Eleven Family Problems Stories from SCOPIC:
Introduction*

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1. Outline of the featured topic

This special feature presents 11 "Family Problem Stories" told in nine different languages that are included in the Social Cognition Parallax Interview Corpora (SCOPIC, hereafter). The 11 stories include those that are told in less-documented endangered languages, such as G|ui, a Khoe language spoken in Botswana, and Arta, an Austronesian language spoken in the Philippines, texts of which have scarcely been published. Thus, the texts constitute a precious part of the documentation of those languages. At the same time, being collected as a part of SCOPIC, the stories can be useful resources for quantitative typological studies.

In §2, we will first give an overview of SCOPIC and the Family Problem Picture Task (FPPT, hereafter), through which the SCOPIC data were collected. In §3, we will provide preliminary observations on narrative structures of the texts.

2. Overview of SCOPIC and FPPT

SCOPIC is developed as a "parallax" corpus that "provides naturalistic but cross-linguistically-matched corpus data" (Barth and Evans 2017: 1). The data reflect the spontaneous reaction of speakers in conducting the common picture task FPPT, which allows the corpus to reflect "parallax" — in other words, different perspectives or vantage points from which the situation is described in individual languages and cultures. In that sense, the corpus can be distinguished from ordinary parallel corpora obtained through

translation, which is inevitably affected by the semantic structure of the original language.

FPPT is a stimulus-based activity in which participants describe 16 picture cards and organize them into one narrative. Table 1 shows the numbers and labels for the 16 pictures. The number indicates the specific order in which the cards are presented to the participants. Visuals of the pictures are shown in Figure 2.

Table 1   Card numbers and labels

No.	Label	No.	Label
1	Homecoming	9	Taken by police
2	Receiving clothes	10	Thinking about gaol
3	Alone in the cell	11	Refusing drink
4	Drunken gossip	12	Hitting
5	In court	13	Family talking together
6	Walking together	14	Standing in light
7	Sitting drinking	15	About to hit
8	Garden together	16	Thinking of home

It is designed to collect discourses relevant to social cognition, which is the sum of cognitive domains that allow us to live in a social world; the relevant cognitive domains include social interaction, interpersonal relationships, understanding of others' personality, intentions and emotions, and sociocultural knowledge.[1] In this task, participants are required to create a story with characters having different social relationships, verbal and nonverbal interactions, and speech and thought reporting. By doing so, we observe how participants interact with each other throughout the task, and how they describe the social world represented on the cards. To illustrate this point, consider the example of the drunken gossip card (No. 4).

To describe the situation on the card, task participants will be aware that the man on the left in the striped T-shirt is talking to the main character in the dark shirt, that their relationship may be neighbors or colleagues, that the striped man is probably talking about an intimate relationship between a man and a woman, and that the main character is taking the situation seriously. Since the task participants need to cooperate with each other to guess each situation on the card and create a story (see below), the task itself constitutes a lively social interaction for analysis.

By gathering data from FPPT, this corpus allows us to analyze such grammatical categories in natural discourse:

- human reference, such as kinship terms, social roles, personal names, and their grammatical categories
- reported speech and thought, direct/indirect style, and sentential complementation

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[1] See Evans (2010: 69ff), Barth and Evans (2017: 8–9) and San Roque et al. (2012) for the task design in relation to social cognition. For social cognition, see also Tomasello (2003), Enfield and Levinson (2006), Firth and Firth (2007), and Enfield (2013). Note that Evans's notion of social cognition is broader than has been traditionally discussed in developmental psychology and evolutionary anthropology.

Fig. 1   A stimulus card (#4 drunken gossip)

- verbal grammar involving intention, reciprocals, beneficiary, and other social significance
- modality, evidentiality, and stance-marking
- demonstrative, final particles, interjections sensitive to conversational organization, and common ground (engagement[2])

Thus, the corpus is a powerful tool for comparing the way speakers encode elements of social cognition in language. The FPPT employs 16 picture cards, as shown in Figure 2. Participants are given the cards arranged in the order shown in Table 1 and are then required to engage in the four task phases below.

