

# Resegmentation of Tense–Aspect Markers in Jejueo, the Traditional Language of Jeju Island\*

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**Yang, Sejung. (2020). Resegmentation of tense-aspect markers in Jejueo, the traditional language of Jeju island. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 28(1), 65–78.** Jejueo pedagogical materials reflect previous mis-analyses of the language’s verbal morphology. The current study attempts to identify those errors and to offer a corrective reanalysis. Problems with traditional proposals are traced to the influence of an over-reliance on syllable structure in the use of Hangeul to spell Jejueo as well as to a disregard for phonological phenomena resulting in the mis-segmentation of verbal suffixes. The current analysis takes account of common phonological phenomena in Jejueo: re-syllabification and allomorphic variation after ‘s’ (ㅅ). The proposed tense and aspectual markers are the perfective marker *-eos* (으), the continuative marker *-eoms* (으), the non-past markers *-eun* (은) and *-neun* (는), and the past tense marker *-eon* (-은). This new view of morpheme segmentation enables us to better identify the intricate system of the verbal morphology in Jejueo while providing a basis for identifying other suffixal forms with which they combine.

**Key Words:** Jejueo, tense–aspect markers, segmentation, re-syllabification, orthography

## 1. Introduction

Planning for language revitalization requires attention to deal with a varied set of issues, including writing a grammar and developing an orthography (Nakayama & Rice, 2014; Page, 2013). As Ferguson (1968) and Fasold (1984) argue, it is important that language planning and orthography development go hand in hand, as literacy skills among community members can empower them to create high-quality written materials and reverse the process of language shift. Moreover, this approach allows grammatical analyses that need to be integrated with pedagogical practices as part of ongoing revitalization efforts, as proposed by O’Grady et al. (2017).

However, while the accessibility and affordability of Jejueo pedagogical materials and programs have been improved, there has been a lack of discussion on the quality of those materials. One particularly important question has to do with whether written texts reflect the correct segmentation of the tense–aspect morphemes that are crucial for learning Jejueo.

According to Van Valin & Lapolla (1997, p. 40), “tense expresses a relationship between the time of the described event and some reference time. This reference time is normally the speech time, though it is not necessarily so. Aspect...tells us about the internal temporal structure of the event itself. In other words, is the event completed or not? is it ongoing or recurring?” However, as Sohn (1999, p. 362) has noted, the distinction between tense and aspect is not always clear-cut, in particular, the semantic interpretation of perfectivity and past-ness may be highly interconnected. Fortunately, we will see in section 2.3, the two can be distinguished based on a generalization that comes from morphological typology (Bybee, 1985; Cinque, 2014; Greenberg, 1966; Helmbrecht, 2004; Van Valin &

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LaPolla, 1997; Yang et al., 2020) which focuses on the position of morphemes within verbs to supplement the semantic approach to tense and aspect.

In the current study, I will argue that researchers have systematically misidentified verbal suffixes under the influence of a shallow, syllable-based version of the Hangeul orthography. Previously, a few linguists such as Jung (2008), Kim (2014), and Ko, et al. (2014) have attempted to put forward an alternative analysis that aligns with the current study to some extent. However, the attempt was never fully developed and failed to achieve public acceptance. Although a more comprehensive analysis was published by Yang et al. (2020), Jejeo pedagogical materials and publications typically rely on the traditional spelling system and the flawed morpheme analysis that it reflects.

One aim of this study is, therefore, to identify those initial mistakes and propose a more plausible analysis of verbal suffixes for the tense-aspect system of Jejeo. I begin with a critical overview of the influential but problematic work of Pyung-hyo Hyun (1976). I then put forward a reanalysis of his proposed morpheme boundaries, resulting in an alternative set of tense-aspect markers. I will conclude with some general remarks suggesting ways to incorporate the new findings into the creation of materials for Jejeo revitalization.

## 2. Previous Studies

Since 1913, Jejeo has been quite extensively documented. Ko (2014) reported that as of 2014, about 500 linguistic studies on Jejeo have been published, including MA theses, Ph.D. dissertations, journal articles, books, and dictionaries. Many of these studies drew on the pioneering work of Hyun (1976), whose analysis of Jejeo word structure has been widely accepted.

