

An Analysis of Morphological Causative Construction in Korean¹ Focusing on Rules and Restriction

Hema
Korean language Guest Lecturer at University of Delhi

Abstract

Many scholars have discussed on the causative construction in Korean. However, there are certain gaps and unsolved issues in those studies which this study attempts to fill in this study. This study discusses the classification and realization of Korean causative. This study investigates the practical usage of causative verbs in Korean languages and also presents the systematic framework of Korean causative, so that a person (especially who does not have a linguistic background) may understand causative verb construction easily. Even though Korean causative construction is quite developed, but it's not free from the restriction, so this study also discusses the limitations of the Korean morphological causative verb construction.

Keywords: causative verb, case marker, Korean, causer, cause, learner

1. Introduction

In Korean language, morphological causative construction is known to be a difficult target for Korean language learners to learn, because rules are quite irregular, as a Korean language instructor in University of Delhi from last few years, it has been noticed that India Korean language learners face difficulties while expressing Korean causative. Despite of having many rules, there are also many restrictions. In Korean, there are some verbs which can't be causativized by attaching suffixes to the verb stem. Song Jae-jung (2001:286,287) has mentioned that in causative construction "*causer is agent who act directly on the causee, if the causee is affected directly by the causer's action, it is marked by accusative case, if it is affected least (less) by the causer's action, the causee is marked with dative case*". Even though some scholars have discussed about the realization of case marking in Korean causative, here there are a few limitations in respect to case marking which this study going

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to discusses, hence in the beginning stage of learning Korean, many language learners consider learning causatives forms the most challenging.

However, till date no study has been found that explains all the rules as well as limitations of Korean causative verb construction in a single study. So this study briefly explains about what types of causatives expressions are available in Korean language on the basis of Comrie classification (1981), then analyses what the phonological conditions and restriction are there in the process of causativization in Korean causative verb construction.

This study has followed the principles of ‘National Institute of Korean Language’ (국립국어원 한글 로마자) for Romanization of Korean into English.² Based on the previous literature and some personal observation, this study attempts to classify the Korean causatives into the following categories.

Table 1: Classification of Causative verb construction

Types	Method	Case marker	
		Causer NP ₁	Causee NP ₂
Morphological	Verb stem+ -i-/-hi-/-li-/-gi-/-u-/-gu-/-chu-	1.Nom:-i/-ga-/-eun-/-neun-/-kkeseo-(hon)	1.Acc:-eul-/-leul- 2.Dat: ege-, -kke-(hon)
Syntactic	Verb stem + -ge hada- 'to do)	1.Nom:-i/-ga-/-eun-/-neun-/-kkeseo-(hon)	1.Nom :-i-/-ga- 2.Acc :-eul-/-leul-, 3.Dat-ege-, -kke-(hon)
Lexical	Noun+ siki-da	1.Nom:-i/-ga-/-eun-/-neun-/-kkeseo-(hon)	1. Acc :-eul-/-leul- 2. Dat: ege-, kke-(hon)
	eum-jig-i-da→ eum-jig-i-da	1.Nom:-i/-ga-/-eun-/-neun-/-kkeseo-(hon)	1. Acc: -eul-/-leul-
	ga-da→ pone-da	1.Nom:-i/-ga-/-eun-/-neun-/-kkeseo-(hon)	1. Acc: -eul-/-leul- 2. Dat: -ege-, kke-(hon)

As shown in the table (1) that in Korean morphological causatives are formed with suffixes such as -i-, -hi-, -li-, -gi-, -wu-, -gu-, -chu-, that are attached with verb to express causation as illustrated in e.g (2), whereas the syntactic causative requires the adverb -ge- and the verb 'hada' 'to do' (3).

(1) *Minhwa-ga-hangeuk sinmun-eul ilg-eo-ss-da.* (Plain sentence)
Minhwa-Nom-Korean newspaper-Acc read-Past-Dec
'Minhwa read the Korean newspaper.'

(2) *Eunbi-ga Minhwa-ege hangeuk sinmun-eul ilg-hi-eo-ss-da.* (Morphological Causative)
Eunbi-Nom Minhwa-Dat-Korean newspaper-Acc read-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Minhwa to read the Korean newspaper.'

