

Linguistic Areas in East Asia: Exploratory Study of Language Contact between Japanese, Korean, and Manchu

Abstract

This paper mainly focuses on possible linguistic areas in East Asia, or more precisely on the hypothetical linguistic area consisting of Japanese, Korean and Manchu. This paper remains agnostic towards the existence of the hypothetical Altaic language family and instead focuses on the possible contact induced similarities shared by the aforementioned languages. This paper presents a macrotypological overview of the relative typological difference between these languages, and then follows by presenting two areas of morphosyntax where the search after the contact induced features seem the most fruitful: case markers and complex predicates.

Keywords: linguistic area; Japanese language; Korean language; Manchu language; contact linguistics; linguistic typology

1. Introduction

This paper mainly focuses on possible linguistic areas in East Asia, or more precisely on the hypothetical linguistic area consisting of Japanese, Korean and Manchu. It is not the only possible areal grouping, nor is it the only language area in East Asia, however, it is a good point of departure because of the obvious similarities between these languages and the fact that their possible genetic relationship is rather dubious or, if proven, very distant at best. First, this paper will attempt to ascertain the real level of similarity between Japanese, Korean and Manchu. Afterwards two areas of morphosyntax most promising for the study of contact induced features will be presented: Case particles of the aforementioned languages and certain types of complex predicates shared among these languages.

The first problem one must tackle when studying language areas is that a 'linguistic area' as a concept is not well-defined. This stems from the fact that there are no inherent borders in a linguistic area as the isoglosses of individual language features do not necessarily have to bundle; linguistic areas can be very old or young, large or very small, and they can overlap. Many scholars have pointed out this characteristic of the term, to quote the most salient one:

A common perception is that the term 'linguistic area' is difficult to define (see Heine and Kuteva, 2001: 409). As Thomason (2001: 99) observes, 'linguistics has struggled to define the concept [linguistic area] ever since [Trubetzkoy, 1928], mainly because it isn't always easy to decide whether a particular region constitutes a linguistic area or not'. In spite of prolonged efforts to define 'linguistic area', there is no general agreement as to its definition, and even for the most widely accepted linguistic areas, such as the Balkans, scholars do not agree wholly on which languages belong to the area, which linguistic traits characterize the area, and even its precise geographical extent.¹

Due to these concerns, a simple working definition will be used in this paper. Linguistic area is a geographical area in which speakers of different languages interact, and the languages in the area share certain features through language contact. Language contact too is a multi-faceted phenomenon that can take on many forms. Generally speaking, it is a series of individual instances of language contact between individuals that are by no means homogeneous. However, when perceived in a large scope,

¹ Campbell, Lyle. "Areal linguistics: A closer scrutiny." *Linguistic Areas*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2006. 1-2.

we can generalize about language contact between certain speech communities. Because of the issues associated with the definition of linguistic areas, it is best to focus on the individual instances of language contact and on concrete language features shared by individual languages.

This paper is an exploratory work attempting to find methods of analysis that would help further research of linguistic areas in East Asia, or more precisely speaking, in the area where the languages sometimes grouped together in the hypothetical Altaic language family are spoken. In this paper I will not be attempting to ascertain whether this hypothetical genealogical grouping is real or not; this paper does not strive for such a judgement, and it will be shown why it is not a major problem for this analysis.

To illustrate this point, let us attempt a thought experiment. Korean and Japanese are generally considered to be typologically very similar languages. However, they share only very little of their basic vocabulary. To illustrate this we can use any Swadesh list (or any of its later incarnations, or lists that attempt to rectify its problems e.g. Leipzig-Jakarta list, respectively)² In this paper I am using the Leipzig-Jakarta list, based on Haspelmath & Tadmor³ as it is, unlike Swadesh list, based on a large language sample and therefore more indicative of genealogical relatedness of languages. This kind of a list is of course not perfect for ascertaining whether the given languages are related or not. However, it can surely tell us whether they are closely related. When we compare Japanese and Korean Leipzig-Jakarta lists (attached to this paper together with the Manchu list), the number of possible cognates is very low.⁴ Which means that even if Japanese and Korean were related, this relationship would have to be very distant, and therefore cannot be used as an explanation for the large quantities of typological and structural similarities. Thus, the language contact between these languages most probably plays a much greater role in emergence of said similarities than the hypothetical genealogical relationship.

This begs another question: Was it physically possible for the speakers of Japanese, Korean and Manchu to interact during the historical and prehistoric times? We know that during the historical period there was much contact between speakers of these languages, especially Manchu-Korean, and Korean-Japanese. There was a great influx of people from the Korean peninsula to Japan in the 6th -7th century, and Korea was occupied by the Japanese briefly at the end of the 16th century and again in modern times between 1910 -1945. Koreans and the Manchu had low-level contacts along the Yalu river for centuries, and the complicated ethnic makeup of the Koguryo and Parhae kingdoms⁵ could have facilitated a great amount of close contact through the greater part of the 1st millennium.

The situation was probably very similar before the beginning of the written record in Northeast Asia. The areas discussed in this paper, i. e. the Japanese archipelago, the Korean peninsula, and the area historically known as Manchuria were a stage for pronounced cultural contacts at least since the beginning of the Bronze Age,⁶ and probably even earlier.⁷ The way bronze making spread from Manchuria to Korea and then later to Japan shows at least a unilateral flow of cultural artefacts and technologies from the northwest towards Japan. Later, there are obvious similarities between the Korean Mumun culture and the Japanese Yayoi culture.⁸ We admittedly do not know what languages these people spoke; however, we can be sure they were in some form of contact, and where we find contact between different groups of people, there is also language contact.

² Swadesh list is a list of basic vocabulary that is supposed to be the most resistant to change. It is often used in the controversial fields of glottochronology and lexicostatistics. However, it was mostly based on Swadesh's intuition. Leipzig-Jakarta list attempts to rectify this by scientifically finding 100 words most resistant to change.

³ Haspelmath, Martin, and Uri Tadmor, eds. *Loanwords in the world's languages: a comparative handbook*. Walter de Gruyter, 2009.

⁴ Possibly a few words such as fire or water.

⁵ Koguryo and later Parhae were states whose territory covered much of North Korea and eastern Manchuria.