### 2.1 Pyung-hyo Hyun (1976)

The first Ph.D. dissertation on Jejeo verbal morphology was completed in 1976 by Hyun, a native of Jeju Island. In addition, Hyun published various journal articles and a Jejeo-Korean bilingual dictionary (1962), leading many other linguists to work on Jejeo. His publications remain the most cited works to this day, and his devotion to Jejeo and his academic achievements led him to become the first president of Jeju National University, in 1982. While his remarkable achievements have been a source of inspiration, his early analyses of tense-aspect markers were often accepted without adequate scrutiny.

Hyun (1976) claims that the Jejeo aspectual system includes the imperfective suffix *-eom* (엄); the perfective suffixes *-eos* (엇) and *-eon* (언), the imperfective continuative suffix *-eomsi* (엄시), and the perfective continuative suffix *-eosi* (어시).<sup>1)</sup>

(1) Imperfective marker: *-eom* (엄)

*Meog-eom-jeo*. (먹엄저)

eat-IPFV-SE

‘(Someone) is eating.’

(Hyun, 1976, p.116)

1) Since Hyun's (1976) original work does not provide interlinear morpheme-by-morpheme glossing, I have glossed all the sample sentences based on his explanations. In addition, the term ‘perfective continuative’ Hyun specifically used is controversial as it holds two contradicting concepts. I believe that Hyun meant ‘perfect’ as he states that *-eosi* (어시) expresses a resulting state of completion of a certain action. However, I will use the term Hyun used in the review of his work to remain as original as possible.

(2) Perfective marker 1: *-eos* (엇)

*Cheolsu-n geu cheg da ig-eos-jeo.* (철순 그 책 다 익엇제)

Cheolsu-NOM that book all read-PFV-SE

‘Cheolsu read all that book.

(Hyun, 1976, p.27)

(3) Perfective marker 2: *-eon* (언)

*Neu-n bab meog-eon-da?* (는 밥 먹언다?)

2.sg-NOM meal eat-PFV-SE

‘Did you eat a meal?’

(Hyun, 1976, p.29)

(4) Imperfective continuative: *-eomsi* (엄시)

*Meog-eomsi-nya?* (먹엄시냐?)

eat-IPFV.CONT-SE

‘(Is someone) eating?’

(based on Hyun, 1976, p.124)

(5) Perfective continuative marker: *-eosi* (어시)

*Neu-ne-deol bab meog-eosi-nya?* (네네덜 밥 먹어시냐?)<sup>2)</sup>

2.sg-pl-pl meal eat-PFV.CONT-SE

‘Did you guys eat a meal?’

(Hyun, 1976, p.17)

While Hyun’s two proposed ‘perfective markers (*-eos* 엇 and *-eon* 언)’ have stood the test of time, the other tense and aspectual markers that he posited appear to reflect misanalyses, as I will show in the next section.

## 2.2 Problems with the previous analyses by Pyung-Hyo Hyun (1976)

Hyun’s analysis has been well received by a number of scholars and has been reflected in many written pedagogical materials. However, I argue that the system could be made simpler, thereby reducing the number of morphemes. The following sections outline the main issues with the previous morpheme analyses.

### 2.2.1 Mis-segmentation of simple verbal suffixes: *-neun* (는) and sentence enders

The first problem with Hyun’s analysis involves the status of the suffix, *-neun* (는) and sentence enders that begin with a vowel or palatal glide such as *-i* (이) and *-ya* (야).<sup>3)</sup> As can be seen in (6) and (7), the existence of the suffix *-neun* (는) is clear-cut when the accompanying sentence ender begins with a consonant, as in the case of *-ga* (가) or *-go* (고) (Hyun, 1976, p.119).

(6) *Mansu jiseul meog-neun-ga?* (만수 지슬 먹는가?)

Mansu potato eat-INDIC-SE

‘Does Mansu eat potatoes?’

(7) *Mansu-n musigeo meog-neun-go?* (만순 무시거 먹는고?)

Mansu-TOP what eat-INDIC-SE

‘What does Mansu eat?’

However, a serious problem arises in the following examples, where Hyun posits the existence of an indicative mood marker *-neu* (ㄴ), which he takes to be an allomorph of *-neun* (는) and which appears with the supposed sentence ender *-nya* (냐).

2) Jejuo allows double plural markers with subject pronouns.

