Lexical Errors Caused by Semantic Similarity in Korean

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신성철. 2007. 의미상의 유사성으로 인한 한국어 어휘 오류. *외국어로서의 한국어 교육 32, 141-170.* 본 연구에서는 의미상의 유사성으로 인해 영어권 한국어 학습자가 빈번히 범하는 어휘 오류를 분석, 분류하여 한국어 교육시에 이들 어휘 항목이 가지는 교육적 의의를 논하고 지도방안을 모색하고자 한다. 왕혜숙 (1995)을 비롯한 어휘 오류 분석 연구들은 어휘 오류가 주로 혹은 빈번히 의미상의 유사성에 의한 혼동에 기인하고 있음을 밝히고 있다. 이들 어휘 오류들의 원인은 의미상으로 서로 '경쟁하고 있는' 어휘들의 개념적 차이에 대한 인식의 부족과 관련이 있다. 본 연구는 이들 의미상의 어휘 오류들 분석, 동의어 (일 vs 직업), 의미 및 발음의 유사어 (비판 vs 비평), 의미의 연상어 (수업 vs 교실), 일치관계어 (결혼 짝 vs 결혼 상대자) 등 여섯 가지로 분류하여 논한다. 이들 어휘와 관련한 학습자들의 혼동은 그 의미상의 유사성 때문만이 아니라 학습자가 받는 교육과 교육자료(예: 학습자 사전)의 적절성에 기인할 수 있음을 주장한다. 의미상의 미묘한 차이로 인해 일어나는 학습자의 어휘 오류에 대해 한국어 교육자의 주의를 환기시키고 혼돈을 최소화하기 위해 교재 개발시나 교정 교육시 도움이 될 수 있는 몇가지 방법을 제시한다.

(뉴사우스웨일즈대)

핵심어: 어휘 오류 (lexical errors), 유사의미 오류 (errors of semantic similarity), 어휘 교육 (vocabulary teaching)

1. Introduction

This paper presents findings of an analysis of lexical errors caused by semantic similarity and discusses pedagogical implications for teaching of vocabulary in Korean as a foreign or second language (KFL/KSL). It has been reported (e.g. Wang 1995; S-C. Shin 2002; Lee, 2003)[1] that

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[1] The subjects in Wang's study (1995) found 'lexical shift/code switch' (24%) and 'similar meaning' (23%) most difficult, but Wang admits that most errors in 'lexical/shift/code switch' were caused in the compositions on two particular topics (racism and impact of TV) and thus the most problematic type of error in an overall and practical sense was 'similar meaning'.

lexical errors are caused most frequently or mainly by confusion based on semantic similarity. These lexical errors are related to a lack of knowledge of the conceptual differences between the competing words.[2] KFL/KSL learners in general feel great difficulties in differentiating lexical items with similar meaning, and the difficulties are primarily associated with the definitional concepts and semantic restrictions (Sohn, 1986: 499).

James (1998: 150) defines the semantic errors as "'conceptual' errors, where learners use forms that exist in the TL [target language] but these forms do not represent the meanings they wish to express." In identifying lexical errors in Korean, this study has adapted the James' definition and is limited to the semantic errors made in regard to the content words and their meanings only, thereby excluding other levels of errors such as spelling errors (e.g. *wi.sa* for *uy.sa* 'doctor'), morphological errors (*nwu.kwu.ka* for *nwu.ka* 'who') and grammatical errors (e.g. functional items like case particles).

Based on the definition of lexical (semantic) errors provided by James (1998), this study has attempted to refine the working definition of 'errors of semantic similarity' as follows: *Errors of semantic similarity* occur, where a lexical item with a similar concept or semantic element is used, and such an item does not fit precisely with another pair of items in the sentence, though communicable and sometimes broadly acceptable. This type of error is often caused when there is confusion between two similar meanings in L2 as they share some semantic features or when the learner is unaware of the delicate conceptual difference between the competing items, as shown in (1) and (2) below.

