Uses of *Make* in Korean EFL Learner Writing: A Corpus-Based Study*

Myung-Hee Kim
(Hanyang University)


The present paper aims to investigate the extent to which Korean EFL learners utilize the various uses of high-frequency verbs such as *make* in their English writing. This study analyzes the uses and collocates of the verb *make* in a Korean learner corpus and compares the results with the findings of Altenberg and Granger (2001), who compared a native speaker corpus with two learner corpus samples by European language speakers. This study has employed a combination of careful manual investigation and computer-aided analysis using a software called *WordSmith Tools*. The results show that the Korean learners overuse high-frequency verbs, and that they often overgeneralize the basic uses, i.e., the produce and causative uses of the verb *make* whereas they underuse or misuse the delexical or other idiomatic uses. This paper suggests that the lower proficiency level of the Korean learners and L1 transfer are responsible for some of the results. Implications for English education and future research are also discussed.

I. INTRODUCTION

An examination of any language corpus instantly shows that there is a huge imbalance in the frequency of words used. For example, the definite article *the*, the commonest word in English, has approximately twice the frequency of the next two, *of* and *and* (Sinclair, 1991). Furthermore, we find the same kind of imbalance in the uses or meanings of words; one of the uses will typically be twice as common as all the others. This can be particularly problematic for foreign

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language learners learning high-frequency words. That is, learners are usually taught and begin
to use basic verbs early, but they are not fully familiarized with the various uses of them until
late; in particular, the full command of language-specific, idiomatic uses that basic verbs often
develop comes much later.

The present paper is a corpus-based investigation of the extent to which Korean EFL learners
know and utilize the various uses of high-frequency basic verbs such as make in their English
writing. The main research questions are as follows: Do Korean learners tend to over- or
underuse high-frequency verbs? What categories of meaning/use differentiate Korean learners
from native speakers or from other language learners of English? And lastly, what part does L1
transfer play in misuse of these verbs?

The organization of the paper is as follows: Section 2 examines some of the important learner
corpus-based studies, in particular, studies on high-frequency verbs in the field of second
language acquisition. Section 3 describes the data and methodology of this study. Section 4
presents the results. Lastly, Section 5 presents implications for English education in the
classroom and concludes the discussion.

II. PREVIOUS STUDIES

1. Corpus Linguistics and Language Education

Since the 1970s, it has become common to investigate language systems based on real
language in use (e.g., Ariel, 1991; Fox, 1987; Givón, 1983; Grimes, 1975). In the field of
language acquisition, looking at ‘real life’ language data is not a new enterprise; the
methodology of collecting and analyzing the corpus of utterances produced by children has been
well established (e.g., Bloom, 1970; Brown, 1973). There has also been an increased interest in
natural language use data and their application to language education (Hatch, 1992; Kramsch,
1993). One of the new, promising trends in this field is to utilize machine-readable, large-scale
corpus data aided by the modern computer’s text-processing techniques (Beaugrande, 2002;

After the pioneering Brown Corpus of Standard English in the early 1960s, there have been
successful attempts to computerize language samples of different genres, varieties, and styles
(e.g., British National Corpus (BNC), COBUILD, International Corpus of English (ICE), The
London-Lund Corpus). More recently, there have also been projects around the world to build a
learner corpus although their scale is not as large as the first language corpora. Representative
learner corpora include the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) and the Louvain
International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage (Lindsei). English learner corpora in Asia include the Corpus of English by Japanese Learners (CEJL) and the Taiwanese Learner Corpus of English (TLCE).

