*English Language & Literature Teaching*, Vol. 26, No. 1 Spring 2020
https://doi.org/10.35828/etak.2020.26.1.39

# Relative Strength of Influence of Five Factors Involved in Korean Learners' Choice of English Ditransitive Constructions

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**Lee, Yong-Hun & Yook, Cheongmin (2020). Relative strength of influence of five factors involved in Korean learners' choice of English ditransitive constructions. *English Language & Literature Teaching, 26*(1), 39-54.**

This study aims to examine the relative strength of influence of the five factors that are known to be involved in Korean English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' choice between the two English ditransitive constructions. The five factors include animacy of theme (T), definiteness of T, pronominality of recipient (R), length difference between T and R, and semantic class of individual verb. In order to explore how differently the five factors influence Korean EFL learners' choice between the adpositional construction (AC) and the double object construction (DC), the study used the Korean section of the TOEFL 11 corpus and conducted three correlation tests: $\phi$, $V$, and $r_{pbis}$. From the results, the following were observed: (1) the length difference between R and T had the strongest effect on the Korean EFL learners' choice between AC and DC and (2) the relative strength of influence of the five factors examined in the Korean data set was different from those examined in a native English speaker data set. The study ends with a discussion of pedagogical implications of the findings.

**[English ditransitive construction/constructional choice/EFL learners/corpus/ correlation analysis]**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

As English has become an international lingua franca, a clearer understanding of the acquisition of English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) has become more important than ever. According to Inagaki (1997), the English ditransitive construction is "the first argument structure to receive attention in the L2 [second language] literature" (p. 638). One of the reasons is that two English ditransitive constructions and their alternation are one of the most difficult features for ESL/EFL learners (Radwan, 2005). Accordingly, this linguistic feature has drawn wide research interest from ESL/EFL scholars in various theoretical and methodological positions.

The English ditransitive construction here refers to a construction consisting of an agent argument (A), a verb, a recipient argument (R), and a theme argument (T). English allows two types of ditransitive construction: the adpositional construction (AC) in (1a) and the double object construction (DC) in (1b).

(1) a. Mary gave a book to Tom. AC (A+V+T+*to*/adpositional marker+R)
b. Mary gave Tom a book. DC (A+V+R+T)

In AC, T is encoded with no overt marker, while R is encoded with an adpositional marker *to*. In contrast, in DC, both T and R are encoded with no overt marker (or with word order as an argument encoding method). Some English ditransitive verbs can occur with AC only; others, with DC only; and still others, with both constructions. The last phenomenon is often called alternation, a situation where "one and the same verb can occur with different constructions with roughly the same meaning" (Malchukov, Haspelmath, & Comrie, 2007, p. 13).

Difficulties experienced by ESL/EFL learners are frequently explained in terms of several factors such as complexity of target structure, influence of ESL/EFL learners' first language (L1), input frequency, and instruction. Until the 1990s, second language acquisition (SLA) research had been influenced by the contrastive approach, which focuses on differences between L1 and L2, largely on the basis of Transformational Grammar and lexicosemantic accounts. However, soon it was found that differences between L1 and L2 do not necessarily pose or predict difficulties experienced by L2 learners. Thus, approaches based on Construction Grammar (CxG) have been suggested as an alternative to the contrastive approach. CxG-based studies take a functionalist perspective on language acquisition. For example, Ellis (2002) claims that language acquisition is "the piecemeal learning of many thousands of constructions and the frequency-biased abstraction of regularities within them" (p. 144).

Most approaches based on CxG argue that the relationship between the two English

dative constructions, AC and DC, is non-derivational. Each construction is associated with its own meaning. The sentence (1a) above, which employs the adpositional marker *to*, emphasizes a caused motion meaning (i.e., the path of the book with *Mary* as goal). In contrast, the sentence (1b) emphasizes a caused possession meaning (i.e., the obtained possession relation between *Mary* and *the book*) (Gropen, Pinker, Hollander, Goldberg, & Wilson, 1989). To put it differently, CxG approaches view that English ditransitive alternation is an operation of semantic structure change and ESL/EFL learners learn it inductively, using general cognitive processes (Goldberg, 2006).

