



Index as a syntactic object: Evidence from Korean^{*}

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Kim, Kyumin. 2025. Index as a syntactic object: Evidence from Korean. *Linguistic Research* 42(2): 257-282. This paper examines the distribution of anaphoric demonstrative and 3rd person singular pronoun in Korean that share the same morphology, namely *ku*. I show that evidence building on these referential expressions provides support for recent theories in which indices are independent syntactic objects and head their own functional projection such as idxP (indexP) within the DP (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2021; Jenks and Konate 2022). I propose that the demonstrative *ku* realizes idxP in the specifier of DP giving rise to an anaphoric interpretation. It is also proposed that the 3rd person singular pronoun *ku* instantiates idxP, but the pronominal idxP appears either in the specifier of DP when it has a referential reading or in the specifier of ϕ P with a variable reading. The two indexed definites realized by the same morpheme *ku* in Korean provide strong evidence for the syntactic realization of indices, similar to Washo (isolate) where deictic demonstratives and the 3rd person pronoun are realized by the same morpheme. I extend the proposed analysis to the deictic demonstratives *i* (proximal) and *ce* (distal) in Korean; these demonstratives realize idxP in the specifier of DP having spatial features (e.g., [+PROX]) unlike the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* that bears the feature [+ANAPH]. The consequence of this paper thus contributes to the syntactic theory of indices developed in recent researches (e.g., Hanink 2021; Jenks and Konate 2022). (Chungbuk National University)

Keywords Index, DP, 3rd person pronoun, anaphoric demonstrative, deictic demonstrative

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1. Introduction

In current literature, there is growing body of research on the syntax and semantics of referential indices (e.g., Elbourne 2005; Schwarz 2009; Arkoh and Matthewson 2013; Simonenko 2014; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Jenks 2018; Ahn 2019; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). Referential indices in noun phrases have the semantic effect of anchoring a particular referent in the discourse or context. Recent works on referential indices have suggested that indices are not just semantically present as subscripts on D or N, but they are independent objects in syntax (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). Schwarz (2009), by investigating German, shows that the presence of an index in a DP structure gives rise to an anaphoric interpretation, in contrast to a unique definite that is absent with an index in its structure (see section 2 for detail). This type of an index is further proposed to head its own functional projection within the DP and host semantic index values as features (e.g., Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Hanink 2018, 2021; Jenks and Konate 2022). I refer such a phrase as *idxP* (indexP) adopting from Hanink (2021). In particular, these studies have shown that *idxP* is realized in the structure of demonstratives and pronouns that are interpreted as a variable which picks out a discourse referent (e.g., Elbourne 2005, 2008; Schwarz 2009; Arkoh and Matthewson 2013; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Hanink 2018, 2021; Jenks 2018; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022 among others). This phenomenon is well observed cross-linguistically such as German, English, Washo (isolate; Lake Tahoe, California), Marka-Dafing (Mande) or Chuj (Mayan) and so on.

This paper demonstrates that *idxP* is also a syntactic object in Korean, which will be shown through the investigation of the distribution of demonstratives and pronouns in Korean. I show that *idxP* is structurally shared by these two definite nominal phrases. The focus will be on the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* ‘that’ and the 3rd person singular pronoun *ku*. Building on the previous approaches to the syntax and semantics of indices (e.g., Elbourne 2005, 2008; Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2018, 2021; Jenks 2018; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022 among others), I argue that the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* instantiates the *idx* head in the specifier of DP. As for the 3rd person singular pronoun, its interpretation is not coherent among native speakers, but shows inter-speaker variation having two possible interpretations, i.e.,

referential and bound variable readings (Kim and Han 2016; K. Kim 2019). Building on this fact, I propose that *idxP* in the 3rd person singular pronoun appears either in the specifier of *DP* or ϕ *P* (in the sense of Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002). I also extend the current proposal to the distribution of deictic demonstratives, *i* (proximal) and *ce* (distal) in the language, and suggest that those demonstratives have *idxP* in the specifier of *DP* similar to anaphoric demonstratives. These proposals will be articulated in the theory of syntactic *idxP* in Jenks and Konate (2022) which motivates a general syntactic *idx* feature that is realized by demonstratives or pronouns. The proposed account will be supported by morphological evidence for the structural presence of *idxP* from Washo (Hanink 2021). In this language, similar to Korean, deictic demonstratives and 3rd person pronoun are marked by the same morpheme which is analyzed to instantiate the *idx* head that projects its own functional projection (Hanink 2021).

The data from Korean provides strong support for the recent claim in the literature that an index is a syntactic object independent from *D* (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022), and as such it contributes to the general syntactic theory of indices developed in recent researches such as Jenks and Konate (2022). The proposals made for the anaphoric definite *ku* as *idxP* also provide support for the compositional semantics of strong definites advocated in the previous studies (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2018, 2021; Royer 2022).

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses previous literature on indices and motivation for their structural presence. Section 3 is the proposal on demonstrative *ku* and the 3rd person singular pronoun *ku* as *idxP*. Section 4 extends the proposed accounts to deictic demonstratives in the language. Section 5 is the conclusion.

