
Method
- Participants: 12 Japanese natives & 15 intermediate/advanced Korean L2ers
- Task: Offline, interpretation task - Each sentence followed by a comprehension question
- Material: a) 12 experimental (3) & 24 fillers
- (8) 24 fillers were unambiguous RCs' testing knowledge of RCs; 6 out of 8 = Pass
- b) Proficiency quiz (taken from a textbook for Japanese Language Proficiency Test level 2)

(3) Dareka-ga [RC] joyuu-no (N2) mesitukai-o (N1) utta. Someone-Nom balcony-Loc was actress-Gen servant-Acc shot

Q: Dare-ga barukonii-ni imasita-ka (Who was on the balcony)? 1. joyuu (actress) 2. mesitukai (servant)

Results
- Grammatical knowledge: "Pass" for all subjects
- Proficiency: 50 - 96% → intermediate to advanced

Summary (Offline)
Japanese natives Korean L2ers → both HA preference

Summary of previous & current findings
- Offline studies
  - Our L2ers clearly prefer HA, due to either L1 transfer or to learning of L2 processing strategy → contra P&C's findings
- Online studies
  - Previous studies: Mixed findings, possibly due to structural differences in the test stimuli

Japanese: Kamide & Mitchell found an L1 preference, using scrambling, i.e., [Subj [RC] Obj], Subj j V
Miyamoto et al. (2004) found a trend for HA preference, using the canonical word order, i.e., [Subj [RC] Obj] V
Korean: Lee & Kweon found an HA preference, using the canonical word order, i.e., [Subj [RC] Obj] V
- Our study: Test stimuli: [Subj [RC] Subj V] – canonical word order, no garden-path (so as to reduce processing costs)
We found no significance (most likely due to the small sample size), but a trend for HA preference in the L2 group.

With a larger number of subjects, we may find a clear HA preference in Korean L2ers, contra P&C’s findings.
We are currently collecting more data from both groups.

4. Discussion

Potential factors differentiating P&C and our study, and implications for further research
- Offline method:
  - Elicitation of the preference may be more likely to yield reveal offline attachment preferences (cf. Felser et al., 2003).
- Homogeneity of the subjects:
  - P&C treated three L2 groups as one group in their data analyses – this may complicate the interpretation of the data.
  - Including potential variability among subjects may help us observe early stages of processing (cf. Felser et al., 2003).
- Structural differences between Japanese/Korean and German/Greek/Russian/Spain...

Attachment sites follow RCs in J/K "...[RC] N2 N1 …" but precede RC in Ger/Gre/R/S “…N1 N2 [RC]…"
- HA may be somehow forced in offline processing of J/K-type languages?

Conclusion: To attest L2ers' RC attachment preferences, it may be instrumental to a) use an offline interpretation task and b) exclude as much variability among the participants as possible.

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No Ambiguity about It: Korean Learners of Japanese Have a Clear Attachment Preference
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References


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