

On contrastiveness*

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Kim, Yong-Beom. 2012. On contrastiveness. *Linguistic Research* 29(3), 515-540. This paper attempts to delineate the notion contrastiveness that has been used as a cover term for different phenomena in linguistics. The terms contrastive focus and contrastive topic have been used without defining the notion *contrastive* in a coherent way. The two notions *contrastiveness* and *focus* are compared to each other and defined separately. In this paper contrastiveness is defined independently of focus based on pragmatic connotations found in English and Korean and it is claimed that contrastiveness involves cancellation or weakening of exclusivity implicature which in effect results in a statement weaker than a focus construction. This enables the speaker to limit his illocution to intended objects only without unintentionally imposing a negative implication on unchosen objects. It is further postulated that the Korean contrastive marker is used in an epistemic statement or conclusion that the speaker draws based on evidence available to him. It is also claimed that the cancellation or weakening of implicature enables the speaker to answer sensitive questions partially, incongruently, or in a face saving manner. (Kwangwoon University)

Keywords contrastiveness, focus, alternative set, assertion strength, B accent, A accent, exclusivity implicature, scalar implicature, canceling of implicature, epistemic statement, partial answer, face saving, politeness

1. Introduction

This paper attempts to delineate the notion contrastiveness as opposed to focusing. Bolinger (1961) states that semantically highlighted constituents are always contrastive, implying that focusing is always contrastive. Rochemont (1986: 52) differentiates between contrastive focus and presentational focus, also implying that contrast is a feature of focusing. Repp (2009:3), however, states that “the term contrast has been used for a number of concepts that bear a family resemblance but

* The research leading to this paper has been conducted with the financial support of 2010 Kwangwoon University Research Grant. I feel grateful to the University for the financial support. I am also thankful to the two anonymous referees of this paper who gave me valuable comments on this paper. All the errors herein are mine, though.

cannot easily be summarized under a definition that is both general enough to cover all of them, and specific enough to distinguish contrast from the notion of focus in the alternative-indicating sense.” I will argue in terms of assertion strength that contrastiveness can be defined as a separate notion that has to be differentiated from the notion focus.

According to Bußmann (1990:449), as quoted in Molnar (2001), the notion of *contrast* has two dimensions: firstly it stands for opposition either on the paradigmatic or syntagmatic level, and secondly it includes another aspect, namely “highlighting by accent”. However, what confuses us is that these two aspects of contrast are also claimed to appear in the notion of focus, too. These properties of contrast can be exemplified by (1).

(1) A: What do you want to drink, tea or coffee?

B: I want [TEA_{Foc}]

In (1) TEA is highlighted by accent and it is in opposition with coffee. This highlighted phrase would be called an identificational focus by É. Kiss (1998) since the alternatives are well defined or given and the exclusion implicature that the speaker does not want coffee is readily calculable. Unfortunately, however, many authors call this type of focus a “contrastive” focus probably because TEA is contrasted with coffee. For instance, Stefan Sudhoff (2009) assumes that all foci are contrastive in the sense that their interpretation involves a set of alternatives. For instance, contrastive focus in its narrow sense — as opposed to (new) information focus — imposes specific restrictions on the alternatives. In other words, alternatives form a closed set and they are contextually given or at least derivable. Chafe (1976: 34) and Jacobs (1988: 113) also claim that the limited set of candidates is the essential properties of contrastiveness and that the candidates excluded must be explicitly mentioned in the context.

The main goal of this paper is to show that contrastiveness defined in this paper cannot combine with the notion focus and that an unsuitable naming like contrastive focus is the main cause of confusion regarding focus and contrastiveness.

Now consider (2):

(2) A: What do you want to drink?

B: I want [TEA_{Foc}]

In (2), we can call TEA an informational focus if we follow É. Kiss (1998) since the alternative set may be semantically determined, namely a set of drinkable substances. I will say that the above two TEA's manifest focus, identificational and informational, but not contrastive focus. In this paper, contrastiveness will be defined independently of focus.

First of all, I will argue that contrastiveness and focusing should be defined in terms of assertion strength of an utterance. I do not accept the controversial position that all foci are contrastive, namely, contrastiveness appears in the definition focus. In what follows I will show that it is proper to differentiate and define contrastiveness and focus as two separate notions in the light of assertion force of an utterance.