⁶ Lee, Chung-kyu. The Bronze Dagger Culture of Liaoning Province and the Korean Peninsula. *Korea Journal*. (Vol.36. No.4 Winter, 1996 pp.17~27)

⁷ There have been contacts between the Japanese archipelago and the southern edge of the Korean peninsula even before the beginning of the Bronze Age, as proven by the Japanese Jomon pottery found at the Dongsamdong archeological site near Busan, Korea.

⁸ There is even evidence of earlier contact between the coastal populations of Korea and Japan already in the Jomon period.

These historical facts point to an environment conducive to language contact in general going back to 1000 BCE at the very least, and thus to various individual language contacts taking place at least intermittently for the last 3000 years. Such a long period of speakers of aforementioned languages interacting with each other is long enough for many of the observed typological similarities to emerge.

2. How pronounced are the similarities between these languages?

However, just proclaiming that some languages are similar is not enough for a scientific discourse. Such a statement is not quantified in any way; inasmuch it does not tell us anything about the degree of similarity between the given languages. Let us therefore attempt to quantify the typological similarities between Japanese, Korean and Manchu. For a rough comparison, the categories and values listed in the WALs (The World Atlas of Language Structures) will be used.⁹ The WALs is a large database categorizing linguistic features of hundreds of languages. It contains altogether 144 different features (not counting subcategories) belonging to various fields of linguistics: phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicology etc. The WALs is admittedly not a perfect tool, some of the definitions of features and some values ascribed to aforementioned languages are problematic.¹⁰ However, considering the number of various features listed in WALs, such errors are not statistically significant, and can be easily corrected. The greatest problem is that the number of listed values for Manchu is much lower than for Japanese or Korean.¹¹

When one analyzes this data from WALs, and corrects several errors found in it, the following results emerge: Between Japanese and Korean the number of differences is very low: Only 34 of 150 values available show pronounced differences. When we adjust for the number of multiple values that belong to subcategories of the same cross-linguistic feature, the result is 30,5 of 137 individual categories where Japanese differs from Korean and vice versa. This is just slightly over 22 %. Typological differences between these two languages are clustered mainly in two areas: Ten of these features are just phonological differences mainly caused by the greater number of phonemes (both consonants and vowels) in Korean. Seven of these differences are various aspects of the coding of negative. These differences are simply caused by the fact that Korean employs a negative prefix and Japanese a negative suffix.

As has been mentioned before, while the Manchu data in WALs cannot be considered comprehensive, it still contains 49 features that can be compared to Korean and/or Japanese. The ratios for different typological features between Manchu and Korean is 18/49, between Manchu and Japanese only 9/49. The much greater difference between Manchu and Korean can be attributed to data bias, as many of the listed features belong to the aforementioned categories of phonology and negative marking. To give a comparison with a language that is neither closely related or in close language contact with Japanese the number of different values for Japanese and Czech is 31/50, which is 62%, a much higher percentage than between any of the analyzed languages. This demonstrably shows that the numbers for Japanese, Korean, and Manchu are significant.

To make this comparison even more scientifically significant and to supplement the lack of data in WALs, I have analyzed the wide range of features where the data for Manchu was missing and added more values for a comparison with Korean and Japanese, drawing on the existing grammars of

⁹ Comrie, Bernard, and David Gil. *The world atlas of language structures*. Vol. 1. Oxford University Press, 2005. The World Atlas of Language Structures is available both online at wals.info, and in paper form.

¹⁰ This is not the topic of this paper, and it is not possible to discuss it here in detail due to the length constraints, it will be discussed in a forthcoming paper. Just to list them: Japanese: listed as having an indefinite article - actually there is no such article, Korean action nominals listed as sentential, actually it has a hybrid form closest to double possessive. Japanese listed as having collapsed genitives and adjectives, which is not true for most cases.

¹¹ Only 49 features that can be used for comparison with Japanese and Korean have ascribed values for Manchu in the WALs.

Manchu, especially Gorelova¹². For a wider and more comprehensive comparison I have also added Evenki¹³ and Khalkha Mongolian. The results are as follows:

Number of typological differences as compared to Manchu:

Japanese 35/145

Korean 45/145

Evenki 47/145

Khalkha 30/145

When adjusted counting the various subcategories as parts of a single category (feature):

Khalkha 30/132 (23%)

Japanese 33,5/132 (25%)

Korean 39,75/132 (30%)

Evenki 42,5/132 (32%)

The ratio when comparing on one hand differences between Japanese and Manchu, and on the other hand Korean and Manchu is much closer than in the smaller sample from the WALS, which was to be expected when the data bias becomes less pronounced, owing to a larger sample. Quite interestingly, the number of differences between the aforementioned languages and Manchu, and the Evenki language, a northern Tungusic language spoken widely in eastern Siberia, shows that Evenki is actually typologically the most different from Manchu, even though these languages are demonstrably related to each other. This again points toward a pronounced areal effect in the analyzed region. This paper focuses on the relationship between Japanese, Korean and Manchu, but to put this relationship into a larger context, it is necessary to provide a short summary of typological similarities to the Mongolian languages that are being spoken to the west of the homeland of the Manchu people in eastern Manchuria as well.

It seems that Khalkha Mongolian is the language most typologically similar to Manchu, however considering that Mongolians and the Manchu have been in very close contact going back at least seven centuries, and many Mongolians learned Manchu, and vice versa, it is perhaps surprising that the similarities are not even more pronounced when compared to Japanese and Korean.

As I have demonstrated the high level of structural parallels on a broadly typological level in this chapter, the next chapters will focus on the most interesting similarities in microtypology. I will further attempt to illustrate the importance of the aforementioned linguistic area using two areas of morphosyntax: case markers, and complex predicate constructions.

3. Case markers and contact induced features

One might ask if something as basic as case markers can be influenced by language contact, and if such a contact induced change can occur in languages of a similar typological profile as Japanese, Korean and Manchu. Should they not be mostly inherited genetically from the earlier development stages of a given language? It is true that in languages of the world case markers are mostly inherited from the previous stages of the language. However there is evidence that they can be borrowed.¹⁴ The

¹² Gorelova, Liliya M. *Manchu grammar*. Brill Academic Pub, 2002.

¹³ Evenki is a northern Tungusic language related to Manchu.