(1)   Ce.nun *ca.sik.un (a.i.tul.ul)* an coh.a.ha.ni.kka…
        'As I don't like *children…*'
        ca.sik: 'one's own children' vs *a.i.tul*: 'children in general/boys and girls'.

(2)   Ho.cu.nun in.ku.ka *cak.a.yo (cek.e.yo).*
        'As for Australia, the population is *small.*'
        cak-: 'small in height/short' vs *cek-*: 'small in number'

In the following I will first present some noun examples of lexical errors of semantic similarity by category, along with attempts to explain the cause of such errors. The lexical errors presented in this study are part of 310 lexical errors identified out of 167 examination papers collected for a larger project from three tertiary institutions offering KFL/KSL programs. The examples have been extracted from the full sentences produced by English L1-KFL learners in their

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[2] In this paper I will use term 'competing' to refer to the state of two or more lexical items causing psycholinguistic difficulties or confusion to L2 learners in differentiating the usage due to the semantic and/or formal similarities.

compositions. I will then discuss some pedagogical implications and strategies to deal with such problematic lexical items.

2. Errors of Semantic Similarity: Categorical Examples

This section presents categorical examples[3] of lexical errors caused by semantic similarity. James (1998: 144) claims that there are two categories of semantic errors: confusion of sense relations and collocational errors. The basic distinction proposed by James (ibid.) is a good starting point for categorising lexical errors caused by semantic similarity although an individual investigation may need to modify or subcategorise the classification to suit its own aims and needs. This study has examined the characteristics of the erroneous use of a lexical item based on a number of semantic aspects such as its semantic value, its semantic or situational restrictions, its semantic and morphological associations, its derivational origin, its connotations and its frequency. In this study, word groups that contain lexical errors caused by semantic similarity are categorised into six: synonymic words, words of similar meaning and pronunciation, words of semantic association, words of derivational association, specific words and words of concord relationship. The lists present examples with significant frequency and implications, but they are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. The correct forms are given in parentheses, with the intended meanings in single-quotation marks (' '). Detailed explanations are made for some examples that need more linguistic and pedagogical attention.

2.1. Synonymic Words

Some lexical errors can be caused by occasional or consistent confusion due to the semantic similarity. These errors are related to a lack of knowledge of the conceptual differences between the competing words, rather than the resulting from random choice or complete ignorance of the meanings. From the learners' point of view such confusions could be attributable to the nature of input or instruction they have received or to a lack of appropriate materials (e.g. a 'good' learner dictionary). Observe the following examples.

(3)   Cha.ha.ko cip.ha.ko *il*.ul *(>cik.ep*.i*)* eps.i kyel.hon ha.ya.ci (ha.ci) ma.sey.yo.
       'You shouldn't marry without a car, house and *job* (<*work*).'

(4)   Po.thong *il.kkwun*.i *(>cik.cang.in.tul*.i*)…* 5.ssi (si) o.hu (o.hu 5.si kka.ci) il.ul ap.ni.ta
       (hap.ni.ta). 'Usually *employees* (<*labourers)* work until 5 in the afternoon.'

(5)   Pa.ppun *hwal.tong (>il)* pyel.lo eps.sup.ni.ta.

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[3] Due to the limited space, this section will focus on noun examples.

'There is not much busy *thing* (<*activity*).'

