DEFINING THE AREA OF (SENTENCE-)FINAL PARTICLES IN ASIA
What are final particles?
FPs in European languages:

*English:*
I wouldn’t invite him *then/though/anyway/actually/even/but/so*

*German:*
Das Gespräch war sehr gut *doch/sogar/aber/so/eigentlich.*
‘Te interview was very good.

*Dutch:*
Die avond moest ’t gebeuren *dus/immers/maar (uh)/misschien.*
‘That evening it had to happen.’ (p. 378)
What are final particles?
FPs in European languages:

A: unit of talk I
B: unit of talk II + final particle

(ibid.)
What are final particles?
Utterance-final position cross-linguistically:

*Last-minute evaluation of an utterance just produced*

(Gómez-Moreno in Hancil at al. (eds.), 2015: *Final Particles*)
Asian VS European FPs
(Hancil et al.: 2015: 15-16)

“In general, in many Asian languages FPs express (meta-)pragmatic meanings, either changing *illocutionary force* (e.g. form an assertion to an information seeking request), indicating an *implicature or speaker-expectation* (e.g. seeking agreement), modifying the *tone of an utterance* (e.g. softening questions, as with Cantonese [aa3], or expressing *emphasis*, as with Korean -tanikka [Rhee 2012]), indicating *epistemic modality* (Strauss 2005) or *affective stance* (e.g. doubt, hesitation, impatience). (…) In most general terms, the function of FPs in Asian languages seem to *embed the proposition in a particular communicative context and to indicate the speaker's knowledge state or stance*”
“These functions are not uncommon with FPs in European languages. However, as existing studies show, indexical functions, i.e. those by which an utterance is related to a preceding or implied proposition, seems to play an important role for the use of FPs in these languages”
Typical examples of Asian-style FPs:

**Mandarin:**

\[ tā mǎi fāngzi le ma? \]
3SG buy house FP FP
Did (s)he by a house? (Li & Thompson: 238)

**Japanese:**

\[ Sore dake ka ne? \]
only it FP FP
Only it, right? [Alpatov et al.: 464]
Goals of the present research:

– Provide a clear typological definition of Asian FPs.

– Define the space of cross-linguistic variation of FP-systems.

– Understand the actual geographical distribution of the phenomenon on the continent.
What kind of a typological concept the Asian-style FPs might be?

– A comparative concept in the spirit of Haspelmath (2010).

– A comparative concept which is not universal but languoid-bound (Cysouw & Good, 2013; Gil, 2016).

– Empirically realistic but abstract enough.

– Combining both morphosyntactic and functional criteria.
Areal dimension and the sample of languages

What do we need to prove the areal nature of a feature? (Haspelmath, 2001 on SAE: 1493)

(i) Demonstrate that the great majority of the core languages of the area possess it;
(ii) demonstrate that the geographically adjacent languages lack it;
(iii) demonstrate that the geographically remote but genealogically related languages lack it; (?)
(iv) demonstrate that this feature is not found in the majority of the world's languages. (?)
Boundaries of the area

– We do not expect the Asian FP area to have clear-cut boundaries;
– rather, it is likely that it will have fuzzy boundaries;
– we do not expect it to be homogenous;
– rather, it is likely that different features have different geographical coverages.
– the more isoglosses overlap, the more “central” case we are dealing with; the fewer isoglosses overlap, the more “peripheral” is the case.
The sample

Tshangla
Lhasa Tibetan
Burmese
Qiang
Lepcha
Eastern Kayah Li
Mongsen Ao
Sino-Tibetan
Jejara (eth. Para Naga)
Galo
Hkongso (eth. Anu)
Anong (eth. Nung)
Raj
Tujia
Mandarin
Cantonese
Thai
Zoule (eth. Gelao)
Tai-Kadai
Vietnamese
Kharia
Indonesian
Austronesian
Bih (Chamic, Vietnam)
Tsat
Hmong-Mien
Green Hmong (Hm. Njua)
Korean
Korean
Japanese
Mongolian
Mongolic
Buryat
Kalmyk
Udihe
Tungusic
Nanai
Yakut
Turkic
Kazakh
Tatar
Turkish
Ainu
Nivkh
Isolates
Itelmen
Yukagir
Chuchka
Uralic
Komi
West Caucasian/
Adyghe
East Caucasian/
Lezgian
Kartvelian
Georgian
Nepali
Hindi
Pashto
Indo-European
Tajik
Armenian
Singapore English
Data:

– Grammars and descriptions of FPs of particular languages

– Own data (Buryat, Turkish)
Def. 1. The prototypical East-, Southeast- and Northeast Asian FP:

(A) Morphosyntactically, the typical Asian FP is a short (1) bound morph(eme) (2). It is usually prosodically deficient (3). It takes scope over the whole preceding discourse unit (4). It occurs at the end of elementary discourse units (5) and only there (6), independently of the basic word order (VO or OV) of a language (7).

(B) Functionally, Asian FP typically expresses meanings from the domains of the illocutionary force or sentence mood (8), epistemic modality (9), evidentiality (incl. mirativity) (10), speaker-hearer relations (allocutivity) (14).
Final of what?