2. Focus

In this section, it will be assumed that focus is basically highlighting an object chosen from a set of alternatives as postulated in Rooth (1985, 1992) and therefore necessarily involves a kind of 'exclusive' conversational implicature and that the existence of such implicature increases the assertion strength of the utterance. The existence of such an exclusivity implicature creates some 'contrast' between chosen and unchosen alternatives, and as a result the chosen alternatives are described as having a certain property and the unchosen ones, implicitly, as lacking such a property. This dichotomous distinction among alternatives is sometimes unwanted in actual utterance since the respondent to a question may only have a partial answer or may not want to say all that he or she knows. Questions are not always answered congruently and answers are not always formulated or given in a manner that suits the inquirer. This is where we want the exclusive implicature to lose its effect and where one alternative can be described as having such and such properties, without any implicature, independently of others. Focus constructions, however, do not have such a function as shown below.

2.1 Focus, exclusion implicature and assertion strength

Let us return to (1). From a non-theoretical perspective, uttering (1B) conveys not only the information that he wants tea but also the implicature that the speaker does not want coffee. According to the notions proposed by Rooth (1985) and their later developments, there is a well-defined alternative set in the case of (1) and exclusion implicature is evident.

This additional implicature adds to the assertion strength of the utterance. The exclusivity implicature appears only when some illocutionary conditions are met. It is difficult to pin-point what those conditions are, but one of the conditions has to do with transaction of information that involves demanding information and supplying it. The interlocution in (1) involves this kind of information exchange. If there is no such demand, the exclusion implicature may not appear as shown below.

(3) A: I heard that both John and Fred arrived in the morning.

B: OK. Good. John came. I will talk to him right away.

(4) A: Did both John and Fred come?

B: JOHN came. (A accent on JOHN)

C: JOHN came (B accent on JOHN)

John came in (3B) does not provide any new information to the interlocutors unlike the case in (4B). What is noteworthy in (3B) is that if there is no explicit mechanism of information demand and supply, the exclusion implicature does not arise. However, *John came* in (4B) has strong assertive force in the light of assertion strength as postulated in Y.-B. Kim (2001) who claims that the existence of pragmatic inferences on the part of the interlocutors is the essential part of strong statements. According to Y.-B. Kim, *JOHN came* in (4B), unlike the same phrase in (3B), invokes a pragmatic inference, namely, that Fred did not come, according to the usual maxim of cooperation or Q-based implicature (Grice 1975, Horn 1984). Now, consider (4C), which does not elicit such an exclusion inference, since the different accent pattern indicates that the addressee is not giving a congruent answer, that is, s/he is not cooperative. We can say the respondent is giving out only a partial answer. A similar pattern can be exemplified in Korean, as shown in (5)¹.

- (5) a. John-kwa Mary ka ta wass e?
 and nom all came
 ‘Did John and Mary both come?’
- b. MARY ka wass e.
 nom came.
 ‘(Only) Mary came’
- c. Mary nun wass e.
 contrastive
 ‘As for Mary, she came’

(5b) implicates that John did not come; (5c) does not have such an implicature. (5c) is a partial answer and it is not a strong statement. So the interpretation of (5b) carries what (5c) conveys, but (5c) does not contain all that (5b) expresses. Therefore, (5b) is a stronger statement² than (5c) is. In this sense, (5b) can be seen as a focus construction which can be categorized as a subtype of emphatic expressions. (See Y.-B. Kim (2001) for further details). From the combined perspective of Rooth (1994), Horvath (2009), and Kiss (1998), focus crucially involves *exclusion* implicature for the unchosen alternative members. Thus, (5c) will not be categorized as a focus construction in any sense of the term. Likewise (4c) does not involve focus.

3. Contrastiveness

In this section, contrastiveness is defined somewhat differently from the way that is assumed by Rochemont (1984) or Bollinger (1961), for instance. In my attempt to define contrastiveness, I will try to resolve and reflect what is intricately ingrained in the so called the contrastive marker in Korean and Japanese, and also in the so

¹ The original version has *John-ilang Mary-lang wasse?* instead of (5a). The current example seems to increase the possibility or clarity of exclusiveness implicature in its answer, namely (5b).

² Y.-B. Kim (2001, p810) defines *assertion strength* as follows:

- Statement A is stronger than statement B if and only if
- i) A entails B, and B does not entail A, and
 - ii) A invokes a pragmatic inference.

called the B accent phrase in English. The main proposal of this section will be that contrastiveness involves cancellation of conversational implicature that would be otherwise present. So this proposal entails that there should be a notable phonological pattern or a lexical marker or whatever for this cancellation function in the relevant language.

