

Conceptual deviance as a cause of fossilization in performance of Korean advanced learners of English*

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Lee, Yae-Sheik. 2015. Conceptual deviance as a cause of fossilization in performance of Korean advanced learners of English. *Linguistic Research* 32 (Special Edition), 33-55. Despite considerable controversy over the definition and interpretation of fossilization in the literature of SLA, fossilization has been considered one of the most difficult yet interesting topics (Long 2003). Yet, rarely have studies been conducted to investigate fossilization found in the English performance of Korean learners of English. The present study explores fossilization in the performance of advanced Korean adult learners of English. The current study revisited the errors found in Korean English textbooks by Suk and Lee (2001), analyzed nine more textbooks newly introduced since 2009 by the Korean government, and discovered that many errors were robustly ascribable to conceptual differences between lexemes of English and Korean. Not only does this finding support the Mixed Representational System of de Groot (1993) or but also the Selective Fossilization Hypothesis of Han (2009). Based on these findings, the present study proposes Conceptual Incongruity Misusage Hypothesis to predict which English lexemes Korean learners are likely to misuse. (Kyungpook National University)

Keywords fossilization, second language acquisition, interlanguage, L1 interference, Korean English textbooks, bilingual lexical knowledge, conceptual deviance

1. Introduction

Selinker (1972) raised the issue of fossilization, a phenomenon characterized as a general failure to acquire the proficiency of L2 native speakers at the final stage of L2 acquisition. Such a general failure happens with regard to particular items, rules

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and subsystems of the L2 competence of L2 learners no matter what amount of exposure and instruction L2 learners have received in an L2. This frustratingly contradicts our sense of our human learning capacity. Naturally scholars' research interest has gravitated toward giving an explanatory account of fossilization. To date a wide array of findings have been reported about causal factors of fossilization. According to Han (2009), particular L2 features are more likely to be misused by learners of L2. Such misuse seems to be persistent over time, and resistant to environmental influences such as natural exposure to and even appropriate instruction in the target language.

The current study also deals directly with the process of fossilization: the present research interest is in how fossilization is related to the idea of circumventing access to the L2 lexicon via the L1 lexicon proposed by Kroll and Steward (1994). More specifically, the present study will delve more deeply into how the conceptual difference between lexemes of L2 (e.g. English) and their equivalents in L1 (e.g. Korean) contributes to fossilization in the performance of advanced adult Korean learners of English. This investigation will reach a conclusion that conceptual deviance is one of the main causes of fossilization. In addition, based on the findings of the present study, a hypothesis (Conceptual Incongruity Misusage Hypothesis) will be proposed to predict which lexemes of L2 are more likely to be misused by learners of L2.

To achieve the above goals, the present study relies on English expressions misused by advanced adult Korean learners of English. To collect misused expressions, the current study analyzed the English expressions of 18 middle school English textbooks because the textbook authors surely are all advanced English learners. Once the above mentioned goals are achieved, the present study would contribute significantly to the field of fossilization in SLA and English education in Korea in the following senses: First, the current study is, to the best of our knowledge, the first serious research on fossilization in the acquisition of English by adult Korean learners. Furthermore this study is strongly supportive of the Selective Fossilization Hypothesis of Han (2009). This means that the current study shows that fossilization applies not only to individuals, but also to a whole population of the same L1. In addition, the current study provides an opportunity to improve Korean English textbooks by providing a detailed review of errors in the presentation of the English textbooks. The present study consists of the following sections: Section 2

presents some theoretical backgrounds such as theories of fossilization and bilingual memory representation. Section 3 deals with the data collection procedure as it relates to statistics. Section 4 discusses how various particular sets of data were collected or interpreted with regard to fossilization. Finally Section 5 makes concluding remarks about how many expressions are misused due to conceptual deviance and serve as evidence of fossilization.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Fossilization

The process of learning a second language is quite different from that of a first language. Bley Vroman (1989)'s Fundamental Difference Hypothesis underscores the differences between these two processes as follows (from Han (2009:141)): (i) lack of success, (ii) general failure, (iii) variation in success, (iv) variation in goal, (v) fossilization, (vi) indeterminate intuition, (vii) the importance of instruction, (viii) the need for negative evidence, and (ix) the role of affective factors such as anxiety and motivation. Meanwhile Selinker (1972) introduced the term 'interlanguage' to refer to the linguistic system of those who are in process of learning a second language. Interlanguage (hereafter, IL) is a dynamically evolving linguistic system or competence, which differs from either that of his or her first language or that of native speakers of the second language. Han (2009:137) depicts this IL metaphorically as follows: "interlanguage is metaphorically a halfway house between the first language (L1) and the TL, hence 'inter'. The L1 is purportedly the source language that provides the initial building materials to be gradually blended with materials taken from TL, resulting in new forms that are neither in the L1 nor in the TL." It has long been claimed that the IL keeps changing through apt interaction with the input of the second language.

