A Concept-Based Approach: Korean Verbal Honorifics for L2 Learners and Heritage Speakers

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Introduction

- **Korean verbal honorifics in second person address forms**
  - Two honorific (polite, *-eyo/ayo*; deferential, *-(su)pnita*), one non-honorific (intimate, *-e/a*) level
  - Various factors (e.g., age, professional relationship, context/setting)
  - Persistent challenges in acquiring L2 verbal honorifics (Wang, 2019)

- **Concept-based instruction (CBI)** (Negueruela & Lantolf, 2006)
  - Connections between difficult grammatical features and pragmatic functions (Walter & van Compernolle, 2017; van Compernolle & Henery, 2014; Zhang, 2014; van Compernolle, Gomez-Laich, & Weber, 2016)
  - Application of CBI to Korean honorifics: barrier concept

Methodology

- **25-minute video-recorded lesson**
  - Factors (e.g., professional relationship, audience, context/setting, personal strategies/motives, psychological boundary, linguistic ideologies
  - Feeling and showing a barrier

- **Participants**
  - 27 second language (L2) learners
  - 22 heritage language (HL) learners

- **Latin squares design**
  - Language awareness task (pre and post)
  - Appropriateness judgement task (pre and post; A & B)
  - Discourse completion translation task (pre and post; A & B)
  - Final reflection task (post)

- **Stimuli:** age, audience, setting (casual/professional), show disrespect, meeting (first time, three times, 3+ times)

Results

Table 1. **Difference in differences test results for self-reported understanding**

	Estimate	Std. Error	t-value	Pr(>|t|)
Impact by Group	11.190	3.726	3.003	0.0034 **
Impact of Treatment	16.420	3.699	4.439	2.39e-05 ***

** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$
F-statistic: 14.36 on 2 and 97 DF
***p*-value:** 3.434e-06

Figure 1. **Differences in the effect of treatment**

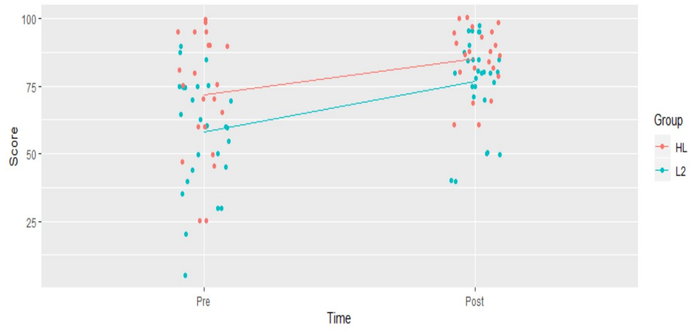

Figure 2. **Language Awareness Task for L2 Learners**

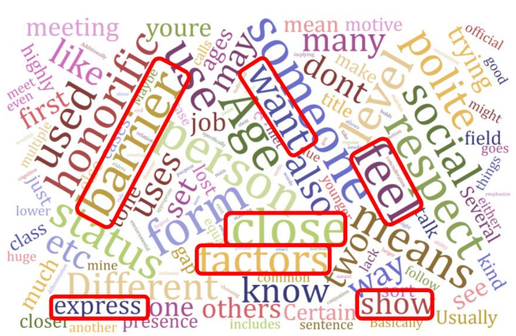

Figure 3. **Language Awareness Task for HL Learners**

Discussion

- **The impact of a 25-minute intervention**
  - Statistically significant gains in self-reported understanding
  - Through CBI, learners made choices for themselves regarding which honorific level to use rather than guessing or relying on rules of thumb

- **Future research**
  - More applications of CBI in more difficult grammatical aspects
  - The need for digitally hosted instructional material that can supplement in-class work

References

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