3.1 Contrastiveness and alternatives

Since the dictionary meaning of contrastiveness usually includes ‘opposition or unlikelihood of things compared’, its theoretic construction will reflect those aspects that relate to such semantic elements. As can be inferred, the lexical combination “things compared” implies that there are things that are compared with the object in question. This conception is already captured theoretically as *alternatives*. Consider (3) again as repeated in (6)

- (6) a: Did both John and Fred come?
 b: JOHN came. (A accent on JOHN)
 b': JOHN came. (B accent on JOHN)

If the existence of alternatives is the sole requirement of contrastiveness, both (6b) and (6b') will be argued to be a contrastive sentence. The alternatives are explicitly mentioned³ and the number of the alternative set member is very small. Furthermore, if we strictly adopted Lee's (2003) position, both (6b) and (6b') could be categorized as Contrastive Topic since they are followed by a conjunctive question⁴. What is more confusing is that the same answers can be preceded by

³ Alternatives can be accommodated from common ground without being overtly mentioned. For instance, the presence of committee members at a certain meeting will facilitate such accommodation if the interlocution involves the prior knowledge about the committee members as follows?

- A: Who opposed the construction of a parking building?
 B: Bill and Fred.
 A: Then five people are in favor and two in opposition?
 B: Alice was not there.
 A: Well, then four are in favor and two in opposition?
 B: That's correct.

⁴ I assume that conjunctive questions are expressions such that questions are raised collectively

disjunctive questions, as shown in (7).

- (7) a: Did John or Fred come?
 b: JOHN came. (A accent on JOHN)
 b': JOHN came. (B accent on JOHN)
 b'': John came a minute ago; Fred a little earlier.

A strict application of Lee's proposal would force us to identify (7b) and (7b') as Contrastive Focus since they are preceded by a disjunctive question. This may not be what Lee (2003) intended to arrive at.

I would say that (6b) and (7b) are focus constructions since they have an exclusion implicature regardless of the preceding question; and that (6b') and (7b') have a contrastive interpretation since they do not give rise to an exclusion implicature. In these cases, I claim, the conversational implicature is cancelled by the B-accent in (6b') and (7b').

My position is compatible with Yang (1973: 88) who also gives semantics of '*nun/un*' in Korean. According to Yang, the use of *nun* creates presuppositions that the *nun*-attached element is known or registered and that the sister members explicitly or implicitly exist. He also claims that the use of *nun* has the assertion component that the *nun*-attached element is interpreted as being 'only concerned in an act or event'. He also claims that *-nun* introduces an implication that 'the registered or expected sister members do not have the same value as the *nun*-attached element has'. However, it is not clear what he meant by 'only concerned in an act or event' but it can be understood in such a way that a *nun*-attached element has a kind of 'autonomous' interpretation, not influencing or relating to other members in the alternative set. Interpreting Yang (1973) this way may be supported by my position that a *nun*-attached element has an independent interpretation that does not influence others by canceling the exclusion implicature. I will return to this matter in section 3.2.

against every individuals of the alternative set. In (6), if John and Fred are brothers without sisters or other brothers we could replace the phrase with "kids" or "children" when this interlocution is between their parents.

3.2 Contrastiveness and implicature cancellation

To resolve the issue regarding Yang's phrase 'only concerned', let us turn to the examples in (5). The specific accent pattern in (5.b) invokes an exclusion implicature but such an implicature is not present in (5.b'). Why? I will claim in this section that the exclusion implicature that would otherwise be present in (5.b') is *canceled* by the B-accent on JOHN.

I believe that an exclusion implicature occurs in a normal congruent question-answer pair. Thus, mentioning one object conversationally implicates that the members in the complementary set do not have the relevant properties. This can be seen in (8).

(8) A: Whom did you meet, John or Bill?

B: John

(9) A: John kwa Bill cung nwukwu lul mannass e?
 and among who acc meet past
 Whom did you meet, John or Bill?

B: John

Simply mentioning one individual puts the other(s) into a position of excluded status. That is, B implicates that he did see not the other member *Bill*. The same is true with Korean as shown in (9B). In (9B) there is no particle attached and a bare NP is simply used. If this simple phrase is natural, the conversational implicature that B didn't see Bill is also a natural one.

However, if we add other elements to these utterances as shown in (10) and (11), the exclusion implicature seems to disappear.

(10) a. Who came to the meeting, John or Bill?

b. JOHN came. (B accent on JOHN)

c. JOHN came. (A accent on JOHN)

(11) a. John kwa Bill cwung nwukwu ka wass ci?
 and among who nom came Q

Who came, John or Bill?

- b. John un wasse.
 contrast came
 JOHN came.
- c. John i wasse.
 nom came
 JOHN came

(10.b) seem to mean that, if I adopt Yang's position, 'concerning John only', John was there. This way of interpretation seems to put the other member (i.e., Bill) in a neutral position as to the question. That is, the speaker's main concern is John and the speaker's remark is neutral and only applies to John himself. In other words the speaker does not implicate anything for the other member Bill. Likewise (11.b) seems to have the same interpretation as (10.b). However, this is sharply different from what is construed in (10.c) or (11c) where the exclusivity implicature is apparent with the A-accent and with the usual case marker, respectively.

