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Korean Learners' Development of English Passive Constructions

Hyesook Park
(Kunsan National University)

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This study investigates how Korean speakers develop their interlanguage of English passive constructions with a reference to the learners' grammar proficiency levels. Sixty two college students of different levels of English participated in this study. They were asked to complete a sentence-completion task. Their production was classified into accurate passives, malformed passives, pseudo-passives, unaccusatives, and actives according to the use of transitive, ergative and unergative verbs. They then were further analyzed depending on the subjects' levels of grammar by three main factors: L1 transfer, the English voice system, and universal cognitive factors. The results showed that the subjects of the lower group produced more pseudo-passives, malformed passives, and overpassivization than those of the higher group, and even subjects of higher group still made passives for ergative verbs. It was also shown that L1 and universal factors had more influence on the lower group than on the higher group. Based on the analyses of the subjects' responses, the development of the English passive system by Korean learners is shown and some implications are suggested for effective teaching of English.

[English passive constructions/L1 transfer/universal cognitive factor/English middle voice]

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the interlanguage constructions SLA researchers have examined with interest is the interlanguage (IL) passives produced by L2 learners of English. Here are some characteristic examples of IL passive constructions produced by different L1 backgrounds.

(1) a. *New cars must keep inside. (Chinese, Yip & Mathews, 1995)
b. *These ways almost classify two types. (Chinese, Yip & Mathews, 1995)

c. *First, the change of life-style will be happened. (Korean, Ju, 1997)
d. *My mother was died when I was just a baby. (Thai, Zobl, 1989)

The above (1a) and (1b) are ungrammatical sentences with theme subjects followed by transitive verbs in active forms. They are typically termed IL pseudo-passives because their intended English structure is believed to be the passive (Simargool, 2008; Yip & Matthews, 1995). On the other hand, (1c) and (1d) are ungrammatical sentences where learners inappropriately generalize the English passive rules to intransitive verbs. These overpassivization errors are prevalent even among advanced L2 learners of English and are observed across learners of different native languages.

Research has tried to find out what makes L2 learners produce such IL passive constructions including pseudo-passives and overpassivization. Some explained the phenomena with L2 learners' language background, and others approached it with a special reference to universal cognitive factors. Still others suggested that the linguistic features of the English language itself may contribute to the IL passive constructions.

With this background, this study attempted to examine IL passive constructions from Korean learners of different levels of English to see how Korean learners acquire English passives and what the factors affecting the acquisition of English passive constructions are.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

1. L1 Transfer

Traditionally, IL pseudo-passives like (1a) and (1b) are considered as malformed passives because of the lack of “be” and passive morphology. They can be explained as learners' IL grammar fails to generate the complete passive construction. In the passive construction, there is a morphological change in the verb and the argument in the structural subject position is a patient, not an agent. Usually, the IL pseudo-passive mentioned above is different from the grammatical passive only in the verb, which is not marked for the passive. As a result, the initial NP in the IL pseudo-passive is likely to be parsed as the patient subject of the passive, so the IL pseudo-passive "New cars must keep inside" can be interpreted as "New cars should be kept indoors.”

Some researchers claimed that the IL passives result from L1 transfer, or reflection of the typology of the learner's L1. For example, the above pseudo-passives are claimed to reflect learners L1 background: pragmatic word order sentence structure (Han, 2000; Schachter & Rutherford, 1979; Thompson, 1978). Schachter and Rutherford (1979) claimed that the IL pseudo-passive is a carryover of native language function-form

characteristics, a type of discourse-syntactic transfer, by analyzing written English samples produced by Chinese and Japanese learners. These learners' L1 has a topic-comment structure, whose main characteristics include the suppression of the non-essential subject and deletion of co-referential pronominal topic (Han, 2000). Thus, they transfer their L1 discourse structure to L2, as shown in (2) and (3).

(2) L1 Topic ---- Comment
L2 NP (topic) --- [null subject] +VP (Simargool, 2008, p.101)

(3) a. IL pseudo-passive (Chinese L1 speaker)
[Most of food which is served in this restaurant], have cooked already.
--> Interpretation
Most of food which is served in this restaurant, [they] have cooked [it] already. (Simargool, 2008, p.101-102)

Basically, the Korean language has a SOV word order which is different from English basic word order, SVO as illustrated in (4).

(4) ai-ka sakwa-lul muknun-ta
A child an apple eats
A child eats an apple.