¹⁴ This is possible even in highly synthetic languages if they are in close contact, (e. g. Romani - ELŠÍK, Viktor; MATRAS, Yaron. *Markedness and language change: The Romani sample*. Walter de Gruyter, 2006., 71-72)

situation is quite complex in the analyzed languages as some of the markers we find in them are similar enough to be considered cognates, e. g., Manchu genitive *-i*, Korean nominative *-i* (or Korean genitive *-ui*); Korean nominative *-ga*, Japanese nominative *-ga*, etc. Whether they do point toward some distant genetic relationship or have been borrowed at some point, is a question for another paper. More importantly for the purpose of this paper, most of the case markers present in these languages do not show any signs of being related at all.

This chapter will focus on the similarities between semantic fields of various markers. As these categories are quite difficult to imagine, and simply listing their various functions would not give us information on the semantic structure to which the listed functions belong, I will be using the so-called semantic maps. Semantic maps are a powerful visualization tool quite useful for depiction of semantic characteristics of various morphemes or words. As Haspelmath puts it:

*A semantic map is a geometrical representation of functions in "conceptual/semantic space" that are linked by connecting lines and thus constitute a network. The configuration of functions shown by the map is claimed to be universal.*¹⁵

In linguistic typology, semantic maps are used for cross-linguistic comparison, and they are indicative of linguistic universals because the lines connecting the depicted functions are considered to have implicative power. Functions that do not neighbor each other cannot be expressed by the same gram, if the same gram does not also express the function lying between them. Broadly speaking, the more languages a semantic map is tested against, the more representative and precise it becomes.

Semantic maps can be used for any group of functions including case markers. Nevertheless, when we consider all the case markers present in these languages and their wide plethora of uses, there are simply too many functions to put into one semantic map, and too many different markers to account for. Therefore, I have decided to focus on the functions connected to locative, dative, accusative and comitative cases. To this end I have created a new semantic map to illustrate my point. It is based on Haspelmath¹⁶ and Narrog¹⁷, but it is much larger in its scope, and unlike these maps it also encompasses various locative functions.¹⁸ This part of the map has been developed by me. To quickly summarize my reasons for the configuration presented here: Both Korean and Japanese use different markers for expressing the location of an action, and of a state or existence. Due to the configuration of the Korean *eseo* marker, we know that the action locative is related to the 'temporal from' (beginning of a certain time period, 'from' in temporal sense).

Each of the following maps Fig. 1 – Fig. 3. depicts the functions of the three main languages discussed here. Fig. 4. shows the system of Czech prepositions to illustrate how vastly different the distribution of markers can be, and how similar Japanese, Korean and Manchu are in this aspect.

¹⁵ Haspelmath, Martin. "The geometry of grammatical meaning: Semantic maps and cross-linguistic comparison." *The new psychology of language*. Psychology Press, 2003, 213.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Narrog, Heiko, and Shinya Ito. "Re-constructing semantic maps: the comitative-instrumental area." *STUF – Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung* 60.4/2007 (2007): 273-292.

¹⁸ The detailed proces of creation of these maps and also a more detailed commentary will be put forward in a separate article of a more general linguistic nature.