3) Sentence enders in Jejuo are utterance-final morphemes that simultaneously indicate sentence types (e.g., declarative, interrogative, imperative, propositive, and exclamatory), speech levels that reflect the social distance between speakers and listeners (e.g., polite, deferential, intimate, and familiar), and evidentiality based on the speaker’s direct observation or inference.

- (8) *Neu jiseul meog-neu-nya?* (느 지슬 먹느냐?)  
 2.sg potato eat-INDIC-SE  
 ‘Do you eat potatoes?’

To see the problem here, we first need to consider the pattern illustrated in (9), where the verb stem *meog-* (먹) ‘eat’ is followed by the past tense marker *-eon* (언).<sup>4)</sup>

- (9) *Mansu jiseul meog-eon.* (만수 지슬 먹언)  
 Mansu potato eat-PST.  
 ‘Mansu ate a potato.’

Given that the past suffix is *-eon* (언), the interrogative suffix in the following sentence has to be *-ya* (야).

- (10) *Mansu jiseul meog-eon-ya?* (만수 지슬 먹언야?)<sup>5)</sup>  
 Mansu potato eat-PST-SE  
 ‘Did Mansu eat potatoes?’

This fact leads us to question Hyun’s proposed segmentation of the verb in (8) into *-neu* (느), and *-nya* (냐). We can dispense with the form *-neu* (느), in favor of the analysis below, in which the interrogative marker is simply *-ya* (야), as in (11).<sup>6)</sup>

- (11) *Neu jiseul meog-neun-ya?* (느 지슬 먹느냐?)  
 2.sg potato eat-NPST-SE  
 ‘Do you eat potatoes?’

Now, instead of having four suffixal forms (*-neun* (는), *-neu* (느), *-nya* (냐), and *-ya* (야)), we have two: *-neun* (는) and *-ya* (야).

Based on this new analysis, other tense-aspect markers can be identified. For example, the perfective marker *-eos* (엇) can be extracted from the simple past-tense pattern in (12), thanks to the fact that the verb stem *meog-* (먹) ‘eat’ and the interrogative suffix *-ya* (야) have already been identified.

- (12) *Neu jiseul meog-eos-ya?* (느 지슬 먹엇야?)  
 2.sg potato eat-PFV-SE  
 ‘Did you eat a potato?’

Now consider the somewhat more complex past-continuative pattern. Since there is independent evidence that *-eon* (언) is a perfective marker and *-ya* (야) is an interrogative suffix, as we have already seen, we can infer that *-eoms* (으랴) is the continuative marker in sentences such as the following.

4) Unlike Hyun, I treat *-eon* (언) as a past tense marker in a revised analysis and it can appear at the end a sentence. See section 2.3 for discussion.

5) An anonymous reviewer claimed that *meog-eon-ya?* (먹언야?) in Jejeuo which is pronounced as in *meo.geo.nya* [머겨냐] is the same as *meog-eoss-nya?* (먹엇냐?) which is pronounced as in *meo.geon.nya* [머건냐] in Korean. However, I cannot agree with the point as in Jejeuo, *Mansu meog-eon?* (만수 먹언?) Did Mansu eat? is commonly used as well as *Mansu meog-eon-ya?* (만수 먹언야?) ‘Did Mansu eat?’. The past suffix *-eon* (언) is clearly present and can occur at the end of a sentence which is unacceptable in Korean such as \**meog-eoss?* (멏엇?) or can be followed by the interrogative sentence ender *-ya* (야).

6) Yang et al. (2020, p.134) argue that *-neun* (는) can be further segmented into two morphemes (*-neu* 느+ *-n* ㄴ). However, for the purpose of the current study, I will treat it as one morpheme which indicates non-past.

- (13) *Mansu jiseul meog-eoms-eon-ya?* (만수 지슬 먹었어?)  
 Mansu potato eat-CONT-PFV-SE  
 ‘Was Mansu eating a potato?’

The final *s* (ㅅ) of the continuative marker *-eoms* (었) was mis-identified in Hyun’s analysis as the initial consonant of the following morpheme.

- (14) \**Meog-eom.seo*. (먹었서) ‘(Someone) was eating.’

This mis-segmentation can be independently refuted with the help of simple declarative patterns, such as (15), in which the sentence ender *-eo* (어) can easily be discerned.

- (15) *Meog-eo*. (먹어) ‘(Someone) eats (it).’

