines are taken to underrepresent the relevant articles and to be autonomous texts which can be read on their own (e.g., Bell, 1991; Jucker, 1996; Kronrod & Engel, 2001). Ifantidou (2009) and Dor (2003), for instance, prove that readers tend to interpret headlines to optimally ration processing effort with cognitive effects, using the framework of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986/1995). They show that successful headlines involve an understanding of the readers' knowledge states, beliefs, expectations and cognitive styles.

This point has a bearing with the second function of headlines: the

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<sup>2</sup> Asyndeton refers to unlinked coordination.

attention-getting function. Since news readers tend to *scan* rather than *read* the headlines, news reporters or editors have to do their best to ensure their readers *read* the articles, especially in the case of online news. That motivates the reporters/editors to construct news headlines that are attractive to the readers. Several experimental studies reveal that readers show more interest in ‘attractive/creative’ headlines than ‘informative/ standard’ headlines (e.g., Ifantidou, 2009; Kwon, 2002). This finding can indirectly support the argument against the summarizing function of headlines.

News headlines are also investigated from diachronic perspectives (e.g., Kim, 2003; Neiger, 2007) or from contrastive perspectives. Neiger (2007), for instance, put forth the argument that the construction of news headlines is strongly influenced by political or cultural factors. He proves his argument with such facts as the increase of highly speculative headlines during the Gulf War. News headlines are also examined by diverse contrastive approaches: between two languages (e.g., Lee, 2009), between offline headlines and their online counterparts (e.g., Noh, 2010), or between American news headlines and their corresponding EFL versions (e.g. Shie, 2011). Shie (2011) observes that American news headlines entertain more metaphors or metonymies than their EFL versions in Taiwan in order to tailor the headlines to be more accessible regarding the target audience.

Except for these several contrastive studies, relatively scarce research has been conducted on the headline texts from contrastive points of view, specifically on headline texts written in the same language targeted to different types of readers. The current study is an attempt to contribute an understanding of headlines written in English in different linguistic/cultural communities and to delve into the interrelation between the composition of headlines and extra-linguistic factors. Specifically, this study will look into how the structural patterns are influenced by the consideration of the readers of the headlines.

### **3. The Study**

#### **3.1 Data Collection and Classification**

To compare and contrast the headlines of English news articles published in America (henceforth AE) and those published in Korea (henceforth KE), 200

headlines of political news were collected from several online news sites: 100 from American news sites and 100 from Korean English news sites.<sup>3</sup> The articles were chosen from those published between November 2011 and January 2012.<sup>4</sup> Among the various sections of news sites, headlines were sampled from politics sections (international, national or local). The selection of headlines was constrained in such a way that each headline contains at least one expression referring to a (public) figure. The reason for the constraint is that the data used in this paper is part of a bigger project, which involves a contrastive analysis of referring expressions in AE political news and KE political news.

A textual survey of the collected headlines was then conducted to examine the variations between the two sets of data. The examination started with the identification of structural patterns of the headlines according to the working categories discussed in section 3.2, which is a revised version of Lee (2009). Afterwards, the identified structural patterns were classified in order to derive the patterns of variations between AE headlines and KE headlines. The occurrence of each structural pattern was calculated for that purpose.

### **3.2 The Structural Patterns of AE Headlines**

The 100 collected AE headlines are classified according to structural patterns using a revised version of Lee's (2009) categories. Lee (2009:78) provided the categories in (3) when classifying English headlines with typical examples and the occurrences.

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<sup>3</sup> The American host sites used for this study are [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), [www.usatoday.com](http://www.usatoday.com), [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com) and [www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com). The Korean sites are [www.koreaherald.com](http://www.koreaherald.com), [www.koreatimes.com](http://www.koreatimes.com) and [www.joongangdaily.co.kr](http://www.joongangdaily.co.kr). The sites are referred to with the following abbreviations respectively: NT USA WP LT KH KT and JD. The main readers of the Korean English news are Koreans who want to retain or improve their English skills through English news or foreigners in Korea or abroad who are interested in Korean affairs. The information posted in Korea Times web site indirectly indicates its target readership.

