Dichotomous or continuous?: What East Asian languages reveal about a dual conception of grammar

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Two groups of scholars have recently proposed a dualistic conception of grammar chiefly on the basis of data from English spoken discourse. Heine, Kaltenböck, and Kuteva (2011, 2013, 2014) propose to distinguish "thetical grammar" from "sentence grammar," and Haselow (2016) makes a comparable distinction between "macrogrammar" and "microgrammar." We demonstrate that East Asian languages such as Japanese, Korean, and Chinese basically support such a dualistic conception of grammar, but some final particles in those languages require us to view such a distinction rather as a continuum.

Thetical and macro grammar pertain to expressions that are "not licensed by canonical rules of syntax" (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 858) or "morphosyntactic dependency relations" (Haselow 2016: 82) but "determined by the situation of discourse, most of all by the nature of speaker attitudes and speaker-hearer interaction" (Heine et al. 2013: 177). However, question tags, one example of theticals, can be considered to be both shaped by the situation of discourse and licensed by a canonical syntactic rule. They are used for conversational purposes such as facilitating speaker-hearer interaction or seeking a hearer's confirmation (Tottie & Hoffmann 2006). At the same time, they "may not precede their anchor clause" as in *Didn't he John went to Paris on Sunday?* (Kaltenböck et al. 2011: 871) and usually observe the rule of subject-verb concord.

Some final particles in East Asian languages have some similarities to those of English question tags: they are responsive to both the situation of discourse and morphosyntactic rules. They are sensitive to speaker-hearer perspectives, used for mitigation, seeking confirmation, etc. Meanwhile, they are prosodically integrated into the preceding unit, and their occurrences are morphosyntactically fixed to sentence-final position.

Moreover, when more than one particle are combined with one another, they exhibit fixed ordering (Saji 2001; Paik 2007; Li and Thompson 1981). For instance, the final particle sequences, *-yo-ne* in Japanese, *-ji-yo* in Korean, and *le-a* (ordinarily contracted as *la*) in Chinese, cannot be reversed (*-ne-yo*, *-yo-ji*, and *a-le*), which indicates that "the final field has a syntax of its own" (Haselow 2016: 95). We demonstrate that the ordering of final particles is not simply governed by a morphosyntactic rule; it is functionally motivated. Their sequences reflect the order of a subjective (or less intersubjective) particle before intersubjective (or interactive) particle. The first particle (*-yo*, *-ji*, and *le*) in each of the above sequences serves to mark the speaker's current assumption and necessarily precedes the second one (*-ne*, *-yo*, and *a*), which is used to mark some addressee-oriented effect.

As far as the dualistic view of grammar concerns the "dualistic organization" of brain activity as proposed in the dual process model (Heine et al. 2014: 147), it should be able to deal with all human languages including East Asian languages. The phenomenon of final particles in these languages suggests that the dualistic view of grammar should somehow allow for continuity between the two kinds of grammar, which is naturally in accordance with the usage-based conception of language evolution.

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