There are several roles corpora may play in language education and research. First of all, they can be an excellent source of empirical teaching data. Corpus examples are important in language learning as they expose students to the kinds of language samples that they will actually encounter in real life situations (McEnery & Wilson, 1996). A further application of corpora in this field is their role in computer-assisted language learning. For example, McEnery and Wilson (1993) used a corpus-based computer software called Cytor to teach students basic grammatical structures. McEnery, Baker and Wilson (1995) compared Cytor-aided teaching and traditional lecture-based teaching, and found that the computer-taught students performed better than the human-taught students in general. Gavioli and Aston (2001) also emphasize the potential of corpora as tools in the hands of learners, for whom they can provide a wide range of opportunities to observe and participate in real discourse for themselves.

Corpora can be also used for research on language teaching. Kennedy (1987) has looked at ways of expressing quantification and frequency in ESL textbooks. Holmes (1988) has examined ways of expressing doubt and certainty in textbooks. These studies found that there are considerable differences between what textbooks are teaching and how native speakers actually use language as evidenced in the corpora. Leech (2001) has examined the value of frequency information in English language teaching. He maintains that corpus-derived frequency information should be considered alongside other factors in the selection and prioritizing of language content. In what follows, we will focus on the studies on high-frequency verbs in SLA.

2. High-Frequency Verbs in SLA

Consistently using a word correctly requires, among other things, distinguishing between core and peripheral meanings, recognizing polysemy, collocational restrictions and possibility/probabilities, syntactic environments, exclusion and taboo uses, register and stylistic levels (Richards, 1974). Thus, studies show that the learner’s lexical problems far outweigh grammatical ones (Schule, 1977).

Of the lexical problems foreign language learners face, a number of studies have discussed the difficulty of basic, high-frequency verbs. A characteristic of high-frequency verbs is that they convey basic, general meanings, and they tend to have high-frequency equivalents in most languages. However, the problem is that they tend to develop language-specific, idiomatic uses over time (Altenberg & Granger, 2001). In particular, many of these verbs are often used as
‘delexical verbs’\textsuperscript{1} where the choice of the verbs is mostly arbitrary; i.e., semantically unmotivated and language-specific (Allerton, 1984).

These characteristics of basic verbs are both a blessing and a curse for foreign language learners. A number of studies (Granger, 1996; Hasselgren, 1994; Källkvist, 1999) report that learners overuse these verbs. They were mostly based on European EFL learner corpora—French, Norwegian, and Swedish. Hasselgren (1994) uses a metaphor ‘lexical teddy bears’ to indicate the characteristics of these basic verbs—learnt early, widely useable, and above all safe.

On the other hand, several studies point to the error-proneness of these verbs. Lennon (1996) reports that a majority of verb choice errors by advanced German learners of English involve common, high-frequency verbs (Källkvist, 1999; Sinclair, 1991). He claims that learners may have a broad outline of verb meaning, but that their lexical knowledge is hazy concerning polysemy, contextual and collocational restrictions, phrasal verb combinations, and grammatical environment. He further argues that learners tend to over-rely on their ideas of core meaning of polysemous verbs and may be derailed by treacherous translation equivalents in L1.

It is against this background that this study explores the use of English high-frequency verbs by Korean learners. In particular, it mostly replicates Altenberg and Granger (2001). They compared the uses of the verb \textit{make} in two learner corpus samples by French- and Swedish-speaking learners of English with those in a native-speaker American English control corpus. They grouped the meanings of \textit{make} into eight major categories and found that the learners, even though they are advanced learners, have difficulty mastering all the uses of \textit{make}.

The major findings of Altenberg and Granger (2001) are as follows: (a) The French learners significantly underuse the verb \textit{make} whereas the Swedish learners tend to use it a little more than the native-speaker students though not significantly so. (b) The rank order of the main uses of \textit{make} is similar in the three corpora, but the delexical category is used significantly less by the two groups of learners than by the natives, and (c) the majority of learner errors with \textit{make} are in the delexical category. It should be interesting to see what will happen with Korean learners who have a different language background and are expected to have lower language proficiency than these European learners. In the next sections, I will describe the data and methodology used in this study and report the results.