The learners failed to differentiate the conceptual differences between: 1) *il* 'work' and *cik.ep* 'job'; 2) *il.kkwun* 'labourer' and *cik.cang.in* 'employed person'; and 3) *il* 'thing (as a matter/affair)' and *hwal.tong* 'activity'. This kind of confusion is observed in the use of many other synonymic pairs or groups of words, for example, *hyu.il* 'a holiday', *hyu.ka* 'leave of absence', *pang.hak* 'school vacation' and *kong.hyu.il* 'a public holiday' are all related to 'holiday', but they have subtle differences in usage, which are discernible in actual contexts. Likewise, the lexical group that needs to be clarified and internalised in a more concrete concept includes the synonymic words of 'work' and 'workers' as follows:

> *il* 'work', *cik.ep* 'job', *cik.cang* 'workplace', *chwi.cik* 'getting a job', *ca.li* 'position' or 'place' and *il* as a secondary or functional meaning 'a matter, thing, or experience'; *il.kkwun* 'labourer', *no.tong.ca* 'labourer (more formal and broader than *il.kkwun*)', *cik.cang.in* 'employed person', *hoy.sa.wen* 'complany employee', *ko.yong.in* 'employee, and *in.pwu* 'sundry labourer'

2.2. Words of Similar Meaning and Sound

While the above group of words represents lexical items with multiple expansions, the next lexical error examples contain competing pairs of words with similarity in meaning and pronunciation. Observe the examples in (6), (7) and (8).

(6) *Pi.phyeng*.lul (>*pi.nan*.ul) ha.myen an coh.a.yo.
     'It's not good to *criticise unfavourably* (<*critically review*).'

(7) *Sey.sang*.ey.se (>*sey.kyey*.ey) cal al.lye.ci.nun (al.lye.cin) pak.mwul.kwan.kwa
     kwung.cen.tul.i ne.mwu manh.sup.ni.ta. 'There are so many museums and palaces that
     are well known to *the world* (<*the society*).'

(8) Ho.cwu.nun yu.lep kath.un *cen.sel*.ul (>*cen.thong*.ul) ta.la.ka.yo. (tta.la.ka.yo)
     'Australia follows the European *tradition* (<*legend*).'

The erroneous use of *pi.phyeng* 'criticism, comment, review' to mean 'criticism, blame, reproach' in (6), *sey.sang* 'the world, society, the public' to mean 'the world, the earth, international' in (7), and *cen.sel* 'legend, tradition' to mean 'tradition, convention' in (8) are obviously due to a failure to differentiate the competing pairs of words with delicate semantic distinctions. This group of words partly shares orthographic and phonological components as well as semantic components, which fact apparently makes it more difficult for learners to distinguish the semantic similarities. For instance, the three lexical items of *pi.phan* 'criticism, judgement'

along with *pi.nan* 'criticism, denunciation' and *pi.phyeng* 'criticism, review' in (6) are so close in both aspects that even L1 speakers of Korean often find it difficult to give a clear definition and distinguish the conceptual differences.

2.3. Words of Semantic Association

Another group of errors is attributable to association by semantic similarity. This is the case where the learners have chosen words semantically associated with the correct forms, words that are not completely out of context, but still do not fit completely in the context, as illustrated in (9), (10), (11) and (12).

(9)   He.yong.chi.po.ta manh.un kes.i (kes.un) *kwan.sey*.lul (>*sey.kum*.ul) nay.ya hay.yo. 'You must pay *tax* (<*tariff*) on things that are over the permissible quantity.'
(10)   *Swu.ep*.ey (>*kyo.sil*.ey.se) tam.pay.lul phi.wu.lye.myen (phi.wu.myen) an tway.yo. 'You should not smoke a cigarette in the *classroom* (<*class*).'
(11)   Hoy.sa.ka pyeng.wen.pi.kwa (wa) *po.swu*.kka.ci (>*po.sang.kum*.kka.ci) ton.ul nayp.ni.ta (ci.pwul.hap.ni.ta).
       'The company pays medical costs and even *compensation* (<*reward*).
(12)   *Uy.kyen*.i (>*sayng.kak*.i) pyen.kyeng.toy.ess.e.yo (pa.kkwi.ess.e.yo).
       'My *mind* (<*opinion*) has changed.'