What does, if any, the end point of such an IL or second language acquisition? In comparison of the ultimate attainment of first language, that of second language can be best characterized by general failure and differential success/failure. The first feature of the general failure means that adult second language learners *generally* fail to achieve the proficiency of adult native speakers of the second language, winding

up far from the target of native-like competence. The second feature of differential success/failure accounts for very different degrees of second language mastery observable in target language learners. Almost all learners fail to reach native-like proficiency¹; some stop at a very basic level. The rest array themselves between these two poles. Such cessation or undershooting in SLA is first termed ‘fossilization’ by Selinker (1972). His first conception of fossilization implicated both a cognitive mechanism and a performance-related phenomenon. The following descriptions of fossilization show this dual roles of fossilization:

- (1) a. *Fossilization*, a mechanism ... underlies surface linguistic materials which speakers will tend to keep in their IL productive performance, no matter what the age of the learner or the amount of instruction he receives in the TL. (Selinker 1972:229).
- b. Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular L1 tend to keep in their IL relative to a particular TL, no matter what the age of the learner or the amount of instruction he receives in the TL. (Selinker 1972:215).

Since then he has expanded the notion of fossilization from ‘backsliding’ to ‘cessation of learning’ and to ‘ultimate attainment’, gradually moving to the claim that no adult L2 learners can attain native-like competence in all discourse domains (Selinker 1996).

Many other scholars have entertained similar definitions of fossilization to that of Selinker (1972)². For example, Hytlenstam (1988:68) defines fossilization as follows:

- (2) Fossilization – according to observations – is a process that may occur in the second language acquisition context as opposed to first language acquisition. *It covers features of the second language learner’s*

¹ Han (2006:1) cites that in the literature of SLA, increasing estimates of successful learners of L2 have been reported: 5 % of the L2 population by Selinker (1972), 15% to even 60 % by Birdsong (2004), Montrul and Slabakova (2003), and White (2003).

² In line with Selinker (1972)’s conception of fossilization, Preston (1989), Ellis (1988), Vigil and Oller (1976), and many others therein try to associate fossilization with persistence of an incorrect form or error in the evolving IL.

inter-language that deviate from the native speaker norms and are not developing any further, or deviant features which, although seemingly left behind, reemerge in the learner's speech under certain conditions. Thus, the learner has stopped learning or has reverted to earlier stages of acquisition. (emphasis added)

In contrast to those scholars who construe fossilization as a phenomenological manifestation of erroneously deviant IL forms, some researchers like (Sharwood Smith 1994, Tarone 1994) identify it as a process whereby an IL stops developing at a stage regardless of repeated practice and exposure to the target language. Hence the target language learner would backslide to a fossilized state. Furthermore, Han (2006:20) proposes the following two-tier definition of fossilization:

- (3) a. COGNITIVE LEVEL: Fossilization involves those cognitive processes or underlying mechanisms that produce permanently stabilized IL forms.
- b. EMPIRICAL LEVEL: Fossilization involves those stabilized interlanguage forms that remain in learner speech or writing over time, no matter what the input or what the learner does.

As Long (2003) points out, the above two-tiered definition is as ambiguous as Selinker (1972)'s view in that the definition sees fossilization both as *explanandum* and as *explanans*. Therefore it would be preferable if such an ambiguous term were replaced with a term that unambiguously expressed both its intention and its function for the learner: 'stabilization'.