More importantly, CxG approaches explain the choice between the two English ditransitive constructions in terms of multiple discourse-pragmatic factors. Furthermore, the shift towards the usage-based approach has inspired the development of several corpus-based methodologies of constructional analysis. Corpus-based research of the English ditransitive constructions employs sophisticated statistical techniques and prove that the choice between the two constructions is influenced by various properties of R and T, including animacy, relative length, pronominality, and definiteness (Gries, 2003).

Lee, Yook, Lee, and Park (2015) followed suit and conducted a corpus-based research. The researchers found that Korean EFL learners' choice of the two English ditransitive constructions is affected by five factors: animacy of T, definiteness of T, pronominality of R, length difference between T and R, and semantic class of individual verb. However, they did not show how differently the five factors affect Korean EFL learners' constructional choice. Therefore, in the present study, we revisit the same data set used in Lee et al. (2015) and investigate how differently the five factors affect Korean EFL learners' choice of the two English ditransitive constructions. The present study tests correlation coefficients to examine the relative magnitude of influence the five factors exert on Korean EFL learners' constructional choice. As Gravetter and Wallnau (2013) explain, a correlation coefficient indicates the strength of the relationship between two variables.

Another purpose of the present study is to explore how different the pattern of the relative strength of influence identified in the Korean data set is from the one identified in a corpus data of native English speakers (NESs). In short, the present study attempts to answer the following questions.

(1) How different are the strengths of influence of the five factors known to affect Korean EFL learners' choice of the two English ditransitive constructions (i.e., animacy of T, definiteness of T, pronominality of R, length difference between T and R, and semantic class of individual verb)?
(2) How different is the pattern of the relative strength of influence identified in the Korean data set from the one identified in an NES corpus?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the early stage, corpus-based approaches focused on frequency and distribution in their examination of the use of the English ditransitive constructions, providing evidence for the constructional bias of individual English ditransitive verbs. Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, and Finegan (1999), in their monumental corpus analysis (i.e., *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*), held that, for example, with the English ditransitive verbs *give* and *offer,* DC is about four times more common than AC. To give another example, Bresnan and Nikitina (2003) analyzed the SWITCHBOARD corpus, a three-million-word database of spontaneous telephone conversations spoken by over 500 American English speakers, and concluded that English ditransitive verbs show a syntactic bias toward DC in conversational use. Moreover, Campbell and Tomasello (2001) showed the correlation between frequency distributions of the English ditransitive constructions in natural use and L1 acquisition of the constructions through the analysis of the Child Language Data Exchange System. They concluded that children's use of the English ditransitive constructions is based on the frequencies of individual verbs with those constructions.

The effort to investigate the correlation between the frequency distribution of the English ditransitive constructions in natural use and the acquisition of the constructions has continued in the L2 field. For example, Gries and Wulff (2005) related verb-specific frequencies of the English dative constructions to L2 acquisition of the constructions. Gries and Wulff performed a collostructional analysis of AC and DC with the British component of the International Corpus of English (ICE-GB) and ranked 39 verbs according to their frequencies with AC and DC. They then tested German university students on a sentence fragment completion task. The point of the task was to examine which of the two English ditransitive constructions the German students chose to complete fragments. The researchers concluded that the German students' verb-specific constructional preference resembled that of NESs, which in turn reflected the frequency distribution identified in the ICE-GB.

A number of studies have recently conducted corpus analyses in order to identify discourse-pragmatic factors that influence the use/choice between AC and DC. In general, CxG-based studies hold that the choice between AC and DC is influenced by multiple factors such as dominance, topicality, weight, givenness, and semantic class of the individual verb, to name a few. Thompson (1988) analyzed a small corpus with three novels and coded for topicworthy properties which include animacy, pronominality, specificity, identifiability, proper nounhood, length of noun phrases, and givenness. Thompson found that: (a) topicworthy R or T is more likely to occupy the immediate post-verbal position and (b) when there is competition for the immediate post-verbal position,

the more topicworthy argument wins. Similarly, in an analysis of the British National Corpus, Gries (2003) coded for 11 factors such as animacy of R and T, pronominality of R and T, discourse status of R and T, referential distance, semantic feature of the verb, and the kind of determiner. Similarly, Bresnan, Cueni, Nikiina, and Baayen (2007) analyzed the Switchboard subcorpus of the Penn Treebank corpus for 14 factors. They employed a logistic regression model and found that nine of the 14 factors affected the NESs' choice of the English ditransitive constructions: animacy of R, accessibility of R and T, pronominality of R and T, definiteness of R and T, differences in the length of R and T, and semantic class of a verb. They also found that the nine factors interacted with each other in their influence on the constructional choice. They claimed that their model was able to accurately predict 94% of the actual constructional choice in the Switchboard subcorpus.