“The Korea Times has something for everyone, be the Korean, foreign businessmen, diplomats, or tourists with its constructive, well-balanced coverage ranging from socio-politics, economics, culture to sports.” ([www.koreatimes.com](http://www.koreatimes.com))

<sup>4</sup> The duration is decided to be to 3 months for two rather conflicting reasons: i) to minimize any variations resulting from the duration variable, and ii) to obtain the relevant data since not all headlines or news articles involve expressions referring to a (public) figure.

- (3) a. NP: Washington Scandal Update (8)  
 b. Complex NP: McCain to Focus on Having Enacted political Reform (19)  
 c. Declarative: Veto of Spending Bill is Threatened. (63)  
 d. Interrogative: Can Ted Stevens Still Win Alaska? (3)  
 e. Complex S: McCain sees Disaster if Bailout Bill Fails Again. (3)  
 f. Subordinate Clause: After I Win...Er, Make That, if I Am Elected (1)  
 g. AP: Young, Republican and Inspired by Palin (2)  
 h. PP: Back From War, and Increasingly Into the Political Fray (1)

Categories in (3) are slightly revised in the current study for a few reasons. First, the category of declaratives is changed into the category of simple sentences for the parallelism with the category of complex/compound sentences. Second, the categories AP and PP are replaced by the category of verb-less constructions chiefly because there are only a few APs and PPs within the current data.<sup>5</sup> Instead, a group of headlines entertain the reduction of sentences by means of deleting the main verb, mostly the linking verbs, the one AP being included in this category. Third, a new category of NP + *to* verb is separated from the category of noun phrases since such construction occupies a relatively large portion of data. In (4), a typical example of each category is presented.

- (4) a. NP + *to* V: Panetta to Offer Strategy for Cutting Military Budget (NT 1/3/12)  
 b. Vless: Paul Voters Not Necessarily Party Voters (NT 12/31/11)  
 c. NP: New Twitter User: Michelle Obama (USA 1/12/12)  
 d. Simple S: Romney Sounds Increasingly Confident in Iowa (NT 1/3/12)  
 e. Complex S<sup>6</sup>: Oakland Reins Blister a Mayor Raised on Protest

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<sup>5</sup> The only one AP head line is *McCain: 'Stupid' to dwell on past Romney criticism*. The following news reveals that the expression is what McCain said.

(NT 12/28/11)

e. Interrogative: Colbert for President: A Run or a Comedy Riff?

(NT 1/11/12)

The occurrence of each construction is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Structural Pattern of AE Headlines

NP+to V	Vless	NP	SimpleS	Complex S	Interrogative	Total
9	13	4	64	9	1	<b>100</b>

The most predominant construction is simple sentences such as (2d) with 64 occurrences. The notable characteristic regarding the use of simple sentences is that the vast majority of simple sentences are couched in the present tense.<sup>7</sup> Out of 64 simple sentences, 56 examples are in the present tense. Table 2 illustrates the tense or the aspect of the simple sentences.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the tense/aspect of AE Simple Sentence Headlines

present	progressive	Past	Auxiliary	Total
56	3	3	2	<b>64</b>

While the time reference of the present tense varies among the future, the present and the past, the most prevailing time-reference is for past events.<sup>8</sup> Examples in (5), (6) and (7) illustrate the use of the present tense for the three types of time-references.

**(5) Donors Get a Piece of Hillary Clinton's Campaign (USA 12/6/11)**

The Friends of Hillary PAC, which was behind Hillary Rodham Clinton's historic 2008 presidential campaign, offers donors a last chance to get a memento if they make a donation to help erase the remaining \$274,000 debt from that race. → **future**

<sup>6</sup> The category of Complex sentences comprises both sentences with subordination such as 2(e) and those with coordination such as *Iowa Republicans Caucus and Look to November and Obama*.

<sup>7</sup> To decide the time of the reported event mentioned in the headline, the articles introduced by the relevant headlines were read with care.

<sup>8</sup> For a comprehensive review of the research on temporality, time and tense, refer to Jaszcsolt (2009).