Regardless of whether it is called 'fossilization' or 'stabilization', the aforementioned phenomenon is persistently observable or found in second language acquisition. Accordingly much research has been conducted on this topic. Most of the research has gravitated toward investigation into the *explanans* or explanatory account of fossilization. A wide array of findings has been reported about causal factors in fossilization. Han (2004:29) classifies these causal variables into two main categories as 'internal' and 'external' factors. The first category is further elaborated into three subcategories: 'cognitive', 'neuro-biological' and 'socio-affective'. The following are some exemplary causal factors of each category:

(3) a. **External**

Environmental: absence of corrective feedback, lack of (written) input, lack of instruction, lack of communicative relevance, language complexity, etc.

b. **Internal:**

Cognitive: L1 influence, lack of access to UG, lack of attention, lack of verbal sensitivity to input, lack of verbal analytical skills, failure to detect errors, etc.

Neurobiological: changes in neural structure of the brain, decrease in cerebral plasticity for implicit acquisition, age, etc.

Socio-affective: satisfaction of communicative needs, lack of acculturation, socio psychological barriers, etc.

From such a wide spectrum of causative factors it is predictable that fossilization could manifest itself in a wide variety of IL forms which can be characterized as follows: they deviate from the target language grammar, are persistent over time and are resistant against either environmental influences such as natural exposure to or appropriate instruction in the target language. From a phenomenological perspective, it would be an interesting but difficult research question on fossilization: what linguistic features in a second language are susceptible to fossilization? Or, why are certain linguistic features in a second language more prone to fossilization than others? To answer this question, Han (2009:147) proposed a fossilization hypothesis as follows:

(4) SFH (Selective Fossilization Hypothesis):

A linguistic feature F of L2 has a greater possibility of fossilization if

(a) It is non-robust (infrequent and variable).³

(b) Another linguistic feature F' of L2, an equivalent to F, if any exists, is unmarked (frequent and invariable)

³ Variability means the consistency in form and meaning distribution. For example, in Spanish omission of pronoun subjects is not only allowed but also occurs quite frequently. Hence the subject position in Spanish is somewhat variable with such empty or non-empty forms.

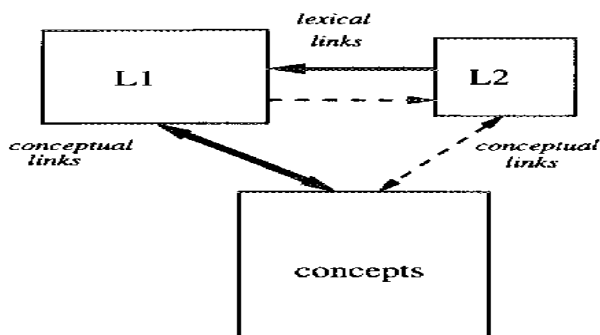
Her SFH is a template for predicting which linguistic features are more likely to be subject to fossilization utilizing L1 markedness and L2 robustness. Hence it is generally applicable to a given population of second language learners. This means that, other things being equal, learners are more likely to produce the deviant IL forms of the features of L2 which meet the conditions of the SFH than the correct forms. Most of the IL forms deviating from the target norms can, in turn, be said to be due to L1 modulation. The data in the present study show English lexemes conceptually or semantically misused by advanced Korean learners of English. Such semantic or conceptual deviance is also ascribable to L1 modulation or interference. Below is dealt with how lexemes are conceptually represented or stored in bilingual memory.

2.2 Representation of lexical knowledge of bilinguals

As discussed above, one of the main differences between acquisition of L1 and that of L2 is that it is almost impossible to attain nativelike competence in acquisition of L2. Many findings to date have shown that L1 interference is the main cause of such under-attainment in advanced adult learners. Even advanced learners of a second language resort to their first language or indirectly access the target language when they translate⁴. In other words, L1 always blends with L2 regardless of the learner's level of L2 proficiency. This means that the use of L2 expressions is more or less dependent on their L1 equivalents. To account for such circumventing lexical access, Kroll and Stewart (1994) proposes a model of bilinguals' lexical knowledge or mental lexicon as follows:

⁴ Previous studies such as Coppieter (1987), Takahashi (1996), and many others attest this idea that rarely is translation carried out with perfect severance from L1.

(5) Revised Hierarchical Model (Adapted from Kroll and Stewart 1994:158)



Kroll and Stewart's Model shows that the mental lexicon of a bilingual is hierarchically arranged with the separation of the lexical and conceptual levels. Hence it is called (Revised) Hierarchical Model. It can capture translation asymmetry as well as the aforementioned circumventing lexical access. The solid lines indicate a stronger connection than the dotted ones. So translation from L2 to L1 happens more quickly than it does from L1 to L2; comprehension or use of L2 words is more or less achieved through their L1 equivalents. As proficiency in L2 increases, however, a stronger connection is built between the L2 lexical representation and the concept. Such conceptual mediation effect would rather take the form of L1 interference than facilitation.