The effort to explore what factors are involved in the choice of one English ditransitive construction over the other has also continued in the L2 field. Callies and Szczesniak (2006), for example, were interested in two interrelated issues: (a) how different/similar the frequency distribution of EFL learners' use of the English ditransitive constructions in their writing from that of NESs and (b) if the difference/similarity is caused by discourse constraints such as information status (give vs. new) and length difference between R and T. The researchers used two corpus data sets: the German and Polish subcorpora of the International Corpus of Learner English and the American and British subcorpora of the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays. What Callies and Szczesnak found is that the constructional preference patterns identified in the EFL corpora had a significant correlative relationship with those identified in the NES corpora and that the discourse constraints appeared to be unproblematic for advanced EFL learners.

It has been recognized that corpus-based research makes a substantial contribution to ESL/EFL teaching and learning. Accordingly, corpus-based research has attracted the attention of Korean scholars. As Lee (2008) observes, however, much of the corpus-based research in Korea has been focusing on frequency and distribution information of certain lexical items (e.g., Cho, 2006; Lee, 2003). Few studies on Korean EFL learners' choice between the two English ditransitive constructions have reflected the recent surging interest in CxG-based and corpus-based approaches. As mentioned in the introduction section, Lee et al. (2015) was the result of the effort to fill this gap (a more detailed description of the study is given in the following method section). Although Lee et al. (2015) showed what factors influence Korean EFL learners' choice between AC and DC, they did not explore how differently the factors affect/interact Korean EFL learners' constructional choice. The present study wants to fill the gap.

# III. RESEARCH DESIGN

## 1. Lee et al. (2015)

The present study used the Korean data set analyzed in Lee et al. (2015). Therefore, a somewhat detailed description of the 2015 study is in order. Lee et al. (2015) used the Korean section of the TOEFL11 corpus. The Korean corpus consists of essays written by Korean EFL learners during the TOEFL iBT® tests in 2006-2007. The size is 328,384 word tokens. In Lee et al. (2015), 40 ditransitive verbs were selected from several previous studies (e.g., Biber et al., 1999; Carter & McCarthy, 2006; Goldberg, Casenhiser & Sethuraman, 2004; Gries & Stefanowitsch, 2004; Gropen et al., 1989; Levin, 1993). Then NLPTools (Lee, 2007) was used to extract from the Korean corpus all the sentences including the 40 verbs. From the extracted sentences, sentences with AC and DC were manually extracted. Then eight factors were encoded: English proficiency level, animacy of R and T, definiteness of R and T, pronominality of R and T, and sematic class of the individual verb. Finally, the R software package (R Core Team, 2013) was used to measure the individual value of the eight factors/variables. On the basis of the results, the study concluded that five factors are statistically significant in relation to Korean EFL learners' choice of the two English dative constructions: animacy of T, definiteness of T, pronominality of R, and length difference between R and T, and semantic class of the individual verb. These results are summarized in TABLE 1 below.

**TABLE 1**

**Results of the Analysis of the Korean Section of the TOEFL11 Corpus**

| Fixed effect | Coefficient | Standard error | *z* | *p* | Radom effect | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ANIM-T | 8.983 | 0.002 | 3,855 | <.001 | | |
| DEFIN-T | 2.030 | 0.002 | 900 | <.001 | | |
| PRON-R | 1.376 | 0.002 | 610 | <.001 | | |
| LENGTH | 0.406 | 0.002 | 180 | <.001 | | |
| (Intercept) | 10.274 | 0.002 | 4,410 | <.001 | VERB | 1.607 |

## 2. Working Definition

In the present study, we explored the relative strength of influence five discourse-pragmatic factors exert on Korean EFL learners' choice between AC and DC. Therefore, working definitions of the factors are in order.