(6) **David Axelrod Is at Home Waging What May Be His Last Campaign**  
(NT 12/29/11)

. . . Now Mr. Axelrod is focused on just the general election and an incumbent's campaign that he will help shepherd from here — he can easily walk to campaign headquarters from home — with a characteristic mix of idealism and caution-filled pragmatism. → **present**

(7) **Bachman Strikes Thatcher Comparison In Iowa** (NT 12/29/11)

Representative Michele Bachmann, trying to keep her campaign alive in the waning days of the race in Iowa, highlighted a theme she has been using lately, comparing herself to Margaret Thatcher. → **past**

Among 56 headlines embedded in the present tense, only 3 headlines describe either future events or present events, while the remaining 53 present-tensed simple sentences refer to past events as shown in (7). Hence it could be concluded that AE headlines employ the present tense mainly to report on past events, presumably for the space constraints inherent with the headline section (Bell 1991) or for the more vivid description of the reported events as historical present tense (Quirk *et al*, 1985).<sup>9</sup> As shown in Table 2, three simple sentence headlines are embedded in the progressive aspect, two of which refer to future events as in (8a) and (8b) and one to a present event as in (8c). Also, three headlines are written within the past tense, referring to past events as in (9). In addition, two headline contain the auxiliary verbs *won't* and *may*, referring to a future event (10a) or a speculation on a future event (10b).<sup>10</sup>

- (8) a. One of the Pentagon's Top Women Is Stepping Down (NT/12/12/11)
- b. Koch Is Backing Quinn in 2013 Race for Mayor (NT 12/12/11)
- c. Sleeveless and V-Necked, Santorum's Sweaters Are Turning Heads  
(NT 1/3/12)
- (9) a. Warren Raised \$5.7 Million for Senate Bid (NT 1/12/12)
- b. George W. and Laura Bush wanted Jeb to run in 2012 (USA

<sup>9</sup> According to Quirk *et al*(1985: 181), “the historic present describes the past as if it is happening now: it conveys something of the dramatic immediacy of an eye-witness account.”

<sup>10</sup> It has long been noted in the literature that futurity and modality, especially epistemic modality, are closely intertwined because futurity involves uncertainty as opposed to the present (e.g., Bybee *et al*, 1994; Jaszczolt, 2009; Lee, 2011; Palmer, 1979; Steedman, 1997).

1/12/12)

- c. Elizabeth Warren raised \$5.7 million in final quarter of 2011 (LT 1/11/12)
- (10) a. Trump Won't Go Forward With Debate (NT 12/15/11)  
b. Hearing May Be an Ex-Governor's Last Stand (NT 1/12/12)

Three simple sentence headlines employ the function of quoting, either fully or partially. (11) shows these headlines.

- (11) a. Huntsman: 'I'm the underdog in this race' (USA 1/5/12)  
b. S.C. GOP chairman: Primary will be 'decisive' (USA 1/12/12)  
c. Chamber chief Donohue calls rivals' attacks on Romney 'foolish' (LT 1/12/12)

The ways in which quoting is done varies considerably. (11a) and (11b) could be regarded as full quotations, whereas (11c) as a partial quotation because only the word foolish is enclosed by single quotation marks. As discussed by Lee (2009: 73), "the quoted expressions are not the exact ones entertained by the sources of the quotes", while some are the exact quotes such as (11b). Quotes are used in a bid to attain readers' attention by making as though the quotes were actually uttered by the news actors, regarding them as high reality (Kwon, 2002).

Going back to Table 1, nine complex sentences are found in the data, some of which are presented in (12).

- (12) a. Frustrated Gingrich Looks Past Iowa and Lashes Back at Romney (NT 1/3/12)  
b. Defense Chief Says Israel Must Mend Arab Ties (NT 1/12/12)  
c. Illinois Prosecutor Who Challenged DNA Evidence Will Resign (NT 12/8/11)

Except for (12c), all complex sentences are presented in the present tense while referring to past events. Among the nine complex sentences, six sentences have the verb *say* as main verbs, as shown in (12b). This demonstrates that the relevant headlines play the quoting role, rendering the relevant headlines authentic and

realistic.