2. Structural presence of indices in *DP*

In recent (mostly semantic) literature, it has been proposed that indices are not merely present for the interpretation of the *DP* as a subscript on *D* or *N* as traditionally considered (e.g., Chomsky 1982 for the Binding Theory), but it is present as an independent object in the structure of the *DP* (Elbourne 2005; Schwarz 2009;

Simonenko 2014; Hanink 2018; Jenks and Konate 2022).¹ In particular, although details differ, these studies share a common insight in which indices occupy structural positions independent from D. Often mentioned supporting data for this view comes from German in Schwarz (2009). The language makes a morphological distinction between weak and strong articles. A weak article indicates unique definite as exemplified in (1) while a strong article, as illustrated in (2), indicates anaphoric definite. The two also differ in their form and this difference is visible when they appear with a preposition. A weak article is in the contracted form with a preposition such as *vom* as shown in (1). In the unique definite context such as in (1), the strong article, a non-contracted form, *von dem* cannot appear.

- (1) Der Empfang wurde [PP vom /#von dem
 the reception was by.the_{weak}/ by the_{strong}
 Bürgermeister] eröffnet.
 mayor opened
 ‘The reception was opened by the mayor.’ (Schwarz 2009: 40)

By contrast, in an anaphoric context as illustrated in (2) where a previously established referent is mentioned, a strong article like *von dem* has to appear, but a weak article *vom* cannot. The example in (2a) provides a context for the example in (2b): the entity *dem Politiker* ‘the politician’ in (2b) refers to the previously mentioned entity *einen Politiker* ‘a politician’ in (2a).

- (2) a. Hans hat einen Schriftsteller und einen Politiker
 Hans has a writer and a politician
 interviewt.
 interviewed
 ‘Han interviewed a writer and a politician.’
 b. Er hat #vom /von dem Politiker
 He has from-the_{weak}/ from the_{strong} politician
 keine interessanten Antworten bekommen.
 no interesting answers gotten

¹ It should be noted that these studies examined unbound instances of anaphora, those not covered under the Binding Theory (Chomsky 1982).

‘He didn’t get any interesting answers from the politician.’

(Schwarz 2009: 23)

Building on the morphological difference between anaphoric and unique definites indicated by strong and weak articles respectively, Schwarz (2009) argues that an anaphoric definite has an index present in its structure in contrast to a unique definite, as schematically present in (3a) and (3b). In the structure of a strong-article in (3a), an anaphoric index notated as ‘1’ appears between the determiner (D) and a preceding preposition (P). Thus, the anaphoric index blocks the contraction of the strong article with the preposition. By contrast, in the structure of a weak article (3b), no anaphoric index is present, and thus the contracted form of a weak article is accounted for.

(3) a. structure of a strong-article DP: [_{PP} P [_{DP} 1 D [NP]]]

b. structure of a weak-article DP: [_{PP} P [_{DP} D [NP]]]

(Schwarz 2009: 138)

Importantly, the proposed structures in (3) account for the interpretational similarity and difference of anaphoric and unique definites, which has been noted or implied in the literature (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2018, 2021; Ahn 2019; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). Semantics of anaphoric definite is compositional consisting of two-meaning parts: uniqueness and anaphoricity.² Uniqueness requires that there is exactly one salient entity. This salient entity is identified anaphorically by being indexed. That is, it is picked out by the index, e.g., 1 in (3a). Building on Hanink (2021) and Royer (2022), I propose that these meaning components can be understood as being structurally encoded. For instance, abstracting away from the

2 Schwarz (2009) proposed the denotation of weak and strong articles as in (i). Due to the scope of this paper, I do not discuss the semantics of the denotation in detail. However, I point out important parts of this denotation relevant to the current discussion. The semantics of strong definite article consists of the meaning of the weak article and anaphoric index argument. Both weak and strong articles have a uniqueness presupposition, as underlined in (i). They differ in that the strong article introduces an extra index argument (λy) and the identity condition, both bolded in (ib), which has the effect of introducing anaphoricity condition.

(i) a. Weak definite article

$\lambda s_r. \lambda P: \exists ! \underline{x} [P(x)(s_r)]. \iota x. [P(x)(s_r)]$

b. Strong definite article

$\lambda s_r. \lambda P. \lambda y: \exists ! \underline{x} [P(x)(s_r) \ \& \ \mathbf{x} = y]. \iota x. [P(x)(s_r) \ \& \ \mathbf{x} = y]$ (Schwarz 2009: 135)

presence of PP, in the DP structure such as in (3a), identifying a unique referent is encoded on D, and indexing a referent overtly is structurally encoded by the index in Spec, DP. On the other hand, unique definite, as in (3b), indicates that there is exactly one salient entity as the presence of D indicates. However, structurally it is absent with an index associated with an anaphoric definite, and hence no anaphoric meaning. In section 3, I show that the anaphoric definite *ku* projects idxP that appears in the specifier of DP thereby indexing a referent, which supports the compositional semantic view for anaphoric definites.

The semantic insight from Schwarz (2009) discussed in this section has been supported by various studies (e.g., Simonenko 2014; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Jenks 2018; Ahn 2019; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). In recent studies, the view of Schwarz (2009) has been further developed into structural terms (e.g., Simonenko 2014; Hanink 2018, 2021; Jenks and Konate 2022): structural indices head their own functional projection, namely idxP. The idxP hosts semantic index values as features indicated as *n* (numeral), e.g., $\text{idx}_{[in]}$. Along with anaphoric definites, there is a class of referential expressions recognized as indexed definites which include pronouns and demonstratives (e.g., Elbourne 2005, 2008; Schwarz 2009; Arkoh and Matthewson 2013; Simonenko 2014; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Jenks 2018; Anh 2019; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022 among others).³ Similar to anaphoric definites, the meaning of the indexed definite expressions are restricted by the value of the referential index; they are interpreted as referring to the entity assigned at the given index.