(1) Animacy: For animacy, we resort to the Silverstein Hierarchy (i.e., 3rd person

pronouns > human proper Ns > human common Ns > other animate Ns > inanimate Ns) (Silverstein, 1976). The basic idea of this hierarchy is that noun phrases whose rank is higher on the Silverstein hierarchy tend to occupy more prominent syntactic positions (i.e., closer to the verb) than noun phrases lower on it.

(2) Definiteness: Following the accounts suggested by Givón (2001), we defined definiteness as a distinguishing semantic feature between referents/entities that are identifiable in a given context (definite) and entities which are not (indefinite).

(3) Pronominality: We define pronominality in terms of phrases headed by pronouns (personal, demonstrative, and indefinite), which are distinguished from those headed by nonpronouns (e.g., nouns and gerunds).

(4) Length difference between R and T: Word order is claimed to be affected by the principles of end weight (PEW) and end focus (PEF) (Williams, 1994). The principle of end weight holds that the heavier the constituent, the higher its chance of appearing after a lighter one. In the present study, we measured weight with the number of words of R and T, and the number of words was manually counted.

(5) Semantic class of the individual verb: We adopted the five semantic classes suggested by Bresnan et al. (2007): abstract, transfer of possession, future transfer of possession, prevention of possession, and communication.

## 3. Extraction of Sentences with AC and DC and Coding

As mentioned earlier, we returned to the ditransitive sentences extracted from the Korean corpus in Lee et al. (2015). In order to lend more precision to the study, we decided to recheck the extracted sentences and manually repeat the process of extracting AC and DC sentences. In the process, we removed sentences with the verb *tell* followed by R + a clause as shown in (2) because they do not have AC alternatives. Through the process, a total of 404 sentences were extracted.

(2) I told him that I don't want to meet the guy.
R that-clause

We then encoded for the five factors/independent variables in question and they are presented in TABLE 2: animacy of T (ANIMAT), definiteness of T (DEFINT), pronominality of R (PRONOR), length difference between T and R (LENGTH), and semantic class of the verb (VERBSEM). The dependent variable was the Korean EFL learners' choice between AC and DC, which was coded as realization (REALIZ).

**TABLE 2**

**Independent Variables of the Present Study**

| Variable | Value | Note |
|---|---|---|
| ANIMAT | animate, inanimate | animacy of theme |
| DEFINT | definite, indefinite | definiteness of theme |
| PRONOR | pronoun, nonpronoun | pronominality of recipient |
| LENGTH | numerical | length difference between recipient and theme |
| VERBSE | abstract, transfer of possession, future transfer of possession, prevention of possession, communication | semantic class of the individual verb |

## 4. Selection of Appropriate Statistical Tests

Data determine statistical tests to which they are amenable. In turn, the tests will determine the significance of the data. As mentioned earlier, we aimed to measure the relative strength of the relationship between the five variables and Korean EFL learner's choice of the two English ditransitive constructions. Notice that the experiment design of the present study is a mixed-factor design in that the operationalization of the variables has not rendered uniformly linear results in all cases. Encoded variables were of three different types, which in turn required the use of three different statistical tests. The dependent variable REALIZ is biominal with two values (AC and DC). Therefore, when independent variables are discrete with only two values as in ANIMAT (animate vs. inanimate), DEFINIT (definite vs. indefinite), and PRONOR (pronoun vs. nonpronoun), the crosstab table becomes 2 x 2 and thus Phi coefficient ($\phi$) can be used. When independent variables are nominal ones with more than two values as in VERBSE (abstract, transfer of possession, future transfer of possession, prevention of possession, communication), however, the crosstab table becomes 2 × 5, and thus $\phi$ cannot be used. In this case, Cramer's $V$ can be used because this correlation coefficient can be measured independent of the size of the crosstab table. Moreover, when independent variables are continuous ones as in LENGTH, the point-biserial correlation coefficient ($r_{pbis}$) must be used.