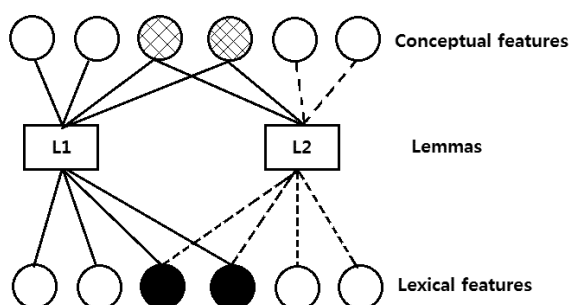
Even though the RHM was developed from Weinreich's (1953) tripartite distinctions of bilinguals' word knowledge⁵, it does not faithfully represent the acquisition state of each lexical item in the mind of a bilingual. This is because each lexical item exists in its own different acquisition state in the mind of a bilingual. Some words less well acquired are represented in the subordinate way in the bilingual mind; some well acquired in the coordinate way.

For a refined representation of the dynamic lexicon of a bilingual, de Groot (1993) suggests three different organizations coexist in the mind of a bilingual. Hence her mixed representational system can give a richer account of all proficiency

⁵ Weinreich (1953) proposed three possible organizations of word knowledge in the lexicon of a bilingual as follows: Coordinate, Compound and Subordinate Organizations. This tripartite dichotomy corresponds roughly with the learner's proficiency in L2. The lexicon of bilinguals at the beginner level is organized into lexical and conceptual levels in a subordinate way; that of advanced learners in a coordinate way.

levels. Kroll and de Groot (1997) further refined her mixed representational system by incorporating the idea that each level can be represented with its relevant features decomposed as in the following model:

(6) Distributed Lexical/Conceptual Feature Model (Readapted from Libben 2000:234)



(The dotted lines are added between the levels of Lemma and Concept.)

The above model shows a native word *L1* sharing two conceptual features (the two shaded circles) as well as two lexical features (the two dots) with the second language word *L2*. As proficiency in *L2* increases, dotted lines turn into solid ones between the levels of Lemma (or Lexeme)⁶, and Concept.

The above models, which represent word knowledge in the mind of a bilingual, are capable of explaining erroneously misused expressions in *L2* due to conceptual mismatch. Even advanced bilinguals would be prone to the misuse of words if they indirectly accessed them via their native equivalents. Furthermore the conceptual features of the *L2* words do not match those of their native equivalents. Suk and Lee (2001) sees circumventing lexical access and conceptual mismatch as main triggers of English errors made by highly proficient Korean adult learners of English. The current study tries to reinterpret such errors as examples of fossilization.

⁶ Roelofs *et al* (1998:220) summarizes what the lexeme of a word and its lemmas consists of as follows: “a lemma links up a word’s meaning and syntactic properties, whereas a lexeme consists of a word’s morphological and phonological properties.” For more about the distinction between lemma and lexeme, see Levelt (1989), and Roelofs *et al* (1998) and many others.

3. Data

The data used in this study consist of misused expressions that were collected from officially adopted Korean public school English textbooks, authored by Koreans. The study analyzed two groups of English textbooks: the first group consists of nine middle school English textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education for the 7th National Curriculum applicable from the year 2001; the second group another nine middle school English textbooks newly approved by the Korean government for the 2009 Revision of the 7th National Curriculum, applicable from the year 2009.

3.1 Analysis of Korean English textbooks

To identify misused English expressions from the English textbooks, the current study makes reference to relevant English norms stated by English grammar books such as Quirk, *et al* (1985) and Swan (2005). For the data from the first group of English textbooks, the current study is reusing the data of Suk and Lee (2001), which analyzed these same nine middle school English textbooks for a very similar purpose to the present one. For the second group of textbooks, the data were identified by the following procedure: first, the above-mentioned nine middle school English textbooks (three different books per grade) were analyzed to select expressions that deviated from the relevant English norms. Second, based on the preliminary data, a questionnaire was created and administered to five native speakers of English to reconfirm which expressions really were deviant. The questionnaire was formatted with questions and corresponding preference choices for the alternatives, as the following sample shows:

(7) Sample Question

※ Please choose your preference out of the alternatives for the underlined part below.