3. Index, demonstrative, and pronoun in Korean

In this section, I analyze demonstratives and pronouns in Korean as indexed definites. In particular, I propose that idxP is the core of both the anaphoric demonstrative and the 3rd person singular pronoun projections. I also provide a featural account of these indexed definites adopting the featural approach to idxP in Jenks and Konate (2022).

That demonstratives and pronouns are indexed definites predicts that they must

3 Pronominal definites (e.g., *we*) such as in *we linguists* also belong to this class. See Jenks and Konate (2022) for detailed analysis of pronominal definites.

have idxP present in their structures. Evidence for this prediction has been found across different languages (e.g., Arkoh and Matthewson 2013; Hanink 2018, 2021; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). I discuss morphological evidence for this prediction from Washo (Hanink 2021), which is illustrated in (4). In (4a), the morpheme *gi* with its vowel stressed and lengthened appears as the 3rd person pronoun. The same morpheme *gi* appears as a suffix in the distal demonstrative *hádi-gi* (4b) and proximate demonstrative *wídi-gi* (4c).⁴ Building on the morphological fact in (4), the morpheme *gi* is proposed to realize an index-encoding head, idx which appears in DP (Hanink 2021).

- (4) a. [DP *gí:*] *pélew* ?-í?iw-i
 gi jackrabbit 3/3-eat-ind
 ‘He’s eating the jackrabbit.’
- b. [DP *hádi-gi* *pélew*] M-ú:bi?-i
 DIST-*gi* jackrabbit 3.run-ind
 ‘That jackrabbit ran.’ (Hanink 2021: 506)
- c. [DP *wídi-gi* *pélew*] Mú:biP-i
 PROX-*gi* jackrabbit 3.come.running-IND
 ‘This jackrabbit came running.’ (Hanink 2021: 513)

In Jenks and Konate (2022), building on Hanink’s work (2021) as well as other previous studies on the syntax of index (see section 2), it is proposed that idx is a syntactic feature, under the assumption in which a lexical item is the realization of abstract bundles of syntactic features. Specifically, idx is the feature that houses a referential index, and it is shared by indexed definite expressions such as pronouns, anaphoric definites, and demonstratives. They further suggested that idx is a category free and thus it can combine with any lexical or functional category resulting in an indexed counterpart of that category. The consequence of this is the complex head, [idx, F] where F is a category feature. The complex head is phrasal and has the same distribution with F. This proposal is supported by English data where *pro*-forms appear

4 The same morpheme *gi* also appears in an internally headed relative clause in the language (Hanink 2021), which is not relevant to the central issues discussed in this paper. For detail, see Hanink (2021). The morpheme *gi* is long and stressed when used as an independent form as in (4a). Otherwise, it is short and unstressed as in (4b) and (4c).

across various categories, some of which are shown in (5).

- (5) a. [idx, D] = *this, that, other pronouns*
- b. [idx, N] = *one*
- c. [idx, V] = *so, that* (as in *do so* or *do that*)
- d. [idx, P] = *here, there*
- e. [idx, C] = *so, that* (as in *say so* or *say that*)

(Jenks and Konate 2022: 8)

As suggested by the distribution shown in (5), the demonstrative *this* or *that* appears in various categories, thus being category-neutral represented as in (6a) for *that*, and (6b) for *this*. As for the demonstrative *this*, it has additional semantic feature *proximate* [+PROX].⁵ Under this view of Jenks and Konate's (2022), the morpheme *gi* in Washo discussed earlier is the realization of the complex head [idx, D].⁶

- (6) a. [idx] ↔ *that*
- b. [idx, +PROX] ↔ *this*

(Jenks and Konate 2022: 8)

I assume the featural approach to referential indices as in Jenks and Konate (2022) in the analysis of the indexed definites in Korean, namely demonstratives and 3rd person singular pronouns. Interestingly, just like Washo, Korean provides morphological evidence for the idx feature in demonstrative and pronoun projections: the anaphoric demonstrative and the 3rd person singular pronoun share the same form, namely *ku*. The Korean data are exemplified in (7a) and (7b) respectively:

5 In Jenks and Konate (2022), English *that* is unmarked for [$\pm$ PROX] and its distal meaning is achieved pragmatically in competition with *this*.

6 The complex head [idx, D] is also proposed to be internally complex (Jenks and Konate 2022). In addition to a semantic index value as a feature [*i:n*] (see section 2), it has phi-features (e.g., gender or number) or spatial features (e.g., proximate). Thus, the features such as [+human, +masculine] suggested by an anonymous reviewer would be housed in the idx head realized by the pronoun *ku*, unlike the demonstrative *ku*. As the main argument of this paper is that idxP is the common syntactic core of referential expressions such as *ku*, I do not further question this issue. See Jenks and Konate (2022) for the detail on the internal structure of idxP with these features.

- (7) a. *nay-ka onul ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta*
 I-NOM today DEM book-ACC read-PAST-DEC
 ‘Today, I read the book (that my brother bought yesterday).’
 b. *nay-ka eycey Minswu-lul man-ass-ta.*
 I-NOM yesterday Minswu-ACC meet-PAST-DEC.
kuliko na-nun onul ku-lul tasi man-ass-ta.
 and I-NOM today 3sg-ACC again meet-PAST-DEC
 ‘I met Minswu yesterday, and I met him today again.’

