

A study of the differences of the effects of learners' different L1s in learning the usages of English preposition "of"

Kota Wachi

Shiba Junior/Senior High School

Rsc36319@nifty.com

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of learners' different L1s in the process of learning the usages of English preposition "of" from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. In Wachi (2016) and Wachi (2017), we examined how different the effects of the correspondences to English preposition "of" in subjects' L1s ("no" in Japanese and "-ui" in Korean) were, in learning the usages of it. The results were, against our expectations, L1s of both groups constrained similarly (both positively and negatively) for understanding the meanings of "of", while there seemed to be a little differences between two groups in the network of the meanings of the target preposition.

Based on these results, in this study, we examine how their L1s affect their making network of the meanings more clearly with the data from the subjects among different L1s.

1 Previous Studies

1.1 Review of Lindstromburg(2010)'s Study on the meaning of "of"

Lindstromburg (2010) examined the meaning of "of" in detail. We can say that his analysis is based on the same idea of Tanaka (2014)'s core-meaning theory, then, we list up the functions in his analysis into some functions as follows;

- 1-a) integrative-intrinsic
- 1-b) PART-WHOLE
- 1-c) PRODUCT-SOURCE
- 1-d) ACT-AGENT
- 1-e) SUBSET-SET
- 1-f) EXAMPLE-TYPE
- 1-g) ENTITIES-UNIT/GROUP/AMOUNT
- 2) integrative-appositive
- 3) trace of spatial

As for function 1), the trajector (TR) and the landmark (LM) are integrated. In function 2), the

integration of TR into LM amounts to near identity of one to the other.

He mentioned some other examples of integrative meaning, and he pointed out that how we mentally integrate the TR and LM depends on our knowledge of the world, as in 1-b) to 1-g).

1.2 Wachi (2016) and Wachi (2017)'s Study

Based on Lindstromburg (2010)'s study, Wachi (2016) examined how Japanese Learners of English (JLE)'s L1(Japanese) affected in the process of learning the meanings of English preposition "of," and found that their L1 "*no*" has both positive and negative effects for learning the usages. In Wachi (2017), we examined 1) whether the subjects' groups have correct knowledge of the meanings of "of" and 2) whether there are any differences between the subjects who have different L1s that have some similar usages of the correspondences of "of." The subjects were Japanese and Korean university students. Through the experiments, we found three things below;

- 1) L1s of both groups constrain similarly (both positively and negatively) for understanding the meanings of "of", against our expectation.
- 2) As for the most prototypical meaning of "of", there is a little difference in the subjects' minds between two groups.
- 3) As for the networks of the meaning of "of", they seem to be different between two groups.

2 Experimental Study

2.1 Purpose of this study

Based on the limitation of Wachi (2016) and Wachi (2017), We set the purpose of this study

as follows: to examine how their L1s affect their making network of the meanings more clearly with the data from the subjects among different L1s.

2.2 Participants

The participants were 19 Japanese university students, 19 Korean university students and 5 Taiwanese university students. They have experiences of English Education in their own countries for more than 7 years, and some of the participants have lived abroad. Some native speakers of English also participated as the control group.

2.3 Correspondences of “of” in Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese

Subjects’ three different L1s have the correspondences of “of,” as in (1) to (4).

- (1) the development of a country
- (2) kuni-no hatten
- (3) nara-(ui) palchon
- (4) guó jiā -de fā zhǎn

Compared to Japanese correspondence, as we see in (3), Korean correspondence “-ui” is often omitted especially in the spoken Korean language. Also, as in (4), Chinese correspondence “-de” sometimes can be omitted according to the part of speech of the modifying word. However, in Wachi (2017), there were not particular differences between the results of experiments by Korean and Japanese subjects’ groups, therefore, we can assume that among three groups there might not be a big difference in the effect to learning the usages. Even so, through the experiment, we tried to make it clearer the effect of their L1s to learn the usages of “of.”

2.4 Experiments

We used the same procedure of the experiments as Wachi (2016) and Wachi (2017): The participants were asked to answer two types of questions; 1) to fill in the blanks in the sentences with appropriate prepositions and 2) to judge the similarities between the sentences with different usages of English preposition *of* shown in the previous sections. The data for question 1) were used to examine the effect of their L1 and the data for question 2) were analysed by Multidimensional Scaling (MDS). The configurations and the results were analysed. From the results of these, we examined how each meaning of English prepositions extends in

the mind of participants.

2.5 Results

In Experiment 1), fill-in-the-blank questions, we found almost the same results of understanding the meaning of target preposition. That is, their L1 have positive effects on the understanding of the prototypical meaning, on the other hand, they have some negative effects on the understanding of peripheral usages.

However, in Experiment 2), judgment of the similarities of the meanings of the target preposition, there are some differences among three groups.

References

- Langacker, W.R. (1995). *Possession and possessive constructions*. In Taylor, J.R. and MacLaury, R.E. (eds) *Trends in Linguistics Studies & Monographs 82. Language & the Cognitive Construal of the World: 51-79*.
- Lindstromburg, S. (2010). *English Prepositions Explained Revised Edition: Chapter 17, 205-213*.
- Miyata, I. (1993). *Chuugokugo Bunpou Gairon (An Introduction to Chinese Grammar)*. Kousei-Kan.
- Munemiya, K. (2006). Eigo Zenchishi “of” no Imi (The Meaning of English Preposition “of”). *Gengo Johogaku Kenkyu Houkoku: Vol. 11, 227-245*.
- Park, J. (1997). *Gendai Nihongo. Kankokugo no Kakujiushi no Kenkyu (A Study on the Case Particles of Modern Japanese and Korean)*. Bensei-Sha.
- Tanaka, S. (2014). *Kaiwaryoku ga Up Suru Eibunpo no Lesson (English Grammar Lessons for Conversation)*. NHK Publishing.
- Ueda, N. (2014). A Case study of Developmental Process in Acquiring English Prepositions by Japanese Learners of English. *Proceedings of the 19th Conference of PAAL, 77-78*.
- Yamashita, T. (2003). *Chuugokugo no Nyuumon (An Introduction to Chinese)*. Hakusui-Sha.
- Yang, H. (1982). *Yousetsu Kankokugo Bumpo (Introduction to Korean Grammar)*. Koma Books.
- Wang, I. (2012) *Wang Ikutoku no Taiwango Kouza (Lectures of Taiwanese by Wang Ikutoku)*. Toho-Shoten.