Skewed distribution of Manchu genitive marker –i in *Ilan gurun -i bithe**

Suzushi HAYATA (Kyoto University, Japan)

Ilan gurun -i bithe (IGB) is a Manchu translation of *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* prefaced in *Shunzhi* 7th (1650). In a previous paper, I reported that there are some lexical differences between the first and the second half of this text material, but research on distribution of non-lexical features remains to be done. This paper is intended to show that not only lexical items but also the genitive-instrumental case marker *-i*, one of the grammatical morphemes with the highest frequency of use in Manchu, has a skewed distribution in IGB: in the latter half, attributive verbs and numeral plus classifier phrases are less likely to be followed by the case marker *–i*. In addition, based on a comparison of IGB and *Gin ping mei bithe*, a Manchu translation of *The Golden Lotus* prefaced in *Kangxi* 47th (1708), published about 60 years after IGB, I point out that concerning imperfect participles preceding postpositions *gese* or *adali* 'like, same', *Gin ping mei bithe* exhibits similar tendency to volume 15 onwards of IGB.

Keywords: Classical Manchu, *Ilan gurun -i bithe*, *Gin ping mei bithe*, genitive, idiolectal variation, generational difference

1. Introduction

Ilan gurun -i bithe (IGB),[1] a Chinese-Manchu translation of *Romance of the*

1) The electronic text corpus of IGB was created by Teruhiro Hayata and the present author. The corpus size is approximately 500,000 words.

Three Kingdoms prefaced in *Shunzhi* 7th (1650), is the oldest surviving example of a long novel translated from another language into Manchu. IGB, consisting of 24 volumes, is one of the most important sources for the study of the classical Manchu language in the middle of the 17th century, spoken by those who belonged to the last generation of Manchus who acquired their native language before the capture of Beijing[2] had been completed. In Hayata, S. (2013), I reported some lexical differences between the first and the second half of IGB, suggesting the possibility of the older unfinished translation utilized by the translators in the *Shunzhi* period.

The lexical differences shown in Tables 1, 2 and 3 suggest that there are at least idiolectal variations, and perhaps chronological differences, between

Vol.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
heb(e)de-	11	15	12	15	16	3	10	3	17	2	1	3						1							109
heb(e)še-	29	8	21	9	6	13	22	22	5	4	29	27	39	36	29	19	12	10	26	19	15	25	18	18	461

(Hayata, S. 2013: 292)

Table 1. Distribution of words for 'to consult'

Vol.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
medege/ medehe	4	2			7							1													14
mejige	7	4	5	12	9	20	16	10	11	17	5	7	12	6	11	9	13	12	19	19	14	15	9	9	271

(Hayata, S. 2013: 293)

Table 2. Distribution of words for 'information'[3]

Vol.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
šun dekdere [(*ergi*)]	1				3	2					1														7
dergi	14	20	32	21	5	19	13	40	57	47	24	24	16	12	29	27	41	18	12	36	22	16	16	11	572
šun tuhere [(*ergi*)]		1	1		3																				5
wargi	8	7	13	16		5	14	18	6	10	4	17	17	8	9	7	5	18	20	18	14	6	13	14	267

(Hayata, S. 2013: 294)

Table 3. Distribution of words for original Chinese *dong* 'east' and *xi* 'west'

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2) The Qing dynasty transferred the capital to Beijing after the victory at the battle of Shanhai Pass, fought in the eastern end of the Great Wall of China in 1644.

3) *Medege* is also written as *medehe*. See Seong (1990) for spelling variations among Manchu dictionaries.

the translators of the first and the second half. However, there remains the question of whether any non-lexical feature shows a skewed distribution. This paper will show that the Manchu genitive-instrumental case marker *-i* also has a skewed distribution in IGB, and make a contribution to the study on the synchrony and diachrony of the case marker *-i* as well as the study on the translational process of IGB.

2. Genitive-instrumental case marker *-i*

The genitive-instrumental case marker *-i* can encode various syntactic and semantic relations, and is one of the most frequent morphemes in Manchu. There are adnominal usage, genitive subject and adverbial usage. In addition, some postpositions govern the genitive case. The following examples illustrate the different uses:

> • Adnominal usage
> (1) aisin   **-i**   uksin
>   gold   *-i*   armor
>   'golden armor'
>   金甲[4)]   IGB vol.20 25b
>
> • Genitive subject
> (2) ts'oots'oo,   sun ts'e **-i**   buce-he be   donji-fi
>   Cao cao   Sun ce *-i*   die-PART ACC   hear-CONV
>   '*Caocao*, hearing *Sun ce* had died,'
>   曹操知孫策已死   IGB vol.6 69b
>
> • Adverbial usage (i.e. Instrumental)
> (3) uthai   ere   loho **-i**   wa
>   immediately   this   sword *-i*   kill
>   'Kill (him) with this sword immediately.'
>   以此劍誅之   IGB vol.9 74b
>
> • Genitive–governing postpositions
> (4) niyalma   tasha **-i**   adali
>   person   tiger *-i*   same
>   'The soldiers look like tigers.'
>   人如猛虎   IGB vol.5 73b

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4) For the version of the original Chinese text of IGB see Kishida (1997: 36-47).