I propose that the fact in (7) suggests that *ku* realizes the feature [idx] in anaphoric definite and the 3rd person singular pronoun. In Washo data, the feature [idx] is present in *deictic* demonstratives (see (5b) and (5c)). In fact, as discussed in section 2, an anaphoric definite belongs to a referential noun phrase as an indexed definite: it houses an index in its structure as well as in its semantics, unlike unique definites, (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Simonenko 2014; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Jenks 2018; Ahn 2019; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). Thus, along with the Washo data in (5), the Korean data such as in (7) where the same morpheme realizes anaphoric definite and the 3rd person singular pronoun provides strong evidence that demonstratives – deictic or anaphoric – all have referential indices realizing [idx] feature structurally. Later in section 4, I discuss deictic demonstratives in Korean and suggest that they also have idxP in their structure, similar to the anaphoric demonstrative *ku*.

In what follows, I substantiate the current proposal in which the feature [idx] is realized and thus shared by anaphoric definite and the 3rd person pronoun *ku*.

3.1 idxP in anaphoric definite *ku*

A strong article in German that indicates anaphoric definite has been proposed to carry an index structurally (Schwarz 2009), as discussed in section 2. Strong definite articles in German are used as anaphoric definites unlike weak definite articles. The data of anaphoric definite in German is repeated below as (8).

- (8) a. *Hans hat einen Schriftsteller und einen Politiker*
 Hans has a writer and a politician

interviewt.

interviewed

‘Han interviewed a writer and a politician.’

b. Er hat #vom / von dem Politiker

He has from-the_{weak}/ from the_{strong} politician

keine interessanten Antworten bekommen.

no interesting answers gotten

‘He didn’t get any interesting answers from the politician.’

(Schwarz 2009: 23)

The demonstrative such as *that* in English is anaphoric in that it refers to a previously mentioned entity, and is analyzed as being similar to German strong articles having [idx] feature (Jenks and Konate 2022). Under this view, German strong article and English demonstratives share the same feature [idx, D]. Having the category feature [D], the idxP realized by English *that* merges in the specifier of DP, as schematically illustrated in (9).⁷

(9) [_{DP} idxP [idx, D] [_{D'} D NP]]

that

(adapted from Jenks and Konate 2022: 13)

The demonstrative *ku* in Korean has been shown to be anaphoric definite in the semantic and syntactic literature (e.g., Lee 1989, 1994; Chang 2009; Cho 2017; Ahn 2019; Kang 2021; M. Park 2022; M. Kim 2023; S. Park 2023; K. Kim 2024). Some of these studies identified the demonstrative *ku* as behaving similar to German strong articles in that it indicates a previously mentioned entity (e.g., Ahn 2019; Kang 2021; K. Kim 2024). As shown in (10), for instance, the demonstrative *ku* has to appear in an anaphoric context. In (10b), *ku chayk* ‘that book’ anaphorically refers to the noun phrase *chayk* ‘book’ in (10a) that my brother bought yesterday. Without the demonstrative *ku* in (10b), the anaphoric meaning cannot be conveyed.

⁷ Unlike Jenks and Konate (2022), Hanink (2018, 2021) proposed that in Washo idxP is the part of the extended projection of DP appearing between D and NP. Building on cross-linguistic evidence and Korean internal evidence discussed in this section, I argue that idxP merges in the specifier of DP in line with Jenks and Konate (2022).

- (10) a. ecey namtongsaying-i chayk-ul sass-ta
 yesterday brother-NOM book-ACC bought-DEC
 ‘Yesterday my brother bought a book.’
 b. (nay-ka) onul *(ku) chayk-ul ilkess-ta
 I-NOM today DEM book-ACC read-DEC
 ‘Today, I read the book.’

The demonstrative *ku* is only anaphoric not being able to indicate unique definite, as shown in (11).⁸

- (11) onul (*ku) tal-i ilccik ttu-ess-ta.
 today DEM moon-NOM early rise-PAST-DEC
 ‘The moon has risen early today.’ (Kang 2021: 318)

In a recent semantic study in Ahn (2019), it is proposed that the demonstrative *ku* carries an anaphoric index in its semantic composition, similar to a strong definite in German. In particular, the role of the index in the anaphoric definite *ku* is to identify the referent that it refers to, namely the referent that is identical to the entity assigned at the given index.⁹

A similar intuition has been provided in a recent study in Kim (2024) on the structure of demonstrative *ku*. The demonstrative *ku* is identified as anaphoric definite and as such it is analyzed to merge in the specifier of DP marking referentiality of the nominal that it appears with (Kim 2024). The view that anaphoric definite *ku* merges in the specifier of DP is not new, which has been suggested in Korean literature (e.g., Hong 2010; S. Park 2023). In studies of other languages, the specifier of DP is also identified as the position for anaphoric definites (e.g., Giusti 2002, 2015; Jenks 2018; Royer 2022). What is novel in Kim’s (2024) proposal is that the role of anaphoric definite *ku* is to mark referentiality and it is achieved structurally by having *ku* merge in the specifier of DP, as schematically represented in (12). This analysis builds on the previous works such as Longobardi (1994, 2001) on Italian and Julien (2005) on

8 More evidence is discussed in the aforementioned studies. I do not replicate them for the scope of
this paper.

9 In Ahn (2019), an index is suggested to be positioned at the specifier of DP, although she leaves open whether an index is projected syntactically or not.