Furthermore, Korean has the same structural properties of a pragmatic word order language as mentioned in Simargool (2008): the lack of articles, dummy subjects, and the subject-creating constructions (e.g., passive and raising constructions). In addition, the constituents in the sentences can be relatively freely moved unlike English or Chinese, as shown in (5).

(5) Sora-ka Minswu-lul saranghan-ta.
Sora Minswu loves
Minswu-lul Sora-ka saranghan-ta.
Minswu Sora loves
Sora loves Minswu.

The meaning of the sentences is determined not by the order of the constituents, but by the case endings of the constituents. In addition, the topic-comment sentential structure is common in Korean.

Now let us look at the characteristics of the Korean passive construction. First, English differentiates passives from unaccusatives by marking passives morphologically. However, there is no distinction between the constructions for Korean as in (6).

(6) English
The window **was broken by** the boy. (passive)
The window **broke**. (unaccusative)

Korean
Changmun-i ku sonyen-ey uhaysu **khay-ci-ess-ta**. (passive)
Changmun-i **khay-ci-ess-ta**. (unaccusative)

Second, the Korean passive constructions are generated by lexical and derived passive morphemes '-i, -hi, -li, -gi, -u, -gu, -ci, or -chu as in (7) (No & Chung, 2006, p.25).

(7) Lexical passives in Korean
sara**ci**ta disappear
ttele**ci**ta fall

Derived passives in Korean
khay-ta break → khay-**ci**-ta be broken
pakkwu-ta change → pakkwu-**i**-ta be changed
tat-ta close -> tat-**hi**-ta be closed

No and Jung (2006) suggested that learners' L1 influenced learners' judgment of grammaticality on unaccusatives, showing Korean learners tended to judge ungrammatical passives containing "break, close, change" which have the derived passive morphemes in Korean as grammatical.

We can expect on the basis of the characteristics of the Korean language that Korean learners of English are likely to produce IL pseudo-passives and to passivize verbs such as "break, change, close, disappear, fall" which have passive morphemes in Korean.

2. The English Voice System

Generally, the English voices can be simply classified into the active voice and the passive voice. In the active voice, the subject of a clause is usually the agent, or doer, of some action. On the other hand, in the passive voice, the subject of a clause is the receiver,

or undergoer of the action. However, there is a middle voice between active and passive voices. The middle voice allows the subject of the sentence to be nonagentive, as in the passive voice, but the morphology of the verb to be in the active voice, as shown (8).

(8) a. She broke the dish. (active voice)
b. The dish was broken. (passive voice)
c. The dish broke. (middle voice)

(8a) and (8b) report a representation of processes in terms of action, while (8c) reports it in terms of happenings (Celce-Murcia, 1999). Other languages such as Spanish and French report happenings with the use of reflexives (Shibatani, 1985 cited in Celce-Murcia) like this (9).

(9)	Spanish	French
	Se abrio la puerta	La porte s'est ouverte.
	(Refl. open the door)	(the door Refl.-is opened)
	The door opened.	The door opened.

Instead, English uses the middle voice with special verbs called ergative verbs to express spontaneous occurrences. The middle voice allows the object of a transitive clause to be a subject of an intransitive clause without changing voices. Ergative, or change-of-state, verbs like "bake, break, change, close, open, boil, melt " can appear in all three voices and take either agents or undergoers of the action as subjects, as shown in (10).

(10) I'm melting the ice.
The ice is melting.
The ice is being melted by the heat.

On the other hand, some other ergative verbs like "happen, appear, disappear, arrive" take the focus of the process as subjects and do not have the passivized counterparts, as shown in (11).

(11) The prisoner disappeared.
*The man disappeared the prisoner.
*The prisoner was disappeared.

Likewise, English has a special middle voice and different categories of ergative verbs. Therefore, it can be predicted from the English voice system that Korean learners are likely to have difficulties in properly using the English voices for ergative verbs, and they are still

more likely to produce passive constructions for the ergative verbs with transitive alternations than ergative verbs without transitive counterparts. As a result, it may lead to overpassivization in unaccusatives.

3. Universal Cognitive Factors

Still others argue that the learnability problem of the English passive constructions may be attributed to universal factors of the subjects in sentences. Research findings report that L2 learners from different backgrounds appear to either overpassivize unaccusatives or reject grammatical unaccusative constructions.