So, from the discussions of data in (8), (9), (10), and (11), the B-accent in (10.b) and the marker *nun* can be said to be *canceling* the conversational implicature that would otherwise be present⁵.

On this view, Korean *nun* and Japanese *wa* can be viewed as a conversational implicature canceller. Consider (12).

- (12) a. Who pass the exam?
 b. JOHN (passed)
 c. JOHN passed
 d. John un hapkeykhasse
 pased
 'John contrast passed'
 e. John wa ukat ta
 pass pst
 'John contrast past'
 (Hara and Van Rooy 2007)

⁵ This position is already presented in Y.-B. Kim et al. (2010) and it is compatible with Kuroda's (2005) remark that Japanese *WA* has an anti-exhaustivity listing property.

According to the basic ideas of Hara and Van Rooy (2007), contrastiveness can be defined as an indicator that the proposition involving the other alternatives are “not known to be true”. This conception is compatible with and can be accounted for by my analysis. So (12c) (12d) and (12e) express that John passed, implicating that the speaker does not know whether the others passed or not. This interpretation is almost identical to Büring’s (1977) claim that contrastive phrases give out a partial answer. The answer containing the contrastive marker is partial since the requested information is provided only for the one that is mentioned and nothing is conveyed about the other alternatives. However, neither Hara and Van Rooy (2005) nor Büring does not explain why such interpretation occurs. However, in my analysis, all the interpretations and phenomena are accounted for by the conception that Korean *nun*, Japanese *wa* and English B accent are implicature cancelers.

Horvath, while he attempts to define exhaustivity, also mentions that it is necessary to think of cancelling implicature. Consider Horvath examples given in (13).

- (13) A: *Max is good at math but not so good at English; Eva is good at English but not so good at math.* They did a test both in math and in English. One of the two will be rewarded for good results. You know the test outcome. Who do you think should be rewarded?
 B: Max got an A in English and Eva a B in math. Of course, Eva also got an A in English - but that’s no news. Also as expected, Max got an A in math. So I think it should be Max who gets the reward.

We can see that the exclusion implicatures normally arising in parallel structures are cancelled in this example. That is, it is not the case that only Max got an A in English, Eva got an A, too. Therefore, within my approach the italicized sentences are in contrast.

This definition of ‘contrastiveness’ seems to be compatible with Korean speakers’ intuition considering that *nun* as a contrastive marker is translated as “only concerned” into English by Yang (1973) and is accepted by many others.

3.3 Scalar implicature and contrastiveness

My next question is whether a scalar implicature is cancelled. As is noticed by Grice (1975), Horn (1967) and Gazdar (1979), when there is a scalar item in an utterance, it receives a “maximum” interpretation. Consider (14).

- (14) a. John drank three bottles of beer last night.
 → John did not drink more than three bottles of beer last night.
 b. John drank beer or wine last night
 → John did not drink beer and wine last night.

In a situation where John drank 3 or more bottles of beer, what is at least true is that three bottles of beer are consumed. However, (14a) has the “maximum” interpretation due to the cooperative principles in conversation. Especially, numerals are scalar in the sense that quantity is proportionate to numbers. *Or* is weaker than *and* on a scale; so (14b) carries the implicature that John did not drink beer and wine. This type is called a scalar implicature and the alternative set has ordered members. We will look into whether this type of implicature is also cancelled by contrastive markers.

To see the differences in two types of implicatures, let us compare two cases. In one case the alternative set members are unordered as in (15) and in the other the members are ordered as in (16)

- (15) Mother: cemsim-tul mek-ess-e?
 lunch-pl. eat-Past-Q
 ‘Did you (all) eat lunch?’

Son: Na-un mek-ess-eyo
 I-contrast eat-past-POL
 ‘I ate’

- (16) A: Ecey chayk-ul myec kwon sass-e?
 Yesterday book acc how-many copy bought-Q
 ‘How many books did you buy yesterday?’

B: sey kwon(-ul sass-e)
 3 copy acc bought

‘(I bought) Three books’

Suppose a situation in (15) where the two interlocutors are talking about lunch. Let’s assume in the above situation that the mother is coming home from church on Sunday and that it is past lunch time. Also assume that the family members get up late on Sundays except the mother who is a church goer and that the rest of the family members usually eat whatever is prepared on the dining table for them. So the son in this situation does not know whether his father and sister eat lunch or not. We cannot say that the son’s utterance in (15) implies the rest of the family members did not eat lunch. This is what is predicted by my claim that contrastiveness cancels the exclusion implicature. (15) does not convey any information that enables us to infer regarding other family members’ eating lunch.

