A Comparative Study of Middle Mandarin and Middle Korean *Wh*-expressions

Keywords: Middle Mandarin; Middle Korean; *wh*-expressions; syntax-semantics mapping; Cartographic syntax

Nogeoldae and *Bak Tongsa* are Middle Mandarin (MM) textbooks established in the late 14th century. They were revised twice in the late 15th century and the mid-18th century. These revised versions were written in Early Middle Mandarin and Late Middle Mandarin, respectively. During the revision process, the translations into Middle Korean (MK) were also carried out (cf. Ota 1991).

These bilingual texts enable systematic comparisons of the *wh*-expressions of Middle Mandarin and Middle Korean along the clausal spine. For example, in these texts, sentence-final (SF) MM *zěnme* 'do what', *zěnshēng* 'do how', and *rúhé* 'be how' were translated into MK *musum-ho* 'do what', *esti-ho* 'do how', and *esteho* 'be how', respectively, all of which were also located in SF positions, see (1) to (3).

Meanwhile, in Modern Mandarin (ModM), *zěnme* 'how' in sentence-medial (SM) positions is divided into two subtypes, that is, H(igh)-HOW and M(id)-HOW (cf. Tsai 2008; Stepanov and Tsai 2008). H-HOW, such as causal *zěnme*, precedes grammatical particles such as *cái* 'now' and *jiù* 'just' and auxiliaries such as *néng* 'can' and *gǎn* 'dare', whereas M-HOW, such as instrumental/method *how*, follows them (see Stepanov & Tsai 2008; Tsai 1999, 2008, 2023, 2024 for further examples and definition of causal *how* as a *wh*-expression for eventuality causation).

In MM, *zěnme* was also used in SM positions and construed as either causal *how* or instrumental/method *how*. However, similar to ModM M-HOW, MM instrumental/method *zěnme* in *Nogeoldae* and *Bak Tongsa* never preceded any particles or auxiliaries such as *cái* 'now', *jiù* 'just', and *néng* 'can'. On the other hand, MM causal *zěnme* always preceded them whenever they were present, similar to ModM H-HOW, see (4a). This suggests that these two *zěnme* are distributed in two separate domains. Interestingly, their MK translations were also distinct from each other. Causal *zěnme* was translated with *esti-hoy-e* 'for doing what' or *esti* 'how' (or *esci* with palatalization) in the pre-modal position as exemplified in (4b), but was never translated with *ei*, whereas instrumental/method *zěnme* was frequently translated with *ei*, see (5).

Based on these strict correspondences between Middle Mandarin and Middle Korean *wh*-expressions, this paper proposes the structure in (6). In this structure, causal *how* (4), which meets the criteria of H-HOW, are positioned within the CP-domain, preceding auxiliaries and modal adverbs. Instrumental/method *how* (5) are positioned at Spec,*v*P, following auxiliaries. This division accounts for the aforementioned separate distributions of H-HOW and M-HOW of Middle Mandarin and Middle Korean. The three SF *wh*-expressions, (1) to (3), are analyzed as VPs along with each of their MK translations.

In this way, this paper conducts a systematic comparison between Middle Mandarin and Middle Korean *wh*-expressions and discovers clear correspondences between the two. Theoretically speaking, the division of H-HOW and M-HOW in these two languages indicates that Tsai's (2008) division of H-HOW and M-HOW is extendable to historical languages as well.

(1) a. *xué tā hàn'ér wénshū* ***zěnme****?* (Middle Mandarin)
learn that Chinese text **do.what**
'What do you learn Chinese for?' (*Revised Nogeoldae* 刪改本老乞大 1483)

b. *hanin-ui kul poyhw-a* ***musum-ho-l-ta****?* (Middle Korean)
Chinese-GEN language learn-and **what-do-will-Q**
'What do you learn Chinese for?' (*Translated Nogeoldae* 飜譯老乞大 1517)

(2) a. *tā chī de fàn què* ***zěnshēng****?* (Middle Mandarin)
he eat MOD meal but **do.how**
'What should we do about his meal?' (*Revised Nogeoldae* 刪改本老乞大 1483)

b. *tye-uy mek-ul pap-on stwo* ***esti-ho-lye-nywo****?* (Middle Korean)
he-GEN eat-FUT.MOD meal-TOP again **how-do-will-Q**
'What should we do about his meal?' (*Translated Nogeoldae* 飜譯老乞大 1517)

(3) a. *rújīn jiàqǐán* ***rúhé****?* (Middle Mandarin)
now price **be.how**
'How is the price now?' (*Revised Nogeoldae* 刪改本老乞大 1483)

b. *icey kaps-i* ***esteho-nywo?*** (Middle Korean)
nowprice-NOM **be.how-Q**
'How is the price now?' (*Translated Nogeoldae* 飜譯老乞大 1517)

(4) a. ***zěnme*** *<u>néng</u> shuō women de guānhuà?* (Middle Mandarin)
how <u>can</u> speak we GEN Mandarin
'How come you speak our Mandarin?' (*New Edition of Nogeoldae* 老乞大新釋 1761)

b. ***esci*** *<u>nenghi</u> uli han mal-ul nilo-non-ta?* (Middle Korean)
how <u>possibly</u> our Chinese language-ACC speak-PRS-Q
'How come you speak our Mandarin?'
(*Korean Translation of New Edition of Nogeoldae* 老乞大新釋諺解 1763)

(5) a. *féng zì* ***zěnme*** *xiě?* (Middle Mandarin)
sew letter **how** write
'How do you write the character "sew"?' (*Revised Bak Tongsa* 刪改本朴通事 1483)

b. *pongca-lul* ***ei*** *ssu-no-nywo?* (Middle Korean)
sew.letter-ACC **how** write-PRS-Q
'How do you write the character "sew"?' (*Translated Bak Tongsa* 飜譯朴通事 1517)

(6) [$_{CP}$ *zěnme* [$_{IP}$ Aux [$_{vP}$ *zěnme* [$_{VP}$ *zěnme* *zěnshēng* *rúhé*]]]]

esti/esti-hoy-a	*esti/esti-hoy-a/ei*	*musum-ho*	*esti-ho*	*esteho*
Causal *how*	Inst./Method *how*	'do what'	'do how'	'be how'

Selected References

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