The second frequent pattern is verb-less constructions with 11 occurrences. The deleted verbs are mostly linking verbs such as *be* or *become*. The time-reference of the titles varies as in the sentence headlines. Examples in (13) are some of the verb-less headlines found in the AE data.

- (13) a. Coming soon: Cain bus tour (USA 1/4/12)  
 b. Iowa Rep. Steve King upset with Boehner (USA 1/3/12)

The above headlines could be rephrased as *Cain bus tour is coming soon*, and *Iowa Rep. Steve King is upset with Boehner*. Here the recovered verbs are all *be* verbs. As linking verbs barely take responsibility of carrying meaning, they are subject to deletion for the space limit of the headline section.

There are nine occurrences of the NP + *to* V construction. The key characteristic of this construction is that the NP position is all occupied by a proper noun such as *Panetta*, *Perry*, *Obama* and *Palin*. The sense intended to be delivered by the construction must be that the relevant public figure is expected/scheduled to do the action described by the verb. The *to*-V construction serves to carry future-time reference, delivering scheduled or (officially) planned future events (Quirk *et al*, 1985; Neiger, 2007). The examples found in the data all refer to (officially) planned future events, as can be witnessed in (14).

- (14) a. Perry to Return to Texas to Assess Campaign (NT 1/3/12)  
 b. Obama to Turn Up Attacks on Congress in Campaign (NT 1/1/12)

Four NPs are identified in the AE data including (4c) and (2b) above, repeated here as (15a) and (15c).

- (15) a. New Twitter User: Michelle Obama (USA 1/12/12)  
 b. Ron and Rand Paul, a double dose of liberty (WP 1/3/12)  
 c. Callista Gingrich, America's Camilla Parker-Bowles (WP 1/3/12)  
 d. What Blagojevich's Sentence Says About Corruption and Greed (NT 12/9/11)

The message recoverable from (15a) looks very simple, presumably by adding a linking verb, *be* or *become*, whose role is replaced by a colon. Indeed, the relevant article reports that Michell Obama joined Twitter. (15b) and (15c) are of special interest, although the same linking verb can be inserted between the two NPs. In these two headlines, the second NPs are used figuratively. (15b) is the headline of an article about two politicians, Ron Paul and his son, Rand Paul, discussing how the son's support for the father's caucus creates a win-win effect for both politicians. That situation is described as *a double dose of liberty*. (15b) exploits a metaphor by comparing Callista Gingrich, the wife of Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich to Camilla Parker-Bowles, the wife of Prince Charles, U.K.<sup>11</sup> For a metaphoric expression to hold, the features of the source domain, Callista Gingrich, are mapped to the target domain, Camilla Parker-Bowles (a la Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999). Here the mapped features may include 'former mistress', 'present legitimate wife' and 'successfully projecting the image of a proper political spouse'. As maintained by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), the metaphor exploited in (15c) has basis on people's cultural experience. That is, if one does not know who Camilla Parker-Bowles is, which must be the case in non-English speaking communities such as Korea, then the headline would hardly be understood due to the failure of the metaphor. The metaphors used here are novel metaphors as opposed to conventionalized or 'frozen' metaphors.<sup>12</sup> (15d) is the headline of news concerning the former Illinois governor who was arrested on federal corruption charges and sentenced to 14 years in federal prison. Even those who do not know who Blagojevich is can infer from the headline that he is in the public service field and involved in corruption.

Last comes the interrogative (4e), repeated here as (16).

(16) Colbert for President: A Run or a Comedy Riff? (NT 1/11/12)

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<sup>11</sup> According to the relevant news (Washington Post on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Jan, 2012), "Callista Gingrich is her husband's former mistress, the third wife now but the woman with whom he conducted a six-year affair while he was speaker of the House. Whether intentionally or not, the image she presents is all wife and no mistress. Formal and reserved in her red blazers, ruby lipstick and stunningly coiffed platinum hair, Gingrich does nothing if not project the portrait of political spouse."

<sup>12</sup> Novel metaphors are recognized when their literal interpretations are taken to be weird, whereas conventional metaphors are processed in a special metaphorical way (Cruse, 2006).