\textsuperscript{1} According to \textit{Collins Cobuild English Grammar} (1990, p. 147), delexical verbs are those that are used ‘with nouns as their object to indicate simply that someone performs an action, not that someone affects or creates something. These verbs have very little meaning when they are used in this way.’
III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The Korean learner corpus of English used for this study is 149 college student writing samples from two composition classes. The learners were mostly high beginner to intermediate-level 3rd or 4th year English majors or non-English majors who had equivalent English proficiency. The corpus includes 65,503 words, and the average length of the essays is approximately 440 words. The essays were non-technical in character and dealt with a variety of topics from a movie review to an argumentative essay.

To compare the Korean EFL learner use with native English use and other EFL learner use, this study used Altenberg and Granger’s (2001) three language corpora: a 170,000 word sample from the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (LOCNESS) which contains argumentative essays written by native speaker American students, and two learner corpus samples from the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) database. They are 17,000 words of essay writing by advanced French and Swedish learners of English. An overview of the four language corpora is given in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1 Learner and Native-Speaker Corpora</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average no. of words per essay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: 1. KR represents the Korean learner corpus used in this study. 2. LOCNESS represents the Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays. 3. SW and FR represent the Swedish and French learner corpora of English from the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE).

As Table 1 shows, one limitation of this study is that the Korean corpus is not exactly comparable with the others; The Korean corpus is smaller and the Korean writers have lower language proficiency. Nevertheless, this study is expected to shed light on how Korean learners utilize high frequency verbs in comparison to native speakers or European learners of English.

The subsequent analyses were performed using a computer software called WordSmith Tools. WordSmith Tools is a user-friendly and powerful package with several analytical tools which are useful for morphological studies. Among the tools provided by the package, this study mainly used the lemmatizer, the concordancer, and the collocation display. Careful manual counting and investigation were also used along with the computer-aided analyses by WordSmith Tools.
IV. RESULTS

1. Overall Frequency of Make in the corpus

Every language has some basic verbs that people use all the time in discourse. In English, for instance, the following verbs are likely to show up at the top of any corpus-based list of high frequency verbs (Altenberg & Granger, 2001):

(1) have, do, know, think, get, go, say, see,
come, make, take, look, give, find, use

The rank order of these verbs may vary according to medium and text type (Svartvik & Ekedahl, 1995). Notice that make is one of the frequently-occurring verbs in English.

First, I checked the most frequently used verbs in the writings of the Korean EFL learners. By using the lemmizer of WordSmith Tools, I was able to group all the inflectional forms of a verb in the same category such that the frequency of make, makes, making, and made shows up under the lemma make. The ones topping the list are shown in (2):

(2) have, think, like, do, make, want, get, know,
learn, say, feel, go, tell, need, understand

A comparison between (1) and (2) shows that in spite of some overlap, there are differences between the two lists. There should be further research on whether the differences are due to the peculiarity of the Korean corpus (for example, the high frequency of learn seems to be topic-related) or L1 transfer (for example, the absence of come in the Korean list). Notice again that make is also one of the frequently-occurring verbs in the Korean learner corpus.

As the next step in the analyses, I computed the overall frequency of the verb make in the data. As a result, I found 321 instances of the verb make, excluding 15 instances of make in a compound, as in trouble-maker. Table 2 presents the normalized frequencies (occurrences per 100,000 words) in the four corpora.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make (Occurrences)</th>
<th>KR</th>
<th>LOCNESS</th>
<th>SW</th>
<th>FR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAKE</td>
<td>512.95</td>
<td>339.8</td>
<td>354.3</td>
<td>234.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that whereas the French learners underuse the verb make, the Swedish learners...
use it almost as frequently as the native-speaker students. Compared to these three corpora, it seems that the Korean learners heavily overuse the verb *make*. Furthermore, according to Altenberg and Granger (2001), LOCNESS, which mostly contains argumentative essays, has more *makes* than more so-called balanced corpora such as LOB, Brown, or BNC. Considering this statement and the result shown in Table 2, it seems important to account for why and how Korean learners overuse the verb *make*. Possible explanations are proposed in the sections to follow.