– Phase 1 (description): describing each card one at a time.
– Phase 2 (problem-solving): sorting the cards into a coherent narrative order.
– Phase 3 (third-person narrative): narrating the story constructed in Phase 2.
– Phase 4 (first-person narrative): telling a first-person narrative from the point of view of one of the characters in the story.

The stories presented in this featured topic are third-person narratives obtained through the Phase 3 task above. Each story is given with details of the data collection method and the data included in each language's sub-corpus within SCOPIC. Yanti and Shiohara include two Indonesian stories, one told in Standard Indonesian and the other in Colloquial Indonesian. Kurabe includes the first-person and third-person narratives in Jinghpaw. The audio and video data are open to the public through PARADISEC (Barth 2018) and/or the TUFS repository for each article.

Table 2 shows the list of the languages covered in this featured topic.

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[2] Engagement is a grammatical category first formulated by Evans, Bergqvist, and San Roque (2017a, b). It refers to grammaticalized systems that serve to monitor and adjust intersubjective settings, such as demonstratives and some final particles.

Table 2   Languages covered in this featured topic

Languages	Country	Family	Author(s)
Arta	The Philippines	Austronesian	Kimoto
Dalabon	Australia	Gunwinyguan	Evans & Pamkal
G|ui	Botswana	Khoe	Ono
Indonesian*	Indonesia	Austronesian	Yanti & Shiohara
Japanese*	Japan	Japonic	Narrog, Yokoyama, and Kimoto
Jinghpaw*	Myanmar	Sino-Tibetan	Kurabe
Matukar Panau*	Papua New Guinea	Austronesian	Barth
Malay	Malaysia	Austronesian	Nomoto
Sibe*	China	Tungusic	Kogura

* shows that the original audio and video data are archived in PARADISEC (see Appendix)

3. Narrative structure observed in the stories

In this section, we provide preliminary observations of the narrative structure of the stories. Table 3 shows how the speakers of the eight languages sorted the pictures. (Arta is not included in the table, as the author fixed the order prior to the task activity.)

As can be seen from the table, speakers of four languages, namely Indonesian, Japanese, Jinghpaw, and Sibe, give a very similar plot, as shown in (1). Figure 2 shows the card order and plot given by Indonesian speakers as a representative.

(1) The plot common to the Indonesian, Japanese, Jinghpaw, and Sibe stories

 A. There was a farmer family living happily.
 B. One day, the husband drank with his friends and heard that his wife was having an affair.
 C. The husband was so angry and punched his wife.
 D. The husband was taken to the police station for a trial.
 E. He had a hard time in jail.
 F. The term was over, and he was released.
 G. He came back home. He told the family how he reformed himself. He refused to drink when his friends invited him to drink again.

Parts B–G above exhibit a feature typically observed in narratives cross-linguistically or cross-culturally, that of a "crisis to resolution progression" (Toolan 2001: 9). The Dalabon, Malay, and Matukar Panau stories also exhibit a crisis and resolution pattern. However, the Dalabon and Malay stories differ from the plot shown in (1) in that they put section A at the end of the story, leaving the story without an introductory part, and in the Matukar Panau story, the detailed assignment of the individual pictures differs from that of any other story and some points that play important roles in other stories are missing, such as the suspicion of the woman's cheating and the man's reformation after his release. Instead, the narrator focuses on the evils of alcohol-induced domestic violence. The G\|ui speaker told a story differently in that section G is presented in the earlier part, and the story has a bad ending. Needless to say, only one sample for each language is not enough to determine whether the