This headline is about Stephan Colbert, the Comedy Central television host. From the headline, at least two aspects about the person called Colbert can be inferred: i) he is intending to run for the president, and ii) he is involved in the field of comedy, which both prove true according to the article. The reason the interrogative is employed is either because Colbert hasn't decided to select which option or that people or the reporter cannot predict which option he would choose. Interrogatives in headlines are believed to be instrumental to attract readers' attention even though their actual roles vary from genuine questions to rhetorical questions (Kim, 2003).

### 3.3 The Structural Patterns of KE Headlines

The distribution of structural patterns of KE headlines is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Distribution of the Structural Pattern of KE Headlines

NP+to V	Vless	NP	SimpleS	ComplexS	Interrogative	Total
19	18	6	49	7	1	<b>100</b>

As seen in the AE data, simple sentences are used most frequently in KE headlines, even though the number of occurrence in KE (N=49) is smaller than in AE (N=64). Except for two examples, all simple sentences are couched in the present tense. The time reference is made to the past except for one sentence. (17) contains two of the simple sentences in the present tense having the past-time reference while (18) has the present-time reference.

(17) a. **Park hints at sweeping change of nomination rules (KH 1/4/12)**

Grand National Party chief Park Geun-hye on Tuesday hinted at a sweeping change of rules in the ruling party's nomination of candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections. → **past**

b. **Kim Geun-tae, 'godfather' of democracy movement, dies (KH**

12/20/11)

Kim Geun-tae, a renowned pro-democracy activist and politician who laid the cornerstone of South Korean democracy, died of complications from pneumonia

and blood poisoning on Friday. → **past**

(18) **Jang orchestrates** North Korea's transition (KT 12/21/11)

The mysterious brother-in-law of the late North Korean leader Kim Jong-il is said to be wielding enormous influence in the aftermath of the ruler's death. → **present**

The remaining two simple sentences contain auxiliary verbs, as shown in (19).

(19) a. President Lee's brother won't seek re-election (KT 12/11/11)

b. Parliament may take legal action against tear gas-spraying lawmaker (KH 11/24/11)

(19a) is the headline of news which reports that the brother of the Korean President M.B. Lee decided not to run for the upcoming general election. Here *won't* can be viewed as a modality marker, indicating the volition of the subject. *May* in (19b) is also seen as a modality marker, which conveys a speculation pertaining to a future event. The distribution of tense or aspect of the simple sentence KE headlines is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Distribution of the tense/aspect of KE Simple Sentence Headlines

present	progressive	past	auxiliary	<b>Total</b>
47	0	0	2	<b>49</b>

As opposed to the AE headlines, KE headlines employ less varied types of tense/aspect in simple sentence headlines: there are no progressive constructions or past tense sentences.

With regard to complex sentence headlines, there are seven complex sentences, among which six contain the verb *say*. Here are some of the examples.

(20) a. Rep. Park Jin of GNP says will not run in April election (KH 12/23/11)

b. Jong-un orders shooting of defectors, sources say (JD 2/5/12)

c. GNP reformist won't run, others may follow (JD 12/12/11)

The quoted content either follows or precedes the quoting verb *say*. Here again, the use of the quote is viewed to be intended to provide authenticity thus, attracting the reader's attention. Examples like (20b) in which the quoted precedes the quoting verb, are not found in AE data, whereas the KE data show three occurrences of such type. When such a construction is chosen, it appears that the quoted content is intended to receive more focus rather than the source of the information. Example (20c) shows asyndeton with two parallel sentences without any connective. Regarding the tense/aspect of the complex sentences, all complex sentences, except for (20c), are couched in the present tense, their time reference being the past.

The second frequent construction is the combination of NP + *to* V. Here are some examples which deserve attention.