2. Uses of *Make* in the Korean Corpus

Following Altenberg and Granger (2001), I grouped the various meanings of the verb *make* into eight major categories. Table 3 lists the categories and illustrates each with one or more examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. produce sth (result of creation)</td>
<td>Make furniture, make a hole, make a law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. delexical uses</td>
<td>Make a distinction/a decision/a reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. causative uses</td>
<td>Make sb believe sth, make sth possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. earn (money)</td>
<td>Make a fortune, a living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. link verb uses</td>
<td>She will make a good teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. make it (idiomatic)</td>
<td>If we run, we should make it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. phrasal/prepositional</td>
<td>Make out, make up, make out of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. other uses</td>
<td>Make good, make one's way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, I assigned every instance of *make* in the Korean corpus to one of the eight categories of use. For this task, I used WordSmith Tool’s powerful concordance sorting facility, which shows up to three levels of left- and right-sorting, alongside careful manual counting. At this point, it is important to note that assigning each instance to a category was not a straightforward task. There were many ambiguous cases. In particular, the distinction between Category 1, the produce category, and Category 2, the delexical category, was not always clear. One example is *make a friend*. The verb *make* in this phrase does not exactly mean ‘to produce,’ but it is not without any lexical meaning, either. There is an unusually large number of occurrences of *make a friend* in the Korean corpus. This is probably because one of the suggested topics for the writing samples was ‘friendship.’ This is problematic because it could bias the results depending on where it is assigned. Therefore, a decision was made to assign these occurrences to the delexical category and indicate them separately in parentheses. The results of the classification are presented in Table 4.
TABLE 4
Uses of Make by NNS and NS Students Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>KR N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>LOCNESS N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>SW N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>FR N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. produce</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. delexical</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(make friends)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
<td>(15.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. causative</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. earn (money)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. link verb uses</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. make it</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. phrasal/prepositional</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we compare the rank order of the main uses of make in Table 4, all four corpora show some similarity; Category 3, the causative category, is most common, followed by Category 2, the delexical category. The other categories are much less common and the rank orders vary across the corpora.

However, if we compare the relative frequencies of the different categories in the four corpora, we find some big differences. First, the Korean learners used all but Category 1, the produce category, significantly less than the native speakers, SW, or FR. It is interesting to note that learners of lower proficiency level overuse the basic meaning of the verb *make* but underuse the other extended meanings.

The differences might have resulted from the students' proficiency level, but they might be also linked to L1 influence. In order to check the possibility that the Korean students might have been influenced by the uses of the Korean equivalent verb *mandul* - ‘to make,’ I have looked at 1,000 corpus samples with *mandul* from the Yonsei Modern Korean Written Corpus and classified them according to the uses of the verb. The results are given in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Uses of Mandul in Korean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number (%)</th>
<th>Produce (66.6%)</th>
<th>Causative (22.9%)</th>
<th>Change A into B (10% (10.5%))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

As Table 5 shows, the Korean verb *mandul* has some overlapping semantic fields with English *make*, but it has some differences, too. In a majority of cases, *mandul* conveys its basic meaning ‘produce or create.’ This is in marked contrast to the few cases (only 4.8% of all

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2 I am grateful to the Center for Linguistic Informatics Development for providing me with these Korean examples.
instances) of the produce category by English native speakers shown in LOCNESS in Table 4. Another difference is that Korean *mandul-* has not developed delexical or other idiomatic meanings. Consider also that Korean uses the verb *ha-* exclusively as a delexical verb. From all this, we may appreciate some of the problems that Korean learners of English might face in mastering the various uses of the verb *make.* That is, we expect that Korean learners will overuse or overgeneralize the produce or causative categories that they are familiar with in L1, and they will avoid or make errors in the delexical or other idiomatic categories that they are not familiar with.

