Phrasing and Focus in North Kyungsang Korean

Hyang-Sook Sohn (Kyungpook National University)

This paper contributes to the discussion of phonological phrasing in North Kyungsang Korean, where tonal interaction bounded by a phonological phrase serves as a diagnostic of phrasing. Advancing the basic tenet in Kenstowicz and Sohn (1997) that focus triggers the onset of a phonological phrase and dephrasing of the following phonological phrases, this paper deals with various aspects of phrasing in which the focus effect plays a crucial role. Discussed in this paper are phrasings of the inherently focus-attracting particles, the NPI (negative polarity item), indefinite pronominals, question-formative endings, and the wh-operators. These (lexical) items are proposed to carry focus with respect to phonological phrasing, also attracting dephrasing of the following phonological phrases. Evidence drawn from these phenomena serves to establish the arguments that phonological phrasing is syntactically sensitive to the phrasal edges, and that dephrasing triggered by the focus effect spans over the IP. The pitch peak of a phonological phrase is also argued to be a function of phrasing, rather than a direct assignment of the H tone on the focus-attracting item per se. This lends supporting evidence to the claim that the effect of focus on phrasing is only indirect (Truckenbrodt 1995).