- (21) a. Ahn Cheol-soo to visit U.S. to meet Bill Gates (KH 1/5/12)  
 b. Lawmaker to testify in bribe scandal (KT 1/6/12)  
 c. MB's address to focus on the North (JD 12/29/11)

As in the AE data, all occurrences of this construction have the future-time reference. What attracts our attention is that the types of NPs are varied as opposed to the AE data. As discussed in section 3.2, the NP position is occupied by proper names in AE data. Within KE data, however, three different types of NPs are identified: proper names (with/without titles) (21a), NP referring to people (21b), and NP referring to objects (21c). Table 5 present the distribution of these three types of NPs and their respective examples.

**Table 5.** Types of NPs in KE NP+*to* V Construction

	Examples	No
Proper Names	Ahn Cheol-soo Foreign Minister Kim Rev. Pomnyun Han	4
NPs (person)	Top military officer; New GNP PR chief; Japanese nuclear envoy; Senior US diplomat; Medical PR expert; GNP lawmaker; Scholar; Israel Official; Ethiopian PM; Lawmaker (2); US envoy; President	13
NPs (object)	Late NK leader's body; MB's address	2

Next frequently used is the verb-less construction. Examples in (22) show us some of the headlines belonging to this category.

- (22) a. Pioneer of Korean democracy laid to rest (KH 1/4/12)  
 b. 'Hillary's lawyer' proud of motherland Korea (KT 1/6/12)  
 c. Hyundai chairwoman coordinating NK visit with ex-first lady (KT 12/22/11)

The association between an NP and a past participle in (22a) is due to the lack of a linking verb. Similarly, the deletion of a linking verb in (22b) and (22c) result in an NP with an adjective and with a present participle respectively. The deletion of the linking verb must be the result of the space consideration, as discussed in section 3.2 above.

Five NPs are found in KE headlines, some of which are presented in (23).

- (23) a. Hunt for cash-for-vote messenger (JD 1/16/12)  
 b. A monk with political pull (KH 11/29/11)  
 c. General whose fortunes rose with Kim Jong-un (JD 12/28/11)

These NPs play the role of introducing the topic or the person that is reported in the accompanying articles. This yields a contrast with the AE NPs. As discussed in section 3.2, AE NPs enjoy the tropes such as metaphors by means of apposition. That is scarcely witnessed in KE headlines. (23a) is the only example in which the

head noun is an object, because the remaining four NPs have persons as their head nouns. The NPs used here contain the otherwise predicate part, so that the semantic relation between the head noun and its complement is retrievable. In (23b), for instance, the relation between the head noun *monk* and its complement PP *with political pull* can be construed in such a way that the referred monk (Rev. Pomnyun) possesses a political influence. Similarly, in (14c), it can be inferred that the general's status has risen thanks to the new NK leader Kim Jong-un.

There is only one occurrence of interrogative in the KE headlines, which is presented in (24).

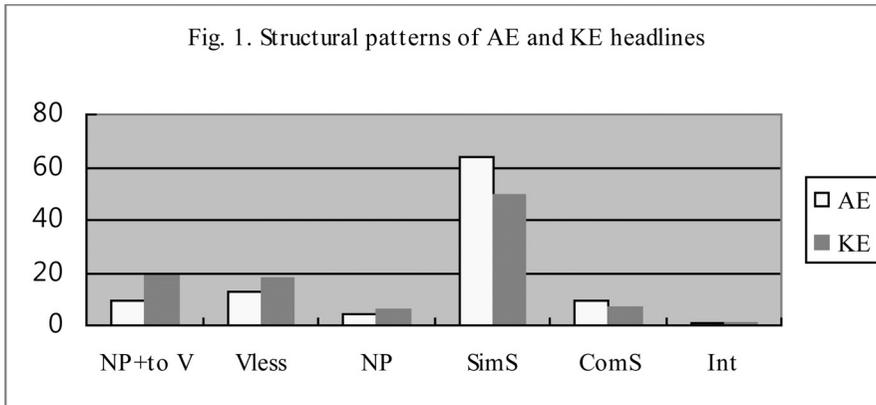
(24) What is future for Kim Ok (KT 12/19/11)