(1) **Textbook Expression:** *Dad, please buy me a new doll.*

Context: In a toy store as the following picture shows:



Alternative expressions:

- 1) Dad, please buy me a new doll.
- 2) Dad, please buy me a new stuffed animal.

Your choice ? — (2)

The five English native speaker participants have an educational background of Master's degree or higher, and were asked to make an intuitive preference choice of the alternatives. As shown in the sample question above, one choice was the textbook expression and the other the alternative, with minimal modifications made to the textbook version. The alternative may not be the best replacement for the text version but the native participants' choices show that the text versions still need to be improved or are deviant from the English norms. The present study identified as misused or deviating from the English norms those textbook expressions that more than half (60%)⁷ of the five participants selected the alternatives to.

3.2 Statistics

For the first group of English textbooks, Suk and Lee (2001) had identified 500 expressions as misused. To be more specific, Suk and Lee (2001:355) classifies the expressions as follows: "136 (27.2%) are grammatical misusages including prepositional, referential, tense, modal, conjunction, singular/plural, agreement, and others. 82 (16.4%) are caused by lexical misconceptions, 70 (14.0%) are misusages that create incohesion/incoherency, 64 (12.8%) are stylistic misusages including authenticity, consistency of the type of English used throughout the book, and miscellaneous misusages. 63 (12.6%) are misusages due to under/over specification. 46 (9.2%) are mother language/cultural misusages caused by strict word-to-word translation of L1 into L2. 39 (7.8%) are due to article misusages."

⁷ In Suk and Lee (2001), in the case that more than 80 % of the native speaker participants judged a textbook expression as misused, it was taken as an error.

Furthermore, Suk and Lee (2001:336) contends that out of the 500 misused textbook expressions, 128 misusages (25.6%) are solely due to L1 influence. In other words, the English words related to the 128 misused textbook expressions conceptually mismatch their translation equivalents in Korean. In terms of such conceptual incongruity, prepositional errors also belong to the same category of the 128 misusages. 39 prepositional errors were found and so were included in the 136 grammatical errors. The reason for this reclassification of prepositional errors will be discussed further below. The misusages belonging to the categories of ‘incohesion/incoherency’, ‘stylistic’, and ‘under/over specification’ can be regrouped into a new category of ‘pragmatic’ misusages. This is because these misusages all more or less violate the Maxims of Grice (1972). As suggested above, the 128 misusages (due to L1 influence) and 39 prepositional misusages should be regrouped into a new category of ‘conceptual’ misusages. If the 77 remaining misusages (the 136 grammatical ones minus the 39 prepositional ones) are reclassified as ‘miscellaneous’, the 500 misusages observed by Suk and Lee (2001) can be shown as follows:

(8) Total Misusage Statistics I

Misusage Type	Number	Percentage (%)
Conceptual	187	37.4
Pragmatic	197	39.4
Article Related	39	7.8
Miscellaneous	77	15.4
Total	500	100

For the second group of the English textbooks, preliminarily 109, 155, and 183 expressions were chosen as seemingly misused from three 7th grade, three 8th grade, and three 9th grade English textbooks, respectively. From the total of 447 text expressions, 206 expressions (48, 71, and 87 expressions from 7th, 8th and 9th grade textbooks, each) were finally confirmed as misused by the English native speaker participants. In turn, out of the 206 expressions, 95 expressions were identified as conceptually misused. That is, the misusage of these 95 textbook versions is attributable to their conceptual incongruity with their translation equivalents in Korean. 76 expressions were classified as pragmatically misused because they are

deviant from the English norms in terms of the Gricean Maxims such as Quantity, Relation, and Manner. 13 textbook expressions were article related misusages, and 22 expressions were classified as miscellaneous, which consist of grammatical or mechanical misusages. This following table summarizes this:

(9) Total Misusage Statistics II

Misusage Type	Number	Percentage (%)
Conceptual	95 (187)	46.1 (37.4)
Pragmatic	76 (197)	36.9 (39.4)
Article Related	13 (39)	6.3 (7.8)
Miscellaneous	22 (77)	10.7 (15.4)
Total	206 (500)	100 (100)

(The numbers in the parentheses are for the data of the first group textbooks.)