² https://www.korean.go.kr/front/page/pageView.do?page_id=P000149&mn_id=99

(3) *Eunbi-ga Minhwa-ege hangeuk sinmun-eul ilg-ge-hae-ss-da.* (Syntactic Causative)
 Eunbi-Nom Minhwa-Dat-newspaper-Acc read-adv-do-Caus-Past-Dec
 ‘Eunbi made Minhwa to read the Korean newspaper.’

The causer ‘Eunbi’ action in e.g. (3) is expressed by combining adverb ‘ge’ + verb ‘hada’ meaning ‘to do’ in the verb stem and as can be observe from the example that the causee ‘Minhwa’ action is expressed by verb ‘to read’. In the above sentence Eunbi is causing Minhwa to read the newspaper and as result of causer action, the causee ‘Minhwa’ is reading the newspaper. Lexical Causatives are formed by changing verb ‘hada’ ‘to do’ into ‘sikida’ ‘to order’, and ‘gada’ into ‘to go’ into ‘bonaeda’ ‘to send’ as illustrated in e.g. (4).

(4A). *Minhwa-ga sijang-e ga-ss-da.* → Plain sentence
 Minhwa-Nom market-loc go-Past-Dec
 ‘Minhwa went to market.’

(4B). *Eunbi-ga Minhwa-leul sijang-e ponae-ss-da.* → Lexical Causative
 Eunbi-Nom Minhwa-Acc market-loc send-Past-Dec
 ‘Eunbi made Minhwa to go to market.’

While discussing about the classification of Korean causative, it is also important to discuss about the case marking, we find as shown in the table (1) causer of the sentence is marked with a nominative marker –i/-ga- or topic marker (TM)-eun/-neun-, causee can be marked with either accusative marker –eul/-leul- or dative marker –ege- in all the three types of causative constructions.. The next part of the study is going to discuss the rules and method of morphological causatives in extensive detail.

2. Rules of Korean Morphological Causative

The main function of morphological causative is to express direct involvement of the causer in the caused event. Causative suffixes are attached with verbs (transitive, intransitive and adjective) keeping in mind a few phonological rules that should to be followed. This study analyses and arranges the phonological rules from the studies of Jae, Hoon-yeon ,1991:339-340 ; Kim Jeong-suk,2005: 257; Sohn, Ho-Min ,1999: 275; Park, Jeong-woon,1994:31, and some personal observation and online mail discussion from Korean language specialists from ‘national institute of Korean language’

This section tries to elaborate complicated rules of Korean causative construction in a simple way with examples so that Indian learners can acquire it easily; especially those are not from linguistic background to easily understand the practical usage of Korean causatives. Example of Rule (1) suffix –i- is given below in e.g. (5)

(5A). *Minhwa-ga-phodo-leul meok-eo-ss-da.*
 Minhwa-Nom grapes-Acc-Past-Dec
 ‘Minhwa ate grapes.’

(5B) *Eunbi-ga Minhwa-ege phodo-leul meok-i-eo-ss-da.*

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Eunbi-Nom Minhwa-Dat grapes-Acc eat-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Minhwa to eat the grapes.'

As shown in the above example 'meokda' to eat is a transitive verb and suffix -i- is attached with the verb stem. After attaching suffix -i-, the verb 'eat' becomes 'meogida' i.e. 'to feed', which is a causative verb. 'Eunbi' is influenced by the causer's action. Suffix -i- can also be attached with intransitive and adjective verbs.

Example of rule (2) suffix -hi- is given in the following e.g. (6).

(6A) *Eunsu-ga-sofa-e-anj-ass-da.*

Eunsu-Nom-sofa-Loc-sit down-Past-Dec

'Eunsu sat down on the sofa.'

(6B). *Eunsu-ga namdongsaeng-eul sofa-e-anj-hi-eo-ss-da.*

Eunsu-Nom younger brother-Acc sofa loc sit down-Caus-Past-Dec

'Eunsu made his younger brother to sit down on the sofa.'

In the above example, the verb 'anc-da' meaning 'to seat' is an intransitive verb in Korean. causative form of 'anj-ass-da' is 'anj-hi-eoss-da' which means to make someone sit. Similarly, the causative form of 'ib-da' (transitive verb) 'to wear' is 'ib-hi-da.