Scandinavian in which D head or the specifier of DP can mark referentiality and as such those positions have to be overtly realized.

$$(12) \text{ } [_{DP} \text{ } ku \text{ } [Def_{anaphoric}]] \text{ } [_{D'} \text{ } NP \text{ } D \text{ } [Def_{anaphoric}]]$$

(Adapted from Kim 2024: 557)

Kim (2024) assumes that D is the locus of definiteness and as such it has a valued feature [Def], as illustrated in (12). As definiteness can be realized as anaphoric or unique (e.g., Abney 1987; Longobardi 1994), this feature can be either [Def_{anaphoric}] or [Def_{unique}]. As with the anaphoric definite *ku*, D has to bear the feature [Def_{anaphoric}] that matches with the feature on *ku* as in (12). Although Kim's (2024) analysis accounts for the distribution of anaphoric demonstrative *ku*, no account has been provided for the distribution of the 3rd person pronoun *ku* or the deictic demonstratives in the language. If we extend Kim's (2024) analysis to those expressions, however, it does not appear to provide a satisfactory account. For example, as for the pronoun *ku*, the [Def_{anaphoric}] may account for a referential reading of the pronoun, but it is not able to accommodate a bound variable reading of the pronoun (see section 3.2). Importantly, this type of an account cannot capture the apparent similarity between the demonstrative and the pronoun *ku*: they are indexed definites. Moreover, it misses a cross-linguistic generalization in which referential expressions project idxP evidenced by a number of studies on different languages (see section 1). Anticipating the proposal made in section 4 in which the deictic demonstratives *i* 'this' or *ce* 'that over there' project idxP, the analysis in Kim (2024) also has to assume a separate feature such as [Def_{deictic}] to account for those deictic demonstratives. Consequently, it would generate the list of features for each referential exponent in question undermining its explanatory power.

In this paper, I provide an account that fares better than the analysis in Kim (2024) by assuming the syntax and semantics of idxP. I assume Giusti (2002, 2015) in which anaphoric demonstratives appear in the specifier of DP where they introduce a referential index. Building on the ordering facts in which different parts of nominal phrases appear across languages, it is argued that the spec-DP position is for all indexical elements such as pronouns, demonstratives, or proper names. Assuming this approach in Giusti (2002, 2015) and the featural approach of idxP in Jenks and Konate (2022), I argue that *ku* instantiates the idx head with the feature [idx, D]. Thus, by

combining with the category D, the idxP merges in the specifier of DP, as schematically illustrated in (13).

- (13) [_{DP} idxP [idx, D] [_{D'} NP D]]
 ku

The proposed position of *ku*, i.e., the specifier of DP, as in (13) is further supported by the compositional semantics of anaphoric definites that are encoded structurally, as discussed in section 2. D denotes that there is a salient referent in the context, and idxP identifies the referent by indexing. If *ku* realized the D head as suggested or assumed in some studies (e.g., Chang 2009; Kim and Han 2016; Ahn 2019), the prediction is that *ku* could indicate a unique entity in the absence of idxP. However, this is not borne out by the data, such as (11) discussed earlier. In (11), a unique entity such as ‘moon’ has to be expressed as a bare noun and *ku* cannot indicate uniqueness.¹⁰ With the demonstrative *ku*, an entity in question has to be anaphoric that is previously mentioned (see (10)). This contrast between a bare noun and demonstrative *ku* is further supported by a recent experimental study which investigates the syntactic distribution of bare nouns and demonstrative noun phrases marked by *ku* in accordance with various types of definiteness including uniqueness and anaphoric definiteness (S. Park 2023).¹¹ The study found out that, regardless of a position in a clause, only a bare noun in the language can mark uniqueness.¹² This finding is in line with the current proposal of this paper: the anaphoric definite *ku* cannot instantiate the D head contrary to the previous approaches (e.g., Chang 2009).¹³

In the next section, I show that the 3rd singular pronoun realized by *ku* also projects idxP. The pronoun differs from the anaphoric definite in that the pronoun

10 This fact indicates that D, the locus of uniqueness, is an independent category although it is null in Korean. See section 2 for relevant discussion.

11 This study also examined other types of definiteness such as part-whole, product-producer, and exophoric situation. See S. Park (2023) for detail.

12 It is found that a bare noun can also indicate anaphoric definiteness. In this case, under the current account, a bare noun may be analyzed as having a null idxP in the spec-DP. However, I cannot go into a full analysis of bare nouns in anaphoric context, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

13 Another position proposed for *ku* is the specifier of NP (Kang 2021). As pointed out by S. Park (2023), this proposal predicts that *ku* as a NP modifier does not necessarily indicate definiteness and it would behave like other NP modifiers, which has shown to be not true. I refer readers to S. Park (2023) for detail.

ku as idxP can appear either in the specifier of DP or in the specifier of ϕ P in the sense of Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002).

