

Acceptability of Double Object Constructions in Korean Ditransitive Structures

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Background

- Previous literature has primarily aimed at building theoretical frameworks to compare Double Object Constructions (DOC) and Prepositional Dative Constructions (PDC) in Korean ditransitives (Jung & Miyagawa, 2004; Kim, 2008; Kim, 2015).
- This approach assumes the parallelism between English and Korean, positing that Korean exhibits English counterparts of ditransitive (Kim, 2015; Park & Kim, 2024).
- Within this assumption, it has been proposed that Korean, as a scrambling language, allows word-order variation in both DOCs and PDCs (Kim, 2015; Park & Kim, 2024).
- However, DOCs are widely recognized as rare in Korean. This raises questions about the assumption that Korean has two representative ditransitive structures similar to English.
- If proven, the marginal status of DOCs would call for a reevaluation of this assumption.

Objective & Prediction

1. Prove that Korean DOCs have low acceptability, differing from their English counterparts.
 2. Argue that Korean DOCs and PDCs are not interchangeable because of their different acceptability.
- STRUCTURE: DOC sentences proposed as grammatical in previous literature will show low acceptability ratings.
 - SCRAMBLE: Scrambled DOC sentences will show low acceptability ratings.

Reevaluation needed!

Experimental results of acceptability testing reveal that current theoretical assumption for Korean DOCs do not hold.

- Design: STRUCTURE (DOC, PDC) × SCRAMBLE (Goal-Theme, Theme-Goal)
- Examples of test trials

[DOC, Goal-Theme]				[PDC, Goal-Theme]			
Hana-ka	Jin- <i>ul</i>	chayk- <i>ul</i>	cwu-ess-ta.	Hana-ka	Jin- <i>eykey</i>	chayk- <i>ul</i>	cwu-ess-ta.
Hana-NOM	Jin-ACC	book-ACC	give-PST-DEC	Hana-NOM	Jin-DAT	book-ACC	give-PST-DEC
'Hana gave Jin a book.'				'Hana gave a book to Jin.'			
[DOC, Theme-Goal]				[PDC, Theme-Goal]			
Hana-ka	chayk- <i>ul</i>	Jin- <i>ul</i>	cwu-ess-ta.	Hana-ka	chayk- <i>ul</i>	Jin- <i>eykey</i>	cwu-ess-ta.
Hana-NOM	book-ACC	Jin-ACC	give-PST-DEC	Hana-NOM	book-ACC	Jin-DAT	give-PST-DEC
'Hana gave Jin a book.'				'Hana gave a book to Jin.'			