Table 3　Order of illustrations found in the nine stories

Indonesian (both standard and colloquial)	Japanese	Jinghpaw	Sibe	Dalabon	Malay	Matukar Panau	Gui
8.Garden togather	8.Garden togather	8.Garden togather	1.Homecoming	7.Sitting drinking	7.Sitting drinking	4.Drunken gossip	14.Standing in the light
6.Walking together	6.Walking together	6.Walking together	6.Walking together	4.Drunken gossip	4.Drunken gossip	7.Sitting drinking	1.Homecoming
7.Sitting drinking	7.Sitting drinking	7.Sitting drinking	8.Garden togather	15.About to hit	15.About to hit	9.Taken by police	13.Family talking together
4.Drunken gossip	4.Drunken gossip	4.Drunken gossip	7.Sitting drinking	12.Hitting	12.Hitting	12.Hitting	11.Refuse to drink
15.About to hit	15.About to hit	15.About to hit	4.Drunken gossip	9.Taken by police	9.Taken by police	5.In court	8.Garden togather
12.Hitting	12.Hitting	12.Hitting	15.About to hit	10.Thinking about gaol	5.In court	2.Receiving clothes	6.Walking together
9.Taken by police	9.Taken by police	9.Taken by police	12.Hitting	5.In court	2.Receiving clothes	3.Alone in the cell	2.Receiving clothes
5.In court	5.In court	5.In court	9.Taken by police	3.Alone in the cell	3.Alone in the cell	10.Thinking about gaol	7.Sitting drinking
10.Thinking about gaol	2.Receiving clothes	10.Thinking about gaol	5.In court	10.Thinking of home	10.Thinking about gaol	11.Refuse to drink	4.Drunken gossip
16.Thinking of home	10.Thinking about gaol	16.Thinking of home	2.Receiving clothes	13.Family talking together	16.Thinking of home	15.About to hit	15.About to hit
3.Alone in the cell	3.Alone in the cell	3.Alone in the cell	3.Alone in the cell	2.Receiving clothes	14.Standing in the light	13.Family talking together	12.Hitting
2.Receiving clothes	16.Thinking of home	2.Receiving clothes	10.Thinking about gaol	14.Standing in light	1.Homecoming	16.Thinking of home	9.Taken by police
14.Standing in the light	14.Standing in the light	14.Standing in the light	16.Thinking of home	11.Refuse to drink	13.Family talking together	8.Garden togather	5.In court
1.Homecoming	1.Homecoming	1.Homecoming	14.Standing in the light	1.Homecoming	11.Refuse to drink	14.Standing in the light	10.Thinking about gaol
13.Family talking together	13.Family talking together	13.Family talking together	11.Refuse to drink	8.Garden together	8.Garden togather	1.Homecoming	3.Alone in the cell
11.Refuse to drink	11.Refuse to drink	11.Refuse to drink	13.Family talking together	6.Walking together	6.Walking together	(6.Walking together was not used)	16.Thinking of home

A. There was a farmer family living happily.

8. Garden together   6. Walking together

B. One day, the husband drank with his friends and heard that his wife was having an afair.

6. Sitting drinking   4. Drunken gossip

C. The husband was so angry and punched his wife.

15. About to hit   12. Hitting

D. The husband was taken to the police station for a trial.

9. Taken by police   10. In court

E. He had a hard time in the jail.

10. Thinking about gaol   16. Thinking of home   3. Alone in the cell.

F. The term was over and he was released.

2. Receiving clothes   14. Standing in light

G. He came back home. He told the family about how he reformed himself.
He refused to drink when his friends invited him to drink.