Figure 1. Japanese

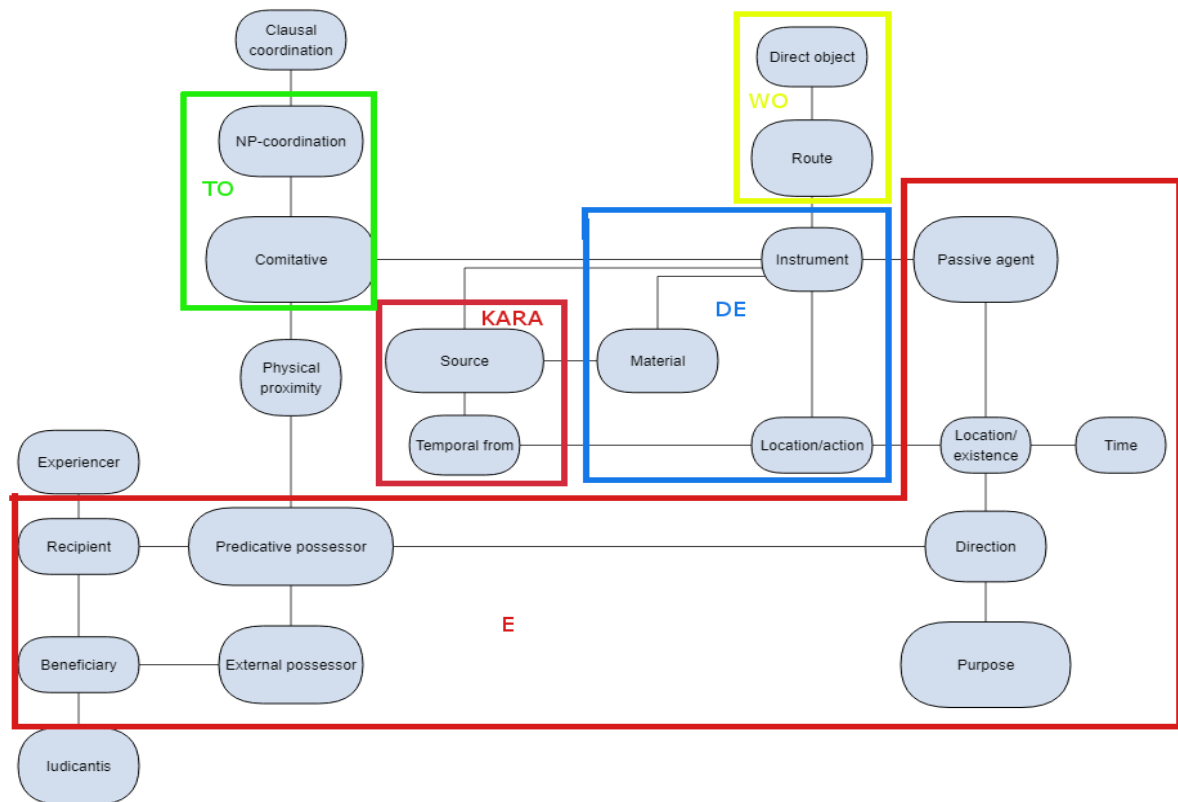


Figure 2. Korean

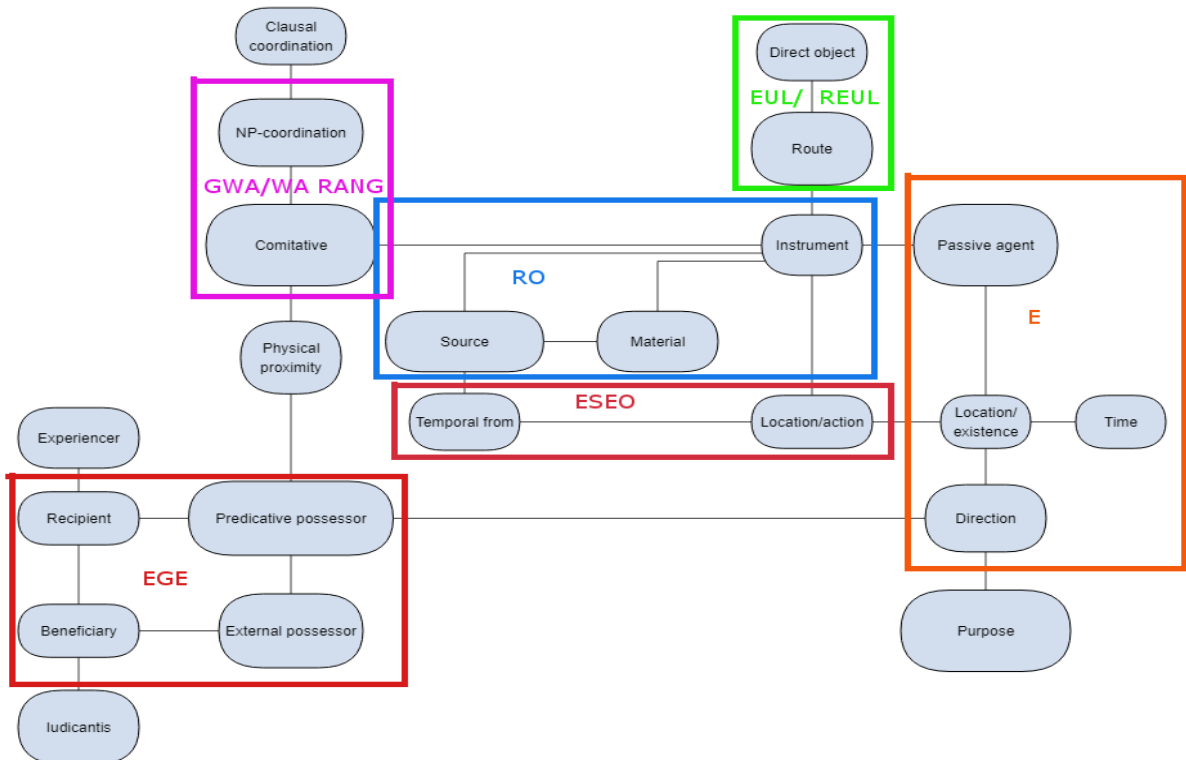


Figure 3. Manchu

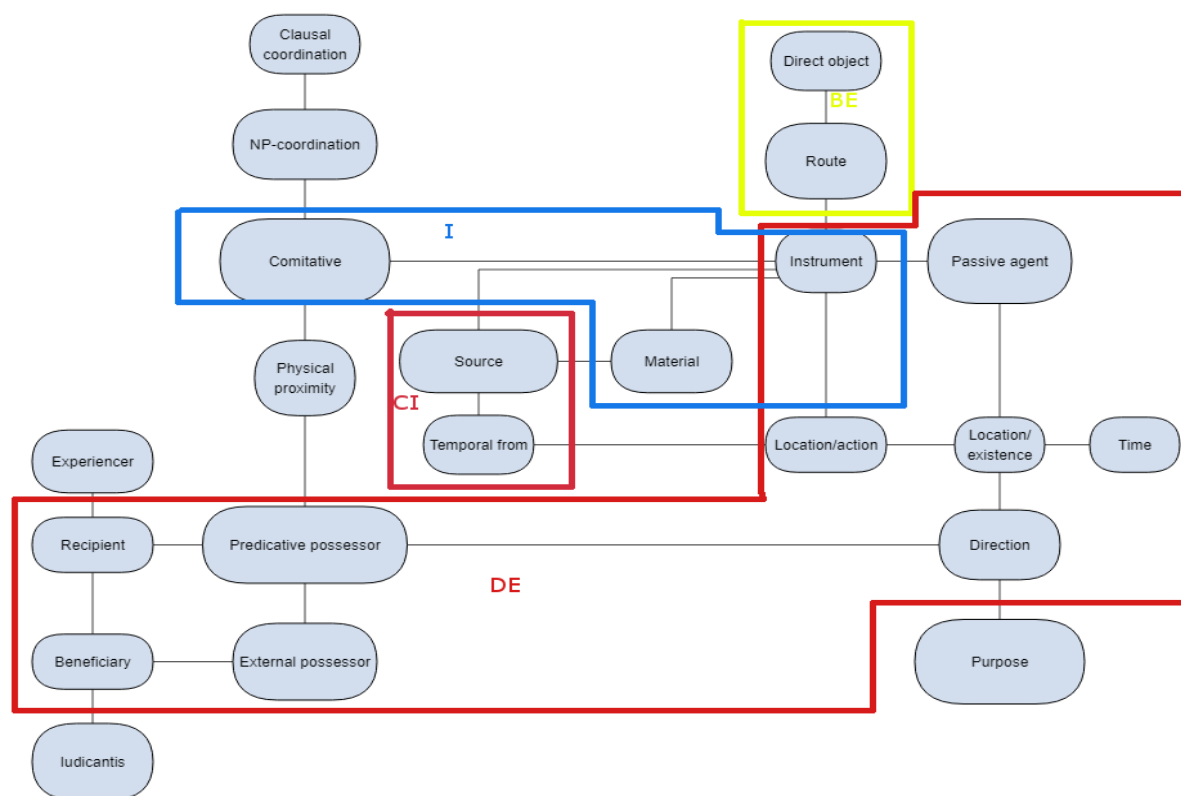
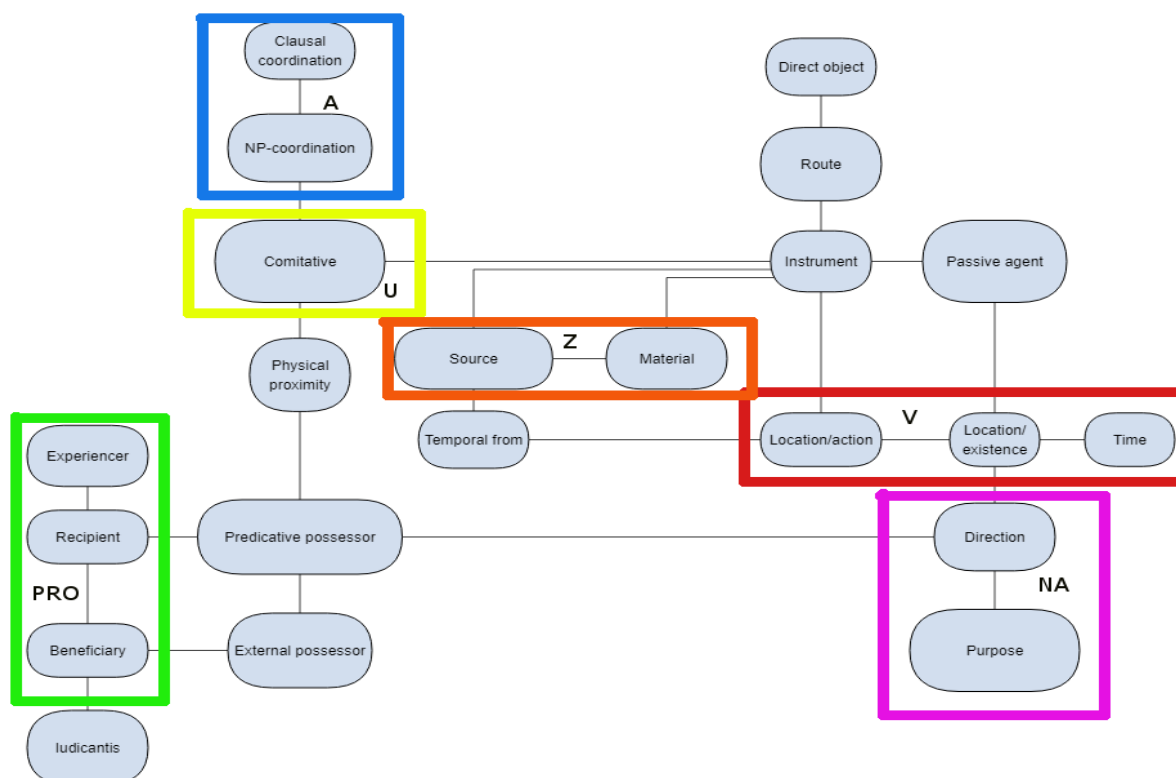