In short, the experiment design of the present study was in effect a form of multivariate analysis in that it attempted (1) to predict outcomes on the basis of more than two predictors and (2) to measure the relative strength of influence the variables have. Because of this design, it was necessary to employ three different statistical tests: $\phi$, $V$, and $r_{pbis}$. The three variables (ANIMAT, DEFINIT, and PRONOR) were tested against the data set by means of $\phi$, given that they are discrete; VERBSE, by means of Cramer's $V$ because it

has more than two values; and LENGTH, by means of $r_{pbis}$ since it is a continuous variable. R (R Core Team, 2017) was used in most of the analyses but, in a few occasions, IBM SPSS Statistics was used.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Results of the Analysis of the Korean Corpus Data Set

TABLE 3 below summarizes the results of the analysis of the Korean EFL learners' data set. As *p* values in TABLE 3 indicate, all of the results were statistically significant (asterisks are attached), and as coefficient values indicate, all the variables influenced the Korean EFL learners' choice between AC and DC. More importantly, the results showed that LENGTH had the highest value (0.689) and thus influenced the choice most strongly. In the hierarchy of the strength of influence, it could be concluded, LENGTH was followed by PRONOR, VERBSE, and DEFINT. The variable ANIMAT was the least strong in the influence on the Korean EFL learners' constructional choice.

**TABLE 3**

**Results of the Analysis of the Korean Data Set**

| ID tag | Coefficient | *p* |
|---|---|---|
| ANIMAT | $\phi$=-0.13 ($\lambda$=0.03) | .003 ** |
| DEFINT | $\phi$=0.22 ($\lambda$=0) | <.001 *** |
| PRONOR | $\phi$=-0.63 ($\lambda$=0.507) | <.001 *** |
| LENGHT | $r_{pbis}$=0.689 | .038 * |
| VERBSE | *V*=0.376 | <.001 *** |

### 2. Comparison between the Korean Data and a NES Data

The results from the Korean data were also compared with those provided by Bresnan et al. (2007). Their results are included in the Language R package in the R software package. They used the Switchboard subcorpus of the Penn Treebank corpus to explore which of 14 factors influenced the American NESs' use of AC and DC. The study found that nine factors affected the constructional choice and that there were interactions among the factors. TABLE 4 below shows only the Bresnan et al. (2007)'s results related to the five factors in question.

**TABLE 4**

**Results of an NES Data Set Provided by Bresnan et al. (2007)**

| ID tag | Coefficient | *p* |
|---|---|---|
| ANIMAT | $\phi$=0.04 ($\lambda$=0) | .496 |
| DEFINT | $\phi$=-0.21 ($\lambda$=0.079) | <.001 *** |
| PRONOR | $\phi$=-0.34 ($\lambda$=0) | <.001 *** |
| LENGHT | $r_{pbis}$=0.736 | .022 * |
| VERBSE | *V*=0.41 | <.001 *** |

For the sake of easy comparison, TABLE 3 and 4 were combined into the TABLE 5 below. The values of the last column (Difference) were calculated by subtracting the value in the Korean column from the one in the NES column.

**TABLE 5**

**Comparison of the Korean Results and the Bresnan et al. (2007)'s Results**

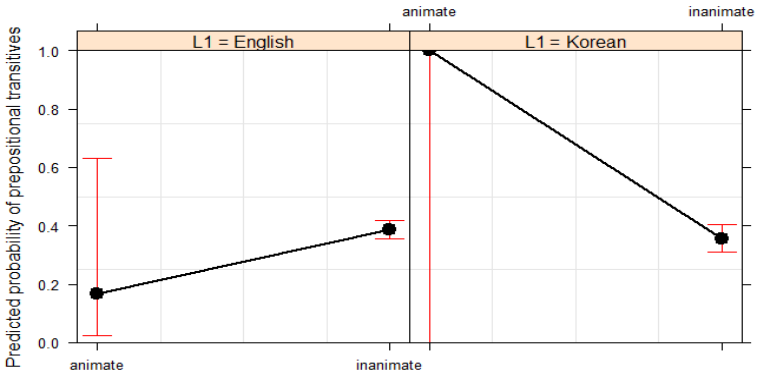
| ID tag | NES/Bresnan (2007) et al. | Korean EFL | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|
| ANIMAT | $\phi$=0.04 ($\lambda$=0) | $\phi$=-0.13 ($\lambda$=0.03) | 0.170 |
| DEFINT | $\phi$=-0.21 ($\lambda$=0.079) | $\phi$=0.22 ($\lambda$=0) | -0.430 |
| PRONOR | $\phi$=-0.34 ($\lambda$=0) | $\phi$=-0.63 ($\lambda$=0.51) | 0.290 |
| LENGHT | $r_{pbis}$=0.736 | $r_{pbis}$=0.689 | 0.047 |
| VERBSE | *V*=0.41 | *V*=0.376 | 0.034 |