The use of interrogative in headlines has multiple functions ranging from genuine questions to rhetorical questions. That is why some headlines are subject to distorted interpretations, which proves the autonomous status of headlines. In the case of (24), there is no way of telling who Kim Ok is without the aid of background knowledge regarding Korean political situations at the time the relevant article was published. Furthermore, readers who do not know Korean might have no clue as to which component of the full name *Kim Ok* is the surname.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The comparison of Table 1 and Table 3 reveal that both AE and KE headlines entertain similar types of constructions ranging from simple sentences to NPs. This can lead to a generalization that English news headlines are formulated using these types of syntactic resources. This also agrees with Quirk *et al's* (1985) observation. As for the differences, the AE headlines use sentential structures (N=73) more than the KE headlines (N=56), whereas the KE headlines employ NP + *to* V constructions and verb-less constructions more than the AE headlines. Figure 1 presents the occurrence of each construction in both sets of data.

<sup>13</sup> According to the news article (Korea Herald 19<sup>th</sup> of Dec, 2011), Kim Ok is “regarded as “North Korea’s first lady“, who has served as Kim Jong-il’s personal secretary since 1980s. She became a de facto first lady after the death of Kim Jong-il’s consort Ko Young-hee in 2004.” Kim is the surname and Ok is the given name.



The three constructions, NP + to V, verb-less, and NP constructions, can be incorporated into a larger category of NPs, if we view the first two to be expanded NPs.<sup>14</sup> That being the case, it could be said that the KE headlines entertain NPs including expanded NPs more than AE headlines. NPs, especially, expanded NPs provide a useful way of delivering a relatively large amount of information by packaging the information densely and effectively, “which would otherwise have required several clauses” (Kuo, 2007:749). The preference to complex NPs (containing pre- or post modifiers) for the sake of information density is witnessed in several recent studies of written news discourse (e.g., Biber, 2003; Ni, 2003). That tendency is much better conformed to in the KE headlines than in AE headlines. This also accords with the fact observed in the comparison of Korean editorial headlines and their English counterparts, as shown in (25) and (26).

- (25) a. cwu o-il-cey honlan-un kwukhoy-uy  
 week five-day-system confusion-NM National:Assembly  
 thayup thas-i-ta?<sup>15</sup>  
 slowdown blame-be-PRS-Q?  
 ‘Is the slowdown of the National Assembly to blame for the  
 confusion surrounding the five-day week system?’

<sup>14</sup> As discussed in Section 3.1, Lee’s (2009) previous work on headlines set the category expanded NPs, which is elaborated into more detailed categories in the current study.

<sup>15</sup> In transcribing the Korean data, the Yale Romanization System is adopted. The abbreviations are as follows: AC (accusative), IN (indicative), NM (nominative), PRS (prospective), Q (question)

- b. Time Wrong For Management Surrender
- (26) a. *ceng-taypyo chiyok-ul eti-kkaci kkul-ko ka-l*  
 Ceng-Rep. shame-AC to:where drag-and go-PRS  
*kes-i-n-ka?*  
 thing-be-IN-Q?  
 'To what extent will Rep. Ceng keep the shame?'  
 b. Shameful Defiance (Kim, 2003: 52)

As the English translations in (25a) and (26a) reveal, the Korean headlines are much longer and tend to employ a wider variety of constructions than the English counterparts. Hence, it could be speculated that Korean writers are highly conscious of conforming to the conventions of composing English headlines.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, it could be predicted that the KE headlines are shorter than the AE headlines in terms of the length, as the total number of words used in the AE headlines is 795, whereas that of the KE headlines is 756. The discrepancy between the two numbers can be bigger if we take one more factor into consideration. As discussed in Section 3.1, all headlines contain at least one expression referring to a (public) person. These referring expressions are examined contrastively in terms of the length of the expression. The result yields that the numbers of words used for the KE referring expression is 202, whereas that in the AE referring expressions is 169. That means that the AE headlines use more words for the other parts of headlines than the referring expressions in comparison to the KE headlines. Table 6 summarizes the numbers of words used in both sets of data.