Figure 4. Czech



The most pronounced feature of these maps is the wide variety of functions expressed by the locative marker. The only exception is Korean, where more markers can be found: *e*, *ege*, *eseo*, each of which has a more restricted usage. (Fig. 2.) However, it is important to point out that they are all derived from the dative *e* marker, which means that diachronically the *e* marker had a much wider semantic field akin to the Japanese *ni*, and the Manchu *de*.

Another important feature evident thanks to these maps is the fact that the accusative marker fulfills the role of the so-called perlocative case in all of these three languages. Perlocative case, as the name suggests, belongs to the group of locative cases. Perlocative expresses the notion of moving through, across or along the referent of the noun that is marked. In all of these languages, such a use of accusative is very frequent with various verbs of motion:

1. Japanese:

鷲が空を飛んでいます。

Washi-ga sora-wo tonde i-masu.

Eagle-NOM sky-ACC fly-CVB exist-HON

An eagle is flying in the sky.

2. Korean:

까마귀가 하늘을 날고 있습니다

Kkamgwi-ga haneul-eul nal-go iss-seupnida.

Crow-NOM sky-ACC fly-CVB exist-HON

A crow is flying in the sky.

3. Manchu:

*Jugun-be yabu-me...*¹⁹

Road-ACC go-CVB

To go along the road...

In all three given examples, the verb of motion (to fly, or to go) governs a noun phrase ending with an accusative case suffix expressing the place/area in which the motion takes place. Again the similarity is especially pronounced in case of Japanese and Korean.

Even though such use of accusative is not unheard of in various other languages of the world, it is highly unlikely that such a feature has developed in three different neighboring languages separately. Considering the low probability of a genetic relationship between the *-reul*, *-wo*, and *-be* markers (especially in the case of *-reul*), it does not appear to be an inherited feature of a **hypothetical** common Tungusic, Korean and Japanese ancestral language. Therefore, it is most probably a shared contact feature.

Yet another interesting feature is the coding of comitative case and noun coordination in the analysed languages. As for Manchu, it has a different system altogether. However, on the other hand the Japanese and Korean systems show many similarities. The Japanese case marker *to* is used both as the comitative, and for the noun coordination, and the basic structure of this construction is “A *to* B” for noun coordination, and simply ‘X-*to*’ for comitative. The main difference with the Korean system is that in Korean there are three different sets of coordinative/comitative markers *gwa/wa*, *hago*, and *rang/irang* that can be all used in the same way. In case of the comitative marker, it is possible that there might be some influence from a different source: From a prolonged contact with Chinese (both classical and spoken). In both Classical Japanese and Middle Korean the preferred noun coordination

¹⁹ Gorelova, Liliya M. *Manchu grammar*. Brill Academic Pub, 2002, 170.

pattern was ‘A-marker B-marker’, e. g. (Classical Japanese) *haru-to aki-to saku*²⁰. However, in Chinese, from the beginning of writing to modern times, it has always been ‘A marker B’, and the marker (in this case a preposition) is also used to express the comitative meaning. This all points to a partial interference from the Chinese language, a superstrate language known to the elites both in Japan and Korea. Admittedly, such an influence is very hard to prove as both noun coordination strategies are common all over the world, ‘A marker B’ being the most common, and ‘A marker B marker’ the second most common (according to the data from the WALS, Stassen 2013). Be it as may, it is noteworthy that Japanese and Korean both employed the same noun coordination strategy, and then shifted in the same way, to a different system.

