

A Comparison of Sentence-Final Expressions in English, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean Based on Translations of English Tag Questions

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This paper examines the expressions related to coordinate the mutual recognition of the speaker and hearer at the end of sentences in English, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean, and argues that while sentence-final expressions in English and Japanese have little similarity to each other, Chinese and Korean have structural overlapping with both English and Japanese and these two also choose sentence-final forms depending on the level of speaker's recognition towards the hearer.

According to Traugott (2012), Right Periphery, or sentence-final expressions, indicate intersubjectivity in all languages. As shown in (1) below, in sentences consisting of a very limited elements, expressions showing the speaker's sharing mind with the hearer are observed at the end of sentences.

(1) a. Cold, isn't it? b. 寒いね。 c. 好冷啊。 d. 춥네。

In English (1a), a short question is added, and in the other three languages (1b-d), a sentence-final particle is added. However, Chinese has other forms (2a-b), which have similar constructions to English tag questions. Korean also has expressions like (3) that can be regarded as a tag question.

(2) a. 你 今天 去 图书馆, 是 吧? b. 你 感 冒 了, 是 不 是?
you today go library be tonal-word you have a cold tonal-word be not be

(3) 여기에 앉고 싶지, 그 령 지?
here sit want to it is final-particle

Previous studies have not discussed Chinese and Korean variety typologically, including those forms mentioned above. For example, a typological analysis of sentence-final particles by Fujiwara (1990) does not discuss Chinese and Korean tag question forms as shown in (2-3). A typological analysis of territory of information by Kamio (2002) deals with the Chinese forms (1c) and (2a), but not (2b), and does not mention Korean.

In this paper, I discuss the diversity of these sentence-final expression forms and their relation to cognitive typology, using data of 170 English tag questions retrieved from the *Harry Potter* movie series and their translations in dubbed movies of the three languages under investigation here. These examples contain the (2a) pattern; 是/对/好+tonal word, 108 examples, the (2b) pattern; 是不是/对不对, 16 examples in Chinese, and the (3) pattern; 14 examples in Korean.

In the analysis, I applied the notion of core's anaphoric use (Langacker 2009), which shows a tag structure [auxiliary (existential verb) + subject + polarity] and its role [CORE/ remainder] in cognitive grammar. Moreover, I focused on an interesting connection between the structural patterns in Chinese and intonation of original tags in English. Rising tones were often observed in the examples of (1c) and (2b) pattern and falling tones were observed only in the (2a) pattern. The results including these findings suggest that each structural pattern has specific meaning and function which is related to the level of the speaker's recognition towards the hearer or the degree of subjectivity.

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