In the following sections, we will concentrate on the three most frequent categories in the Korean corpus, the produce, delexical, and causative uses, and compare them with the native and other language learner use.

3. ‘Produce’ Uses

The basic meaning of the verb *make* is ‘to produce or create,’ from which all the other uses have developed. This basic meaning is often shared by equivalent verbs in other languages. We expect that learners of English will overuse or overgeneralize the meaning category they are already familiar with in their mother tongue. This will be more so if the learner is of a lower proficiency level. This is exactly what happened in the use of *make* by Korean learners of English. The Korean learners heavily overuse the produce category. The following examples illustrate some typical errors in the Korean corpus:

(3) Director made so many strategies not to make his guests notice the director’s intention.
→ devised

(4) She has a dream that makes international brand like Gucci or Chanel within 20 years.
→ to develop

(5) The DINK, in a sense, seems to make happy marriages….
→ have

Examples (3)–(5) seem to show that the Korean learners over-rely on the core meaning of *make* and extend it to other semantic fields. Or, the errors might have resulted from the influence of L1, since the translated versions of all three are consistent with the Korean equivalent *mandul-.*

4. Delexical Uses

If the produce category is a source for overuse, the delexical category, which is not associated with the Korean *mandul-*, is a major source for underuse or errors for Korean learners. Table 6
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shows all the collocates that occurred at least twice in each corpus. They are listed in decreasing order of frequency. This time, *make a friend* is included.

The first thing we notice in Table 6 is that the Korean learners not only underuse delexical structures but also demonstrate limited variety in the nouns they associate with *make*, compared to the native speakers or Swedish or French learners. Although the smaller size of the Korean corpus is partly responsible for this, it seems that it cannot explain all. The following list shows the nouns that occurred only once in the Korean corpus:

(6) fool, fun, use, compromise, statement, contact, conflict, sacrifice, choice, start, debut, comment, note, score, stop, hit, discovery, reputation, treaty, habit, assumption

The Korean students not only have a limited repertoire in the collocates, but they also misuse them. For instance, Table 6 shows a number of *make* + relationship/communication/conversation combinations, which are collocation errors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KR</th>
<th>LOCNESS</th>
<th>SW</th>
<th>FR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friend(s)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>decision</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mistake(s)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>mistake</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort(s)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>choice</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>argument</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversation(s)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>claim</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friendship</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>point</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>statement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>case</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>best</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>error</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>effort</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>assumption</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>attempt</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>contribution</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>discovery</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>impact</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>judgement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>advance(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>appointment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>attack</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>calculation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>call</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>change</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>comment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>improvement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>love</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>observation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(7) During working hours, we meet many people and make relationships with them.  
→ get into

(8) If you do that, you will make a good communication, and also you that the English  
→ communicate well
  grammar is very easy and interest.
(9) I strongly believe that good grammar make good communication.  
→ makes for
(10) Even if it was a short time, they are making a good conversation and feeling.  
→ had

Another type of error is the misuse of the verb, as in (11)-(12):

(11) But I think it is too hard to make a good score in TOEIC or any other English exam.  
→ achieve
(12) While we are having a mistake, improve in English.  
→ making

In many cases, the verb have seems to be the one that the students often get confused with make,  
as shown in (10) and (12) above.

The last type of error in the delexical uses comes from the use of ‘formulaic expressions.’ The extremely high frequency of make a friend in the Korean corpus can in part be explained by this learner strategy. Consider (13):

(13) We have made friends with each other since middle school days.  
→ have been

Example (13) shows that although Korean students learn the expression make a friend as an idiomatic expression at an early stage of development, they use it as an unanalyzed chunk even at a later stage.