In a continuative form, we find that same sentence ender, leaving *-eoms* (었) as the obvious continuative marker.

- (16) *Meog-eoms-eo*. (먹었어) ‘(Someone) is eating.’

A parallel pattern referring to a past event can be seen in (17) involving the suffix *-eos* (엇).

- (17) *Meog-eos-eo*. (먹엇어) ‘(Someone) ate.’

At this point, we have identified the following six morphemes.

- (18) *-neun* (는): non-past (NPST)  
 (19) *-eon* (엔): past (PST)  
 (20) *-eos* (엇): perfective (PFV)  
 (21) *-eoms* (었): continuative (CONT)  
 (22) *-ya* (야): interrogative sentence ender (SE)  
 (23) *-eo* (어): declarative sentence ender (SE)

By comparison, Hyun’s inventory includes the following eight morphemes.

- (24) *-neu* (ㄴ) and *-neun* (는): indicative mood markers (INDIC)  
 (25) *-eos* (엇): perfective (PFV)  
 (26) *-eon* (엔): perfective (PFV)  
 (27) *-eomsi* (엄시): imperfective continuative (IPFV.CONT)  
 (28) *-eom* (엄): imperfective continuative (IPFV.CONT)  
 (29) *-eosi* (어시): perfective continuative (PFV.CONT)  
 (30) *-nya* (냐): interrogative sentence ender (SE)  
 (31) *-seo* (씨): declarative sentence ender (SE)

Additional difficulties with Hyun’s segmentation arise when we consider more complicated tense and aspect patterns. The next section discusses this issue.

### 2.2.2 Mis-identification of the complex verbal suffixes, *-eomsi* (엄시) and *-eosi* (어시)

A fundamental problem with Hyun's segmentation is related to his postulation of the imperfective continuative marker, *-eomsi* (엄시) in (32) and the perfective continuative marker *-eosi* (어시) in (33), both of which Hyun analyzes as containing the copula morpheme *-si* (시) (Hyun, 1976, p.36) which is responsible for carrying the resultative component. However, Hyun claims that *-si* cannot be an independent morpheme as it never appears after verb stems. It only appears after either *-eom* (엄) or *-eo* (어). Moreover, Hyun analyzed *-eo* (어) as a retrospective marker (p. 48).

- (32) *Mansu musigeo meog-eomsi-nya?* (만수 무시거 먹엄시냐?)  
 Mansu what eat-IMPV.CONT-SE  
 'What is Mansu eating?'  
 (33) *Mansu musigeo meog-eosi-nya?* (만수 무시거 먹어시냐?)  
 Mansu what eat-PFV.CONT-SE  
 'What did Mansu eat?'

Although Jejeuo does, in fact, have a copula verb whose root is *si-* (시), Hyun's segmentation is fundamentally mistaken, since there is no copula in the pattern he is considering. Justification for this alternative analysis begins with the segmentation of the examples below. We know from the previous section that *-ya* (야) is the interrogative suffix in both sentences and that *-eoms* (없) is the continuative marker. The challenge is to classify *-in* (인), which lies between these two morphemes.

- (34) *Mansu musigeo meog-eoms-in-ya?* (만수 무시거 먹없인야?)  
 Mansu what eat-CONT-?-SE  
 'What is Mansu eating?'  
 (35) *Mansu musigeo meog-eos-in-ya?* (만수 무시거 먹엇인야?)  
 Mansu what eat-PFV-?-SE  
 'What did Mansu eat?'

The key clue comes from simple non-past sentence patterns, such as example (36), in which *-eun* (은) denotes a habitual non-past event or state.

- (36) *Mansu jiseul meog-eun-da.* (만수 지슬 먹은다)  
 Mansu potato eat-NPST-SE  
 'Mansu eats potatoes.'

Crucially, as the next example (37) shows, *-eun* (은) has the allomorph *-in* (인) after a stem that ends in *s* (스).

- (37) *Mansu jal us-in-da.* (만수 잘 웃인다)  
 Mansu well smile-NPST-SE  
 'Mansu smiles easily.'

