Differential degrees of retention of lexical meaning in Japanese and Korean functional categories: A typological and constructional approach

Kaoru Horie

Nagoya University

Japanese and Korean have an abundance of function words (Muysken 1998) which derive from lexical items, e.g. auxiliaries, complementizers (Horie 2011), adpositions, and conjunctions. Controversies over the common ancestral origin of the two languages (Martin 1991) aside, extensive parallelism in form-meaning correspondence exists among Japanese and Korean function words, e.g. imperfective aspectual auxiliary verbs *–te iru* ている in Japanese and *–ko issta* 고 있다/*-e issta* 어 있다 in Korean, adpositions meaning 'regarding' *-ni kansite* に関して in Japanese and *– ey kwanhay* 에 관해 in Korean. What is often observed between the two languages is that Korean function words are more likely than their Japanese counterparts to retain lexical meaning. A prime example is the grammaticalized benefactive auxiliary verb *–te morau* てもらう, whose Korean counterpart *–hay patta* 해 받다 is not yet fully grammaticalized, judging from its very low in-corpus frequency. We propose that this difference crucially relates to the cross-linguistic contrast between the two languages where lexico-semantic idiosyncrasies of grammatical processes (e.g. passive, causative) are more abundantly manifested in Korean than in Japanese, paralleled by the well-established German-English contrast (Hawkins 1986). We will also look into the contrast from the perspectives of constructionalization and constructional change (Traugott and Trousdale 2013).

References

Hawkins, John A. *A Comparative Typology of English and German*. Berlin & London: Croom Helm.

Horie, Kaoru. 2011. Horie, Kaoru. "Versatility of nominalizations: Where Japanese and Korean Contrast." In *Nominalizations in Asian Languages. Diachronic and Typological Perspectives.* (Typological Studies in Language Series), edited by Yap, Foog Ha et al., Amsterdam & Philadelphia, John Benjamins, 473-498.

Martin, Samuel E. 1991. "Recent research on the relationships of Japanese and Korean." In *Sprung from Some Common Source: Investigations into the Prehistory of Languages*, edited by Sydney M. Lamb and E. Douglas Mitchell. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 269-292.

Muyken, Pieter. 2008. *Functional Categories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Traugott, Elizath Closs, and Graeme Trousdale. 2013. *Constructionalization and Constructional Changes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.