The pronounced similarities discussed above naturally raise a question: Is it possible for such languages, and for languages in general, to change the case system due to language contact? To answer this question, I was able to locate a suitable example in a language that is both typologically very similar and also closely related to one of the analyzed languages. A dialect of Manchu called Sibe that differs in some aspects from the written language, still spoken in western China by approx. 15 000 speakers, has undergone a change in its case system under the influence of language contact with the speakers of Mongolian. A new instrumental/sociative²¹ has emerged and the old ablative has been reanalyzed as directive.²² It is hard to pinpoint exactly when this change occurred, however, it is evidently relatively modern, it might have happened around the time Sibe were vassals of the Khorchin Mongolians between 15th-17th century. It has to be noted that some of the older speakers use the old ablative -či in its original meaning, possibly under the influence of the written language. (Zikmundová, 2013: 64)

	Genitive	Dative-locative	Accusative	Ablative	Directive	Instrumental	Sociative
Manchu	-i	-de	-be	-či	-	(-i,-be)	-
Sibe	-i	-d(ə)/-t	-f/və	-dəri	-či	-maq	-maq
Mongolian	-i/-iin	-d/-t	-iig	-aas	-ruu	-aar	-tai

(Based on Zikmundová²³)

This suggests that such changes in semantics of the case markers could have occurred many times over the period speakers of these languages were in contact. Regardless whether the contact lasted 2000 years or 3000 years. It is probable that such changes could occur even through indirect contact, e. g. from Manchu to Korean and from Korean to Japanese, or they could originate from Korean, which had a central position, spreading to both Manchu and Japanese, as various Korean or partially Korean kingdoms held power over parts of Manchuria, and at the same time the Koreans played a great role in the transmission of culture from the continent to Japan. All of these scenarios are possible. However, as there is not enough historical data, any judgement at this stage would be just pure conjecture, so it is best to focus on other examples of contact induced features.

4. Complex predicates and loosely fitting parallels

²⁰ ‘It blooms in spring and autumn.’ (Makura no soshi, early 11th century text)

²¹ Zikmundová’s terminology. In this paper the term comitative is preferred.

²² Or lative.

²³ Zikmundová, Veronika. *Spoken sibe: morphology of the inflected parts of speech*. Karolinum Press, 2013, 49.

The similarities do not end with the case systems of these languages. One of the areas where an inquiry after possible contact induced features is the most fruitful are the so-called complex predicates, i. e. predicates that consist of more than one verbal element. First let us have a short overview of the strategies Japanese, Korean, and Manchu employ when connecting verbs.

All three analyzed languages have a verb coordination and compounding strategy that could be broadly categorized as converb constructions. The term converb, referring to verbal forms that very often occur in agglutinative languages of Central and Eastern Asia, has been gradually gaining recognition in Western linguistics. This term is not without its problems, however, in here it is being used in a sense derived from Haspelmath (1995, 3). In his short definition Haspelmath characterizes converbs followingly:

“A converb is defined here as *a nonfinite verb form whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination*. Another way of putting it is that converbs are verbal adverbs, just like participles are verbal adjectives.”

As a matter of fact, in real languages where there are verbal forms that fit Haspelmath’s definition, the situation is usually more complicated. Such forms often fulfill a large variety of functions apart from the most prototypical converbal one. Nevertheless, let us consider a tentative list of verb forms that belong to this cross-linguistic category:

1. Japanese *te*-form and *i*-stem
2. Korean *go*-ending and *a/eo* infinitive verb form²⁴
3. Manchu converbs, especially the imperfect *me*-converb

This is not the complete list of converbs in these languages, but it is a list of converbs most important for our purposes. One can find many similarities in the listed constructions. Manchu has probably the largest inventory of converbal verb forms of the aforementioned languages. I will focus on the *me*-converb as it is the closest to the Japanese and Korean markers in its function as it is mainly used to express the imperfect aspect. All of these converbs could be characterized as coordinative converbs, according to Bisang (1995). The Japanese *i*-stem and the Korean infinitive verb form are slightly further from the prototypical converb as they are often more closely connected to the finite verb form in the construction. However, they can still fulfill the basic converbal function of clause coordination (interestingly both in Japanese and Korean predominantly in written or formal style).

Inspired by Yaron Matras (2011) and his study of imprecise borrowing of structures between Macedonian, and Macedonian dialects of Turkish, I will be searching for features that exhibit similarities, but are not parts of exactly mirrored paradigms. The constructions Matras chooses for his analysis (relative clauses, genitive construction) do not have exactly the same morphological or syntactic features (they are not totally isomorphic), but they do agree broadly in semantics of their constituents and of the whole construction. Precisely the point that they are not a perfect fit hints at their origin as contact induced features. In Japanese, Korean and Manchu it is also possible to find many examples of what I will call simply ‘loosely fitting parallels’.

4. *Muse sibiya makta-me dasa-me dende-ki*.²⁵

We(INCL) lots throw-CVB correct-CVB divide-OPT

“Casting lots we shall divide (smth.) again”

5. 저녁에는 책을 읽고 자요.

Jeonyeog-eneun chaeg-eul eolgo ja-yo.²⁶

Evening-LOC-TOP book-ACC read-CVB sleep-HON

²⁴ The infinitive verb form changes its shape depending on the vowels in the verb stem.

²⁵ Gorelova, Liliya M. *Manchu grammar*. Brill Academic Pub, 2002, 268.

²⁶ Yeon, Jaehoon, and Lucien Brown. *Korean: A Comprehensive Grammar*. Routledge, 2013.

In the evenings, I read books and then go to sleep.

6. ご飯を食べて寝ました

Gohan-wo tabe-te ne-mashi-ta.

Meal-ACC eat-CVB sleep-HON-PST

I had a meal and I went to bed.

The constructions in examples 4., 5., and 6. are comparatively simple verb coordination constructions that fulfill essentially the same function as the word ‘and’ in the following sentence: I went home and drank a cup of tea. They are multiclausal, and the function of the marker is simply to connect two clauses together. Similar strategies can be found in many languages of East and Central Asia. This hints at a possibility of a large area phenomenon, as these markers do not show any signs of being genetically related. Of course, these markers have, apart from the prototypical converbal function, many other uses that are not always shared among all languages. For example, the rather unfortunately named ‘infinitive’ form of Korean verbs can also be used as a final verb form in the intimate speech style²⁷. The Manchu *me*-converb only expresses imperfect meaning in the clause coordinating function, whereas the Japanese *te*-form can also be used to convey perfective meaning. The *te*-form is not marked for tense or aspect.

Certain functions of such converbs are shared among all of the languages mentioned in this paper. However, we do find many examples that point towards a much closer contact between Korean and Japanese, such as the sample sentences bellow. These constructions belong to a large category of complex predicates in which the auxiliary verb²⁸ expresses a certain aspect or some other related category.

7. 문을 열어 두었어요.