Kellerman (1979) reported that Dutch learners of English tended to reject grammatical sentences with some English unaccusatives (with transitive counterparts) as in (12a), while they preferred either causative constructions or agentless passives as in (12b) and (12c).

(12) a. The cup broke.
b. Someone broke the cup.
c. The cup was broken.

This shows that L2 learners are unlikely to accept nonagents as subjects for unaccusatives even when their L1 allows it.

In a similar point of view, Croft (1995) argued that animacy plays an important role in establishing predicate-argument, proposing an animacy hierarchy like this: human> animate> inanimate> abstract entities. According to the hierarchy, a human agent is the least marked syntactic subject, while inanimate or abstract entities are the most marked ones, which are seen in unaccusative constructions. So, it seems to be natural that learners reject nonagent subjects for unaccusatives and show a tendency to passivize to mark the special status of the inanimate subject.

Yip (1994, 1995) proposed a transitivization hypothesis, noting that there are inherent similarities between unaccusatives and agentless passives in that (a) both are intransitives on the surface and (b) they have patient-role subjects. She claimed that unaccusatives like (1c) and (1d) are underlyingly represented as transitives in the learners' interlanguage, arguing that learners are unlikely to believe that any change of state occurs spontaneously, without external causation.

Apart from Yip's syntactical approach to the overpassivization, Min Kyong Ju (2000) introduced a universal cognitive factor to account for the overpassivization phenomenon of learners' passive constructions. According to her, learners are more likely to make overpassivization errors in externally caused events than internally caused events. Although no agent is posited semantically in sentences, from real-world knowledge in

some contexts learners assume that there must be an entity that is responsible for an event. According to Ju (2000), the entity that causes the event to occur is a pragmatically conceptualizable agent of the predicate. So, in the context where learners are likely to assume that there must be an implicit agent, learners may tend to apply passivization to the unaccusative verbs. As a result, learners may use the passive when the sentence has an inanimate subject and an implicit agent, which results in overpassivization to unaccusative sentences.

From this universal cognitive approach to passivization, it is expected that learners will be more likely to produce passivized constructions when the subject is inanimate or there is the availability of agent or cause in unaccusative constructions.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With this background, the present study addresses following research questions:

1) What kinds of IL passive constructions do Korean learners of English produce?
2) What are the main factors that cause Korean learners to produce IL English passive constructions?
3) Are IL passive constructions depending on the learners' levels of English?

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Subjects

Sixty two Korean college students participated in this study. Their majors included English, math, social science, natural science and engineering, and their ages ranged from 19 to 23. Most students began learning English from elementary school, so their average length of learning English was around 9 years.

For the baseline of the analysis, a control group was composed of 10 native teachers of English: two female teachers and eight male teachers. They had studied different major such as communication, education, business, science, foreign languages, TESL and linguistics. Most of the teachers had taught English more than 7 years while one teacher had taught it since the spring semester, 2009 and two teachers had taught it around for 2 years.

2. Task and Procedures

The participants were given a sentence-completion task and a test of their grammar knowledge. The sentence-completion task was comprised of 24 pairs of nouns and verbs which was adapted from Simargool (2008) (Appendix 1), and the grammar test included 15 items which were intended to serve for judging learners' grammar proficiency levels.

The sentence-completion task included 24 verbs: 10 transitive verbs (read, write, paint, push, steal, sing, hit, win, catch, and cancel), 10 ergative verbs (break, change, close, boil, freeze, burn, disappear, fall; happen, and appear), and 4 unergative verbs (jump, die, and swim, and run). Ten ergative verbs included the subclasses of verbs: with/ without transitive counterparts and with/without the Korean passive morphemes (-ci, -i, -hi, -li, -gi) in Korean translations of the verbs. The distribution of the verbs in the task is as follows.

TABLE 1
Distribution of the Verbs

Verbs type	Verbs used
Transitive	read, write, paint, win, push, steal, sing, hit, catch, cancel
Ergative I	break, change, close
Ergative II	boil, freeze, burn
Ergative III	disappear, fall
Ergative IV	happen, appear
Unergative	jump, run, swim, die

Ergative I –ergative verbs with transitive counterparts and Korean translation passive morphemes
Ergative II – ergative verbs with transitive counterparts and without Korean translation passive morphemes
Ergative III – ergative verbs without transitive counterparts and with Korean translation passive morphemes
Ergative IV – ergative verbs without transitive counterparts and Korean translation passive morphemes

The expected constructions are 10 passives, 10 unaccusatives, and 4 actives. The Participants were instructed to make sentences with the nouns and verbs as given in the example like below.