On the other hand, if alternatives are ordered as in (16), we can infer that the number of books purchased is not four or five. In other words, since the number three is mentioned by B in (16) we can naturally infer that the number of books that B purchased is not four or more.

Now consider Lee’s (2003) example again.

(17) A: What did Bill’s sister do?

B: [Bill’s youngest sister]B accent kissed John. (Krifka 1991)

(18) A: Ne ton iss ni?

you money have Q

‘Do you have money?’

B: Na tongcen un iss e

I coin CT have DEC

‘I have coins, (but not bills)’ (Lee 2003)

As for (17), Lee argues that (17A) is a conjunctive question since Bill’s sister consists of Bill’s youngest sister **and** the rest of his sisters. He also thinks that (17B) also conveys an implicature that Bill’s other sisters didn’t kiss John. However, this claim may not be acceptable since many native speakers and authors assumes differently. Many authors assumes that the “B-accent” intonation (L+H*L-H% intonational contour) is used to indicate the existence of an unanswered question for the topics under discussion (Jackendoff 1972, Roberts 1996, Büring 1997, 2003).

Consider (19) in a situation where we assume that the alternative set consists of John and Mary for Agents and beans and bananas for Patients.

- (19) a. Who ate what?
 b-1. {What did John eat? What did Mary eat?}
 b-2. {Who ate beans? Who ate bananas?}
 c. [John]_{B-accent} ate {beans}_{A-accent}.

In this case, the B-accent is thought to implicate that another sub-question in the relevant set is still left open. For instance, (19a) can be seen as consisting of two sub-questions as shown in (19b-1) and (19b-2), and (19b-1) can be answered by using the B-accent as in (19c). In this case the speaker is thought to indicate that his response leaves open the question “What did Mary eat?”

As for (18), Lee claims that the speaker B conveys more than the mere implicature that the speaker has no bills. This paper rejects Lee’s claim that an exclusion implicature is conveyed by both (17B) and (18B). In what follows, I will show that there are two different mechanisms working in (17B) and (18B); one is the cancellation of conversational implicature (for (17B)) as mentioned before, and the other is weakening of a scalar implicature (for 18B).

I believe (18B) conveys a kind of weak implicature that is a little different from previous ones. This is unlike the case in (15). I believe this difference comes from the difference in the constitution of the alternative sets. The alternative set members in (15) are not ordered with respect to the relevant properties. That is, the son’s eating lunch does not entail his father’s eating lunch or his sister’s similar act. Put differently, the mention of ‘me’ (‘na’ in Korean) in (15) is to be interpreted as the maximum quantity of information that the interlocutor has about eating lunch or not eating lunch. So we can say the speaker does not know or does not want to talk about other family members.

On the other hand, the alternative set members in (18), namely, coins and bills have a certain ordering with respect to willingness to give it out. It can be generally assumed that if one has willingness to lend bills, he also has willingness to lend coins, but not vice versa. In such cases there arises a scalar implicature such that weaker statements are the maximum amount of information that the speaker can truthfully provide. In (18), therefore, there are two different forces affecting the

illocutionary effect of the utterance. One is working for the exclusion implicature and the other is working against it. Then the question is whether scalar implicatures are cancelled by the contrastive marker. Numerals are typical cases where a scalar implicature can be observed clearly. Let us consider the actual data that may clarify this dilemma, as shown in (20).

- (20) a. *cenbangwi sachal i Saenuri tang uy uisek*
 omnidirectional inspection Saenuri party poss. seat unit
20 kay nun nallye pelyessta.
 cont blew away
 The omnidirectional inspection blew away (at least) 20 seats of
 Sanuri Party.
 (http://hantoma.hani.co.kr/board/view.html?board_id=ht_politics:001001&uid=346424: policy critic)
- b. *1 nyen ey game 20 kay nun manduleya salanamul*
 year in unit cont make must survive mod
swu issta.
 way is
 “We have to make (at least) 20 games a year to survive (in the
 game industry)”
 (<http://limwonki.com/38>: Game Industry Expert)
- c. *Chia 20 kay nun isseya cengsang saynghwal!*
 teeth unit cont is must ordinary living
 “(At least) 20 teeth needed to lead an ordinary (healthy) life”
 (http://v.daum.net/link/17466096?&CT=MY_RECENT: Dentist’s
 Comment)

These examples (20) has some of the background knowledge contained in it and it is easier to see whether the scalar implicature survives with the *nun* maker. As the translation shows, these sentences do not have the “exact number” or “maximum” interpretation. They have the “at least” interpretation and this interpretation is possible when scalar implicature is canceled.

Let us look into more details regarding the interpretation of the example (20a). If the *-un* marker were not used in (20a), it would have the exact number

interpretation as shown in (20a). This would result in an implicature shown in (20b) according to Gazda (1979).