This alternation is common at morpheme boundaries in Jejeuo (Yang et al., 2020, p.36). As can be seen in (38) and (39), the suffix *-eumin* (으민) becomes *-imin* (이민) and *-eula* (으라) becomes *-ila* (이라) after *s* (스).<sup>7)</sup>

- (38) *Meog-eumin* (먹으민) ‘if (someone) eats’ → *Us-imin* (웃이민) ‘if (one) smiles’  
 eat-CON smile-CON  
 (39) *Meog-eula*. (먹으라) eat.’ → *Jus-ila*. (줏이라) ‘pick up.’  
 eat-SE pick.up-SE

We can, therefore, say with confidence that the *-in* (인) in (34) and (35) above is an allomorphic variant of the non-past tense marker *-eun* (은) that occurs in (36). This leads to the segmentation illustrated below.

- (40) *Mansu musigeo meog-eoms-in-ya?* (만수 무시겨 먹었인야?)  
 Mansu what eat-CONT-NPST-SE  
 ‘What is Mansu eating?’  
 (41) *Mansu musigeo meog-eos-in-ya?* (만수 무시겨 먹엇인야?)  
 Mansu what eat-PFV-NPST-SE  
 ‘What did Mansu eat?’

This new segmentation reveals a parallel with the past continuative interrogative pattern discussed earlier (13–16). The difference between the two patterns reflects the choice of tense-aspect markers: we find *-in* (인), the allomorph of *-eun* (은), for the non-past and *-eon* (언) for the past.

- (42) *Mansu musigeo meog-eoms-in-ya?* (43) *Mansu musigeo meog-eoms-eon-ya?*  
 Mansu what eat-CONT-NPST-SE Mansu what eat-CONT-PST-SE  
 (만수 무시겨 먹었인야?) (만수 무시겨 먹었언야?)  
 ‘What is Mansu eating?’ ‘What was Mansu eating?’

Hyun (1976, p.34) apparently failed to recognize the common phonological process in Jejeuo that yields *-i* (이) as a variant of *-eu* (으) after *s* (스). As a result, he arrived at *-eomsi* (엄시) and *-eosi* (어시) rather than *-eoms* (엷) and *-eos* (엇). In fact, *-eoms* (엷) parallels to *-eos* (엇): in both cases, the ‘s’ ends up in the next syllable with an *-i* (이) to give a form *-si* (시) that looks like the copula.

Another compelling fact further supports this alternative analysis. As Hyun (1976, p. 43) admitted, he could not provide a clear explanation for why *i* (이) is missing from the proposed copula *si-* (시) when it is followed by verbal suffixes such as the honorific marker *-u* (우) in patterns such as the following.

Hyun’s analysis	Expected pronunciation (for Hyun)	Actual pronunciation
(44) <i>Meog-eomsi-u-da</i> . eat-IPFV.CONT-AH-SE ‘(Someone) is eating (it).’	<i>Meogeom.syu.da</i> (먹엄슈다)	<i>Meogeom.su.da</i> (먹엄수다)
(45) <i>Meog-eomsi-eo-la</i> . eat-IPFV.CONT-RT-SE ‘(Someone) was eating (it).’	<i>Meog-eom.syeo.la</i> (먹엄셔라)	<i>Meogeom.seo.la</i> (먹엄서라)
(46) <i>Meog-eosi-eo-la</i> eat-PFV.CONT-RT-SE ‘(Someone) ate (it).’	<i>Meogeo.syeo.la</i> (먹어셔라)	<i>Meogeo.seo.la</i> (먹어서라)

Phonologically, we would expect the *i* (이) of *si-* (시) to become *y* when followed by a vowel in Jejeuo, as

7) Additional allomorphic variants are *-umin* (우민), and *-ula* (우라) after labials as in *jab-umin* (잡우민) ‘If (I) catch’, and *gawm-ula* (괸우라) ‘Take a bath’.

happens elsewhere in the language.

(47) *i* becomes *y* when followed by a vowel (adapted from Ko 2011, pp. 97– 98).

<u>verb stem with <i>i</i></u>		<u>suffix</u>		<u><i>i</i> becomes <i>y</i></u>
<i>si-</i> (시)	+	<i>-eong</i> (영)	→	<i>syceong</i> (썩)
be		-because		'because (there) is'
<i>gawli-</i> (꺠리)	+	<i>-ams-jeo</i> . (얹저)	→	<i>Gawlyamsjeo</i> . (꺠얹저)
choose		-CONT-SE		'(Someone) is choosing.'
<i>mawli-</i> (믈리)	+	<i>-u-la</i> . (우라)	→	<i>Mawlyula!</i> (믈류라!)
dry		-CAUS-SE		'Make dry!'

