Koryak (of the Chukchi-Kamchatkan) is classified as an adjectival verb language on Matsumoto’s linguistic map, a map which shows the distribution of adjectival verb languages and adjectival noun languages (2007:194). However, I have found clear data that demonstrate Koryak adjectivals are split between the nominal and verbal categories. I demonstrate this by presenting examples of Koryak adjectives, which have the syntactic function of both predication and noun attribution. In addition to describing the split-adjective system of Koryak, this presentation has two aims. First, I will provide evidence demonstrating that Koryak adjectives represent an intermediate lexical category showing gradual distribution from more verb-like adjectives to more noun-like adjectives in the Verb-Noun continuum (Wetzer 1996:44). This pattern is one of the universal properties shared with other split-adjective languages. Second, I will propose a tentative explanation of the formation process of Koryak split-adjectives, by correlating this phenomenon with the incorporative character of Koryak.

There are morphologically six main types of Koryak adjectives, all of which function both predicatively and attributively: (1) n-..-qin/-qen (nømejøqin ‘big,’ niwløqin ‘long’); (2) ye-/ya-..-lin (yejølin ‘sandy,’ yawøwølen ‘stony’); (3) -kin/-ken (gejøken ‘autumnal,’ janøken ‘leading’); (4) -in/-en (pøwøten ‘iron,’ en’picen ‘father’s’); (5) -løøn (køluøøn ‘strong,’ guølen ‘weak’)(see (1)-(5) on the next sheet for examples of their predicative and attributive behaviors).

In the previous literature, types (1) and (2) have been classified as ‘qualitative adjectives’ and (3) and (4) as ‘relational adjectives,’ which undoubtedly follows the traditional classification of Russian adjectives. (5) is a participial form traditionally called ‘imja dejatelja (actor noun).’ If these forms are morphologically examined, they can be divided into two main categories based on which word class they behave like. The first is a verbal category comprised of the adjective types in (1) and (2), which are both derived by the addition of inflectional verbal affixes (see examples (6) and (7)). The second is a nominal category comprised of the adjective types in (3), (4) and (5), which are marked for different degrees of case and number (see examples (8) and (9)). Although on Matsumoto’s map (2007:194), Koryak adjectives are identified as verbal, the data I have gathered indicates the picture is not that simple. Rather, Koryak is a split-adjective language in which the adjectives range from verbal to nominal in the Verb-Noun continuum as indicated in the figure on the next sheet.

Furthermore, the classification of Koryak adjectives is closely related to the incorporative nature of the language, because attribution of nouns is also accomplished by adjectival incorporation into nouns (see the examples in (1c)-(5c) which correspond to (1b)-(5b), respectively), as well as by analytical noun phrases. Thus, I will investigate the coexistence of incorporative and analytical attribution of adjectives in Koryak, and tentatively propose the course of development for the Koryak split-adjective system. Koryak is spoken in an area which is geographically located midway between adjectival noun languages such as Even and adjectival verb languages such as Yukaghir. It is possible that these languages might have influenced the formation of the Koryak split-adjective system.
1a. *jaja* | *qaq* | *mn* | *mej* | *NN* | *NN* | *qin-
house  very  big
‘The house is very big.’

1b. *wuccin* | *n* | *mej* | *NN* | *NN* | *-jaja*
*this  big   house
‘This is a big house.’

1c. *wuccin* | *mej* | *NN* | *NN* | *-jaja*
*there exists stony hill
‘There is a stony hill over there.’

2a. *t* | *nup* | *j* | *qq* | *m* | *aw* | *ww* | *len
hill  very     stony
‘The hill is very stony.’

2b. *anko kotva* | *N* | *N* | *-t* | *nup
there exists stony  hill
‘There is a stony hill over there.’

2c. *anko kotva* | *N* | *N* | *-t* | *nup
there exists stone-E-hill
‘There is a stone hill over there.’

3a. *mnin* | *qlavol* | *Cajbuqaken
my  husband  Chajbuqa’s
‘My husband is from the village of Chajbuqa.’

3b. *Cajbuqaken* | *va* | *alen* | *natakt
Chajbuqa’s airport  closed
‘Chajbuqa airport was closed.’

3c. *Cajbuqa-va* | *alen* | *natakt
there exists stone-E-hill
‘Chajbuqa airport was closed.’

4a. *wuccin* | *ic* | *en’picin
this  fur.coat  Father’s
‘This fur coat is Father’s.’

4b. *en’picin* | *ic* | *panko kotva
Father’s  fur.coat  there exists
‘Father’s fur coat is over there.’

4c. *en’picin* | *ic* | *panko kotva
Father-fur.coat  there exists
‘Father’s fur coat is over there.’

5a. *qajen* | *qajuju* | *gul* | *qajuju
that  baby.reindeer  weak
‘The baby reindeer is weak.’

5b. *qekmit* | *qajen* | *gul* | *qajuju
catch that weak  qajuju
baby.reindeer
‘Catch that weak reindeer.’

5c. *qekmit* | *qajen* | *gul* | *qajuju
catch that weak-baby.reindeer
‘Catch that weak reindeer.’

6. *qno* | *na* | *naqaj* | *qaw
he(ABS)  hard
‘He always works hard.’

7. *qajam* | *-a* | *jaqam
reindeer.herder  immediately
‘The reindeer herder immediately went to
the hill.’

8. *Pojt-a-kena-k* | *unk-a* | *ano
Pareni-E-REL-LOC forest-E-LOC many
‘There are many kinds of berries in the forest of Pareni.’

9. *qe-jew-nin-o-
shoot-3SG.OBJ-3SG.SUBJ
‘There are many kinds of berries in the forest of Pareni.’

【Abbreviation】
ALL=allative   ABS=absolutive
E=epenthesis   HABIT=habitual
INSTR=instrumental   LOC=locative
OBJ=object   PF=perfective
PL=plural   POSS=possessive
REL=relational   RES=resultative
SG=singular   SUBJ=subject