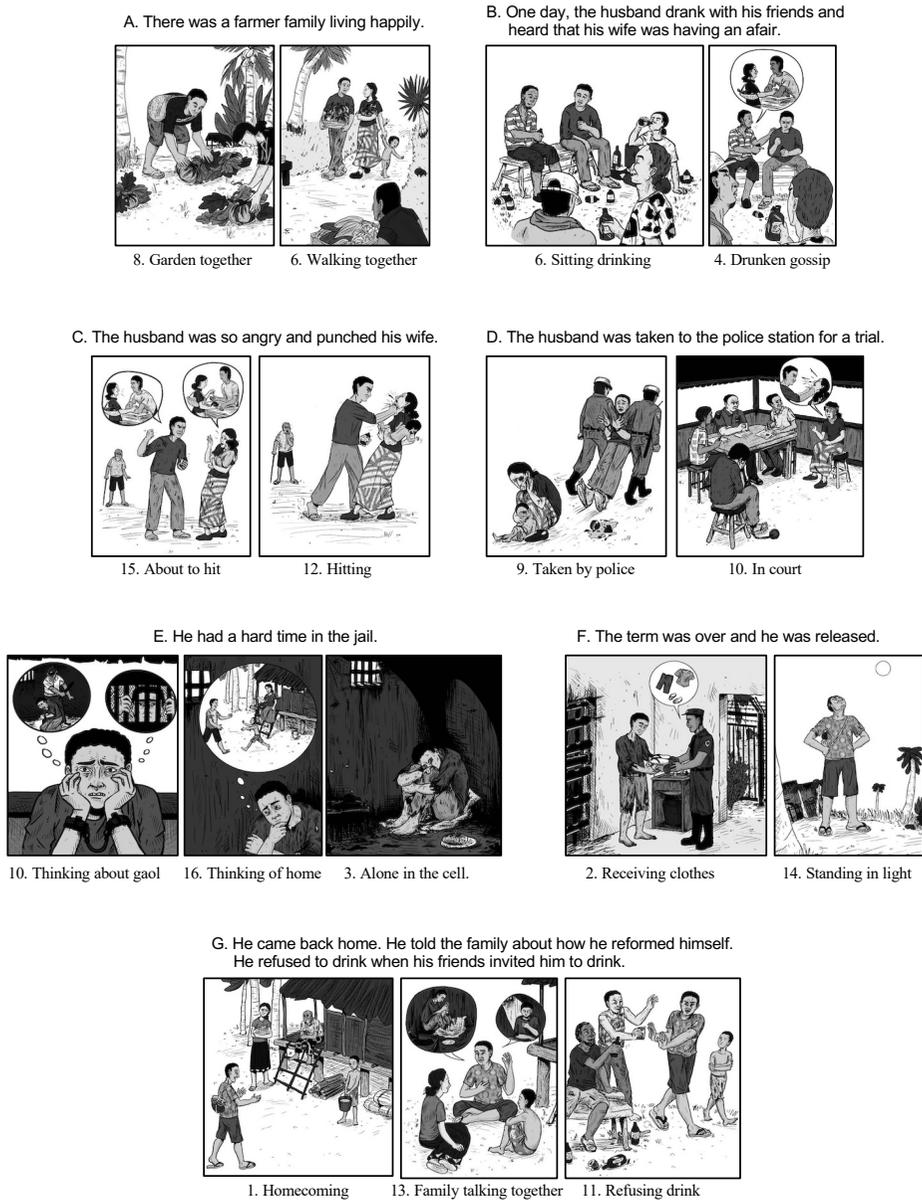1. Homecoming   13. Family talking together   11. Refusing drink

Fig. 2   A plot of Indonesian story with the stimuli pictures

differences observed among the stories are due to individual differences or to differences in language and culture. Further research based on more samples will enable us to identify the tendencies of individual languages or cultures.

While noting the differences in narrative structure mentioned above, the significance of

the commonalities found in the stories may be worth mentioning. Almost all the stories contain the narrative parts A–G above. Thus, we could confirm that FPPT functions exactly as designed, at least so far as Phase 3 (third-person telling) is concerned, enabling us to collect texts with a narrative structure similar enough to serve as a reference point. In future research, we will measure and evaluate parallax related to the reference points reflected in each story.

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Appendix: Data accessible at PARADISEC

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