Example:

Boy, laugh	The boy laughed.
Rice, eat	The rice was eaten.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The 62 participants were divided into 2 groups depending on their scores of the grammar test: the lower group and the higher group. In addition, the responses of the native control group will be given as well. All the analyses of the results will be given according to the types of verbs: transitive, ergative and unergative verbs.

1. Results of Transitive Verbs

The participants' responses were classified into 5 categories: well-formed passives, malformed passives, possible pseudo-passives, actives, and others. Table 2 shows the results of 10 transitive verbs by the different groups.

TABLE 2
Results of Transitive Verbs

Constructions	Instances (%)		
	Lo-G	Hi-G	Con-G
Well-formed passive	113(37.2)	153 (49.5)	75 (75)
Malformed passive	47 (15.5)	10(3.2)	0
Pseudo-passive	48 (15.8)	18(5.8)	0
Active	59 (19.4)	87 (28.2)	20 (20)
Others	37 (12.2)	41(13.3)	5 (5)
Total	304	310	100

The well-formed passives are native-like passives as in *the newspaper was read*, while the malformed passives includes the ones with errors in past participle markers, as in **the tiger was catch*, and **the tiger was catched*. Pseudo-passives are the ones with theme subjects and active verbs, as in **the cart pushed*, whereas active sentences are those with agent subjects and active verbs, as in *he is pushing the cart*. Other constructions includes ones that don't belong to the above categories as in *don't push the cart*.

The students of the lower group showed 113 well-formed passives (37.2%), 47 malformed passives (15.5%), 48 pseudo-passives (15.8%), 59 actives (19.4%) and 37 others (12.2%), while those of the higher group exhibited 153 well-formed passives (49.5%), 10 malformed passives (3.2%), 18 pseudo-passives (5.8%), 87 actives (28.2%), and 41 others (13.3%). When well-formed and malformed passives are combined, the total passive numbers by two groups are almost the same around 160 each. The actual difference between the two groups resulted from the numbers of pseudo-passives, 48 vs. 18. The lower group formed more pseudo-passives than the higher group. Furthermore,

compared to Simargool's study (2008) in which there were only 3 pseudo-passives among 380 instance, the present lower group formed many more pseudo-passives, 48 among 304 instances. This may be the evidence that the learners' L1 has an influence on their earlier stage of acquisition of passive constructions.

The chi-square test was performed to see if the groups of different levels made a difference in sentence completion responses to transitive verbs, and it indicated that there was significant difference between the two groups (X^2=39.044, df=4, p=.000).

2. Results of Ergative Verbs

The ergative verbs with transitive counterparts (break, close, change, boil, freeze, burn) were first analyzed according to unaccusative constructions, passive constructions, malformed unaccusative constructions, malformed passive constructions and others (Table 3).

TABLE 3
The Results of Ergative Verbs I and II

Constructions	Ergative I Instances (%)			Ergative II Instances (%)		
	Lo-G	Hi-G	Con-G	Lo-G	Hi-G	Con-G
Unaccusative	13 (14.1)	21(22.8)	17(56.6)	20(22.5)	46(49.5)	27(67.5)
Passive	52 (56.5)	46 (50.0)	9(30.0)	45(50.6)	27(29.0)	9(22.5)
Malformed unaccusative	6 (6.5)	0 (0.0)	0(0.0)	4(4.5)	1(1.1)	0 (0.0)
Malformed passive	8 (8.7)	4 (4.3)	0(0.0)	14(15.7)	6(6.5)	0(0.0)
Others	13 (14.1)	21(22.8)	4 (13.3)	6(6.7)	13(14.0)	4(10)
Total	92	92	30	89	93	40

The unaccusatuve constructions are ones with a theme subject and active verbs like *the dish broke*, while the passive ones are sentences with a theme subject and be+-en as in *the dish was broken*. The malformed unaccusative constructions are unaccusatives with incorrect forms of past tense as in *the dish breaked*, while malformed passives are passive sentences with incorrect forms of 'be' verb or past participle as in *the dish was broke*. Others include all the remnant, for example, actives with agent subject and imperatives as in *I broke a dish* and *Break the dish*.