Example of rule (3) suffix-li- is as follows:

(7A). *eomeoni-ga draigi lo eunbi-ui meoli-leul mal-lyeo-ss-da*

Mother-Nom dryer by Eunbi hair machine-Acc dry.Past.Dec

'Mother dried Eunbi's hair with hair dryer machine.'

As we can see in the above example that 'mareu-da' is irregular verb in which the final sound is 'leu', so the direct causation is 'mal-li-da' 'to make dry', similarly morphological causation of verb 'ul-da' 'to cry' will be 'ul-li-da' 'to make someone cry' and causative form of verb *geod-da* 'to walk' is 'geol-li-da' 'to make someone walk' . Even though direct causative form of verb 'geod-da' is 'geol-li-da' for example;

(8A) *abeoji- -ga Eunsu-leul ppal-li geol-lyeoss-da.*

Father-Nom Eunsu-Acc fast walk-suffix-past Dec

'Father made Eunsu to walk fast.'

(8B) *abeoji-ga Eunsu -leul ppal-li geod-ge haess-da.*

Father-Nom Eunsu-Acc fast walk-Adv-do-past Dec

'Father made Eunsu to walk fast.'

(8B) is more natural form according to native Korean speakers. Example of rule (4) suffix -gi-with transitive verb is given below in (9). As shown in the above example (9) that verb *usda* 'to laugh' ends with consonant 's' therefore suffix -ki- is attached with the verb to express causation.

(9A). *Eunbi-ga us-eo-ss-da.*

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Eunbi Nom-laugh-Past-Dec
'Eunbi laugh.'

(9B). *Minhwa-ga Eunbi-leul us-gi-eoss-da.*
Minhwa-Nom Eunbi-Acc laugh-Caus-Past-Dec
'Minhwa made Eunbi to laugh.'

Example of rule (5) suffix -u- with an intransitive verb is given in the following example. In this category, sometime only one suffix for example -u- and sometime two different suffixes are combined together, as shown in (11). As JeongWoon-park (1994:35), Go-Young-geun (2008:263) and Kim Jeong-suk (2005: 258) point out that there are cases where two suffixes (-i- and -u-) are attached with the verb, but even though two suffixes (-i- + -u-) are combined in the verb stem, they are considered as single suffix in morphological causative verb construction.

(10A). *Eunbi-ga ja-ss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom-sleep Past-Dec
'Eunbi slept.'

(10B) *Eunbi-ga namdongsaeng-eul ja-i-u-eo-ss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom younger brother-Acc sleep-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made her younger brother to sleep.'

E.g. (10B) is a direct causation, where causer 'Eunbi has a direct control over the causee 'her younger brother'; in other words she is actively involved in the caused event. The verb 'jada' (to sleep) is an intransitive verb. Its direct causation form is 'jaeuda' ('ja+i+u+da), where suffix -i-and suffix-u-are attached.

When we examine the examples of rule (6) in which suffix -gu- is attached with the verb stem, we find that even though causative form of verb *dal-da* is *dal-gu-da*³ however in Korean grammar it express indirectness.

Example of rule (7) suffix-chu- with adjective verb is given in below example (11). In Korean if the verb stem ends with -j-, then the suffix -chu-is attached with the verb.

(11A) *Delli daehakkyo-neun-hakbi-ga-naj-da.*
Delhi University-TM school fee-Nom low-Dec
'Delhi University has low fee.'

(11B). *Delli daehakkyo-neun-hakpi leul-naj-chu-eo-ss-da.*
Delhi University Nom -school fee-Acc low-Caus-Past-Dec
'Delhi University has lowered the school fee.'

³ *angyeongsa-ga mina-ui angyeong dosu-leul dod-gwoss-eo-yo.*
'Eye specialist made Mina's eyeglass stronger.'

As can be observed from above examples and discussion that selection of i/hi/li/gi/wu/gu/chu totally depends on the final sound of the verb stem. Yet, there are some limitations of Korean morphological causative which this study discusses in the next section.