In the difference column, a plus value indicates that the related factor influenced the American NESs' constructional choice more strongly than the Korean counterpart, whereas a minus value indicates the reverse, that is, the related factor influenced the Korean EFL learners' constructional choice more strongly than the American NES counterpart. It can be concluded, therefore, that the American NESs were more strongly influenced by four of the five variables (ANIMAT, PRONOR, LENGTH, VERBSE) than the Korean EFL counterpart in their use of the two ditransitive constructions. In contrast, the Korean EFL learners were more strongly influenced by only one of the five variables (DEFINT).

Moreover, TABLE 5 reveals an interesting fact: three variables (i.e., ANIMAT, DEFINT, PRONOR) behaved differently in the two groups' data sets. The plus sign of a correlation coefficient implies that the regression line goes up from left to right. In contrast, the minus sign implies that the regression line goes down from left to right. Therefore, the opposite (plus vs. minus) sign of correlation coefficient of a particular variable/factor means that that factor behaves differently for the two groups.

**FIGURE 1**

**Effect Plot for ANIMAT**

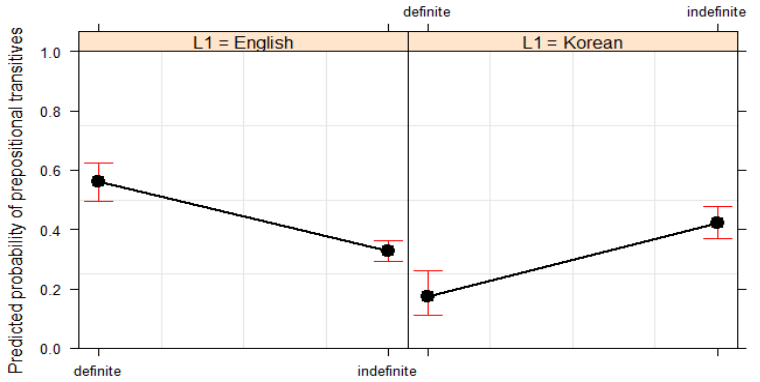



For example, ϕ in of ANIMAT was 0.04 in the analysis of the NESs' data set and -0.13 in the analysis of the Korean EFL learners' data set. Thus, as the effect plot of FIGURE 1 above shows, for the NESs, the regression line went upward, while, as for the Korean EFL learners, it went downward.

To give a contrasting example, $\phi$ of DEFINT was -0.21 in the analysis of the NESs' data set but was 0.22 in the Korean EFL counterpart. As the effect plot of FIGURE 2 shows, therefore, the NES regression line went downward, while the Korean EFL regression line went upward.

**FIGURE 2**

**Effect Plot for DEFINT**




As the two effect plot graphs show, the three factors behaved differently (or in the opposite direction) when they influenced the two groups' choice between AC and DC.

TABLE 5 shows another aspect of the strength of influence the five variables had in the

analyses of the two groups' data sets. In order to more closely examine differences between the patterns of the strength of influence examined in the two data sets, we classified the values of *r* and Cramer's *V* into three levels, following Moore, Notz, and Figner (2010). In the case of the value of $\phi$, we followed the criteria for *r* because it becomes equal to the absolute value of *r* when the crosstab table is 2 × 2.