As shown in Table 3, both the lower group and the higher group formed passive constructions more than unaccusative constructions by using the verbs "break, close, change", although the use of unaccusative constructions increased from 14.1 % to 22.8 %. For example, subject # 52 of the higher level produced passives for the ergative verbs I and II as in *the dish was broken, the door was closed*. The native group did form 9 passive constructions out of 30 instances. Among the three verbs, both the learners and natives

produced the most passive constructions with the verb "break", while they made the least passive constructions to the verb "change". These results are in line with the L1 transfer perspective and the L2 intralingual perspective in that subjects preferred to form passives for the ergative verbs with the Korean translation passive morphemes and English transitive counterparts. The subjects made more passives for the verb "break," which may reflect human beings' natural assumption that the action of breaking something is typically externally caused. As a matter of fact, Ju (2000) reported that the most difficult verbs of ergative verbs with transitives were "close" and "break".

The chi-square test indicated that there was a significant difference between the two groups in the responses to the ergative verbs I (X^2=11.465, df=4, p= .022).

Let us look at the ergative II verbs which have transitive counterparts, but don't have the Korean derived passive morphemes "boil, freeze, burn". The lower group formed more passive constructions than unaccusative constructions (50.6% - 22.5%), while the higher group did unaccusative constructions 49.5% and passive constructions 29.0% of the time, showing that learners are developing their interlanguage towards the native speakers' system of English. Korean learners used more passive constructions than unaccusative constructions with the verbs "boil, freeze, burn", in particular, for the lower group, although these verbs don't have the Korean passive morphemes and their Korean equivalents are used in actives. For the lower group, they similarly responded to ergative verbs I and ergative verbs II, showing they preferred to use passive constructions to unaccusative constructions regardless of the subclasses of the ergative verbs. However, the learners of the higher group formed many less passive constructions for the ergative verbs II than those for the ergative verbs I. The chi-square test indicated that the two groups differently responded to the ergative verbs II (X^2=32.299, df=4, p=.000).

This can be the evidence that universal factors may interact with the acquisition of passive constructions. Naturally human beings have a tendency to naturally accept that any change of state occurs with external causation, but not to accept that any change of state occurs without any external causation. As a result, learners may have used the passive constructions when the subject were inanimate and the meaning of the verb expresses change of state, which resulted in overpassivization for the verbs "boil, freeze, burn."

Let us consider the ergative verbs which don't have transitive counterparts (Table 4). First, let us look at ergative verbs III which don't have Korean passive morphemes "happen, appear."

TABLE 4
Results of Ergative Verbs III and IV

Constructions	Ergative III Instances (%)			Ergative IV Instances (%)		
	Lo-G	Hi-G	Con-G	Lo-G	Hi-G	Con-G
Unaccusative	29(47.5)	52(83.9)	20(100)	27(45.8)	49(79.0)	20(100)
Passive	26(42.6)	8(12.9)	0	12(20.3)	7(11.3)	0 (0.0)
Malformed unaccusative	1(1.6)	0(0.0)	0	13(22.0)	2(3.2)	0 (0.0)
Malformed passive	2(3.3)	2(3.2)	0	5(8.5)	2(3.2)	0(0.0)
Others	3(4.9)	0(0.0)	0	2(3.4)	2(3.2)	0(0.0)
Total	61	62		59	62	20

The lower group used unaccusative constructions 47.5% and passive constructions 42.6% for the verbs “happen, appear”, while the higher group used unaccusative constructions 83.9% and passive constructions 12.9% for the verbs. The subjects of the lower group used many more passives than those of the higher group. This is a remarkably interesting result as we consider they don’t have transitive counterparts and Korean passive morphemes. However, the subjects formed fewer passives for the verb III and IV than did they for I and II. This shows that learners have more difficulty in using verbs with different argument structures. Among the two verbs “happen, appear” the subjects formed many more passive constructions for the verb “happen”.

This is in line with other researchers’ studies. Balcom (1997) examined Chinese learners’ passive constructions by using a grammaticality judgment task and a cloze task. Her subjects accepted “be” + en sentences with verbs like happen, close, cut, taste, and cost more often as grammatical, and they used “be” + en with the subclasses of unaccusative verbs significantly more frequently than the native control group. In addition, the verb “happen” occurred more with “be” + en among 18 unaccusative verbs in the Zobl’s corpus (1989).