In conclusion, it has been shown that the Korean learners heavily underuse the delexical use of the verb make, and that they are more likely to make errors in this category related to collocation, verb-choice, and so on. It seems that the learners, since they are at a lower proficiency level, have not been exposed to the full range of uses in this category. It is also speculated that the lack of the delexical function in the L1 equivalent has influenced the learners’ performance.
5. Causative Uses

The causative uses of make are another salient category. Causative make can take three types of object complements: adjectives (make me sad), verbs (make us grow), or noun complements (make him a musician). The distribution of these types in the four corpora is given in Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object complement</th>
<th>KR</th>
<th>LOCNESS</th>
<th>SW</th>
<th>FR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjective</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All four language corpora show the same rank order of the relative frequencies of complement types; adjective complements are most common (more than half of the instances), followed by verbs and nouns.

Of the three types of object complements the verb make can take, Altenberg and Granger (2001) give special attention to the verb complements. They subcategorize the verbs into three major semantic categories: relational, mental, and action, as shown in (14)–(16) respectively:

(14) They live in fantasy worlds which make Euro Disney seem uninventive.
(15) I was made to feel guilty and irresponsible.
(16) You can’t make me do anything.

The results are shown in Table 8, with the Korean results added:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb type</th>
<th>KR</th>
<th>LOCNESS</th>
<th>SW</th>
<th>FR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Altenberg and Granger (2001) point out, while the three verb categories are about equally common in the native students’ writing, both SW and FR learners show a significant underuse of
Uses of *Make* in Korean EFL Learner Writing: A Corpus-Based Study

relational verb complements. They provide the following examples with relational verb complements from the LOCNESS which are missing in the learner corpora:

(17) … they are lying to their consumers by making their product seem more intriguing.
(18) This turnabout is an effort to make animal research appear to be more ethical to animal activists.

Table 8 shows that the frequency of relational verb complements is a little higher in the Korean corpus than in the other learner groups. In fact, however, the Korean learners seem to have the same problem as the others; two of the relational verbs are *be*, which are redundancy errors:

(19) Ron Howard's fantastic direction and Russell Crowe’s amazing performances made 'A Beautiful Mind' to be perfect in my view.
(20) He expected the internet could be a good way to make cartoons be popular.

All the other relational verbs are also different from the ones in the LOCNESS:

(21) Childlike innocence especially makes the friendship look better, so people who made a good friend in childhood are lucky so much.
(22) People who don’t need to buy comic books because they can borrow it from those shops and friends. It has been making the cartoon market get smaller.

The complements in (21)–(22) are also relational verbs, but they seem to belong to a different subgroup.

According to Table 4 above, the causative use was the most common of all uses in the Korean learner corpus even though it is not as common as in the other corpora. It seems to be, at least in part, related to the fact that the Korean learners are already familiar with the structure since the Korean verb *mandul-* also has a causative function. Again, this suggests that the Korean learners are likely to overuse or overgeneralize the causative structure. Indeed, we find a number of clumsy sentences resulting from the learner’s overgeneralization strategy. The errors can be grouped into several types. The first type is where the learners avoid the semantically complex single causative verb to use the familiar, easy-to-use causative structure:

(23) The soundtrack includes ‘She’ by Elvis Costello, which makes the singer win worldly fame…. → won the singer
(24) I think maybe this happiness is energy that has made her keep.  
→ has sustained her

(25) Once we are recognized a person who make others offend, they will avoid us and it result a difficulty to make friends and good membership.  
→ offends others

The second type of errors in the causative uses is to use the make causative as an all-around ‘lexical teddy bear’ instead of semantically more appropriate causatives:

(26) This time make us understand each other and produce good result in marriage.  
→ allows us to

(27) this effort can make them enjoy happy marriage life.  
→ can enable them to enjoy

(28) The title of this story is that good telephone manners make you marry a gentleman.  
→ may give you an opportunity to marry

Other errors include complement type errors, as in (29)-(30):

(29) But this guy is made a blind person by a fire of theater.  
→ was made blind

