

pak- alakot teszem hozzá e sorhoz. Ennek az igének a jelentése 'lök (be)', 'teszt (be)' (tranzitív), 'beszorul, beágyazódik' (intranszítív).⁶ A mássalhangzó-torlódásban részt vevő második mássalhangzó törülésére is kapunk itt példát. Ezt a fajta jelenséget kívánatos lesz a jövőben a koreai és altaji nyelvek kapcsolatában vizsgálni.

A fentiekben Ramstedt (1924) példáit mutattam be röviden az altaji és koreai lexikai összehasonlítás témakörében. Bár csupán két kis példáról van szó, mégis kiválóan alkalmasak a kérdéskör bonyolultságának az érzékeltetésére.

Meggyőződésem, hogy az altaji és a koreai nyelvek viszonylatában a lexikai összehasonlítás a legsürgetőbb feladat. Nem szükséges különösebben hangsúlyozni, hogy a nyelvészeti összehasonlításnak a hangmegfelelések szigorú szabályain kell alapulnia, s a kívánt pontosságot csak a nagyszámú szókészleti összevetéssel érhetjük el.

5. Vajon genetikailag rokonságban vannak-e az altaji nyelvek a koreaiakkal? Lehet-e egyáltalán a genetikai rokonságot vitathatatlanul feltételezni az altaji nyelvek között?

Poppe professzor időről időre azt mondta nekem, hogy a „genetikai rokonság tényét nem lehet tagadni. Az egyetlen nehézséget ennek bebizonyítása jelenti.” A gyakorlatban a genetikai rokonság bizonyítékainak minőségi és mennyiségi kérdése ez. Meillet (1921: 26) igen tömören fogalmazza ezt meg: "En toute science, démontrer, c'est découvrir des faits qui apparaissent évidents". De vajon mi az alapja annak, hogy valamit „évident”-nak ítéljük? Meillet a szabálytalan grammatikai elemek megfelelését hozza fel példaként. Szerencsétlenségünkre az altaji nyelvek és a koreai egyként különlegesen szabályos nyelvek. Hogyan lehet akkor a közöttük levő genetikai rokonságot kimutatni? Bár az egyedi tények szabályosak lehetnek, a sajátos szerkezetük valójában megkülönböztető lehet. Meggyőződésem, hogy ilyen megkülönböztető szerkezet felfedezése kellő bizonyítéka a genetikai rokonságnak. Véleményem szerint a fent említett *-*r*, *-*n*, *-*m* igei végződés szerkezete kitűnő példát adja ennek a szerkezeti bizonyításnak. Effajta példát nem csupán a nyelv-tanban lehet találni, hanem a fonológia és a szókészlet területén is.

ON THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF KOREAN AND ALTAIC

1. Discussion of the genetic relationship between Korean and the Altaic languages began as early as the 19th century, but it was based primarily on such structural features as vowel harmony and agglutination. Research based on the comparative method was pioneered by G. J. Ramstedt, who published his works from the 1920s to the 1940s. His posthumous works were edited by P. Aalto and published in the 1950s.

Ramstedt first encountered Korean when in Japan after World War I, and added Korean as the fourth branch of the Altaic language family hypothesis which he was building at the time.

Since Ramstedt, there have been no remarkable results in this field. It is no exaggeration to say that research in this area has been no more than revision and supplementation of his work.

6 Ramstedt (1949) egybeveti a modern koreai *pak-* (tanzitív) alakot a tunguz *baka-* 'találni' alakkal. Ugyanakkor Tsintsius et al. (1975–1977) ezt a tunguz igét a modern koreai *pat-* 'kapni, fogadni' igével veti össze. Egyik hasonlítás sem tűnik hitelesnek.

2. Comparative study of the phonological systems of Korean and Altaic has seen no significant progress since it was established by Ramstedt/Aalto (1957). Poppe (1960) shows remarkable systematization in the comparison of the phonological systems of the Altaic languages, but includes nothing new as far as Korean is concerned. Although Tsintsius (1975) attempts a new reconstruction of the Proto-Altaic consonantal system taking into consideration the consonantal system of Korean, unfortunately it shows a lack of understanding of the historical phonology of Korean. The consonantal system of Modern Korean is characterized by the aspirated and reinforced (glottalized) series, but these were the results of changes in comparatively late periods.

It seems to me that comparative phonology of Korean and Altaic is still in its initial stages. Comparative study of the Indo-European languages has very favorable conditions for establishing strict rules of sound correspondence. In the case of Korean and Altaic, however, the lack of ancient documents and the distance of the relationship may perhaps make it impossible to hope for the successful establishment of rules of correspondence as strict as those of Indo-European. It seems to me that the degree to which we are able to overcome this difficulty will be the main factor controlling the future of the comparative study of Korean and Altaic.

3. Research regarding the comparison of Altaic and Korean morphology began with Ramstedt (1928, 1939, etc.), and was comprehensively systematized in Ramstedt/Aalto (1952). Poppe's research appears in his review (1955) and various articles.