The chi-square test indicated that the two groups differently responded to the ergative verbs III (X^2=20.053, df=4, p=.000).

Now let us consider the ergative IV verbs “disappear, fall” which don’t have transitive counterparts, but have the Korean translation passive morphemes to see if there is any influence of L1 transfer. As shown in Table 4, both the lower group and the higher group used more unaccusative constructions than passive constructions even though the verbs have the Korean translation passive morphemes. In particular, the percentage of passive constructions for “disappear, fall” was even lower than those for “happen, appear”, which is against the argument that learners’ L1 has an influence on the use of the English passive constructions. As the learners’ level of English was higher, they formed more

unaccusatives and fewer passives. The chi-square test indicated that the two groups differently responded to the ergative verbs IV (X^2=16.973, df=4, p=.002).

Let us take a more careful look at the verbs respectively to see if an animate subject does have influence on the subjects' responses.

TABLE 5
Results of "disappear and fall"

Constructions	Disappear		Fall	
	Lo-G	Hi-G	Lo-G	Hi-G
Unaccusative	19 (65.5%)	26(83.9%)	8(26.7%)	23(74.2%)
Passive	6 (20.7%)	4(12.9%)	6(20.0%)	3(9.7%)
Malformed unaccusative	3 (10.3%)	0	10(33.3%)	2(6.5%)
Malformed passive	1(3.4%)	1(3.2%)	4(13.3%)	1(3.2%)
Others	0	0	2(6.7%)	2(6.5%)
Total	59	62	100	

In the task given, the verb "disappear" was presented with the animate subject "prisoner", while the verb "fall" was given with the inanimate subject, "leaves". As shown in table 5, the subjects of the lower group formed unaccusative constructions 65.5% and passive constructions 20.7% for the verb "disappear", while they made unaccusative constructions 26.7% and passive constructions 20% for the verb "fall". Though the two verbs "disappear, fall" have in common Korean passive morphemes without transitive counterparts, the subjects of lower level tended to choose active voice for "disappear" with the animate subject, but they tended to choose passive voice for "fall" with the inanimate subject. This lends itself to the universal cognitive approach to passive constructions: the animacy of the subject influences the choice of the voice used in the sentences.

3. Results of Unergative Verbs

The subjects' responses to the intransitive verbs "jump, die, swim, and run" were divided into 5 categories: actives, passives, malformed actives, malformed passives, and others. Sentences like *the boy jumped* were given to the actives, while the passives were sentences like *the boy was jumped*. Malformed actives were sentences with tense and agreement errors, as in *the boy jump into swimming pool*, while malformed passives were ones with past participles errors or "subject- be" agreement errors, as in *the dog was die* and *the boy were jumped.*

TABLE 6
Results of Unergative Verbs

Constructions	Instances (%)		
	Lo-G	Hi-G	Con-G
Active	73(58.9)	105(84.7)	37 (92.5)
Passive	19(15.3)	7(5.6)	0 (0.0)
Malformed active	14(11.3)	3 (2.4)	0 (0.0)
Malformed passive	7(5.6%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Others	11(8.9)	9 (7.3)	3 (7.5)
Total	124	124	40

It was shown that the subjects of the lower level chose passives 15.3% and malformed passives 5.6% for the verbs “jump, die, run, swim”, and the higher level subject formed passives 5.6% for the unergative verbs. In particular, both the higher and lower group formed the most passives for the verb “die”, 16.1% and 29% respectively, as in *my dog was died because of virus*. This may reflect that passive constructions are frequently used in adversative context, where negative consequence of the action is given to the subject of the sentence.

The chi-square test showed that there was a difference in the responses to the unergative verbs between the two groups (X^2=25.609, df = 4, p=.000).

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study began with the problems: What kinds of IL passive constructions do Korean learners of English produce? What are the main factors that cause Korean learners to produce IL English passive constructions? Are they depending on their levels of English. The analyses of the results revealed us some significant aspects on the above research questions.

Korean learners of English produced pseudo-passives, malformed passives, and passivies for transitive, ergative verbs and even for unergative verbs, depending on their level of English. The learners of the lower group showed pseudo-passives, malformed passives, and overpassivization remarkably more than did those of the higher level. They formed pseudo-passives like *the prize won,* made more errors in past participle markers as in *the letter was wrote,* and tended to choose passive voice for change of state verbs as in *the milk was freezed*.