But this is not what happens in the aspectual patterns we are considering. The reason becomes apparent once we recognize that there is no copula in these forms: the *s* (스) is part of the continuative morpheme and the *i* (이), when it occurs, is part of the non-past suffix *-in* (인).<sup>8)</sup>

### 2.3 Distinction between *-eos* (엇) and *-eon* (언)

Turning now to the status of *-eos* (엇) and *-eon* (언) as illustrated in examples (48) and (49), I classify them as instances of aspect and tense, respectively.

(48) *Jiseul meog-eos-eo*. (지슬 먹엇어)  
 potato eat-PFV-SE  
 '(Someone) ate a potato.'

(49) *Jiseul meog-eon*. (지슬 먹언)  
 potato eat-PST  
 '(Someone) ate a potato.'

The distinction can be subtle if we rely solely on semantic considerations since perfective aspect and past tense are known to overlap to a significant degree. However, as noted in section 1, the typological literature offers a useful criterion based on the fact that, cross-linguistically, aspect markers come before tense markers after a verb stem (Bybee, 1985; Cinque, 2014; Greenberg, 1966 ; Helmbrecht, 2004; Van Valin & LaPolla, 1997). By that criterion, as Yang et al. (2020, p.119) also observe, we can treat *-eos* (엇) as instance of aspect and *-eon* (언) as an instance of *-eon* (언), give their relative order in patterns such as (50) and (51) below. The combination of *-eos* (엇) and *-eon* (언) results in a past perfect interpretation.

(50) *Eomeong joban meog-eos-eon-ge*. (어멍 조반 먹엇언게)  
 mother breakfast eat-PFV-PST-SE  
 '(I noticed) mother had finished (her) breakfast.'

Furthermore, when the non-past suffix *-in* (인) (the allomorph of *-eun* 은 after 's' 스) is combined with the perfective marker *-eos* (엇), it results in a present perfect interpretation as in (51). Despite the mis-segmentation, Hyun's analysis of *-eosi* (어시) which he called 'perfective continuative' posits a similar interpretation, as he takes it to reflect the resultative state of an action.

8) This analysis does not preclude the possibility that the 's' in *-eoms* (엷) is a remnant of the copula from a much earlier period in the history of Jejeuo. My point is simply that 's' (스) no longer serves this function.



- (51) *Eomeong joban meog-eos-in-ge.* (어멍 조반 먹엇인게)  
 mother breakfast eat-PFV-NPST-SE  
 ‘(I notice) mother finished (her) breakfast.’

## 2.4 Causes of the mis-identification of verbal suffixes

A major cause of the mis-segmentation that occurs in Hyun’s work and was subsequently adopted by others lies in the failure to recognize the effect of a simple and ubiquitous re-syllabification process. In both Jejeuo and Korean (and, arguably, in all languages), a VCV string of sounds is syllabified as follows, with the medial consonant pronounced in the syllable headed by the following vowel.

- (52)  $\dots VCV \dots \rightarrow V.CV$

Thus *meog-eon-ya* (먹었냐?) ‘Did (someone) eat?’ is pronounced as if it were *meo.geo.nya* (머거냐?), just as *another* is pronounced as if it were *a nother* in English. In both cases, the postvocalic *-n* (ㄴ) is pronounced as the initial consonant of the following syllable. Because of a tendency for morphemes in Jejeuo (and Korean) to be syllables, the output of the re-syllabification process has led to the mis-segmentation of word structure and the mis-identification of morphemes.

An additional cause of confusion with respect to the segmentation of Jejeuo verbal morphology involves the influence of Korean. As O’Grady et al. (2017) point out, for example, the fact that modern Korean has an interrogative suffix *-ni* (니) has encouraged linguists to assume that Jejeuo has a similar suffix—resulting in the very mis-segmentation that we have been discussing.

- (53) *Mansu-neun mueos-eul meog-ni?* (만수는 무엇을 먹니?)  
 Mansu-NOM what-ACC eat-SE  
 ‘What does Mansu eat?’ [Korean]
- (54) *Mansu musigeo meog-neu-ni?* (만수 무시거 먹느니?)  
 Mansu what eat-INDIC-SE  
 ‘What does Mansu eat?’ [Jejeuo, based on Hyun’s segmentation]

In fact, as we have seen, the Jejeuo interrogative suffix is *-i* (이), not *-ni* (니).

