

LNS PROJECT
Literature Survey

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Language: Tamil

References

Clippinger, Morgan E. "Korean and Dravidian: Lexical Evidence for an Old Theory." *Korean Studies* 8 (1984): 1-57.

Kannan, Narayanan. "Tamil–Korean relationship." *The Contributions of Tamils to the Composite Culture of Asia*. Chennai, India: Institute of Asian Studies, 16th-18th January 2011.

Murugaiyan, Natarajan. "Syntactic Similarities between Tamil and Korean." n.d.

1)Korean and Dravidian: Lexical Evidence for an Old Theory

Author: Morgan E. Clippinger

Ethnicity: Northeast Asian

Since 1905 when, on the basis of syntactic and typological similarities, Homer Hulbert first suggested a genetic relationship between Korean and Dravidian. Such a relationship had been suggested by nineteenth century French missionaries who, coming to Korea from India, noted many similarities between the Dravidian languages and Korean. In the eighty years since Hulbert published his comparative grammar, however, no serious systematic attempt has been made to pursue his theory.

This paper presents over four hundred sets of Korean-Dravidian cognate pairs, including many basic vocabulary items, in an attempt to uncover links between the two language groups.

It first starts by discussing possible historical reasonings with evidences such as similar mythology, megalithic culture and then moves on to discuss recent migration.

Some of the Korean-Dravidian cognates are so close that one is inclined to discount any kind of ancient relationship, while other cognates can be explained by well-documented sound changes in both languages, suggesting a much earlier link.

The author listed cognates for parts of body, body-related words, family and social relationships, cultural words, flora and fauna vocabulary. Korean and Dravidian also share a small number of onomatopoeic words.

He further talks about other similarities in grammar such as particle classes, endings, syntactic relations, modifiers and modified words, SOV structure, construction of nominal and adjectival phrases. There is also an in-depth discussion about the phonology of both languages which of course plays a huge role in the language's cognates and morphology. The paper then discusses about word etymologies, where he divided them into four categories for easy evaluation. In general, he attempted to compare only the first syllable, or the root or stem, this being the most persistent part of the Korean and the Dravidian lexical inventory.

In short, the evidence suggests that at a very ancient period Dravidian and Korean shared a common heritage, and this heritage was reinforced much later by migrations to the Korean peninsula, perhaps in the later years of the first millennium B.C..

2) Tamil-Korean relationship

Author: Narayanan Kannan

Ethnicity: Dravidian

This paper explores the possible relationship between ancient Korea and Tamil Nadu, India from cultural, linguistic, historical and genetic points of view. This paper was presented at the international conference on "The Contributions of Tamils to the Composite Culture of Asia" at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai, India during 16th-18th January 2011.

The author begins by exploring the historical links from the silk road, to Korean myths of "Dan-Gun" and its Indian parallels.

He then talks about the relationship between Hangeul and Tamil long alphabets. The alphabet was originally called Hunmin jeongeum, or "The correct sounds for the instruction of the people", but has also been known as Eonmeun (vulgar script, like kotuntamizh) and Gukmeun (national writing).

He realizes that anyone familiar with Indian alphabetical system, especially Tamil long alphabets (Tamizh Natungankku) will not fail to notice that Hangeul is similar to Tamil in making a combination of vowel and consonant to derive a letter.

He further talks about structural similarity between the alphabets, derivatives of words and the phonetical system. He talks about demarcation, agglutinated letters, combination of vowels and consonants, and borrowing of words.

There is another view as proposed by Stephen A. Tyler of Tulane University in his abstract "Dravidian and Uralian: The lexical evidence" that both Korean and Tamil may belong to a super family consisting of Dravidian, Uralian and Altaic.

3)Syntactic Similarities between Tamil and Korean

Author: Natarajan Murugaiyan

Ethnicity: Dravidian

This paper in its first part examines four different answers to the question 'Where did the Koreans come from?'

This story of their origin is confronted by many perspectives and ideas. The four main theories that answer to this are called the Eastern theory, Western Theory, Southern theory and Northern theory. This is because their origin is fixed to the four different directions.

While we may not be looking so much in to their very origin, we shall still try to find the point in which dravidian language entered the hemisphere of the korean language.

Now, the second part of the paper deals with the the Syntactic similarities between Tamil, the chief among the Dravidian languages and Korean, a language Isolate.

Here, the discussion looks at phonetics between the Hangul alphabets and the dravidian alphabets. The discussion continues onto how both languages appear to be verb or predicate final languages and agglutinating. This entire array of the discussion is proven by the plethora of examples provided in the section.

The main argument in the next section would be the presence of typological or structural features such as predicate final or verb final sentences, agglutination, presence of common items of vocabulary, the use of post-positions instead of prepositions etc., do not guarantee that these two or more languages have genetic relationship.

Hence this final part of the paper concludes that the similarity is not due to genealogical relations but is instead caused by migration and cultural contacts. The reason assigned by present day linguistics them for the similarities between languages like Korean and Tamil is not just a genetic relationship that is to say that these two languages have the same origin but cultural contacts, migration in search of wealth etc. This is because they argue that typological similarities are not enough to establish the genetic relationship among languages.