

# A comparative typological study of “convergent” grammaticalization pathways between Japanese and Korean: With English as a neutral bystander

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Grammaticalization, in which grammatical forms/constructions evolve from lexical items through repeated use, has received focused attention from both functionally and formally oriented linguists (e.g. Heine et al. 1991, Bybee et al. 1994, Hopper and Traugott 2003, Roberts and Roussou 2003, Horie 2008, Narrog and Heine 2010). This has led to the proposal of various principles governing and constraining the pathway of grammaticalization (e.g. the “unidirectional” change from lexical to grammatical forms, from less to more grammatical items, from “objective” to “subjective” to “intersubjective” meaning) and the form-meaning relationship observed during its process (e.g. “persistence”, where the original lexical meaning of a grammatical form continues to constrain its grammatical behavior). However, relatively little has yet been uncovered about whether languages of similar typological profiles, such as Japanese and Korean, manifest grammaticalization in a like manner.

Inspired by the synchronic comparative typological studies of English and German by Hawkins (1986) and informed by recent typological and sociolinguistic typological works (e.g. Evans 2007, Trudgill 2012), I report on two instances of grammaticalization phenomena that do not follow norms predicted by previous works, primarily based on the findings from two of my prior joint works, particularly Wako, Sato, and Horie (2003) and Horie and Kim (2011).

In the grammaticalization phenomena presented here, Korean apparently undergoes pathways similar to Japanese, with some interesting cross-linguistic differences. In order to highlight the nature of the cross-linguistic contrasts, the grammaticalization phenomena under consideration will be compared with English when directly relevant.

The first instance of grammaticalization I will touch on is the development of the ‘perfect’ aspectual meaning of the Korean periphrastic construction *-ko issta*, which consists of the conjunctive (medial) linker *-ko* and the existential verb *-issta*. The *-ko issta* construction encodes ‘progressive’ aspect (1) as its core meaning.

(1) Minswu-ka cikum talli-*ko iss*-ta.

Minswu-NOM now run-PROG-DECL

‘Minswu is running now.’

It parallels the Japanese *-te iru* construction compositionally, though the latter is

functionally more versatile and can encode a range of aspectual meanings including “progressive”, “resultative”, as well as “perfect” (2).

(2) Taro-wa hon-o 3-satu kai-te iru.

Taro-TOP book-ACC 3-volumes write-PERF

‘Taro has already written three books.’

However, the “resultative” meaning is typically encoded by another periphrastic construction *-e issta* (3), while the “perfect” meaning is typically marked by the non-periphrastic past tense form *-ess/ass-* (4).

(3) Minswu-ka uyca-ey anc-a iss-ta.

Minswu-NOM chair-on sit-RESUT-DECL

‘Minswu is seated on a chair.’

(4) Minswu-nun sosel-ul sey kwen ssu-ess-ta.

Minswu-TOP novel-ACC 3 volumes write-PAST-DECL

‘Minswu has written three books.’

In English, the ‘perfect’ aspectual meaning is primarily encoded by the periphrastic *have* + past participle construction (5), which evolved from the transitive *have* + NP + participle construction (6). Alternatively, the aspectual meaning can be encoded by another periphrastic construction *be* + past participle construction, though the latter is restricted to a limited number of verbs such as *come* and *go* (7).

(5) The train *has* just *arrived*.

(6) I *have* some money *saved*.

(7) He’s *gone*.

Interestingly, the “progressive” form *-ko issta* has started to take on ‘perfect’ aspectual meaning when it co-occurs with verbs that encode “reporting” and “attaining”

(8) in written discourse.

(8) Khollin Phawel kwukmwucangkwan-un pimanglok-eyse ku-ey tayha-n

Colin Powel State Secretary-TOP memoir-in him-toward

chesinsang-ul ilehkey cek-ko iss-ta.

first impression-ACC like this write-PROG-DECL

‘State Secretary Colin Powel has written his first impression about him like this in his memoir.’

Apparently, *-ko issta* has started to follow a grammaticalization pathway similar to its counterpart *-te iru*. Why is such “convergence” observed? I will discuss possible motivating factors for such convergent phenomena, and offer some predictions as to how far it will proceed in Korean.

In the remainder of this presentation, I will also discuss another instance of

'convergent' grammaticalization phenomena in Japanese and Korean. I will end my talk by synthesizing the findings from two case studies and presenting their theoretical implications for the cross-linguistic/typological studies of grammaticalization and language change.

#### Selected References

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