3. Limitation of Morphological Causative

Even though Kim Jeong-suk (2005:258,263), Jae, Hoon-yeon (1991:345), Wang Mun-yong, Min hyon-sik (1993:85), Lee ik-sop (2000) and Park Jeong-woon (1994:33) have noticed some irregularities of Korean Causative verb construction, however they are not arranged, which creates confusion for foreigner learners of Korean language to have in-depth knowledge of Korean causatives. This study has arranged some phonological irregularities which are reflected in Korean causatives.

The first irregularity is that according to rule (2), -hi- is attached when the verb ends with -p-, -t-, -k-, -c-, - like *balg-da* → *balg-hi-da* 'to brighten', *ilg-da* → *ilg-hi-da* 'to make read', *ik-da* → *ik-hi-da*, however there are few exceptions where instead of -hi-, the other suffix like -i- is attached with the verb even though the verb ends with -k-, for instance, the transitive verbs such as *meok-da* 'to eat', ends with consonant 'k' but its causative form is '*meog-i-da*' 'to feed'.

Secondly, we can find that all the verbs are ending with -d- sound '*tteud-da*' (뜯다) → '*tteud-gi-da*' (뜯기다) 'to pluck, to take something off). However in case of '*dot-da*' → '*dot-gu-da*' verb stem ends with consonant 't', but the suffix -gu- is attached with the verb, in another case verb *dat-da* 'to close' causal form is → *dat-hi-da* 'to be close', so we can find that different suffix are attached.

Thirdly, when the verb stem ends with -l-, -t-, in such case -li- should be attached to the verb, for instance, '*wul-da*' which means 'to cry', causative form is '*wul-li-da*' 'to make someone cry', however there are some cases when, instead of the suffix -li-, suffix '-i-' is attached to the verb stem, for instance, '*jul-da*' which means 'to decrease' is changed to '*jul-i-da*' 'to be decreased'. Another example is of the verb *dal-da*, which ends with sound 'l', but suffix 'gu' is attached and its causative verb becomes '*dal-gu-da*'. Here we need to teach students that *julda* 'to reduce' is a regular verb in Korean however *ulda* 'to cry' is an irregular verb.

In Korean verb *sseu-da* semantically has many meanings in Korean for example *sseuda* means 'to write' and 'to wear'. Even though both verbs end with the same sound -eu- however different suffix are attached with the verb for expressing causation. So, there is need to define such irregularities to the Korean language learners very carefully. It is important to note that memorizing the above-mentioned rules is not enough; these phonological irregularities need to be taught to the students for their in-depth knowledge of Korean causal construction.

Every language has its own special features as well as some restrictions, not only in English grammar⁴ but also in Korean and Hindi, grammar disallows the morphological

⁴ Pinker (1989:130,131) in his study has presented a very pioneering work in understanding which verb can be causativized and which can't

causativisation of some verbs like ‘to appear’, ‘to go’, ‘to come’, etc. This study provides a detailed list of such verbs based on personal observation and previous literature analysis (Wang-Mun-yong, Min hyon-sik,1993:85;, Park Jeong-woon ,1994; Kim Kyung-gan,1995:61; Lee ik-sop,2000:212; Kim Jeong-suk,2005:258; Go Young-gun,2008:362; Kang Myung-yoon ,1997:88) and some personal discussion with the Korean language specialists at ‘ national institute of Korean language.’ (국립국원)

Korean, morphological suffixes can’t be attached with ditransitive verbs like *juda* ‘to give’) as also presented in the e.g. (12B):

(12). * *Eunbi-neun Minhwa-ege soseol-chaeg-eul ju-i-eoss-da.* (Direct Causative)
 Eunbi-Nom Minwha –dat-novel-give-Cause-Past-Dec
 ‘Eunbi made Minhwa to give novel.’

In Sentence (12) suffix –i- is attached with ditransitive verb *juda* ‘to give’ which is grammatically incorrect. If we examine another verb ‘*eod-da*’ ‘to get/obtain’ and ‘*bad-da*’ ‘to receive (Kang, Myung-Yoon. 1997:88), we find that direct Causation of these verbs is not possible (as shown in the e.g. below).