- (55) *Mansu musigeo meog-neun-i?* (만수 무시거 먹느이?)  
 Mansu what eat-NPST-SE  
 ‘What does Mansu eat?’ [Jejeuo, based on the revised segmentation]

## 3. A summary of the new tense-aspect system and orthography

Although Hyun’s attempt to identify the tense and aspect system in Jejeuo inspired many Jejeuo linguists, his mis-segmentations are problematic. Once these mistakes are corrected, along the lines we have suggested, it is possible to identify a simple set of verbal suffixes and to describe their function in a relatively straightforward manner. Table 1 shows the Jejeuo verb slot template which illustrates the revised order and organization of tense–aspect suffixes based on the current reanalysis (excluding the suffixes that are not dealt in this study).

Table 1. A partial verbal template for Jejuo tense-aspect markers

1	2	3	4
Verb stem	Aspect - <i>eoms</i> (없) - <i>eos</i> (엇)	Tense - <i>eun</i> (은), - <i>neun</i> (는) - <i>eon</i> (언)	Sentence ender

Jejuo employs four types of tense-aspect markers: perfective, continuative, non-past, and past. As we have seen (Section 2), tense-aspect markers include the continuative suffix -*eoms* (없), the perfective marker -*eos* (엇), the non-past markers -*eun* (은) and -*neun* (는), and the past marker, -*eon* (언).

(56) Continuative aspect marker -*eoms* (없) CONT

*Mansu dawgsegi meog-eoms-jeo.* (만수 독세기 먹었저)

Mansu egg eat-CONT-SE

‘Mansu is eating an egg.’

(57) Perfective aspect marker -*eos* (엇) PFV

*Dawgsegi meog-eos-jeo.* (독세기 먹었저)

egg eat-PFV-SE

‘(Someone) ate an egg’

(58) Non-past marker -*eun* (은) NPST

*Halmang dawgsegi meog-eun-da.* (할망 독세기 먹은다)

grandmother egg at-NPST-SE

‘Grandmother eats eggs.’

(59) Non-past marker -*neun* (는) NPST

*Cheolsu-n menal badang-deole ga-neun-ge.* (철순 메날 바당더레 가는게)

Cheolsu-TOP every.day sea-DIR go-NPST-SE

‘Cheolsu goes to the sea every day.’

(Based on Song, 2007, p. 761)

(60) Past marker -*eon* (언) PST

*Neu dawgsegi meog-eon-da?* (느 독세기 먹언다?)

2.sg egg eat-PST-SE

‘Did you eat an egg?’

As there is increasing interest in teaching Jejuo in schools, the development of written materials should be able to incorporate new grammatical analyses. Although Jejuo has long been a spoken language, the high literacy rate in Korean using Hangeul among learners may promote fast learning of literacy in Jejuo.

As Yang et al. (2020, p. 22) states, one of the principles underlying Hangeul writing is that “when there is a mismatch between syllable boundaries and morpheme boundaries, the latter typically win out.” Here are some examples of Korean.

(61) *Meog-eoss-eo.* (먹었어) not *meo.geo.sseo* [머거써] or *meog.eo.sseo* [먹어써]

eat-PFV-SE

‘(I) ate.’

[Korean]

(62) *gabs-i* [값이] not *gab.ssi* [갑씨]

price-NOM

‘Price’

[Korean]

The same principle can apply to Jejuo to make it easy for learners and teachers who have already acquired the rules. The symbol-to-sound correspondences are essentially identical to those used in modern Korean, where the

consonant at the end of a *geulja* (글자) ‘written syllable’ is automatically pronounced as part of the next syllable if that syllable begins with a vowel.

- (63) *Meog-eos-eo*. 먹엇어 not *meo.geo.seo* [머거서] or *meog.eo.seo* [먹어서]  
eat–PFV–SE  
‘(I) ate.’
- (64) *Meog-eoms-eo*. (먹었어) not *meo.geom.seo* [머검서] or *meog.eom-seo* [먹엄서]  
eat–CONT–SE  
‘(I) am eating.’
- (65) *Meog-eos-in-ya?* (먹엇인야?) not *meo.geo.si.nya* [머거시냐] or *meog.eo.si.nya* [먹어서냐]  
eat–PFV–NPST–SE  
‘Have (you) eaten?’
- (66) *Meog-eoms-eon-ya?* (먹었언야?) not *meo.geom.seo.nya* [머검서냐] or *meog.eom.seo.nya* [먹엄서냐]  
eat–CONT–PST–SE  
‘Had (s/he) been eating?’