As in the data of the first group of English textbooks, conceptual misusages in (9) include not only the misuse of content words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives, but also of prepositions.

3.3 Representative examples of conceptual deviance

In this section, only a few representative examples belonging to the category of ‘conceptual’ (misusages) are introduced as in (10), for misusages of the other categories are not of current interest. The examples given in (10) and (11) are mainly from the data of the second and first groups of the English textbooks, each.

(10) (a) Examples of nouns

i) *sea* vs *beach*

Textbook version: Sometimes I go to the sea and put on my beautiful swimsuit there!

Alternative version: Sometimes I go to the beach ~

ii) *friend* vs *classmate*

Textbook version: (a Christmas card to classmates):

Dear friends,

I wanted to give one hundred pictures of dresses to all of you. (...)

Love, Wand.

Alternative version: Dear classmates, ~

iii) *doll vs stuffed animal*

Textbook version: Dad, please buy me a new doll. (for stuffed animals)

Alternative version: ~ a new stuffed animal.

(b) Examples of verbs

i) *meet vs make*

Textbook version: It was Semin, the boy with his sister! So I met a new friend today!

Alternative version: ~ I made a new friend today!

ii) *change vs replace*

Textbook version: The window broken yesterday is being changed now.

Alternative version: ~ replaced now.

iii) *surprise vs disturb*

Textbook version: A big arctic wolf is staring at me. Shh. I'm going to walk into the house very quietly. I don't want to surprise the wolf.

Alternative version: ~ disturb the wolf.

(c) Examples of adjectives

i) *famous vs popular*

Textbook version: Since the X Games started in the USA in 1995, they have become famous around the world.

Alternative version: ~ popular around the world.

ii) *simple* vs *easy*

Textbook version: Riding on one wheel or jumping is simple for them.

Alternative version: ~ easy for them.

iii) *fun* vs *interesting*

Textbook version: Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone is really fun.

Alternative version: ~ is really interesting.

(11) Examples of prepositions

i) *to* vs *into*

Textbook version: Yesterday I went to the shopping mall. I wanted to buy a gift for my mother's birthday. I was going to buy a blue shirt for my mother. I went to a dress shop.

Alternative version: ~ into a dress shop.

ii) *on* vs *on top of* (physically in contact with /on the highest point or uppermost surface of)

Textbook version: Draw a small circle on the big circle. Next, draw two eyes in the small circle. Add a nose and a mouth there. Then draw a hat on the small circle.
(directions on how to draw a snowman)

Alternative version: Draw a small circle on top of the big circle. Next, draw two eyes in the small circle. Add a nose and a mouth there. Then draw a hat on top of the small circle.

iii) *inside* vs *in*

Textbook version: Oh, the game's starting. Let's go inside.

Alternative version: ~ go in.

4. Discussion

4.1 Conceptual misuse

As the above statistical data show, conceptual misuses, on average, account for more than 40% of the total misuses found in both groups of English textbooks. These misuses are all due to the conceptual mismatch between English words and their Korean equivalents. With regard to the representative examples of conceptual misuse given in the above section, let us discuss how the concepts of English words and their Korean equivalents incongruously differ.

Even though Korean has the vocabulary word *haebyun*, for “beach”, *bada* conceptually covers both the concepts of “sea” and “beach” for purposes of everyday conversation as (10 a-i). Similarly the Korean equivalent of English ‘friend’ is *chinkwu*, which can represent either concept of “friend” or “classmate”. Although Korean does have a word, *banchinkwu*, which corresponds well to ‘classmate’ in English, it would rarely be used to refer to a classmate in daily conversation. In the case of the misused ‘doll’ given in (10 a-iii), *inhyung*, its rough Korean equivalent, is a broader term used to refer to both dolls and stuffed animals.

To mention the misused verbs given in (10), the misused verb ‘meet’ in ‘met a new friend’ can be attributed to the fact that the Korean equivalent of English ‘meet’, *mannata* is normally used to express the concept of “make” as in ‘make a friend,’ even though Korean does have the word *sakwita* which corresponds to the ‘make’ of ‘make a friend’. In the case of the misused ‘change’, the misuse is similarly due to the Korean word *pakkwuta*, which normally covers either the concept of “change” or “replace”. The misused ‘surprise’ can be accounted for in a similar way. Korean has a multi-concept verb, *nollakeyhata*, which can represent either the concept of “surprise” or “disturb”.

