

The Korean Language

This book provides a detailed survey of the Korean language, covering its speakers, genetic affiliation, historical development, dialectal variation, lexicon, writing systems, sound patterns, word structure, and grammatical structure. It is designed to be accessible to a wide readership, and provides a wealth of data in a user-friendly format that does not presuppose an in-depth knowledge of the latest linguistic theories. It will be used by general linguists and Korean linguists who are interested in the typological characteristics of the language from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives, and by undergraduates and graduate students in those disciplines who seek a comprehensive introduction to the linguistics of Korean. Likewise, advanced students of the Korean language and language educators will find it offers valuable insights into lexical, phonological, morphological and syntactic aspects of the language for their purposes.

HO-MIN SOHN is Professor of Korean Linguistics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and President of the Korean Language Education and Research Center. He is a past president of both the American Association of Teachers of Korean (1994–7) and of the International Circle of Korean Linguistics (1979–81). He is presently the Project Director of an international collaborative project developing Korean language textbooks and a dictionary of Korean grammar and usage. His numerous publications include *Korean: Descriptive Grammar* (1994), *Korean Proficiency Guidelines* (1992), *Linguistic Expeditions* (1986), *Woleaian-English Dictionary* (1976), *Woleaian Reference Grammar* (1975), and *A Ulithian Grammar* (1973).

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THE KOREAN LANGUAGE

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For Timmy, Elliot, Miran, and Aran

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MAPS

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PREFACE

Korean has emerged as an important world language not only for learners of Korean as a foreign/second language but also for scholars and students of general and Korean linguistics and for language pedagogists. Thousands of heritage schools, elementary, intermediate and high schools, colleges and universities, private institutes, and government agencies around the world offer all levels of Korean language instruction. The number of institutions offering Korean and consequently, the number of students learning Korean are both constantly increasing especially in Australia, Europe, China, Japan, New Zealand, the former Soviet Union, and the United States. An ever-growing number of general and Korean linguists and linguistic students as well as language educators are interested in the structure and use of Korean and its universal and typological features from diachronic, synchronic, and dynamic perspectives.

In order to meet the immediate needs of linguists working on linguistic universals and typology as well as students interested in the structure of Korean, I published a monograph entitled *Korean* in Routledge's descriptive grammar series in 1994. This volume, which consists of syntax, morphology, phonology, ideophones and interjections, and lexicon, soon became out of print in early 1996. I did not attempt to have this volume reprinted as I have been working on the current Cambridge volume, which not only encompasses most of the essential aspects touched upon in *Korean* but also widens the horizon by including chapters on genetic affiliation, historical development, dialects, and writing systems.

Through theory-neutral description and analysis, the present volume aims to present most of the major areas of Korean in as simple and widely received terms as possible, so that the book is accessible to general readers as well as linguists. I have tried not to include those recently innovated technical terms which are used only within certain theoretical frameworks. Such terms would be meaningful only among specialists and students who keep abreast of the contemporary linguistic trends. Furthermore, in order to show an unbiased and balanced picture of each major aspect with appropriate linguistic data, I deliberately avoided discussing controversial theoretical arguments that have been raised thus far by many recent and contemporary Korean linguists.

xviii *Preface*

Instead, I included in the bibliography an extensive list of works in which a wide variety of theoretical issues are extensively discussed.

Thus, this volume is designed and written as a reference book for general and Korean linguists and Korean language pedagogists and as a textbook for undergraduate and graduate students interested in Korean. It can be used most profitably for university courses such as Introduction to Korean Linguistics and Structure of Korean.

This volume is a result of my many intermittent years of work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) while teaching the undergraduate course Structure of Korean and the graduate courses History and Dialects of Korean, Korean Phonology and Morphology, Korean Syntax and Semantics, and Korean Sociolinguistics. Professor Gerald B. Mathias at UHM read the entire manuscript and provided me with many valuable comments. Ms Haejin E. Koh, one of my PhD students in Korean linguistics, gave me admirable editorial assistance. I also appreciate Dr Katharina Brett, Dr Caroline Murray, and the anonymous reviewer for many essential corrections, comments, and suggestions invaluable in improving the form and contents of this volume. I extend my appreciation to the UHM Research Relations Office and the UHM Center for Korean Studies for each awarding me a grant to help my research.

I would like to take this opportunity to specially appreciate Professor Byron W. Bender who, as my UHM academic advisor and dissertation committee chair some thirty years ago, has supported and guided me towards a career in linguistics.

As always, I thank my wife, Sook-Hi, for patiently and generously taking care of all the chores at home, giving me constant moral support, and paying much attention to my health for over forty years of our marriage.

I dedicate this volume to my beloved grandchildren, Timmy, Elliot, Miran, Aran, and those yet to be born.

Ho-Min Sohn
Honolulu

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used to label the linguistic terms employed in this volume.

*	ungrammatical (when placed before a phrase or a sentence) reconstructed form (when placed before a phonemic form)
<	derived diachronically from
>	derived diachronically to
AC	Accusative particle
AD	Adverbial suffix; adverbializer
ADM	Admonitive (warning)
AH	Addressee honorific
APP	Apperceptive sentence-type suffix
BLN	Blunt speech level or suffix
CAS	Causative suffix
CL	Numeral classifier (counter)
CMP	Complementizer suffix
CNJ	Conjunctive suffix
DC	Declarative sentence-type suffix
DEF	Deferential speech level
DR	Directional particle
EM	emphasizer
ENDER	Sentence/clause ender
EX	Exclamatory suffix
FML	Familiar speech level or suffix
GN	Genitive particle
hon.	honorific word
HT	Honorific title
IM	Imperative sentence-type suffix
IN	Indicative mood suffix

INF	Infinitive suffix
INT	Intimate speech level or suffix
NM	Nominative case particle
NOM	Nominalizer suffix
PAS	Passive suffix
PL	Plural suffix or particle
PLN	Plain speech level or suffix
POL	Polite speech level, suffix, or particle
PR	Propositive sentence-type suffix
PRM	Promissive sentence-type suffix
PRS	Prospective modal suffix
PST	Past tense and perfect aspect suffix
Q	Question marker, i.e., interrogative sentence-type suffix
QT	Quotative particle
RL	Relativizer (or adnominal modifier) suffix
RQ	Requestive mood suffix
RT	Retrospective mood suffix
SH	Subject honorific suffix
SUP	Suppositive mood suffix
TC	Topic-contrast particle
TR	Transferentive suffix
VOC	Vocative particle