(13).**Minhwa-ga Eunsu-ege-hangeugo seonsaengnim jagyeogjeung-eul bad-gi-eo-ss-da.*
 Minhwa-Nom-Eunsu -Acc Korean Language teacher certificate-Acc obtain-Caus-Past-Dec
 ‘Minhwa made eunsu to get Korean language teacher certificate.’

As per the rules, if verb stem ends with -t-, then suffix -gi- is attached to the verb stem. However, in case of ‘*eod-da*’and ‘*bad-da*’, it will be grammatically unacceptable if suffix -gi-is attached with these verbs. Korean grammar does not allow morphological Causative construction of these verbs.

(14). * *Minhwa-ga unbi ege samseong hoesa-e iljari-leul eod-gi-eo-ss-da.*
 Minhwa-Nom –Eunbi-Dat-book-Acc receive-Caus-Past-Dec
 ‘Minhwa made Eunbi to get a job in Samsung Company.’

Further, Korean grammar does not allow using morphological suffixes with verbs that uses particles –wa-and –gwa-to combine two clauses like ‘*manada*’ ‘to meet), ‘*ssauda*’ ‘to fight’. ‘*dalmda*’ ‘to resemble’ , This is further explained in e.g. (15) below.

(15). * *onul chingu-ege hak-kwa-jang nim-eul man-na-i-eoss-da.* (Direct Causative)
 Today Friend –Dat-HOD-Hon suffix-Acc Meet-Caus-Past-Dec
 Today i made my friend to met with Head of the Department.

Above e.g. (15) clearly shows that verb *mana-da* ‘to meet’ can’t express direct causation, however, this verb can be used for expressing indirectness as shown). Also, in Korean, verbs ending with vowel ‘i’ can’t be morphologically causativized.

be causativized in English language. Verb which can’t be causativized are Come, leave, exit, arrive, disappear, vanish, expire. Glow, glitter, speak, cry, laugh .

(16). * *eomeoni-ga Eunbi-ege keopi-leul masi-i-eo-ss-da.* (Direct Causative)
Mother -Nom Eunbi –Dat Coffee-Acc drink-Caus-Past-Dec
'Mother made Eunbi to drink the coffee.'

However in case of *bi-da* 'to vacant/empty', *phi-da* 'to smoke' even though these verbs ends with vowel but can be causativize, the causative form of *bi-da* verb is 'bi-u-da' which is acceptable in Korean. In Korean direct causation of motion verbs is not possible in Korean, for example;

(17). * *Eunbi-ga Minhwa-leul Delli-e ga-i-eoss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom-Acc Delhi-Loc-to go-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Minhwa to go to Delhi.'

As also discovered by some scholars, some verbs in Korean language which are derived from Chinese language and majority of these verbs end with 'hada'. These verbs can't be causativized morphologically because Causative morphemes can be attached only to verbs that have monosyllabic roots. For instance,

(18). * *Mira-ga Eunbi-leul jinsil-eul mal-ha-in-da.* (Direct Causative)
Mira-Nom Eunbi-Acc truth -Acc speak-Caus Past-Dec
'Mira made Eunbi to speak truth.'

Park, Jeong-Woon claimed that (1994:37) Korean grammar does not allow attaching *i/hi/li/ki* with a verb that is a made by the combination of a noun and a verb. For instance 'mar-hada' is made up with the combination of a noun 'mal' which means 'word' and a verb 'hada' means 'to do'.

Apart from the listed verbs, there are some other verbs in which direct causation is not possible. Park, Jeong-woon (1994:42-43) found in his study that in Korean verb *sal-da* meaning 'to live' (at some place), for instance, The direct Causative form of this verb will be '*sal-li-da*' which is grammatically incorrect.

(19A). * *Eunsu-ga Eunbi-leul delli-e sal-li-eo-ss-da.* (Direct Causative)
Eunsu–Nom Minhwa-Acc Delhi-Loc-in live-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunsu made Eunbi to live in Delhi.'

However indirect Causation of the verb '*salda*' is possible as illustrated in the next example. Direct Causation of '*salda*' is possible in a situation where it expresses the meaning of saving someone's life.

(19B) *eunjeongisa-ga-geu-hagsaeng-eul-sal-li-ess-da.*
Driver-Nom the student-Acc live-Caus-Past-Dec
'The driver saved the life of that student.'