**Table 6.** Number of Words in Both Sets of Headlines (per headline)

	Total	Referring expressions	Remaining parts
AE	795 (7.95)	169 (1.69)	626 (6.26)
KE	756 (7.56)	202 (2.02)	554 (5.54)
<b>Difference</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>-33</b>	<b>74</b>

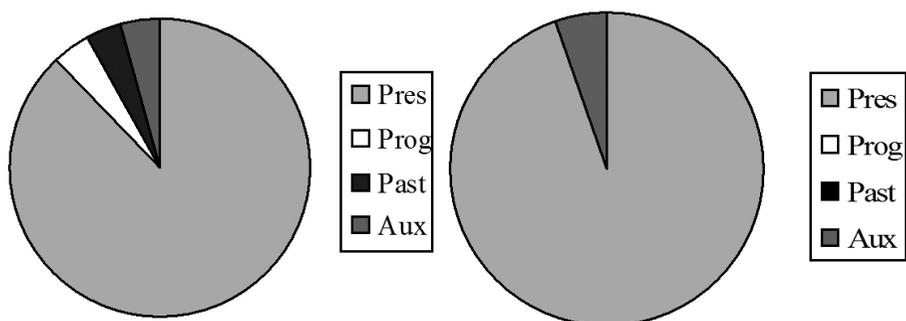
Table 6 shows us that the AE headlines contain more words than KE headlines and the difference increases if the referring expressions are excluded. The differences

<sup>16</sup> Note that the KE headlines are written by bilingual or English-native-like Koreans, which was verified by the reporters' names.

here are attributed to the increased use of (expanded) NPs in the KE headlines such as NP + *to* V construction and verb-less constructions.

The next difference to be addressed is the types of tenses/aspects in both data. As discussed in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, the KE headlines employ fewer varieties of tenses/aspects. There are 73 sentences including complex sentences in the AE data and 56 sentences in the KE data, the latter lacking both the past tense and the progressive aspect. The distributions concerning the tense/aspect of the sentences in both sets of data are presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

**Fig. 2. Tense/Aspect of AE sentences**      **Fig. 3. Tense/Aspect of KE sentences**



The other difference worth mentioning is the use of tropes such as metaphors. AE NP headlines entertain (novel) metaphors, which sometimes require background knowledge about English-speaking communities. The representative case is the Camilla Parker Bowles example. In contrast, the KE headlines do not show any use of such metaphors. This might due to the nature of the readership of KE news, as discussed in Section 2: a large portion of KE readers are Koreans who want to study English as a second/foreign language. Understanding the figurative meaning of an expression requires a wide variety of aspects including: meanings of individual words, the literal meaning of whole expression, facts about the world, cultural components, etc. (Fromkin *et al*, 2011). The less use of figurative meanings in KE headlines is attributable to the writer's intention to put less of a burden on news readers. This effort can be witnessed in the use of referring expressions, especially in the use of full nouns. In English-speaking communities, it is normal to put one's

given name first and the surname last as in *Carmilla Parker Bowles* or *Hillary Clinton*. However, in the KE headlines, full names are given in the order in which Korean presents one's full name; i.e., surname first and given name last. The KE headlines included such proper names as *Ahn Cheol-soo*, *Kim Geun-tae* and *Park Jin*, in which the family name precedes the given name. The only exception is *Sung Kim*, the U.S. Ambassador to Korea, whose given name is Sung and surname is Kim. The reason might be that the ambassador holds an American citizenship, even though he retains his Korean name.

To sum up, the comparison of AE headlines and KE headlines displays a similarity in terms of the syntactic patterns they utilize in that, both sets of data follow the conventional news headlines features. On the other hand, a few differences are witnessed including the variety of tense/aspect of sentences, the length of the headlines, the uses of complex NPs, and naming practice. These differences are attributed to at least two factors. First, they are due to the consideration or appreciation of the readers of the news. The readers of KE headlines include Korean readers whose native language is not English. Therefore, the editors/reports appear to take that aspect into account; when composing the headlines, they make them less complex and less lengthy. Second, the conventions practiced within the relevant linguistic/cultural communities also contribute to the differences. The typical example discussed in this section above is the naming practice used within Korea, according to which the surname precedes the given name. That practice is reflected in constructing the headlines while other cultures' conventions are also appreciated as in the Sung Kim example.

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