(30) But his willingness make me shame.  
→ made me feel ashamed

Lastly, there is one error which involves the learner’s confusion with the verb make and have:

(31) It has him more nervous.  
→ made

To conclude this section, it seems that the causative uses of make provide familiar, ready-to-use structures for Korean learners, and yet, the convenience is also a source of errors. They tend to overgeneralize its function to other semantic fields, or transfer the causatives of the L1 to the make-causatives.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study has examined a Korean learner corpus to see how basic, high-frequency verbs such
as *make* are used, and compared the results with those by native speakers and two European learner groups as presented in Altenberg and Granger (2001). One limitation of this study is the relatively small size of the Korean corpus. The results, however, show some meaningful tendencies that are worthy of further investigation.

Major findings of this study are as follows: (a) The Korean learners overused high-frequency verbs. The frequency of the verb *make* was much higher than in the other corpora. (b) Among the eight major categories/uses of the verb *make*, all but the produce category, the basic meaning of the verb, were less exploited by the Korean learners than by the other groups. (c) The Korean learners overused the produce category and were likely to make overgeneralization errors. (d) The idiomaticity of the delexical verb use produced a large number of collocation, or verb-choice errors. This may be partly due to the fact that the Korean equivalent *mandul-* does not have the delexical function. And lastly, (e) the causative use was another major source of errors, most of which were overgeneralization errors.

It seems that several factors, including the learners’ low proficiency and L1 transfer, have contributed to producing these results. From the cognitive perspective, a possible explanation would be that the Korean learners maximally utilized their incomplete knowledge of the verb *make* and expanded its functions based on its basic meaning and the uses of the Korean equivalent verb *mandul-*. Thus, learners often overgeneralized the basic or familiar uses, i.e., the produce and causative uses of the verb *make* whereas they avoid or misuse the delexical or other idiomatic uses, which were unfamiliar to them.

The results of this study have implications for English education. First, as Altenberg and Granger (2001) point out, these high-frequency verbs are introduced very early in any English program, but once they have been taught, they tend to be neglected. Thus, learners usually have only a basic knowledge of them even at an advanced level. I suggest that this basic knowledge should be supplemented by subsequent in-depth teaching and learning exercises. In other words, we must balance our approach to meet the twofold objectives of quantitative and qualitative vocabulary improvement. For instance, in order to acquire the wide range of meanings/functions of high-frequency verbs, learners need detailed classroom vocabulary work at later stages, which explores meaning-range and limitation, collocational possibilities and restrictions, sense relations such as antonymy and partial synonymy within lexical sub-systems (Lennon, 1996).

Second, corpus-based exercises from native corpora have been suggested as a useful resource to introduce the complex grammatical and lexical patterns of these high-frequency verbs (Altenberg & Granger, 2001; Gavioli & Aston, 2001). Exercises from native corpora can provide learners with real language samples and allow them to develop an understanding of how the verbs are really used.

Lastly, it should be pointed out that the learners might even benefit from increased awareness
as to areas in which lexico-semantic divisions do not correspond in L1 and L2 (Lennon, 1996).

Learners are often misled by the translation equivalents in their dictionary-based work. Some inclusion of metalinguistic awareness in the classroom may encourage the learners to focus on vocabulary problem areas in production and sensitize them to input in this respect.

This study has important implications for SLA research, too. As a variety of comparable learner corpora are being developed in other languages, there is a need to build the Korean learner corpus of English. A detailed, wide-range of learner corpora will help researchers and teachers better understand the learner’s interlanguage system.

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Kim, Myung-Hee

Myung-Hee Kim
Division of English Language and Culture
Hanyang University
1271 Sa 1-dong, Ansan,
Kyonggi-do, 425-791, Korea
Tel: (031) 400-5342 / Mobile: 016-352-5342
Fax: (031) 717-5342
Email: mhhkim00@hanyang.ac.kr

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