Similarly, as also discussed by Kang, Myung-Yoon (1997:88) it is not possible to make direct causation with verb '*nohda*' which means 'to put something.'

(20A). **Eunbi-ga Minhwa-ege khol-la leul twu pyeng-i sik-thak wi-e noh-i-eoss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom Mihwa-Dat coke-Acc two bottle-dinning table on put-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Minhwa to put two bottles of cola on the dining table.'

(20B). *Eunbi-ga Minhwa-ege khol-la twu pyeng-i sik-thak wi-e noh-ge haess-da.*
Eunbi-Nom Mihwa-Dat coke-Acc two bottle-dinning table on put-adv-do Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Minhwa to put two bottles of cola on the dining table.'

We find that indirect causation of all the mentioned verbs is possible in Korean, but direct causation of these verbs is not possible, therefore it is said that morphological causatives are less productive as compare to syntactic causatives.

Apart from the above-mentioned irregularities in term of phonological condition and some restricted verb, there are some more limitations in term of using case marking in Korean morphological causative construction. As also discussed by some Korean scholars, this study identifies how case marking system works in morphological. In morphological the causer of the sentence always assumes a nominative case marker (Nom) –ga-,i-, and Honorific Nominative case marker-kkeseo-. The possibilities of case marking for a causee in morphological causative are: (A) Accusative (as illustrated in the e.g. 21B) or (21B) dative case markers (21A).

(21A). *Eunbi-ga Mira-ege soseol chaek-eul ilg-hi-eo-ss-da.* √
Eunbi-Nom Mira-Dat novel-Acc read-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Mira to read the novel.'

(21B) *Eunbi-ga Mira-leul soseol chaek-eul ilg-hi-eo-ss-da.* √
Eunbi-Nom Mira-Acc novel-Acc read-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Mira read to the novel.'

(21C) * *Eunbi-ga Mira-ga soseol chaek-eul ilg-hi-eo-ss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom child-Nom novel-Acc read-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made Mira to read the novel.'

In morphological causative, as also noticed by Lee Hyo-Sang (1985:148) Lee, Hee chul (2008:215), the causee cannot take a nominative case (as shown in the e.g. 21C) as the causee has less power than the causer. Nominative case marker in morphological causative cannot appear two times in a given sentence.

(22A). *Eunbi-ga Mira-leul yeonpil-lo pyeonji-leul sseu-i-eo-ss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom c Mira-Acc pencil-with write-Caus-Past-Dec
'Eunbi made the Mira to write a letter with pencil.'

(22B). * *Eunbi-ga Mira-lo pyeonji-leul sseu-i-eo-ss-da.*
Eunbi-Nom Mira-Ins the letter-Acc write-Cause-Past-Dec
'Eunbi had Mira to write the letter with the pencil.'

In morphological causative -lo- can be used as an instrument marker only, in other words when a causee is inanimate only then -lo- can be attached, it can't be used with an animate causee. As illustrated in the example (22B) -lo-is used with the animate causee ie, 'Mira' which is grammatically wrong.

Conclusion

Till now this study has discussed about the classification of Korean causative, specially focused on the realization and restriction found is Korean causative on the basis of previous studies and some personal observation as a learner and instructor of Korean language in India. While learning and expressing a causative expression three factors need to be kept in mind: First is the type of verb used, because in Korean there are some verbs which cannot be causativized; second, whether the causee is animate or inanimate; phonological irregularities, even the verb stem ends with same sound, there are different suffixes which need to learn carefully. As discussed above, there are also some phonological and semantical irregularities that should be taught carefully to the Korean language learners in order to prevent the errors. Maximum opportunities should be provided to the learners to acquire the in-depth knowledge of construction of Korean causative along with case marking, without appropriate case marking causation can't express the clear meaning. Apart from the text book teacher can take easy examples or dialogues on causation from internet or other sources and can utilize it while teaching to the learners.

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Hema
Korean language Guest Lecturer at University of Delhi
Ph.D. candidate at Department of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi
M.Phil. Degree (2012) from Department of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi, India
Master's Degree (2010) from Korea University, Seoul, South Korea
hema.in.ko@gmail.com

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