3.2 idxP in the 3rd person singular pronoun *ku*

The exponent *ku* also realizes the 3rd person singular pronoun as shown in (7b) earlier. My analysis starts from the experimental studies in Kim and Han (2016) and K. Kim (2019) on the interpretation of the pronoun *ku*. These studies noted that there is no consensus on the interpretation of the pronoun *ku* in the literature.¹⁴ Some studies such as Kang (1988), Suh (1990), or Noguchi (1997) suggest that the pronoun *ku* can be construed as a variable bound by the quantificational expression *motwu* ‘everyone’ as in (14) below. On the other hand, others such as Hong (1985), Choe (1988), or Kang (2000) suggested that the pronoun *ku* cannot play a role as a bound variable.

- (14) a. Motwu₁-ka ku₁-uy emeni-lul salangha-n-ta
 everyone-NOM he-GEN mother-ACC love-PRS-DEC
 ‘Everyone₁ loves his₁ mother.’
 b. Motwu₁-ka ku₁-ka chwukkwu-lul cal
 everyone-NOM he-NOM soccer-ACC well
 ha-n-tako sayngkakha-n-ta.
 do-PRS-COM think-PRS-DEC
 ‘Everyone₁ thinks that he₁ plays soccer well.’

(Kim and Han 2016: 347-348)

Kim and Han (2016) and K. Kim (2019) conducted experiments to address the issue of the interpretational status of the pronoun *ku*. An interesting finding from these experiments is that there is inter-speaker variation in the interpretation of the pronoun *ku*: it can be interpreted as being referential or a bound variable.

Building on this finding, these experimental studies suggest that the pronoun *ku* can be analyzed to have two different structures assuming the typology of pronouns

¹⁴ These studies noted that the same debate also applies to the feminine counterpart of the pronoun, *kuney* ‘she’, but no discussion has been provided.

in Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002).¹⁵ The pronoun *ku* with a referential interpretation has a DP structure (pro-DP hereafter), while the pronoun *ku* with a bound variable interpretation has a ϕ P structure (pro- ϕ P hereafter). ϕ P indicates any intermediate functional projection between N and D that encodes phi-features including number, gender, and person.¹⁶ In Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002), pronouns that are referential and definite are classified under the structure of pro-DP, which is exactly the core interpretation of the anaphoric definite *ku*. Thus, I propose that pro-DP *ku* shares the same projection of idxP with anaphoric definite *ku*, as illustrated in (15a). In particular, the role of pronominal *ku* is to index the referent in the relevant context similar to the anaphoric definite *ku*. In both structures of Korean in (15), I assume that the NP position is null as with Kim and Han (2016) and K. Kim (2019).¹⁷

(15) a. Pro-DP

$$[\text{DP idxP [idx, D] [D' [\phi\text{P [NP } \phi] \text{ D}]]]$$

ku

b. Pro- ϕ P

$$[\phi\text{P idxP [idx, } \phi] [\phi' \text{ NP } \phi]]$$

ku

On the other hand, pro- ϕ P has no inherent semantics unlike ‘definite’ pro-DP, but they are the spell out of ϕ features (Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002). As such, I suggest that the pronominal *ku* with a bound variable interpretation realizes idxP but it merges in Spec, ϕ P, as illustrated in (15b). As idx is category neutral (see section

15 The focus of their studies is on the acquisition of the pronoun *ku*. For the purpose of this paper, I do not discuss detail.

16 I depart from Kim and Han (2016) and K. Kim (2019) in that the pronominal *ku* appears in the specifier of DP or ϕ P. These studies assumed that the pronoun *ku* realizes a head (D or ϕ) under the assumption that demonstratives in the language realize the D head as with Kang (2001) and Chang (2009). However, as discussed in the previous section, the analysis in this paper supports the specifier positions of DP for *ku* rather than the head position.

17 In Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002), the NP position of pro-DP can be overt or covert. A demonstrative use is observed when it is overt, as evidenced by the data from Halkomelem (Salish). Korean appears to be similar to Halkomelem as the case of the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* suggests. That is, *ku* as an anaphoric definite requires an overt NP while *ku* as a pronoun the NP position has to be null. A null NP in the pronoun has shown to be the result of an NP ellipsis (K. Kim 2019). See Park (2017) for evidence that Korean allows an NP ellipsis. I do not further question this issue as it is beyond the scope of this paper.

definite article [#](é) as shown in (18). In a unique definite context such as in (18), however, no anaphoric index appears, as there is no previously established referent to be indexed. The form of definite enclitics varies phonologically depending on the final vowel of the word that it attaches (see Jenks and Konate 2022 for detail).

- (18) té = [#](é), kán fàrì
 sun = DEF BE intense
 ‘The sun is intense.’ (Jenks and Konate 2022: 25)

Thus, the anaphoric index morpheme *wó* in Marka-Dafing is similar to the anaphoric definite *ku* in Korean in that it realizes the [idx] feature in its structure. Interestingly, just like Korean, the anaphoric index marker *wó* functions as a pronoun, as shown in (19).

- (19) Context: In Ghana, nobody likes the president(s) who died.
 ñ nó = ó (/ní wó/) kùnbè
 1sg PAST = IDX:ANA meet
 ‘I met him.’ (Jenks and Konate 2022: 30)

Building on the data such as discussed here, it is proposed that the anaphoric index *wó* realizes the features [idx, D, +ANAPH] in both structures of anaphoric definite and pronominal (Jenks and Konate 2022). The pronoun *wó* thus may belong to a pro-DP similar to the pronoun *ku*; however, it cannot be categorized as pro-φP as the pronominal use of *wó* does not allow bound variable reading, as shown in (20).