These erroneous nouns chosen have certain semantic associations with the correct ones, but in terms of concepts they are not competing pairs but semantically contiguous or neighbouring nouns. The erroneous uses of *kwan.sey* 'tariff' instead of *sey.kum* 'tax' in (9), *swu.ep* 'class work' instead of *kyo.sil* 'classroom' in (10), *po.swu* 'reward' instead of *po.sang.kum* 'compensation' in (11) and *uy.kyen* 'opinion' instead of *sayng.kak* 'thought, idea' in (12), are all about the definitional concepts inherent in the nouns involved, and in each case the correct vocabulary is replaced with their associated nouns.

2.4. Words of Derivational Association: 'Time Words'

Some errors of semantic similarity were caused by the confusion between words sharing the semantic origin, particularly between time-related nouns: between *si* 'o'clock' and s*i.kan* 'period of time', between *si.kan* and *si.cel* 'season', and between *wel* 'month of the year' and *kay.wel* 'period of month, as illustrated in (13), (14), (15) and (16) below.

(13)   Tay.hak.kyo.kka.ci 1.*si*.pan.ey (>1.*si.kan* pan.i) kel.lip.ni.ta.
       'It takes 1 *hour* (<*o'clock*) and a half to [go to] the university.'

(14)   O.nul o.hwu 3.*si.kan*.ey (>3.*si*.ey) tay.hak.kyo.ey (tay.hak.kyo.ey.se) man.na.ca.
       'Let's meet at university at 3 *o'clock* (<*hour*) this afternoon.'

(15) Ca.yu.*si.cel*.i (>*si.kan*.i) eps.ta.ko pwa.yo.
    'I think there is no free *time* (<*season*).'

(16) Ip.sa.ha.ci (ip.sa.han.ci) 6.*wel*.i (>6.*kay.wel*.i) twayss.e.yo.
    'It has been 6 *months* (<*6th month/June*) since (I) joined the company.'

These kinds of errors are frequently observed in learners' expressions, and the confusion is greatly affected by the combination of three factors. The nouns have derivational association in terms of their semantic origin (i.e. *si* vs *si.kan/si.cel*, *wel* vs *kay.wel*), thus sharing not only the semantic components but also orthographic (spelling) and phonological (pronunciation) components. In addition to this, the use of Arabic numerals would add greater confusion in understanding the usage and construction of time-related phrases.

2.5. Specific Words: 'Korean' and 'Family'

Another category of confusion that is worth mentioning relates to some specific words that give confusion to KFL learners in relation with their usage and semantic distinction. Here I take two ordinary nouns that are frequently used by learners: 'Korean' and 'family'. Observe the examples in (17), (18), (19) and (20).

(17) *Han.kwuk* (>*han.kwuk.e)* swu.ep si.kan.ey.
    'In a *Korean language* (<*Korea*) class'

(18) *Han.kwuk.ka.cok.uy cip*.un (>*han.kwuk.in ka.ceng*.un).
    '*A Korean home/household* (<*Korea(n) family members' house*)'

(19) Coh.un *ka.cok*.ul (>*ka.ceng*.ul) man.tul.ko siph.sup.ni.ta.
    'I would like to make a nice *home* (<*family members*).'

(20) *Han.kwuk.cip*.un (>*han.kwuk.in ka.ceng*.un).
    '*A Korean home/household* (<*Korea(n) house*)'

The English word 'Korean' is interpreted in a number of ways in everyday contexts. It may be interpreted as *han.kwuk.in* or *han.kwuk sa.lam* 'Korean person' or *han.kwuk.e* or *han.kwuk.mal* 'Korean language' by itself, but it is also expressed as *han.kwuk* to indicate the adjective 'Korean' or possessive 'Korea's' in the attributive position of a noun phrase, as in *han.kwuk kyeng.cey* 'Korean/Korea's economy'. The semantic distinction and usage become clearer in the context where the word is used. Similarly, the English word 'family' can be a source of confusion, particularly when it is used with an attributive word, e.g. *Korean*, *good*, etc. It translates *ka.cok* 'one's family' or 'family member', but it also covers *ka.ceng* 'home', which then brings further confusion with a semantically associated noun *cip* 'home' or 'house' as shown in (19). In addition,

