Psalmanazar[1]

In our account of the source of Kempelen's `Formosan` numbers from 1-10 we noted that his list, which he copied from Fritz & Schultze's *Orientalisch- und Occidentalisches A, B, C-Buch,* derived ultimately from the 18th century conman George Psalmanazar, who claimed to be a native of Formosa. In that account we suggested that Psalmanazar was actually English. In fact, he was more likely French. See, for example, Keevak (2004).

Reference

Keevak, Michael. (2004). *The Pretended Asian: George Psalmanazar's Eighteenth-Century Formosan Hoax.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Korean Numbers

In our introduction, we presented Kempelen's list of Korean numbers from 1 to 10, along with their analysis in terms of the native, and Sino-Korean readings of the numbers. We repeat our Table 1 below:

	Kempelen	**Native Korean**	**Sino-Korean**
1	Jagner	hana	il
2	Tourgy	dul	i
3	Socsom	set	sam
4	Docso	net	sa
5	Caseto	daseot	o
6	Joseljone	yeoseot	yuk
7	Jeroptehil	ilgop	chil
8	Jaderpal	yeodeol	pal
9	Ahopcon	ahop	gu
10	Jorchip	yeol	sip

[1] We thank Sven Osterkamp for discussion and feedback on an earlier version of this note.

These, as we noted, he had derived from Fritz & Schultze's *Orientalisch- und Occidentalisches A, B, C-Buch,* which in turn was based on earlier work by Schultze.

The ultimate source, as discussed by Osterkamp (2010), is Nicolaas Witsen's *Noord en Oost Tartarye* (1692). In this book, Witsen gives a large list of Korean words, which he apparently obtained from members of the crew of Hendrick Hamel's ship *de Sperwer*, which was shipwrecked off Jeju Island in 1653[2]. Hamel reported on his experiences in Joseon Dynasty Korea in *Journael, van de Ongeluckige Voyagie van't Jacht de Sperwer* (1668). Hamel's own account about the Korean language was scant, but his crew evidently must have picked up a fair amount of information about it, since Witsen's wordlists are quite extensive. As Osterkamp shows, these lists served as the sole source of information about the Korean language in Europe for another century.

Among Witsen's wordlists are two lists of numbers, given in his book on page 52. One list, which consists of just the numbers 1-10 is designated as being used *onder de grooten*, that is, among the people of high social standing:

1. *Ana*
2. *Toue/Toel*
3. *Sevve/Suy*
4. *Deuye*
5. *Tasset*
6. *Joset/Jacet*
7. *Girgop/Jirgop*
8. *Joderp/Jadarp*
9. *Agop/Ahob*
10. *Iaer*

This list is transparently the native words for '1' to '10'. Some of the spellings, such as *toel* for *dul* can be explained by the influence of Dutch spelling, in this case <oe> for /u/. Others seem to be garbled: for example *agop* for '9', though *ahob* is reasonable.[3]

The spelling of '4' with <d> requires some comment since the native form begins with /n/. The same substitution, of course, occurs in the list inherited by Kempelen. But it is not only in numbers that this substitution occurs: For example on page 53, Witsen gives the word for 'eyes', Korean *nun*, as *doen.* The confusion of nasals with their non-nasal equivalents in Korean, while not widely known, has been reported, and is discussed extensively in Kim (2011)—and see also Osterkamp (2015). As Kim discusses, this is actually a relatively common phenomenon among non-native learners of Korean,[4] and apparently reflects a general process of denasalization in

[2] Witsen's informant was likely Mattheus Eibokken, junior surgeon on de Sperwer. See Osterkamp (2010).
[3] Sven Osterkamp (pc) suggest that the <g> spelling in *agop* may also be an influence of Dutch spelling, since <g> in Dutch corresponds to a voiceless velar fricative /x/.
[4] Osterkamp (pc) also reports that when learning Korean he heard initial nasals as oral stops. We thank him for this observation and for the references to his and Kim's earlier work.

Korean. This, then, would seem to be a plausible source for Witsen's informant's (mis)hearing of phonemic nasals as oral stops.

Returning to Witsen's account of the numbers, his second list is the forms used by *de gemeene*, namely the common people. This list is much more extensive, and includes not only numbers from '1' to '10', but higher numbers including decades, and higher powers of ten. The decades are the native words, and the hundreds and above are all Sino-Korean words.[5] There are some errors in the list for the higher numbers, but those need not concern us here, since what is of interest to the present discussion is the numbers from '1' to '10', since these correspond to the list that ultimately showed up in Kempelen's book, and involve the combination of native followed by Sino-Korean numbers already noted.

The first point to observe is that the reading of a native word followed by its Sino-Korean equivalent is a well-known pedagogical exercise termed *hun-eum*. The literal meaning of *hun-eum* is 'meaning, sound', where the 'meaning' is given by the native Korean word and the sound by the Sino-Korean word. This was a way of explaining the meaning of Chinese characters in terms of their translation into a native Korean word, and their pronunciation in Sino-Korean. Thus the character 暑 'hot' could be designated as *deoul* (더울)*,* the native word for 'hot' followed by *seo* (서)*,* the reading of that character in Sino-Korean. More relevantly to the present discussion, Korean children today are taught the native and Sino-Korean readings of numbers in this fashion:

hana-il
tu-i
seok-sam
neok-sa
taseot-o
yeoseot-yuk
ilgup-chil
yeodeol-pal
ahop-gu
yeol-sip

In this reading style, the normal words for '3' and '4'—*set,* and *net*—are replaced with morphological variants *seok,* and *neok,* which are not normally used in counting, but are found in combination with a few measure words, such as *jan* 'cup'. This brings the list of native-Sino-Korean combinations more in line with what eventually shows up in Kempelen: Kempelen's (and Witsen's) *socsom* and *docso,* can be readily seen as coming from *seok-sam* and *neok-sa,* respectively, once one takes the denasalization phenomenon discussed above into account.

Still, there are a couple of points that remain unexplained. As noted above, the *hun-eum* practice of reading native and Sino-Korean word pairs together is a pedagogical exercise,

[5] Native words for hundreds and higher do exist, but they are very rarely used.

intended to train students to understand and know how to pronounce Chinese characters. Nobody actually counts that way. Furthermore, as a pedagogical exercise related to Chinese character reading, it would have made more sense if the reported readings were associated with the people of higher class, rather than the commoners. In the Joseon period, only the upper classes had access to education, especially any education involving reading Chinese characters, so it is puzzling that it would be the commoners who reported numbers involving these *hun-eum* readings, whereas the upper classes were attributed with the common-language native Korean forms. However, strange as this may seem, Witsen was not the only one to claim this odd usage among commoners. Osterkamp (2010, footnote 40) reports that the use of a native-Sino-Korean combination for numbers among commoners was also discussed in Motoori Norinaga's 18th century account *Tama Katsuma*. So while the observation is hard to account for, and it also seems highly unlikely that lowborn people—or indeed anyone—actually *counted* this way, at least two independent sources reported *hun-eum*-style number names among common people.

So, while the puzzle of the *hun-eum* forms remains, at least the source of Kempelen's seemingly odd wordlist can be better explained.

References

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