**TABLE 6**
**Level of the Strength of Correlation Coefficient**

| Level | *r*/ $\phi$ | Cramer's *V* |
|---|---|---|
| strong | 0.70 ~ 1.00 | 0.50 ~ 1.00 |
| moderate | 0.30 ~ 0.69 | 0.30 ~ 0.49 |
| weak | 0.00 ~ 0.29 | 0.00 ~ 0.29 |

In TABLE 5, as for the NESs, one variable (LENGTH) is at the strong level, two (PRONOR, VERBSE) at the moderate level, and another two (ANIMAT, DEFINT) at the weak level (See TABLE 6). In contrast, the Korean EFL counterpart has no variable in the strong level, three (PRONOR, LENGTH, VERBSE) at the moderate level, and two (ANIMAT, DEFNIT) at the weak level. Therefore, it can be argued that, as a whole, the Korean EFL learners' choice of AC and DC was influenced by the five variables/factors less strongly than the NESs' choice. Note, however, that, for the Korean EFL learners, the correlation coefficient of LENGTH was 0.689, which was very close to the threshold value, 0.7. Accordingly, it can be said that this factor was the most probable candidate for the "strong" correlation coefficient in the Korean EFL learners' data set.

## V. CONCLUSION

Through the analyses, we observed the following: (a) among the five factors (i.e., animacy of T, definiteness of T, pronominality of R, and length difference between R and T, and semantic class of the verb), the length difference influences the Korean EFL learner's constructional choice most strongly; (b) second, the relative strength of influence pattern identified in the Korean EFL learners' data set is different from that identified in the NESs' data set (or the five factors behave differently in the constructional choice of the Korean EFL learners and the American NESs); and (c) as a whole, the Korean EFL learners' constructional choice is influenced by the five factors less strongly than the NESs' choice. These findings, particularly the findings (b) and (c) may provide a piece of statistical

evidence for the known bias of Korean EFL learners toward the English adpositional construction (Yook, 2012).

This study has some limits. English ditransitive constructions include *to*- and *for*-constructions, but this study focused on the former type. As Levin (1993) suggests, the two types can be treated differently on the basis that *to* is a goal-oriented preposition, whereas *for* is a benefactive-oriented one. Moreover, Mazurkewich (1984) reports that children might feel *for*-ditransitive alignment alternation more difficult to process than *to*-counterpart. Additionally, the present study exclusively analyzed EFL and NES writings. However, as Gries and Deshors (2015) point out, written texts and spoken texts are different. Thus, although *to*- and *for*-constructions and written and spoken texts are similar in many respects, the findings of the present study would be on a firmer ground if it is expanded into *for*- ditransitive constructions and spoken texts.

Nevertheless, the study is significant in that, first, the findings obtained through a corpus analysis combined with sophisticated statistical tests make a contribution to a better, clearer understanding of Korean EFL learners' acquisition of the English ditransitive construction, which has been known to be one of the most problematic areas for ESL/EFL learners. To put it differently, the study makes it possible to predict which of the five factors influence Korean EFL learners' choice/use of the two English dative constructions more strongly than others. In addition, the use of authentic (i.e. corpus) data ensures the analyses are based on realistic grounds, resulting in "a testable and frequency-based account of authentic language use" (Mukherjee, 2005).

The study is also significant in that the findings have important pedagogical implications. With a better, clearer understanding of what affects Korean EFL learners' use of the English ditransitive constructions and how different the use from that of native English speakers, teaching materials and strategies can be prepared or developed in such a way that they help Korean EFL learners aware of the factors involved in the use/choice of the two English ditransitive constructions and thus facilitate their acquisition of the English ditranstive alternation. These materials and strategies may be able to lessen the strategy of avoidance, which refers to the exclusive use of one of the two ditransitive constructions (usually AC) and avoidance of the other construction. It has been observed that ESL/EFL learners often turn to an avoidance strategy when they perceive a word or a structure of the target language to be difficult to produce (Schachter, 1974). Teaching materials and strategies developed or prepared on the basis of the findings of the present study may be able to help Korean EFL learners avoid the avoidance strategy in their use of the two English ditransitive constructions.

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**Examples in: English**

**Applicable Langauge: English**

**Applicable levels: Secondary, tertiary, college**

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Received: January 16, 2020
Reviewed: February 27, 2020
Revised version received: March 5, 2020