(5) tasha **-i**   gese   jiyangjiyūn
    tiger -*i*   same   general
    'a general who looks like a tiger'
    虎將   IGB vol. 13 81a

Verbs in the participial form (i.e. attributive verbs) are seldom followed by
-*i*. They usually appear in the zero case in the context where nouns would
occur in the genitive case.

(6) deye-re[5)]   adali
    fly- IMPF. PART   same
    'like flying (i.e. with lightning speed)'
    如飛   IGB vol. 14 91b

(7) aga   aga-ra   gese
    rain   rain- IMPF. PART   same
    '(came down) like raindrops'
    如雨   IGB vol. 7 40b

Conversely, numeral plus classifier phrases that modify nouns are followed
by -*i* in many cases in IGB but there are not a few exceptions.

(8)   emu   baksan **-i**   cooha
      one   group -*i*   soldier
      'one group of soldiers'
      一軍   IGB vol. 19 94a

(9)   emu   baksan   cooha
      one   group   soldier
      'one group of soldiers'
      一軍   IGB vol. 17 93a

(10) sunja   baksan **-i**   cooha
      five   group -*i*   soldier
      'five groups of soldiers'
      五隊軍馬   IGB vol. 8 83b

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5) Imperfect attributive verbs are formed by the affixation of the participle suffix
   -*rV* (-*ra/-re/-ro*) as seen in (6) and (7). The vowel of -*rV* harmonizes with the stem
   vowels.

(11) juwe   baksan   cooha
     two   group   soldier
     'two groups of soldiers'
     兩隊   IGB vol. 5 53a

I focus on these imperfect participles and numeral plus classifier phrases in IGB. In some contexts the imperfect participles and the numeral plus classifier phrases can appear in either the genitive case or the zero case. In these contexts, their *-i* to Ø ratios are not constant across all volumes. Next will be examined the frequency distributions of *-i* following imperfect participles and numeral plus classifier phrases. [6]

3. Distribution of *-i* in IGB

3.1 Imperfect participles followed by *-i*
All the imperfect participles followed by *-i* attested in IGB are given in Table 4. Due to their extremely low total frequencies, *-rV -i/Ø teile*, *-rV -i/Ø ten* and *-rV -i/Ø giyan* are unsuitable for statistical analysis. I therefore exclude them from the present discussion.

Consider Tables 5 and 6 on the next page. As can be seen from Table 5, *-i* does not occur in the fifteenth volume onwards. Interestingly, this distribution corresponds to that of *gese* and *adali* in the context of *agara -i/Ø gese/adali* '(come down) like raindrops' in Table 6.

	-i	Ø	Total
-rV -i/Ø gese 'like, same'	12	195	207
-rV -i/Ø adali 'like, same'	7	144	151
-rV -i/Ø teile 'to the extent of'	6	5	11
-rV -i/Ø ten 'extreme point'	1(vol.6)	0	1
-rV -i/Ø giyan 'reason'	1(vol.8)	27	28

Table 4. Frequencies of imperfect participles followed by *-i* compared with Ø

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6) The text corpora used in this study and Hayata (2013) are not tagged with additional linguistic information. I made KWIC (keyword-in-context) indices using letter sequences as search keywords, and manually checked for the pertinence of the results.

Vol.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
-rV-i gese	2	4				1					1	2	2												12
-rV-i adali	3	2					1							1											7
-rV gese	16	8	18	8	9	10	6	5	16	11	10	13	5	9	9	4	4	4	10	3	5	4	3	5	195
-rV adali	9	9	10	3	2	2	1	11	14	9	2	9	4	7	7	5	2	2	5	2	4	7	6	12	144

Table 5. Distribution of imperfect participles followed by *-i*

Table 6. Distribution of words for '(come down) like raindrops'

In the context of *agara (-i) gese/adali, gese* does not occur in the fifteenth volume onwards. In this paper I provisionally divide IGB into two parts, volumes 1 to 14 and volumes 15 to 24. Admittedly, it is not easy to draw a dividing line between the first and the second half in terms of linguistic features. This is an issue that remains to be solved.[7]

3.2 Numeral plus classifier phrases followed by *-i*

Next, I will look at the numeral plus classifier phrases followed by *-i*. These types of phrases are used in IGB, but most of them appear only a couple of times and are therefore unsuitable for statistical analysis. The numeral plus classifier phrases repeatedly used in IGB are those denoting the number of troops.

In the context of "numeral + *gargan -i /Ø cooha*", *-i* appears throughout all volumes. Ø occurs only once in the former part and 17 times in the latter part.

Vol.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Total
numeral + *garhan/gargan -i cooha*	1	2	3	9		2		2	2	1	2	4	5	7	17	1	5	5	12	14	2	10	2	4	112
numeral + *garhan/gargan cooha*													1				2	1	4	2	4		1	3	18

Table 7. Distribution of "numeral + *gargan*[8] *-i/Ø cooha* 'branch(es) of soldiers'"

7) In Hayata (2013), I divided IGB into volumes 1 to 12 and volumes 13 to 24. However, it is not appropriate to divide it in the same way when it comes to the features shown in this section. There does not seem to be a single cause for the skewed distributions of the many linguistic elements in IGB.