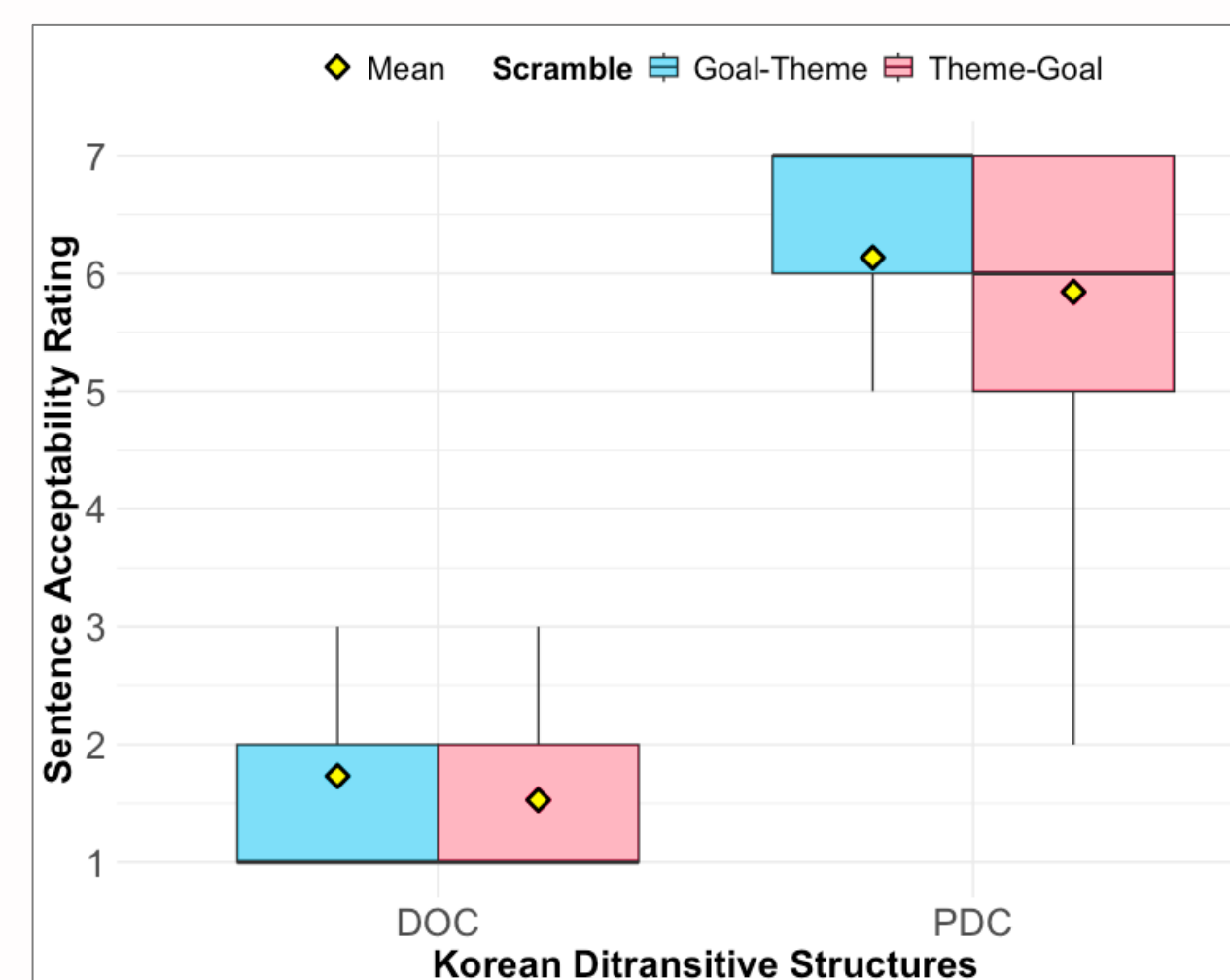


Fig 1. Acceptability Ratings for Ditransitive Verbs

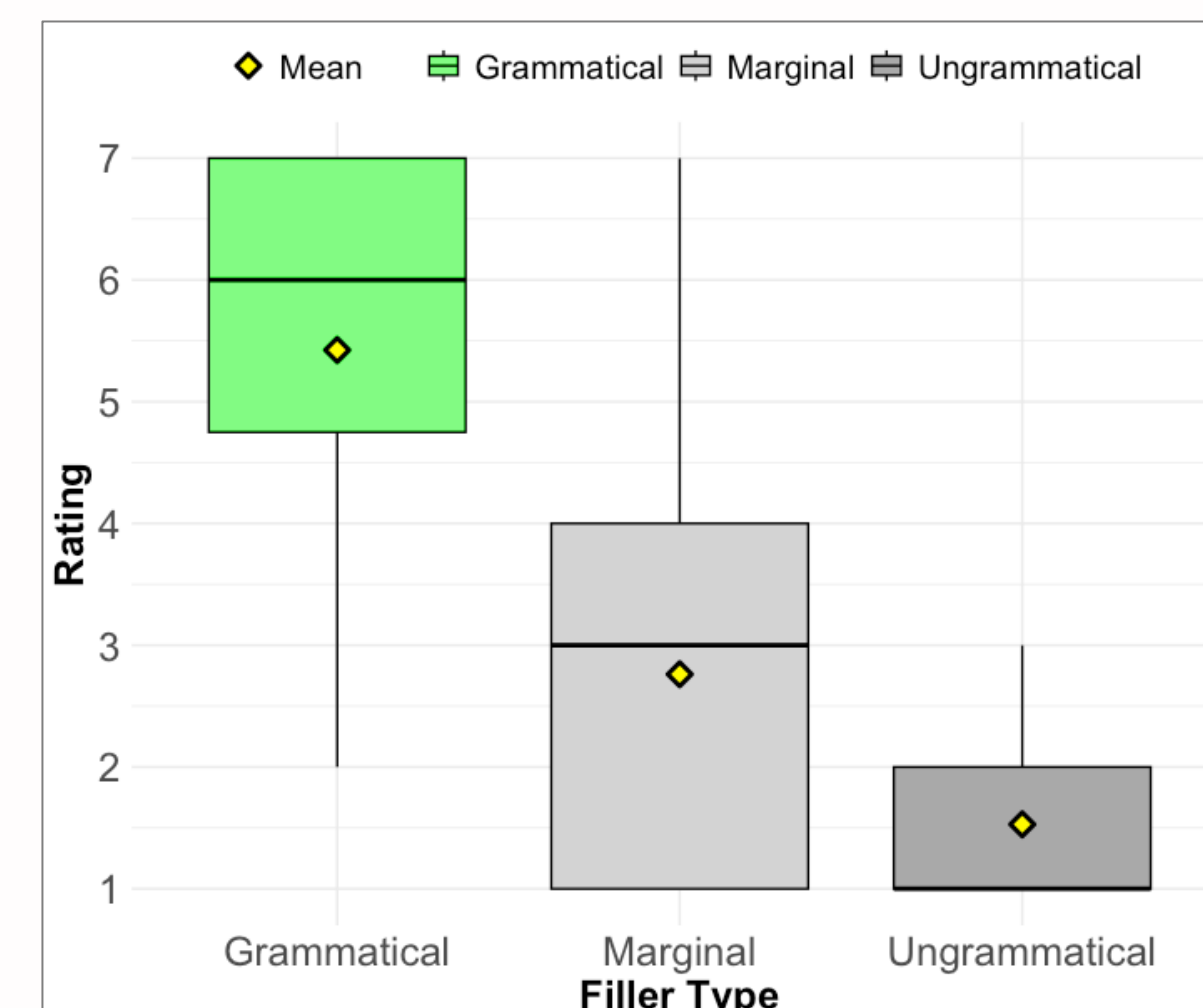


Fig 2. Acceptability Ratings for Fillers

Experiment & Results

- Acceptability testing on 43 native Korean speakers
- 4 causative verbs allowing DOC (Jung & Miyagawa, 2004; Kim, 2015): *cwu*- 'give', *kaluchi*- 'teach', *mek-i* 'feed', *ip-hi* 'put on'
- The finding calls for a reevaluation of Korean ditransitive constructions and their parallelism with English, as neither STRUCTURE nor SCRAMBLE hold for DOCs in Korean.

DOCs Rated as Unacceptable

- The ratings reveal that native Korean speakers perceive the previously proposed DOCs as unacceptable ($p < .001$).
- The Goal-Theme order is preferred over Theme-Goal for both Korean DOCs and PDCs ($p < .01$).
- Both scrambled and non-scrambled DOCs were rated unacceptable, suggesting that scrambling is not allowed in DOCs.

Future Work

- Future work will investigate:
 - (1) grammatical sources of low acceptability
 - (2) potential language change over generations
 - (3) why the Goal-Theme order is more acceptable than the Theme-Goal order in Korean ditransitive structures

Selected References

Jung, Y. J., & Miyagawa, S. (2004). Decomposing ditransitive verbs. In *Proceedings of SICGG*, 1, pp. 101-120. Kim, L. (2008). *The ditransitive construction in Korean*. Master's thesis, Simon Fraser University. Kim, L. (2015). Asymmetric ditransitive constructions: Evidence from Korean. *Lingua*, 165, 28-69. Park, J. & Kim, H. (2024). In Support of the Non-Derivational Analysis of Korean Ditransitive Constructions. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 32(3), 65-84.