- (21) a. The omnidirectional inspection blew away (exactly) 20 seats of Saenuri Party.
 b. Scalar Implicature: It cannot be truthfully stated that 21 (or more) seats were blown away
 (→The maximum number of seats that were blown away is 20)

Nevertheless, the cancellation of (21b) would open a room for the possibility that more than 20 seats were blown away in that situation. Given this, if the *nun* marker cancels the scalar implicature, then it will lead to a reading shown in (20a). If interpreting (20a) this way is acceptable, then it seems to be plausible to say that the *nun* marker cancels the scalar implicature.

Now consider (22) which is exactly the same as (20a) except for the marker as shown below.

- (22) cenbangwi sachal i Saenuri tang uy uisek
 omnidirectional inspection Saenuli party poss seat
 20 kay ul nallye pelyessta.
 unit acc blew away
 The omnidirectional inspection blew away 20 seats of Saenuri Party.

This statement is a little awkward, if used in an actual situation, since it seems to be difficult to assess the exact impact of the omnidirectional inspection of civilians or civilian agencies by the government. This type of provisional statement usually makes use of the *nun* marker frequently. As Lee (2003) indicates, *nun* marker is used when there is an epistemic uncertainty. The statements in (20) are not factual statements but epistemic ones in the sense that they are results of estimation or inference based on various pieces of evidence or premises.

The frequently quoted example like (23) is also an epistemic statement according to this criterion. We can see how scalar implicature based on our background knowledge works in making other inferences in this case.

- (23) Dong medal un hwakpohay ss ta.
 bronze medal contrast secure past dcl.
 As for a bronze medal, (I) secured (it).

The statement like (23) can be made in a situation where the speaker still has a chance to win a silver or a gold medal. This statement is made when the player might have unknowingly secured a silver or gold medal. This is because sometimes it is difficult to assess the exact standing of a player in a tournament since other players might have disqualified or withdrawn for unknown reasons.

3.4 *(n)un* as an epistemic statement marker

I will argue that *(n)un* transforms a statement into a weak epistemic one when scales are involved. The statements in (20) and (23) are good such examples. The utterer of (23) makes this statement not from a factual standpoint but from his inference that he has drawn from many pieces of evidence. There may be many paths of securing a bronze medal in a competition and the speaker may have gone through complex calculation about the chances of his securing a bronze medal before he says (23). Thus (23) could turn out to be an understatement. This is merely an epistemic conclusion based on what he knows about the competition. So there might be a chance he might have unknowingly secured a silver medal. Since there are many ‘delicate’ things to be considered before we make a statement, we tend to make an epistemic statement. Consider (24).

- (24) A: Pati ey nwuka o l kka?
 party to who come will Q
 Who will come to the party?
 B: JOHN un o l keya.
 come will
 As for John, he will come

B’s statement may be translated as ‘John would be the one who comes’. This statement is made based on the speaker’s epistemic conclusion about John’s situation. The situation surrounding John’s possibility of coming can be complex and

the speaker makes the statement based on what he knows about John. So B's statement can be naturally followed by (25).

- (25) B': Nay ka ku salam ul cal alketun.
 I nom the man acc well know since
 (since) I know him well.

Furthermore, as is well known in Korean linguistics *(n)un* is used as a generic statement marker. I claimed in my paper (2008) that indefinite generic statements are epistemic generalizations based on various kinds of evidence. For examples consider (26).

- (26) a. Frenchmen eat horse meat.
 b. France salam un mal koki lul meknunta.
 men cont horse meat acc eat
 'Frenchmen eat horse meat'

How do we know that Frenchmen 'generally' eat horse meat? Do we have to visit each and every individual and check whether or not they eat horse meat? This may not be the case. According to Y.-B. Kim (2008), what is expressed in (26) is not a factual description but an epistemic conclusion that the speaker has drawn based on evidence that he has gathered. In this sense Korean *nun* marker has a lot to do with epistemic statements. I can say the statement (26) is an epistemic statement that the speaker has concluded based on various premises that he encounters. An epistemic statement can be refuted if stronger evidence is presented than the one the speaker carries. In this sense, the *nun* makes the statement as strong as his premises support it to be. This situation, I believe, leads to weakening rather than canceling the scalar implicature, since the conclusions made in these cases are conjectures based on premises but not a description of hard facts. I singled out these two cases since they do not seem to involve alternative sets of the usual kind. That is, the cases in (24) and (26) do not seem to have an alternative set that has a small number of members. In this context, the coin case is to be rethought about. Let us compare the two sentences in (27).