The learners' use of pseudo-passives can be regarded as evidence that the subjects' L1 word order and structural features have an influence on their acquisition of the English passive constructions. Pseudo-passives can be simply regarded as a kind of malformed passives, but as mentioned above, the Korean language has a pragmatic word order and doesn't have any distinction between passives and unaccusatives unlike English. Thus, these taken into account, it may be claimed the learners' native language is reflected on their use of pseudo-passives.

On the other hand, the lower level subjects remarkably preferred to use passives for the verbs which may imply an external agent such as "break, close, change, boil, freeze, burn, happen" and they even used considerable passive constructions for the unergative verbs, in particular, in adversative meaning like "die". The subjects of higher level still formed passives, in particular, for the verbs such as "break, close, freeze, burn." This indicates that the English voice system as well as universal cognitive factors plays important roles in the acquisition of English passive constructions. However, the existence of Korean translation passive morphemes does not seem to have as much influence as No & Jung (2006) suggested. Korean learners formed more passives for the verbs "break, close, change" than they did for other ergative verbs without Korean translation passive morphemes. However, considering the control group's responses to the same verbs and the results of "disappear, fall" with Korean translation passive morphemes, it should be cautiously said that L1 passive morphemes have an influence on the acquisition of English passive construction.

The present study showed the learners of higher level formed remarkably fewer pseudo-passives, malformed passives, and passive constructions for ergative verbs compared with those of lower level. And it was supported by the chi-square tests, which indicated that there were significant differences in the formation of passive constructions between the two different groups. Based on these analyses, it can be drawn that the influences of their L1 and universal cognitive factors decline with learners' development of the English passive system.

In summarization, Korean learners seem to develop the interlanguage system of the English passive construction like this.

1 stage	Use pseudo-passives and malformed passives.
2 stage	Choose the passive voice for ergative and unergative verbs which may imply an external agent.
3 stage	Choose the middle voice for ergative verbs and the active voice for unergative verbs.

Some implications to effective teaching of English to Korean learners can be drawn from the findings. The present study showed that even the learners at a higher level of

English tended to produce overpassivization when unaccusatives were required, even though they were not exposed to such ungrammatical input. This suggests that positive evidence alone may be not sufficient and effective for Korean learners of English, in particular, in learning the English passive and ergative verbs. This strongly shows that negative evidence is needed along with positive evidence to enhance L2 learners' learning of English and to prevent such inappropriate forms from becoming fossilized.

Recently the role of different kinds of input in SLA has been examined and suggested negative evidence is necessary to help L2 learners retreat from overly broad-range rules (Balcom, 1997; White, 1988; Yip, 1994). To put it another way, implicit and explicit grammar instruction about the English middle voice can help L2 learners effectively acquire English passive constructions and avoid overpassivization for ergative and unergative verbs. For example, Hwang, Kang, & Han (2008) reported the effects of implicit learning without conscious awareness as well as the effects of explicit awareness on the acquisition of the English passive by Korean learners. Thus, it is recommended teachers find effective ways of teaching the English passive through explicit and implicit instruction. In a way, the English passive system can be effectively taught to Korean learners through explicit explanation about ungrammatical passive sentences like **the accident was happened* or implicitly drawing L2 learners' attention to the English middle voice like *the glass shattered during the last earthquake*. More attention should be given to how to implement such explicit and implicit instruction in a communicative and meaningful way.

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APPENDIX

Sentence Completion Task (adapted from Simargool, 2008)

Example:

1. Boy, laugh — The boy laughed.
2. Rice, eat — The rice was eaten.

1. accident, happen
2. newspaper, read
3. boy, jump
4. cart, push
5. dog, die
6. leaves, fall
7. tiger, catch
8. shadow, appear

9. picture, paint
10. song, sing
11. dish, break
12. fish, swim
13. door, close
14. prisoner, disappear
15. car, hit
16. prize, win
17. thief, run
18. purse, steal
19. letter, write
20. water, boil
21. milk, freeze
22. traffic lights, change
23. wood, burn
24. meeting, cancel

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Secondary and Tertiary

Hyesook Park
Dept. of English Language and Literature, College of Humanities
Kunsan National University
Miryong-dong, Kunsan
Jeallabuk-do, Korea
Tel: 063-469-4332
Email: sapark@kunsan.ac.kr

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