In the treatment of case suffixes, for example, we can point out that Ramstedt's works contain more than a few errors. There are two sources for the errors. First, he had incorrect knowledge of Korean morphology. For instance, he took the accusative suffix of Korean to be $-j'i$, and compared it to the Proto-Altaic $-*i$. This suffix in Middle Korean took the forms (1) $-r$ (after nominals ending in a vowel), (2) $-^r/ir$ (after nominals ending in a consonant), and (3) $-r^r/rir$ (after nominals ending in a vowel). There is no doubt that (3) is the double form of (1) and (2), and r is the core of the suffix. R. A. Miller (1977) compares the character $A\ddot{s}$ (read $-h^r/hir$, which appears as an accusative suffix in Old Korean texts, with Altaic accusative suffix $-*g$, but he overlooks the fact that the h in the Korean example is in fact the final consonant of the preceding noun.⁷ The other source, as pointed out in Poppe (1955), is Ramstedt's view that grammatical forms all originate from content words.⁸ Thus he attempts to find a connection between Altaic locative suffix $-*da$ or $-*du$ and Korean tai (place), and also between Tungus accusative suffix $-wa/wo$ and Korean $po-a$ (a converbial form of $po-$ 'to see'). These connections are not very convincing. Middle Korean t^y is the locative form of t^h (labelled by Korean grammarians as a 'dependent' or 'formal' noun).

I believe that Ramstedt's greatest contribution was the comparison of verbal noun endings. He made clear the important role of verbal nouns in the grammar of the Altaic languages and Korean, and demonstrated that there is an excellent correspondence among the verbal noun endings $-*r$, $-*m$ and $-*n$. The credibility of

7 There were approximately 80 nominals ending in $-h$ in Middle Korean. It is probable that there were even more in earlier times.

8 According to Aalto (1975), Ramstedt while in university was strongly influenced by the theory that suffixes generally originate from content words, which was very popular at the time.

this comparison was made greater as research in the history of the Korean language showed that -r and -n were in fact verbal noun endings in Middle and Old Korean.

At this stage what is needed is deeper research into the respective morphologies of the Altaic languages and Korean. I believe that this is a necessary precondition for further comparative research.

4. Ramstedt took up the topic of Korean-Altaic etymology in the last work of his life (1949). After retiring in 1943, he devoted all his energy to the compilation of this book (Aalto 1975), but as early as 1939 he made the following remark: "Ich selbst habe mit der Zeit ungefähr 5,000 Karten für eine Koreanische Etymologie zusammengestellt. Wie skeptisch man auch sei, so dürfte doch die Hälfte davon jeder Kritik standhalten." (Ramstedt 1939/1951) Of the 1,904 lexical items included in the work, only 1,599 have the forms from Altaic languages shown⁹ This is surely the result of careful selection. Here it is necessary to point out two things. (1) 196 of the items were recognized by Ramstedt himself as borrowings. (2) 350 Sino-Korean words (marked by "sk.") are included. There are in fact more Sino-Korean words in addition to these. He had a rather unusual theory regarding Sino-Korean words, but it is difficult to justify.

In spite of its many flaws, Ramstedt (1949) provided a good foundation for the lexical comparison of the Korean and Altaic languages. So much so, in fact, that it appears a kind of inertia has taken root among scholars that this work is "the final word" on the subject. Ramstedt himself revised his opinions several times in the course of his many years of research, and there has been considerable effort on the part of other scholars since then. Before new research in this area is undertaken, it is necessary to compile and organize all the research that has been done to date.

I would like to briefly discuss two etymologies from Ramstedt (1924). These are the first examples comparing Korean lexical items with Altaic and Japanese data that he gave after starting to learn the Korean language.

The first example is a comparison of Turkic *taš* 'stone' with Korean *tol* 'stone' and Japanese *to* 'whetstone'. Mongolian *čilajun* is not mentioned, but is hinted at the statement that *taš* goes back to *tilagun* < *tal* 'a-gun. This comparison can also be seen in Polivanov (1927). Chuvash *čul* and Orochon *žolo* are also mentioned. As evidence that the liquid in South Korean *tol* and North Korean *tor* is originally an *l*, Ramstedt (1928) cites Goldi *žollo*, *žolo*, Proto-Turkic **tal*' and Chuvash *čul*. Here he encounters the problem of word-initial **t* and **t'*. Ramstedt (1932) confronts this problem head on. He interprets Korean *tol*, Turkic *taš* **tal*', Chuvash *čul* < **t'al*, Mongolian *čilajun* < **t'ala-gun* as resulting from the presence or lack of palatalization. In Ramstedt (1949), however, the only listing under the item *tol* is Tungus *žolo*. It includes the annotation "The identity is questionable because of *t* = *ž* (?)." This can be interpreted as indicating that in his later years Ramstedt came to harbor serious doubts about his earlier comparison of *tol* with Turkic *taš*, Mongolian *čilajun* and Tungus *žolo*.