To explain the misused adjectives given in (10 b), the Korean adjective *inkiissnun* is used to represent either the concept of “famous” or “popular” in daily conversation. Accordingly Korean learners of English are likely to use the two adjectives interchangeably. Similarly the two concepts of “simple” and “easy” can be represented by the Korean adjective *swiwun*. Hence ‘simple’ and ‘easy’ are synonymous to Korean learners of English. For the misused ‘fun’, there is a multi-conceptual Korean adjective *caymiissnun*. The Korean adjective can express not

only the concept of “fun”, but also that of “interesting”, “entertaining”, “exciting”, or “funny”. It is predictable that ‘fun’ will be used interchangeably with ‘interesting’ by Korean learners of English as shown in (10 c-iii). Actually ‘fun’ is different from the other adjectives at least in the following respect: something that ‘fun’ can be predicated of requires some type of direct participation in an activity with it. For example, a game can be fun but normally a movie cannot. This is because games are what we can directly engage in while movies are what we cannot directly participate in but normally just watch⁸. Hence if the Korean learners of English do not know this particular conceptual feature of ‘fun’, they are likely to misuse ‘fun’ as in (10 c-iii).

As the examples in (11) show, there are many pairs of prepositions in English that sound synonymous to Korean learners of English. The two prepositions ‘to’ and ‘into’ can be translated into the Korean postposition *-lo*. *-lo* can be used for either the concept of “to” or “into” in Korean. So these two English prepositions easily get used interchangeably by Korean learners of English. The pairs ‘on’ and ‘on top of’, and ‘inside’ and ‘in’ can be accounted for in the same way. In other words, there are single postpositions *wuiey* and *aney* in Korean for the first and second pairs of prepositions, each.

It is not difficult to see a thread running through all the misusages discussed above. That is, all the misusages share a common character: the misused English words and their near-synonym alternatives are all translatable into their single Korean equivalents. This finding easily develops into the following hypothesis to predict misusages due to conceptual incongruity:

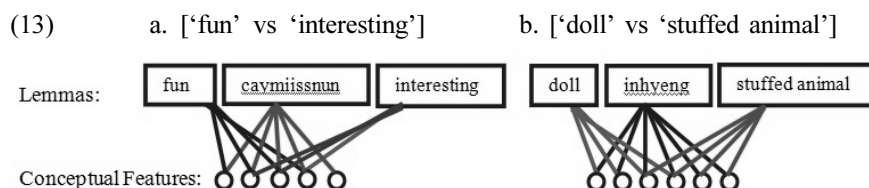
(12) Conceptual Incongruity Misusage Hypothesis (CIMH):

Learners of L2 are more likely to misuse a lexeme L in L2 if

- (a) There are some Ms, near-synonyms to L in L2 such that
 - 1. L is more marked than Ms in terms of their conceptual features, or
 - 2. L is more familiar than Ms to learners of L2.
- (b) There is a lexeme T in L1 such that it can cover either the concept of L or Ms.

⁸ In this sense if actors or actresses say that movies are fun, they would mean that they have a fun time while they are acting in the movies.

What CIMH predicts is that if a learner of L2 takes a multiple number of L2 words to be translatable into a single word in L1, the learner is likely to misuse the L2 words. Especially the more marked or less familiar one among the L2 words in question is more likely to be misused by the learner. This can be figuratively represented as follows:



As Kroll and Steward (1994) claim, learners of L2, regardless of their L2 proficiency, tend to access their lexicon of L2 indirectly via their L1 lexicon. CIMH captures such circumventing lexical access, and in turn shows that mother language interference is the main cause of the conceptual incongruity errors.

With regard to the CIMH of (12), there is one more thing worth mentioning. What of cases to going the other direction from those examples discussed above? In other words, if a translation can be made from a single word of L2 into a multiple number of L1 words such as 'wear' into *ipta* (for clothes), *kkita* (for rings or glasses), or *sinta* (for shoes), surely Korean learners of English should not misuse the L2 word as 'wear'.

