

## **Korean in its Areal/Typological Context: An Overview**

Sungdai Cho (Binghamton University)  
Andrej Malchukov (University of Mainz)  
John Whitman (Cornell University)

The status of Korean in its areal/typological context has become clearer in recent work. What emerges from this work is a de-emphasis on traditional genetic (e.g. “Altaic”) and areal (e.g. “Siberian” “East Asian”) groupings and a refocus on a new macro-grouping—Northeast Asian—with several salient subgroupings, one of which is an East/Japan Sea cluster including Koreanic, Japonic, and Ainuic (Yurayong & Szeto 2020).

A persistent problem in this line of research, though, is distinguishing marked typological features possibly probative of a closer areal relationship from general typological patterns (Malchukov & Czerwinski 2020). In this talk, we focus on three areas of comparative morphosyntax:

- **case marking**
- **transitivity alternations**
- **complex NPs**

We show that once we get beyond the superficial similarities, there are deep differences between Korean and the languages of its neighborhood, but also some similarities in historical development. A closer examination of features such as clitic status of case makers, case stacking, and perception complements confirms the existence of a tight Korean-Japanese typological grouping. On the other hand, features such as causative-passive syncretism and ‘give’-derived causatives group Korean with languages of Northeast Asia excluding Japanese, while adversity passives and internally-headed relative clauses, among many other features, group all the languages of the area.