The pedagogical importance of employing a new morpheme analysis is overwhelming. Jung (2008, p.33) emphasizes that orthography has to accurately and consistently reflect linguistic information and also be convenient for users. As he notes, an accurate spelling system does not presuppose that the notation must match the pronunciation. Jung also argues that creating accurate and consistent orthography is only possible when we know what the correct underlying forms are. This view supports the purpose of this particular study.

Most L2 learners in the classroom may have no previous experience speaking and writing in Jejeuo. However, they are already familiar with the Hangeul writing system, which is morpheme-based. Therefore, with clear instruction on accurate verbal suffixes and how they can reflect tense and aspect in Jejeuo, learners will be able to read and write different patterns in Jejeuo using Hangeul. In order to provide the help that learners need, it is crucial to train school teachers so that they can quickly identify verbal suffixes, see how they are combined with other suffixes, and know how they can be written using Hangeul.

#### 4. Conclusion

The study has identified problems with the previous analysis for verbal suffixes that are crucial for the tense–aspect system in Jejeuo. The main cause of the misidentification of tense–aspect markers in earlier studies of Jejeuo lies in the mis-segmentation of morpheme boundaries under the influence of re-syllabification, compounded by the influence of superficially similar Korean verbal morphology. Unfortunately, as mentioned at the outset, these mis-segmentations are reflected in various pedagogical materials that are redistributed for use in schools on Jeju Island.

The current study provided an alternative analysis which yields a new set of verbal suffixes with their allomorphic variations: the continuative marker, *-eoms* (엄) instead of *-eom* (엄) and *-eomsi* (엄시); the perfective marker, *-eos* (엇) rather than *-eos* (엇), *-eosi* (어시), and *-eon* (언); the past marker, *-eon* (언); the non-past markers, *-eun* (은) and *-neun* (는). These suffixes were identified based on the phonological considerations involving re-syllabification and the allomorphic variation that calls for ‘i’ (이) rather than ‘eu’ (으) after ‘s’ (ㅅ) in Jejeuo. The new set of verbal suffixes also made it possible to identify a new group of sentence enders such as *-i* (이), *-ya* (야), and *-eo* (어) which were not evident in the previous analysis.

The recent language revitalization movement on Jeju Island seems to be positively accepted by Jeju society in general. However, before written materials can be produced, especially in the case of a morphophonemic orthography

such as Hangeul, it is essential to identify the language’s grammatical morphemes in an accurate way. It is time to revise and adjust the current orthography based on the linguistic analysis of tense–aspectual morphemes that are outlined here while keep supporting linguistic work based on new approaches.

### Abbreviations

1	first person	INDIC	indicative	PROSP	prospective
2	second person	IPFV	imperfective	RT	retrospective
AH	addressee honorific	NOM	nominative	SE	sentence ender
CAUS	causative	NPST	non–past	sg	singular
CON	connective	PFV	perfective	TOP	topic
CONT	continuative	PST	pst		
DIR	directional	pl	plural		

### Jejueo Romanization and IPA Symbols

The Jejueo Romanization adopted the system developed by the National Institute of the Korean Language.

Table 6. Consonant phonemes

Stop	plain	Bilabial		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
		IPA	ROM	IPA	ROM	IPA	ROM	IPA	ROM	IPA	ROM
	tense	p	b	t	d	c	j	k	g		
	aspirated	p*	pp	t*	tt	c*	jj	k*	kk		
Fricative	plain	p <sup>h</sup>	p	t <sup>h</sup>	t	c <sup>h</sup>	ch	k <sup>h</sup>	k		
	tense			s	s					h	h
Nasal				s*	ss						
Liquid		m	m	n	n			ŋ	ng		
				l	l						

Table 7. Vowel Phonemes

	Front		Central		Back	
	IPA	ROM	IPA	ROM	IPA	ROM
High	i	i	i	eu	u	u
Mid	e	e	ə	eo	o	o
Low	æ	ae	a	a	ɒ	aw

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