- (27) B: Na tongcen un iss e
 I coin CT have DEC
 ‘I have coins, (but not bills)’ (Lee 2003)
- C: Na tongcen i iss e.
 I coin nom have DEC
 ‘I have coins, (but not bills)’

C’s response is interpreted as implying that C carries coins but not bills, and therefore the implicature that he does not have bills is direct and undoubted, whereas B’s response allows for an implication that he might unknowingly have bills, too. Namely, B is partially answering the request leaving rooms open for the situation where the speaker may unknowingly have bills or pays little attention how much money he carries in bills. The examples that we have dealt with up to this point can be categorized into four different types. One of them, like (5b) and (6b), has a strong exclusion implicature whereas the one in (9b) and (11b) have no exclusion implicature. As for these examples, I argued that the conversational implicature that might arise is cancelled by *-nun*. In these cases there is no ordering among alternatives, so there cannot be any logical inference relation involving other alternatives.

On the other hand, the data in (20), and (23) are cases where an ordering relation among alternatives is observed. In these cases the scalar implicature is weakened by *-nun* since the statement is an epistemic one which can be sustained as long as the speaker’s premises support it to be true.

The third type appears in the data in (24) and (26) which are different from the previous cases mentioned above. In these cases there is no finite alternative set easily imaginable; therefore no exclusion implicature seems to arise.

It should be further noted that my proposal naturally accounts for Lee’s (2003) ‘contrastive predicate topic’ cases like *tochak-un hayssta*, as shown in (28). Suppose a music performance is just about to begin and the entertainer has just arrived. The staffs can talk as follows.

- (28) A: Ku kasu eti issci?
 the singer where is
 ‘Where is the singer?’

B: Tochak un hayss e.
 arrival contr did
 ‘He has at least arrived’

The B’s statement may implicate that the singer **may** not be ready to sing or that the singer is not yet on the stage. In this case we think the pressure of exclusive implicature comes from an ordered sequence among the alternatives as shown in (29)

(29) <arrive, change for the stage, get on the stage, sing, leave the stage>

Shown above is a kind of scenario that we can think of when a singer arrives and performs on a stage. The usual kind of inference pattern can be observed in this case, too. For example, if the singer in question is changing for the stage, then we can infer that he has at least arrived, but not vice versa. This paper claims that (16) is also an epistemic statement that allows for an “at least” interpretation.

3.5 Types of pragmatic interpretations and their effects

In the following I will list up different kinds of interpretation possibilities and the related pragmatic effects that each interpretation may bring forth. Consider (30) which summarizes what have been discussed so far.

(30)

semantics	types of pragmatic interpretation	conditions of interpretation	examples	pragmatic effects
[s]	Type 1 [s]+conversational implicature +implicature cancellation	use of ‘contrast’ markers in maximal Q context with unordered alternatives	(9b), (11b)	canceling of implicature => contrastiveness
	Type 2 [s]+scalar implicature +weakening of scalar implicature	ordered alternatives	(20), (23)	weakening of scalar implicature => contrastiveness

	Type 3 [s]+conversational implicature	use of case markers in maximal Q context with unordered alternatives	(5b), (6b) (8B)	exclusion =>focusing
	Type 4 [s] +no conversational implicature	non maximal Q context or no alternative set available	2B, 24B, 26b	no exclusion

Considering the differences in implicature between Type 1 and Type 3 context, we can see that Type 3 context do not require extra remarks regarding unmentioned alternatives since the interlocutor virtually speaks about every individuals with the help of a conversational implicature. On the other hands, a speaker in Type 1 context needs to talk further about unmentioned entities since nothing is actually conveyed about unmentioned alternatives. Consider (31) for Type 3 and (32) for Type 1.

- (31) A: Minho lang Minsu lang halmeni tayk ey
Minho and Minsu and grandma house to
ka ss tay?
go past is said Q
'Did (you hear that) Minho and Minsu went the Grandma's?
B: Minho ka kass tay.
Minho nom went
'I heard that Only Minho went'
B': #Minho ka ka ko Minsu ka an kass e.⁶

⁶ One referee pointed out that the following data is acceptable and that it has virtually the same semantic content as (31B'):

Minho-ka/-nun kasse. Mwullon Minsu-do kassko.

I think this locution is acceptable but there is some difference between this and (31B'): the use of *Mwullon* and the use of particle *-do* seem to contribute to the difference. *Mwullon* somehow creates a scale regarding the possibility of Minsu going to his grandma's and the particle *-do* implicates that another person than Minsu went. So the text in question gives more information than (31B').