- (20) mó tʃèn mà-fɔ̃ k-ó kánzàn wà
 person one neg-say COMP-IDX:ANA.SG full neg
 ‘Nobody₁ said they_{*1/2} are full.’ (Jenks and Konate 2022: 30)

Although *wó* in Marka-Dafing is not ambiguous in its category unlike the pronoun *ku* in Korean, the data from Marka-Dafing provides support for the current view in which the anaphoric definite and pronominal share the same core structure, namely idxP.

4. Extension: Deictic demonstratives as IdxP

Korean has a three-way distinction in the demonstrative paradigm (e.g., Sohn 1999): *i* ‘this’ (a proximal form), *ce* ‘that over there’ (a distal form), and *ku* ‘that’ (a neutral form, close to hearer or known to both speaker and hearer). The three demonstratives are possible in deictic contexts (e.g., Lee 1989; Kang 1994; Lee and Song 2010; Ionin et al. 2012; Kang 2021), as illustrated in (21a). However, only demonstrative *ku* is possible in anaphoric contexts, as shown in (21b). A pointing gesture is possible with all three demonstratives when they are in a deictic use as observed in the previous studies. However, as will be discussed shortly, in a recent experimental study (Ahn and Davidson 2018), it is shown that a pointing gesture is not possible in an anaphoric context, i.e. in anaphoric use of demonstrative *ku*.

- (21) a. In an art gallery [Speaker points at a painting]:

i/ce/ku *kulim-i* *alumtapta*
 this/that/that picture-NOM beautiful
 ‘This/that painting is beautiful.’

- b. *yeca* *hanmyeng-i* *mwutay* *oyncok-eyse* *tulewassta.*

woman one-NOM stage left-from entered
talun *yeca* *hanmyeng-i* *mwutay* *oluncok-eyse*
 different woman one-NOM stage right-from
tulewassta.

entered

ku/?i *yeca-nun* *kkoch* *pakwuni-lul* *tulko*
 that/this woman-TOP flower basket-ACC carry-COMP
issessta.

was

‘A woman entered from stage left. Another woman entered from stage right. That/?this woman was carrying a basket of flowers.’

(Ionin et al. 2012: 76)

In recent studies such as Ahn (2017, 2019) and Kang (2021), it has been pointed out that the demonstrative *ku* is distinguished from the other demonstratives *i* and *ce*. In Kang (2021), for example, it is mentioned that the referents of *i* and *ce* have

to be visually present, while those of the demonstrative *ku* do not have to be present visually. This is illustrated in (22). This observation is in line with the previous proposals in which only the demonstrative *ku* can be used in anaphoric contexts (see section 3). In an anaphoric context, a visual presentation of the referent is not necessary, but the referent has to be previously mentioned in the discourse.¹⁹

- (22) Context: John was at the furniture store. After deciding to buy the most expensive chair in the store, John calls to his wife and says:
 yekise ceyil pissan uyca-ka maum-ey tul-e.
 here most expensive chair-NOM mind-LOC have-DECL
 ku/*i/*ce uyca-lul sa-lke-ya.
 KU/this/that chair-ACC buy-will-DEC
 ‘I like the most expensive chair here. I will buy the/that chair.’
 (Kang 2021: 304)

On the other hand, the fact that the demonstratives *i* and *ce* require visual presentation of referents is associated with specification of deictic information in those demonstratives. In particular, they identify their referents in spatial contexts, such as proximate or distal contexts, unlike the anaphoric definite *ku*.

Deictic demonstratives in English and Washo are analyzed as idxP as discussed earlier (see section 3). Deictic demonstratives belong to indexed definites, and as such they are idxP occupying the specifier of DP. In light of the analysis of demonstrative *ku* as idxP proposed in this paper, I argue that the deictic demonstratives *i* and *ce* can also be analyzed as idxP; they share the same feature [idx, D] with the anaphoric demonstrative *ku*. Their difference is in the specific semantic information they indicate: exophoric vs. anaphoric, as suggested in Ahn (2017, 2019). Below, I discuss the part of Anh’s study on how the deictic demonstratives *i* and *ce* are *semantically* different from the anaphoric demonstrative *ku*.²⁰ This will be relevant to the syntactic proposals

19 An anonymous reviewer suggested that the demonstrative *i* can be used in the absence of visual presentation if a proper context is provided. Thus, making a distinction between *ku* and *i* in terms of visual presentation requirement as in the previous approaches may need to be relaxed or too strong. For the purpose of the paper, I do not further question this issue. What is important to the current discussion is that, regardless of this requirement, *ku* is anaphoric unlike the deictic demonstratives *i* or *ce*.

20 Ahn (2017, 2019) proposed formal semantics of those demonstratives, but no syntactic analysis of them

on the deictic demonstratives different from the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* made later in the section.

In Ahn (2017, 2019), the deictic demonstratives in Korean are distinguished from the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* in that only the former allows an exophoric use referring to an entity in the immediate context. I interpreted this sense of exophoric is in line with the visual presentation of referent imposed by the deictic demonstratives discussed above. According to Ahn (2019), exophoric uses of demonstratives carry the demonstration of where the referent is, and this is indicated by a pointing gesture. For example, as illustrated with English (23), the symbol $\rightarrow$ is employed to indicate this pointing gesture that accompanies the demonstrative.