It would be not difficult to extend CIMH to the extent that CIMH predicts which vocabulary words in L2 are less likely to be misused by learners of L2 as follows:

- (13) Extended Conceptual Incongruity Misusage Hypothesis (ECIMH):
- 1) Learners of L2 are more likely to misuse a lexeme L in L2 if
 - a) There are some Ms, near-synonyms to L in L2 such that
 - (1) L is more marked than Ms in terms of their conceptual features, or
 - (2) L is more familiar than Ms to learners of L2.
 - b) There is a lexeme T in L1 such that it can cover either the concept of L or Ms.
 - 2) Learners of L2 are less likely to misuse a lexeme L in L2 if

- a) There are few near-synonyms Ms to L in L2.
- b) There are multiple lexemes Ts in L1 such that the lexeme L in L2 can cover the concepts of lexemes Ts in L1.

As Han's SFH given in (4) does, the ECIMH of (13) is generally applicable to a population of the same L1 learners of L2. Furthermore, what the first statement of ECIMH predicts is related to the likelihood of the fossilization of particular lexemes in an L2 learners' IL. In other words, it predicts which lexemes are more likely, other things being equal, to be misused by the same L1 learners of L2. This will be shown below with some errors found in the English textbooks.

4.2 Evidence of fossilization

To recapitulate the definition of fossilization discussed above, fossilized forms are deviant from the target language grammar, persistent over time, and resistant against environmental influences such as natural exposure to and appropriate instruction in the target language. If erroneous or deviant forms are found recurring in performance of English by advanced adult Korean learners of English, they would evidence fossilization in the IL of adult Korean learners of English. In this sense, at least some of the current data can serve as evidence of fossilization for the following reasons. We can assume that the ILs of the authors of the English textbooks analyzed in the current study are somewhat in a similar state. On top of that, their ILs have reached a near-end stage of acquiring English because they are all professors who specialized in English. Therefore, among the current data, the misusages recurring across authors and textbooks would serve as evidence of fossilization of English acquisition by adult Korean learners or the textbook authors.

The following are representative misusages recurring in the English textbooks the present study analyzed:

(14) <u>Textbook</u>	<u>Korean</u>	<u>Alternative</u>
friend	<i>chinkwu</i>	classmate
doll	<i>inhyeng</i>	stuffed animal
fun	<i>caymiissmun</i>	interesting/entertaining
famous	<i>inkiissmun</i>	popular (a game)

meet	<i>mannata</i>	make (a new friend)
meet	<i>mannata</i>	see (him every morning)
inside	<i>aney</i>	in (go in)
on	<i>wiey</i>	on top of (a big circle)
:		:

As the examples of (14) show, misuse of the textbook versions is not ascribable only to the conceptual mismatch with the words given as alternatives, but also the single Korean equivalents which cover either the textbook versions and their alternatives. They occur repeatedly across the English textbooks of the first and second groups. Considering the recurrence of the misusages and the English proficiency of the authors, the misusages of (14) meet the conditions of fossilization in second language acquisition.

5. Conclusion

The current study provides the following two findings: first, almost half of the misused expressions found in the English textbooks are due to conceptual incongruity between English lexemes and their corresponding Korean ones. The idea of indirect access to L2 lexicon of Kroll and Steward (1994) enables us to remold such conceptual incongruity into the form of mother language interference. In other words, adult Korean learners' knowledge of their mother language, Korean, interferes with their correct acquisition of English lexemes. The current study also demonstrates that one of the main causes of errors in L2 is negative L1 transfer.

Second, among the misused expressions found in the English textbooks, very many misusages recurred across the English textbooks. As Han's SFH predicts, the fossilization of particular features of L2 is applicable within any population of L1 learners. Not only do our findings support her SFH, but they also provide evidence of fossilization in the IL of advanced adult Korean learners of English. Based on these two findings, ECIMH is proposed to predict which L2 lexemes are more likely to be prone to misuse. It is in order to further prove the ECIMH through additional research based on a wider spectrum of relevant data.

In conclusion, it is expected that the results of the current study will be

pedagogically useful in the following ways: First, the misused English expressions found through the analysis of the English textbooks will provide Korean teachers and learners of English with a set of representative English expressions evidently susceptible to misuse which they might well pay their due attention to in order to avoid the same errors. Second, the ECIMH of (13) enables Korean English teachers to predict which English expressions are more likely to be misused by their students. This ought to make a significant contribution to better English teaching in Korea.

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