*Mun-eul yeol-eo du-eoss:eo-yo.*²⁹

Door-ACC open-CVB put-PST-HON

I left the door open. (so it is open when you need it later)

8. ドアを開けておきました。

Doa-wo ake-te oki-mashi-ta.

Door-ACC open-CVB put-HON-PST

I left the door open. (so it is open when you need it later)

Both of these examples express the same basic idea. The subject has opened the door, so it is open to later facilitate some other action e. g. carrying a box through the door, etc. In both cases this meaning of preparing something for a later use is expressed by the word meaning ‘put’, in Korean *duda* and in Japanese *oku*. However, the way these auxiliaries are connected to the content word is different. Whereas in Japanese the converbal *te*-form is used, in Korean the connection is facilitated by

²⁷ This style is used to address intimates (close friends etc.) of similar or younger age.

²⁸ Here I have decided to call these verbs auxiliaries, although by other measures and theories they could be considered to be light verbs. The distinction between auxiliaries and light verbs is quite problematic in general, and it can be especially difficult in the case of Japanese. Light verbs are supposed to be verbs that can serve both as full verbs and as components of constructions that are at least partially grammaticalized and semantically empty. There are certainly such verbs in Japanese. On the other hand, light verbs are not supposed to express TAM categories, which many of such verbs in Japanese do. Simply put there is no morphological difference between ‘auxiliaries’ and ‘light verbs’ in Japanese.

²⁹ Yeon and Brown. *Korean: A Comprehensive Grammar*,

the ‘infinitive’³⁰ verb form.³¹ Generally speaking, these examples closely resemble each other on the semantic level. However, the morphology of the complex predicates is markedly different. The obvious parallelism between the constructions in ex. 7. and 8. can be understood as a result of a prolonged language contact between these languages. As it is highly unlikely that such a construction developed independently in two neighboring languages, the semantic pattern had to be transferred between these languages, (it is still not clear in which direction), and recreated in the recipient language using language-internal resources.

This example is not the only instance of such a similarity between Japanese and Korean complex predicates. There is a plethora of constructions that involve the Japanese *te*-form or *i*-stem, and the Korean *go*-suffix or infinitive verb form, that at least broadly agree on the semantic level, if not on the others.

In Japanese the verbal *i*-stem is often used in constructions that express inchoative or cessative meaning, but most other aspective constructions employ the *te*-form. In Korean most of these meanings are expressed by the infinitive verb form, and only a much smaller variety of functions are expressed using the *go*-converb. To make the distribution of major functions of the monoclausal multi-verb constructions easier to grasp, I provide a simple table:

Japanese	Functions	Korean	Functions
I-stem +fin. verb	-i+hajimeru Inchoative	Inf. Form +fin. verb	-a/eo+ka-, -a/eo+o- Continuing activity
	-i+owaru Cessative		-a/eo+nae- Cessative
	-i+kiru Completive		-a/eo+noh- Completive
	-i+tai Desiderative		-a/eo+ju- Benefactive
	-i+tsuzukeru Iterative		-a/eo+dae- Iterative
			-a/eo+bo- Trying
			-a/eo+beori- Accidental result
			-a/eo+du- Preparation
Te-form +fin.verb	-te+iru Continuous aspect	Go-form	-go+iss- Continuous aspect
	-te+aru Stative		-go+sip- Desiderative
	-te iku, -te kuru Continuing activity		-go+bo- After trying
	-te miru Trying		-go+na- After finishing
	-te shimau Accidental result		-go+mal- End up
	-te oku Preparation		
	-te ageru benefactive		

When looking at this table, it is clear that these two pairs of constructions share many functions mostly of aspectual and modal type. Although the Japanese *i*-stem and the Korean ‘infinitive form’ are both used in constructions expressing an end of an activity, Korean ‘infinitive form’ has a much wider use, and it is also present in constructions analogous to the Japanese constructions employing the *te*-form. The situation in contemporary Japanese and Korean is therefore quite interesting from the contact linguistic point of view. However, there is still much to be discovered about the diachronic

³⁰ This Korean verb form is traditionally called infinitive verb form in English literature. However, it is a misnomer, as it can be used as a finite verb form in intimate context. Its primary function is converbal, as has been mentioned earlier.

³¹ The only other difference that can be found in these example sentences is the order in which the honorific markers and the past tense markers are connected to the auxiliary verb. In Korean it is first past and then the honorific suffix. In Japanese, on the other hand, it is first the honorific suffix connected to the *i*-stem of the main verb and then the past marker. One possible reason for this difference is the fact that the Japanese *masu* suffix can be conjugated, and the Korean honorific suffix *yo* does not change its form and therefore cannot carry a past marker.

development of these constructions. Even though we know that various constructions with te-forms form the backbone of complex predication in modern Japanese, it was not always the case. When one takes a closer look at Old Japanese, or even Classical Japanese, most of these constructions are nowhere to be found. To put this into a proper context, a large study of the development of complex predication in Korean will be needed. Only then we will be able to show the direction of the flow of linguistic features between these languages.

However, based on the preceding examples, it can be said with a great certainty that the effect of language contact on Japanese and Korean is even more pronounced than in the case of their relation with Manchu, and that these languages constitute a small language area by themselves.

Conclusion

Through the course of this paper one point has emerged in all chapters. The contact induced features in Japanese, Korean and Manchu have been strongly underestimated and they do deserve much more attention. Even such a basic feature of a language as the case system can be strongly influenced by contact, and many of such system's characteristics can be shared over a large linguistic area even among unrelated languages. Even though some of the case markers found in these languages could be possibly related, most semantic similarities can be observed in the functions of case markers that show no such relatedness. Thanks to the data from Sibe, we know that contact induced features can emerge in case systems in a relatively short time. Using semantic maps, I have shown that the features most interesting from the area perspective seem to be the vast variety of functions of the dative marker, the perlocative function of the accusative marker, and the existence of a joint marker for noun coordination and comitative in Korean and Japanese. None of these markers seem to be genetically related, yet they exhibit many semantic similarities.

However, the strategies of case marking are not the only area where Japanese, Korean and Manchu show areal features, their predication is also strongly influenced by long-term contact. Especially the frequent use of converbs, not only for clausal coordination, but also for building complex predicates is probably a contact feature. These complex predicates exhibit many loosely fitting parallels (especially in Japanese and Korean) in multi-verb constructions where the semantic structure is almost identical, but the actual expression on the morphological and syntactic level is governed by language-internal constraints.