(23) (Pointing at a boy) That $\rightarrow$ boy was in my class. (Ahn 2019: 155)

In English, an exophoric use is not possible with the anaphoric pronoun *it* or with a definite description such as *the boy*, as shown in (24). The contrast between (23) and (24) suggests that in English only demonstratives can be used exophorically.

(24)a. (Pointing at a window decoration) *I like it $\rightarrow$.

b. (Pointing at a boy) *The $\rightarrow$ boy was in my class.

(Ahn 2019: 156)

Similar to a pronoun or a definite description in English such as in (24), the anaphoric definite *ku* is not allowed in the exophoric context, as shown in (25). In the context such as below, the anaphoric definite *ku* is not simply possible with the exophoric pointing gesture. However, in (25), the exophoric demonstrative *ce* can appear.

(25) *ce* $\rightarrow$ /**ku* $\rightarrow$ *pyel-ul* *pwa!*

ce /**ku* *star-ACC* *look.IMP*

'Look at that star!'

(Ahn 2019: 187)

Building on data such as discussed here, Ahn (2017, 2019) proposed that the

has been provided. For the purpose of this paper, I do not discuss the formal semantics proposed in Ahn (2017, 2019).

demonstratives *i* or *ce* are exophoric while *ku* is only anaphoric.²¹ This proposal is further supported by the experimental study in Ahn and Davidson (2018). The study found out that *ku* with an exophoric pointing is significantly rated lower than *ku* without an exophoric pointing. Moreover, in the same study, it is shown that the demonstrative *ce* obligatorily requires a pointing gesture and without a pointing gesture the use of *ce* is marked significantly low.

The discussion thus far suggests that demonstratives in Korean is largely classified into two types, anaphoric and exophoric. Ahn (2019) suggested that the semantics carried by these two types of demonstratives – anaphoric and exophoric – is encoded in the specifier of DP respectively, under the assumption that these demonstratives appear in the DP projection. As the two meanings are in complementary distribution as suggested by data such as (25), they are not allowed to co-occur. This restriction provided in Ahn (2019) can be understood under a broader constraint, namely the Single Index Constraint proposed in Jenks and Konate (2022) which builds on cross-linguistic data that includes Korean, Marka-Dafing and Limbum (Grassfields Bantu).

- (26) The Single Index Constraint: Indexed definites and deictic pronouns can only rely on a single referential index to refer.
(Jenks and Konate 2022: 31)

The constraint in (26) suggests that indexed definites and deictic pronouns have only a single specifier position occupied by idxP, and each idxP is constrained by one kind of referential index. For example, each idxP is restricted by one single dimension by referring to a discourse participant or to an individual in space. For the Korean data under discussion, this restriction makes sense as an anaphoric index (realized by *ku*) identifies a referent in the discourse or in the previously mentioned contexts, while an exophoric index (realized by *ce* or *i*) identifies a referent in the immediate context in space. Thus, the complementary distribution of anaphoric and deictic demonstratives in Korean follows from the constraint in (26). Building on this conclusion, I propose the syntax of idxP as in (27) projected by the anaphoric demonstrative *ku* (27a) and the deictic demonstratives *i/ce* (27b). As schematically

21 Relevant to deictic demonstratives, some speakers allow the demonstrative *i* as anaphoric definite. It is not clear whether this use of *i* does not carry an exophoric meaning, which I leave for future research.

- The feature [idx] realized by the exophoric demonstratives is also category neutral, similar to *ku*. As illustrated in (28), they show a similar range of distribution.²²

- The current section proposes that exophoric demonstratives *i* and *ce* share a common structural core with anaphoric *ku*, namely idxP. The current proposal is different from the previous studies on the demonstratives that have mainly focused

(i) Child or Adult-Plain	Dem- <i>ay</i>	
Adult-familiar	Dem- <i>i</i>	
Adult-Polite	Dem- <i>pwun</i>	
Male-Derogatory	Dem- <i>nom</i>	
Female-Derogatory	Dem- <i>nyen</i>	(Adopted from K. Kim 2019: 55)

on the semantics of the demonstratives, and have not provided a serious syntactic analysis of the demonstratives. Under the current approach in this paper, the difference among the demonstratives is in their semantics expressed as a syntactic feature (see (27)) which has the effect of locating their referent spatially or contextually: the exphoric demonstratives locate their referents in spatial contexts, while anaphoric demonstrative locate their referents in the discourse.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have proposed that anaphoric demonstrative *ku* and the 3rd person singular pronoun *ku* share the same structure, namely idxP. The same morpheme *ku* shared by these two referential expressions is the realization of idx. As indexed definites, they share a syntactic feature [idx] which is category-neutral and combines with different syntactic categories. With the anaphoric definite *ku*, idx combines with DP, while the 3rd person pronoun *ku* combines with either DP or ϕ P depending on the interpretation of the pronoun. I also showed that the proposed account can be extended to deictic demonstratives in the language with spatial features on the idx head (e.g., [+PROX]), thereby providing a unified syntactic account for the different types of the demonstratives and the 3rd person pronoun.

The consequence of this account provides both empirical and analytical evidence for the recent claim in which indices are best viewed as syntactic objects independently from D (e.g., Schwarz 2009; Hanink 2017, 2018, 2021; Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Jenks and Konate 2022; Royer 2022). The current study thus contributes to the better understanding of the syntactic status of *ku* as well as of the deictic demonstratives in Korean which has been studied in numerous semantic literature with less attention on their syntax.

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