On the other hand Poppe (1960) accepts the comparison of Old Turkic *taš*, Chuvash *čul*, Mongolian *čilajun* and Korean *tol* as valid.¹⁰ He neglects to explain, however, the difference between word-initial **t* and **t'* appearing in the reconstructed forms *ta* **taš* < **tāš* < **tāl*² < **tāl*² *a*, *čul* < **t' al*², *čilajun* < **tila-gun* < **t'ala-bun*. The explanation for this was provided by Poppe (1975). Here he chan-

9 There is a certain degree of inaccuracy in these figures.

10 It is noteworthy that Poppe (1960) does not include the Tungus words in this comparison.

ges the reconstructed forms to čilaŋun < *tila-gun and čul < *tjal < *tila and specifies that *i underwent the so-called "breaking". He does not, however, deal with the o in Korean tol. Meanwhile, Street (1978), in a reconsideration of examples showing an opposition between a in the initial syllables of Turkic words and i in the initial syllables of Mongolian words, suggests that they go back to the proto-language form *ja. His discussion includes not only various lexical items of the Altaic languages and Korean, but also Japanese isi'stone.¹¹ The one thing lacking is a detailed explanation of how *ja changed into i or o in the above-mentioned languages.

I discussed accepting the breaking of *i in Middle Korean torh 'stone' and Old Turkic taš in Lee (1959). I have never changed my mind on this matter. Regarding Tungus žolo, I believe it necessary to find additional examples before accepting alternation of word-initial *t and *d. I still have my doubts regarding comparison with Japanese isi.

The second Korean example in Ramstedt (1924) is kolta 'half', which he compares with Mongolian kaltasun 'half', Tungus kalta, and Japanese kata 'one side'. First, it must be pointed out that this word has never existed in Korean. Ramstedt (1949) corrected the Korean word to karj-da 'to divide, to cut into parts', and the Mongolian word to qaltagai, kelte-gei 'a part, a half'. With Poppe (1960), the Mongolian words in this comparison are correctly shown as qaltas 'Teil, Fragment', qalta-či- 'zerbrechen', qaltaŋai 'half'. The above mentioned Korean verb shows the alternate forms kar^-/karj- in Middle Korean, and I hypothesize that this stem is a development from ancient *kar^ŋ-.

This comparison enables us to reconstruct Proto-Altaic *kalta- 'to break apart'. Here it should be noted that intervocalic -*lt- corresponds to Korean -r- (<*1). This seems to be the result of simplification of intervocalic consonant clusters (deletion of the second consonant) in Korean. A similar simplification process can be seen in the following example. Poppe (1960) compares Mongolian baŋta- 'hineingehen, hineinpassen, genug Platz haben' with Old Turkic bat- < *bakta- 'sinken, versinken', while Tsintsius et al. (1975-1977) compares with Evenki bat-, Solon bakta-, Manchu bakta- 'вмещаться'. I would like to add Middle Korean pak- to this comparison. This verb has the meanings 'to thrust (in, into), to put (into)' (transitive) and 'to get stuck, to be embedded' (intransitive).¹² Deletion of the second consonant in a medial consonant cluster in Korean can be seen in this example as well. This kind of phenomena is a desirable research topic for future comparison of Altaic languages with Korean.

To this point I have briefly described examples from Ramstedt (1924) of lexical comparison between the Altaic languages and Korean. Although these are no more than two minor examples, they more than suffice to give one a feeling for the complexity of this kind of comparison.

It is my belief that lexical comparison is the most urgent task facing researchers comparing the Altaic languages and Korean. It goes without saying that linguistic comparison must be based on precise rules of sound correspondence, and accuracy in rules of sound correspondence can only be achieved after extensive lexical comparison has been accomplished.

11 Martin (1966) compares Korean tol and Japanese isi.

12 Ramstedt (1949) compares Modern Korean pak- (a transitive verb) with Tungus baka- 'to find'. On the other hand, Tsintsius et al. (1975-1977) compares this Tungus verb with Modern Korean verb pat- 'to receive'. Neither comparison seems valid.

5. Are the Altaic languages and Korean genetically related? Can a genetic relationship among even the Altaic languages themselves be indisputably established?

Professor Poppe told me time and time again, "The genetic relationship cannot be denied. A genetic relationship is possible between any two languages. The only problem is proving it." In actuality, the question is the quality and quantity of evidence supporting a genetic relationship between two languages. Meillet (1921, p. 26) puts it very succinctly: "En toute science, démontrer, c'est découvrir des faits qui apparaissent évidents." But what is the basis for judging whether something is "évident"? Meillet cites correspondence of irregular grammatical elements as one example. Unfortunately, however, the Altaic languages and Korean are all extremely regular languages. How then, may genetic relationships among these languages be proved? Even though individual facts may themselves be regular, the peculiar structure they make up may indeed be distinctive. It is my belief that the discovery of such a distinctive structure is valid proof of a genetic relationship. In my opinion, the structure of verbal endings *-*r*, *-*n*, *-*m* mentioned above constitutes an excellent example of this kind of structure. This kind of example may be found not only in grammar, but also in the areas of phonology and vocabulary.

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