ka.cok and *ka.ceng* share a common morpheme (i.e. Sino-Korean morpheme, *ka* 'house, home') and partly share the form and sound (i.e. *ka* and *ce-/co-*), which can make the learners more confused about the usage. Thus, the source of confusion in this case appears to be the combination of more than one factor. It appears to be due to the different referential application of the English and Korean terms as well as to insufficient knowledge about the subtle definitional differences and the usage. In reality, it is unusual for an English and a Korean term to share exactly the same range of connotations (or even denotations). But from the opposite aspect, the confusion might also have been affected by induced factors where the students were not provided with clear-cut instructional input including usage and practice. In general, not all these words with semantically similar but different referential and lexical domains are taught to KFL/KSL learners and the learners often find them by themselves in dictionaries. Learners conceptualise words through not only textbooks but also dictionaries, and overuse of dictionaries is relevant to production of errors. Then, perhaps inadequacy of dictionary entries or lack of examples of usage has exacerbated the problem.

2.6. Words of Concord Relationship

Still other errors caused by semantic similarity include some word groups in concord relation (Chun and Kim 1994), as shown in (21) and (22) below.

(21) Il.pon *kwan.kwang.in*.tul.i (>*kwan.kwang.kayk.tul.i*) manh.ess.sup.ni.ta
(manh.ass.sup.ni.ta). 'There were many Japanese *tourists* (<*tourism workers*).'

(22) Kyel.hon *ccak*.ul (>*sang.tay.lul*) man.na.nun ke.ka swip.ci anh.ki ttay.mwun.ey.
'Because it is not easy to meet a marriage *partner* (<*pair/mate*)'

This group of errors contain words in pairs where one of the components was erroneously replaced with a similar lexical item. Learners often attempt to generalise what they have learnt and in this case, one of the pairs of items that carries definitional or associated semantic similarity was overgeneralised or wrongly applied.

In addition to noun errors, verb errors caused by confusion of similar meaning also presented various semantic features. Below is a list of some typical examples of semantically competing verbs that often provide a source of verb errors.

(23) Examples of Competing Verbs:
ka.po.ta 'to go and see' vs. *po.ta* 'to see'
o.ta 'to come' vs. *tol.a.o.ta* 'to come back'
o.lu.ta 'to rise, go up' vs. *nul.ta* 'to increase'
cung.ka.ha.ta 'to increase' vs. *ke.ci.ta* 'to get bigger/larger';

cak.ta. 'to be small in height' vs. *cek.ta* 'to be small in number'
ssu.ta 'use' vs. *i.yong.ha.ta* 'make good use of';
si.khi.ta 'order' vs. *pwu.thak.ha.ta* 'do someone a favour'
nulk.ta 'to be old (animate) vs. *nalk.ta* (to be old (inanimate)
sal.ta 'live' vs. *me.mwu.lu.ta* 'stay'
ke.cel.ha.ta 'refuse, reject, decline' vs. *ke.pwu.ha.ta* 'refuse, reject
pyen.ha.ta 'undergo a change' vs. *pa.kkwi.ta* 'be changed, replaced, alternated'
ma.si.ta 'to drink' vs. *sam.khi.ta* 'to swallow'

Lexical errors of semantic similarity are also found in other classes of words such as verbs (e.g. *ssu.ta* 'use' vs *i.yong.ha.ta* 'make good use of'), adjectival verbs (e.g. *ki.ppu.ta* 'be glad' vs *cul.kep.ta* 'be pleasant') and adverbs (e.g. *cik.cep* 'directly' vs *kot.cang* 'straight').[4] The above erroneous uses are only a few examples that show errors replacing correct lexical items with incorrect or inappropriate ones with similar semantic components. The errors observed thus far are largely developmental errors based on the learners' previous but insufficient knowledge. Some errors are intralingual and attributable to confusion about semantically competing items, and other errors appear to be induced by the lack of clear explanations about the subtle differences of similar items (Stenson, 1974). KFL/KSL learners' confusion or inability to distinguish two or more competing lexical items which share semantic and/or formal components has implications in teaching and in the following section I will further explore lexical errors based on similarity.