All of this points to a larger linguistic area formed by the hypothetical Altaic languages family including Korean and Japanese (this paper remains agnostic towards the existence of this grouping), and a smaller linguistic area consisting of Korean and the Japonic languages. In the larger language area Manchu seems to have a central position, as it has been influenced both from the west (by Mongolic languages), and from the east (Korean, less probably Japanese) to the point where it is more typologically similar to these languages than to the demonstrably related Evenki.

In this paper I have pointed out the most probable areal groupings (linguistic areas) in the Northeast Asia. However, the precise age, character and inner structure of both aforementioned linguistic areas remains to be examined, as it is a task too daunting for a single paper, and probably even a single book.

List of abbreviations

ACC	Accusative
CVB	Converb
HON	Honorific
INCL	Inclusive
LOC	Locative

NOM	Nominative
OPT	Optative
PST	Past
TOP	Topic particle

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Appendix: Leipzig-Jakarta list of Japanese, Korean, and Manchu

	Japanese	Korean	Manchu
• 1. fire	hi	bul	tuwa
• 2. nose	hana	ko	oforo
• 3. to go	iku	gada	gene
• 4. water	mizu	mul	muke
• 5. mouth	kuchi	ip	angga
• 6. tongue	shita	hyeo, sse (dialectal)	ilenggu
• 7. blood	chi	pi	senggi
• 8. bone	hone	ppyeo	giranggi
• 9. 2SG pronoun	anata	neo, ni	si
• 10. root	ne, moto	ppuri	fulehe, da
• 11. to come	kuru	oda	ji-
• 12. breast	mune, chichi	gaseum	tunggen, hunhun
• 13. rain	ame	bi	aga
• 14. 1SG pronoun	watashi	na, jeo	bi
• 15. name	na	ireum	gebu
• 16. louse	shirami	i	cihe
• 17. wing	hane	nalgae	as‘ha
• 18. flesh/meat	niku	sal, gogi	yali
• 19. arm/hand	te	son	gala
• 20. fly	hae	pari	derhuwe
• 21. night	yoru	bam	dobori
• 22. ear	mimi	gwi	šan
• 23. neck	kubi	mok	monggon, gen
• 24. far	tooi	meolda	goro
• 25. to do/make	suru	hada	ara-
• 26. house	ie	jip	boo

• 27. stone/rock	ishi	dol, bawi	wehe
• 28. bitter	nigai	sseuda	gosihun
• 29. to say	iu	malhada	hendu-, gisure-, se-
• 30. tooth	ha	i	weihe
• 31. hair	kami	teol, teorok	funiyehe
• 32. big	ookii	keun, keuda	amba
• 33. one	hitotsu, ichi	hana, han	emu
• 34. who?	dare	nugu	we
• 35. 3SG pronoun	kare, kanojo	geu	i, tere
• 36. to hit/beat	utsu	chida, ttaerida	tanta-
• 37. leg/foot	ashi	dari/bal	bethe
• 38. horn	tsuno	ppul	uihe
• 39. this	kore	i	ere
• 40. fish	sakana, uo	mulgogi	nimaha
• 41. yesterday	kinō	eoje	sikse
• 42. to drink	nomu	mashida	omi-
• 43. black	kuro	geomjeong, geomda, kkamata	sahaliyan
• 44. navel	heso	baekkop	ulenggu
• 45. to stand	tatsu	seoda	ili-
• 46. to bite	kamu	mulda	sai-
• 47. back	senaka	deung	fisa
• 48. wind	kaze	baram	edun
• 49. smoke	kemuri	nae	šanggiyan
• 50. what?	nani	mueot	ai
• 51. child (kin term)	ko	eorini, ai, ae	jui
• 52. egg	tamago	al	umhan
• 53. to give	ageru	juda	bu-

• 54. new	atarashii	sae, saeroun	ice
• 55. to burn (intr.)	yakeru	tada	deiji-
• 56. not	nai	ani, an	waka, akū
• 57. good	ii	joda	sain
• 58. to know	shiru	alda	sa-
• 59. knee	hiza	mureup	tobgiya
• 60. sand	sunā	morae	yonggan
• 61. to laugh	warau	utda	inje-
• 62. to hear	kiku	deutda	donji-
• 63. soil	tsuchi	heuk	boihon
• 64. leaf	ha	ip	abdaha
• 65. red	aka	ppalgang, bukda	fulgiyan
• 66. liver	kimo	gan, ae (archaic)	fahūn
• 67. to hide	kakureru	sumda	somita-
• 68. skin/hide	kawa	salgat	sukū
• 69. to suck	suu	ppalda	goci-
• 70. to carry	hakobu	nareuda	yoda-
• 71. ant	ari	gaemi	yerhuwe
• 72. heavy	omoi	mugeopda	ujen
• 73. to take	toru	japda	jafa-
• 74. old	furui	yet, oraedoeda	fe, sagda
• 75. to eat	taberu	meokda	je-
• 76. thigh	momo	heobeokdari	suksaha
• 77. thick	futoi, atsui	dukkeopda	jiramin
• 78. long	nagai	gilda	golmin
• 79. to blow	fuku	bulda	fulgiye-
• 80. wood	ki	namu	moo
• 81. to run	hashiru, kakeru	dallida	surte-

• 82. to fall	ochiru	tteoreojida	tuhe-
• 83. eye	me	nun	yasa
• 84. ash	hai	jae	fulenggi
• 85. tail	o, shippo	kkori	ucehen
• 86. dog	inu	gae	indahūn
• 87. to cry/weep	naku	ulda	songgo-
• 88. to tie	musubu?	Maeda	huthu-, hūwaita-
• 89. to see	miru	boda	sabu-
• 90. sweet	amai	dalkomhada	amtangga
• 91. rope	nawa	batjul	futa
• 92. shade/shadow	kage	geuneul	helmen, silmen
• 93. bird	tori	sae	gas‘ha, cecike
• 94. salt	shio	sogeum	dabsun
• 95. small	chiisai	jakda	ajige
• 96. wide	hiro	neolbeum	leli, onco
• 97. star	hoshi	byeol	usiha
• 98. in	ni, de	e, ane	de
• 99. hard	katai	ttakttakhada	mangga
• 100. to crush/grind	tsubusu	galda	meijebu-

About the author