In strictly predicate-final languages, the FPs are not only utterance-final but also predicate-adjacent. Still, in these languages FPs constitute a category separate from prototypical grammatical markers of verb both phonologically (1) and functionally (2):

(1) They are prosodically deficient
(2) Unlike typical verbal markers, they are compatible with all kinds of predicates (and even occur in predicateless utterances).
Final of what?

This aspect is rarely reflected in language-particular descriptions. Authors usually use terms sentence-, clause- or utterance-final without discussion.
Final of what?

Some languages of the sample are predominantly but not strictly predicate-final (e.g. at least some of Tungusic languages). In these languages, particles always follow the predicate => are not always final.

However, it makes little sense to exclude these languages. Statistically, the particles are still utterance-final in the majority of cases; their functional domains correspond to a large extent to those of the surrounding languages with strictly final position of the predicate. = Excluding separable German satellites when doing a typology of spatial preverbs (makes little sense).
Final of what?

Udihe: predicate-adjacent

Na xokono-li-ge gune uti omo.
Also moan-INC-PERF EV that one
‘That one also started moaning’

Question particle follows the utterance focus

Turkish:

a. Ali iskambil oyna-mı-yor-mu?
   Ali cards play-NEG-PRES-Q
   ‘Doesn’t Ali play cards?’

b. Ali ISKAMBIL mi oynamıyor?
   Ali cards Q play-NEG-PRES
   ‘Is it cards that Ali doesn’t play?’

(Kamali, Beste (manuscript). The Question Particle in Turkish: Consequences for the Interfaces)
Particles in lists

Cantonese:

yumou-kau la, bingbambo la, tennis la
badminton PT ping-pong PT tennis PT
‘badminton, and pingpong, and tennis (ibid.)’

Buryat:

Manda xuu juume amtatai: buuza daa, xušuur daa
me-DAT every thing tasty buuza FP khushuur FP
šülen daa
soup FP
‘I like everything: buuza, khushuur, and soup too’ (Own data)
Particle after topic

Buryat:

Ežym daa xain exener geeše daa
mother-poss.sg FP good woman FP FP

‘(You know well that) my mother is a good woman!’
Elementary discourse units

Hypothesis: Cross-linguistically, it might be the case that FPs occur after elementary discourse units (Kibrik 2011)

“Spoken discourse is produced not as a smooth flow, but as a series of quanta – or, in alternative wordings, segments, steps, portions, pulses, or spurts. Linearly discourse is organized as a sequence of such quanta” (Kibrik 2011: p. 280)
Elementary discourse units

“– holistic tonal contour: most often in narrative discourse, beginning at the base frequency level characteristic of a given speaker’s voice; rise; fall to the bottom of the speaker’s frequency range
– presence of an accentual center: typically, a rhematic accent
– typical loudness pattern: lowering towards the end
– typical tempo pattern: acceleration at the beginning, deceleration towards the end
– typical pausing pattern: breathing/planning pauses at the boundaries, no pauses inside EDUs.” (Kibrik 2011: 280)
Def. 2. The typical Asian FP system

A typical language of the area has on average a dozen FPs (1). Several FPs form clusters (2) that may also include some other elements (3). A typical sample language does not have elements with utterance scope or has only few of them in positions other than the final one (4).
### Sentence-final cluster

#### Hkongso (Wright 2009):

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#### Buryat (Panov 2016):

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<td>Tag question markers</td>
<td>General question particle, information question particle</td>
<td>Subject predicative markers</td>
<td>Existential copula-based confirmative particles</td>
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## Parameters

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<th>Indirect knowledge</th>
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Polar Question
Certainty / overt declarative marking
Indirect knowledge
Mirative
Allocutive
Politeness / Gender of the addressee
Summary
Conclusions

– FPs expressing the illocutionary force, epistemic modality, evidentiality and illocutivity are indeed an areal feature of the languages of East, Southeast and Northeast Asia.

– The areal factor seems to be prominent in the distribution of the “Asian-style” FPs. However, the genealogical factor is also in play: e.g. all Turkic languages exhibit polar question particle, whereas Austronesian languages seem to be resistant to their spread.

– Different types of FPs have different geographical distribution. However, there is a relatively big geographical core where most of the isoglosses overlap.
Conclusions

– This is a large-scale study that gives a general picture of the areal distribution of FPs. It has obvious shortcomings. A more fine-grained micro-areal approach would be fruitful for the study of particular sub-areas, especially on the periphery of the area established in the present study.

– Liminal cases: Turkish allocutives. Westmost manifestation of a transcontinental macro-isogloss or independent development?

– Traditionally defined linguistic areas might be challenged when new criteria are taken into account.
Conclusions


– SVO
– Prepositions
– Noun-Genitive
– Noun-Adjective
– Noun-Demonstrative
– Noun-Numeral
– Relative clause-Noun
– Adjective-Degree word
– Complex tone systems
– Implosives
– Initial velar nasal
– No front rounded vowels

– Little affixation
– No grammatical plural
– No distributive numerals
– “Already”-perfect
– Numeral classifiers
– Topical possessive construction
– Verbal encoding of of predicative adjectives
– Different nominal and locational predication marking
– Politeness distinctions in pronouns
Conclusions

Taking into account the geographical distribution of other features, e.g. FPs or overt topic marking might result in macro-areas larger than the MSEA.
Thank You!