8) *Gargan* is also written as *garhan*.

Table 8. Distribution of "numeral + *baksan -i/Ø cooha* 'group(s) of soldiers'"

In the context of "Numeral + *baksan -i /Ø cooha"*, both *-i* and Ø appear throughout all volumes. Ø is used much more in the latter part.

3.3 Statistical significance

With all the contexts that we have looked at in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, the frequencies of occurrence of *-i* are higher than the expected values in Vols.1 to 14, while, lower than the expected values in Vols.15 to 24, as shown in Tables 9, 10 and 11. These differences between the two groups have caused the skewed distribution of frequencies, which is proved to be statistically significant (significance level α = 0.05). Overall, these results indicate a decrease of *-i* in the number of uses in the latter part of IGB.

Vol.	1-14	15-24	Total
-rV-i gese/adali	19 (13.5)	0 (5.5)	19
-rV gese/adali	236(241.5)	103(97.5)	339
Total	255	103	358

(The expected values are given in numbers in parentheses)

chi-squared test, P = 0.004 < 0.05

Table 9. Observed and expected values for imperfect participles in Table 5

Vol.	1-14	15-24	Total
numeral + *gargan/garhan -i cooha*	40(35.3)	72(76.7)	112
numeral + *gargan/garhan cooha*	1 (5.7)	17(12.3)	18
Total	41	89	130

chi-squared test, P = 0.011 < 0.05

Table 10. Observed and expected values for phrases in Table 7

Vol.	1-14	15-24	Total
numeral + *baksan-i cooha*	66(56.3)	51(60.7)	117
numeral + *baksan cooha*	12(21.7)	33(23.3)	45
Total	78	84	162

chi-squared test, P = 0.001 < 0.05

Table 11. Observed and expected values for phrases in Table 8

4. Comparison with *Gin ping mei bithe* (1708)

This section compares the results obtained from IGB, prefaced in *Shunzhi* 7th (1650), with those from *Gin ping mei bithe* (GPM),[9] prefaced in *Kangxi* [10] 47th (1708), the only known Manchu translation[11] of *Jin Ping Mei,* the long Chinese novel translated as *The Golden Lotus* or *The Plum in the Golden Vase.* GPM is roughly equal in word count to IGB.

Table 12 shows the frequency of *-rV-i/Ø gese* and *-rV-i/Ø adali* in IGB, compared with that in GPM. Unfortunately, no numeral plus classifier phrases denoting the number of troops appear in GPM.

As we have seen in Table 3, *medege* 'information' occurs exclusively in the first half of IGB. The frequency of *medege* and *mejige* in IGB compared with GPM is given in Table 13.

	IGB Vols.1-14	IGB Vols.15-24	GPM
-rV -i gese	12	0	0
-rV -i adali	7	0	0
-rV gese	144	51	104
-rV adali	92	52	180

Table 12. Frequency of imperfect participles preceding *gese* or *adali*

	IGB Vols.1-14	IGB Vols.15-24	GPM
medege/medehe	14	0	0
mejige	141	130	174

Table 13. Frequency of words for 'information'

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9) The electronic text corpus of *Gin ping mei bithe* was created by Teruhiro Hayata.

10) The Kangxi emperor (1654-1722) was the first Qing emperor born in Beijing.

11) See Hayata (1998: 4, 5), for the version of the original Chinese text of GPM.

Note that the latter part (Vols.15 to 24) of IGB shows similar characteristics to GPM both in the non-use of *-i,* and the substitution of *mejige* for *medege,* as in Tables 12 and 13. This suggests that the linguistic difference between the first and second half of IGB could be attributed to a generational difference between the translators. However, it is peculiar that a diachronic change is manifest not between different source materials but between different parts within a single novel. This is a problem to be solved.[12]

5. Conclusion

The present study has shown that there is a decrease in non-central uses of the genitive-instrumental case marker-*i* in the latter part of IGB. This finding provides new insights for future research on the multifunctionality of the case marker-*i*. It has also been shown that the latter part of IGB shares some linguistic characteristics, both lexical and grammatical, with GPM. This result suggests the possibility of a diachronic change. In order to confirm that it is not a matter of style, further research needs to examine phonological, lexical and grammatical characteristics of IGB in more details and compare them with those in the other Manchu texts contemporary with IGB.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	IGB	*Ilan gurun –i bithe*
CONV	converb	GPM	*Gin ping mei bithe*
IMPF	imperfect	PART	participle

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12) In Hayata (2013: 295) I pointed out the possibility that the lexical differences occurred because "the translators of IGB in the *Shunzhi* period utilized *Dahai's* unfinished translation of the same work", but no direct historical evidence has been found to confirm this.

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HAYATA Suzushi
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science /Faculty of Letters, Kyoto University
Yoshida Honmachi, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-8501, JAPAN
＜hayatag@gmail.com＞