- M. nom go and M. nom not went
 'Minho went and Minsu didn't'
- B": Minho nun ka ko Minsu nun an kass e.
- (32) A: Minho lang Minsu lang halmeni tayk ey
 Minho and Minsu and grandma house to
 ka ss tay?
 go past is said Q
 'Did (you hear that) Minho and Minsu went the Grandma's?'
- B: Minho nun ka go Minsu nun cip ey isse.
 'Minho contr. go and Minsu contr. home at stay
 'Minho went and Minsu is staying home'

In (31) the utterance by B is perfect but the one by B' is awkward as a response. This is because the second conjunct of (31B') repeats what is already conveyed by the first conjunct.

This situation in general precludes the possibility of mentioning some contrastive features about the unmentioned objects. However, if *ka* is replaced by *nun* as in the utterance by B", the expression is natural as an answer. Likewise, the response in (32) is natural since no implicature is created by the first conjunct. So the contrastive marker should be used.

Therefore, in Type 1 context which is another maximal Q context, the addressee is expected to provide information about specific target objects only in the domain. Thus, if contrast markers are used or if a B accent is used, we can say, the utterance applies only to the mentioned individuals and nothing is implicated about other unchosen objects.

We assume the speaker are cooperative and provide as much information as possible in a context where maximal amount of information is expected to be provided or needs to be provided. I will call this type of context a Q context. A Q context is usually created by requesting information by one interlocutor. In such context, if we use an A-accent on the expression that denotes a certain alternative, then the predicate portion of the utterance is seen as applying both to the mentioned alternative and to unmentioned alternatives in the sense that there is a negative implicature regarding the unmentioned entities along with the asserted propositional content. This can be observed in the Type 3 context where focusing are created. In

this type of context we mention only part of the objects and, nevertheless, achieve the effect of saying something about every other object in the discourse domain.

Type 2 interpretation is available when the utterance contains an expression that denotes one of ordered alternatives in an utterance situation. In this case our statement is interpreted based on some kind inference according to the strength of the scalar items. The *-(n)un* marker, in this case, makes the statement an epistemic one and the scalar implicature is weakened making the whole statement weaker.

In a Type 4 context which is non-maximal Q context, there is no information request. Thus, the conversation implicature does not arise since there is no need for information transaction and no need for cooperation.

3.6 Contrastive marker as a face saver

In this section we will show that the use of contrastive marker has another pragmatic function, namely, saving face. By limiting our statement to a specific individual without implying anything about unmentioned individuals, we can save their face. This, I believe, is made possible due to the cancellation of the exclusive implicature involving unmentioned alternatives.

If we look back at the responses in (12), we can think of a situation in which the exam takers do not want the result to be known in public or otherwise. Quite often there are circumstances where we want to keep something unknown or not mentioned explicitly because some remarks, if a specific individual is mentioned or inferred to be such and such, can threaten his/her face. According to Brown and Levinson(1978), there are two types of face:

- (33) a. Negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non distraction i. e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.
- b. Positive face: the positive constant self image or personality (crucially including the desire that this self image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. (1978:66)

According to Brown and Levinson, the positive face is a kind of image that is to be preserved by the interlocutors. However, Matsumoto (1988) claims that the

positive face is not merely a personal matter among discourse participants but a socially given image that is projected to be preserved in a given society. According to Matsumoto, everyone in Japan are very sensitive to his and every other's social position in a society, which is very hierarchical, and a person in such a hierarchy has his own self-image that is to be preserved. I believe this interpretation of positive face applies to Korean as well. From this perspective, the notion of face is not limited to discourse participants but extendable to everyone in a society if his social position is to be recognized and preserved.

From Matsumoto's perspective, the utterance like (12.b) might be a threat to the face of the unsuccessful candidate. This is because (12.b) implies that John is the only successful candidate. On the other hand (12.c), (12.d) or (12.e) neither mention unsuccessful candidates nor imply that the unmentioned individuals are unsuccessful. Therefore, these utterances may not threaten anyone's face and this function can be seen as deriving from the use of contrastive markers. In this sense we can say that *-(n)un* has a face saving function.

4. Conclusions

In this paper, I defined contrastiveness as a separate notion that is not dependent on focus. According to Y.-B. Kim (2001, 2004) a focus construction has a strong assertive force and it has a number of exclusivity implicatures. Contrastiveness, on the other hand, does not have such an implicature. Ordinary conversational implicatures and scalar implicatures are shown to be cancelled by the contrastive marker. In this sense the Korean *-nun* marker has the pragmatic function of cancelling conversational implicatures. However, the two notions, focus and contrastiveness, have something in common, i.e. alternative sets. It is also claimed that the contrastive marker also acts as a marker for epistemic statements. Topic, although it has not been dealt with in this paper, can be seen as different from focus or contrastiveness since it does not seem to have an alternative set, or the alternative set has a single member. On this definition contrastiveness is as independent a notion as topic is independent of focus.

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Received: 2012. 11. 08

Revised: 2012. 12. 16

Accepted: 2012. 12. 17