

processing English sentences with ambiguous RC attachment. If they prefer LA, than it can be argued that there is no or not much influence from L1, while if they prefer HA, we may conclude that L1 influences L2 in sentence processing, (particularly ambiguity resolution). Besides, we will see if there is a correlation between attachment preferences and English proficiency levels.

2 Experiment

The participants of this study are 53 freshmen in a university in Korea. They were asked to answer the questions about both Korean and English sentences including an ambiguous RC attachment. Below is an example of the English question.

(3) John met the friend of the teacher who was in Germany. Who was in Germany?

a. the friend b. the teacher

The students answer 20 questions for each language, which include some shadow questions.

The students also took an English grammar test for their English proficiency, in order to investigate if there is a correlation between attachment preferences and English proficiency.

3 Results

In processing English sentences with an RC attachment ambiguity, Korean EFL learners show strong HA preferences as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Korean EFL learners preferences

Attachment type	The number of choice	%
HA	386	80.9
LA	91	19.9

Note: The total number of the questions is 477.

Table 2 shows there is no correlation between RC attachment preferences and English proficiency.

Table 2: Correlation between RC attachment

preferences and English proficiency

Correlation

		The number of HA	Test score
The number of HA	Pearson correlation	1	.038
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.789
	N	53	53
Test score	Pearson correlation	.038	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.789	
	N	53	53

$P < .05$

4 Conclusion

We can interpret the results as evidence showing L1 influences L2 processing, in a sense that Korean EFL learners who prefer HA for their mother tongue also strongly prefer HA for English which is an LA preference language. Furthermore, the L1 influence is so strong that no correlation is observed between RC attachment preferences and L2 proficiency.

References

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