3. Pedagogical Strategies

The lexical errors observed above are caused by confusion or ignorance of similar meaning. In addition to similarity in meaning, similarity in form (i.e. spelling and pronunciation) also contributes to a considerable proportion of lexical errors. Based on this observation, this study intends to group the words that produce lexical errors caused by similarity into three: words of similar meaning, words of similar meaning and form, and words of similar form. As a practical approach to these semantic errors, I will now present the usage and examples of the problematic lexical items that are attributable to semantic and formal similarities, and make some suggestions for pedagogical strategies.

3.1. Words of Similar Meaning

I have identified a number of lexical items where a word was erroneously replaced with an incorrect word with similar meaning. A lot of words used by learners share certain semantic components with the correct words or associate semantically with them. For pedagogical

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[4] For discussions on acceptability of some of these lexical items, see S-C. Shin (2006).

purposes it is useful and necessary to identify those competing words that appear not only in learners' compositions but also in other sources within the range of their expected learning, and to clarify their semantic boundary and usage. There follow some examples of such competing words produced in the learners' compositions.

(24) a. *ca.sik*: 'one's own children'; specific
     a.i.tul: 'children'; general

   b. *swu.ep*: 'instruction, class work, lesson'
      kyo.sil: 'classroom'

   c. *uy.kyen*: 'opinion, view'
      sayng.kak: 'thinking, thought, idea, notion, concept'

   d. *pang.hak:* 'school holidays, vacation'; for educational contexts
      hyu.ka: 'holidays, leave of absence; for employment contexts

   e. *ceng.mwun*: 'front gate, main entrance'; public venue
      tay.mwun: 'front gate, main entrance'; private, big house.

   f. *il.kkwun*: 'labourer, worker'; usually physical, agricultural, irregular
      cik.cang.in: 'employee'; usually semi-skilled or professional, regular

   g. *ol.lu.ta*: 'to go up, ascend, rise'; sun, mountain, vehicle, price, status, etc.
      nul.ta: 'to increase, multiply, gain'; number, quantity, weight, etc.

   h. *nulk.ta*: 'to grow old, be old'; people
      nalk.ta: 'to grow old, be old; objects – e.g. clothes, furniture, car, etc.
      o.lay toy.ta: 'to be of long standing; period of time, objects; *o.layn* – 'friend'.

   i. *ppal.li*: 'quickly'; a short time to take in doing an action
      kot.pa.lo: 'immediately'; straight after an action

   j. *nal*: 'day, date'; used with native-Korean(NK) numbers; independent
      il: 'day, date'; used with Sino-Korean (SK) numbers; dependent.

   k. *tal*: 'the moon, month'; primarily with NK numbers; independent
      wel: 'the moon, month'; primarily with SK numbers; dependent

   l. *sal*: 'years of age'; primarily with NK numbers; limitedly animals
      sey: 'years of age'; primarily with SK numbers; not for animals

These examples of competing words are often observed in students' routine compositions as well, and it is pedagogically useful to identify the competing pairs that cause or are likely to cause confusions which lead to production of errors due to the semantic similarity. (25) below lists some examples of the competing pair words along with brief indications of their semantic

boundary and examples of usage. The translations given are based on intended (i.e. correct) utterances.

(25) *ka.kyek*: 'price', mainly used with Sino-Korean nouns
      kaps: 'price', more broadly used; often used with native-Korean nouns

    a. *cip kaps* (o) *cip ka.kyek* (?) 'housing price'
    b. *cwu.thayk ka.kyek* (o) *cwu.thayk kaps* (?) 'housing price'

kam.ta: 'wind, wear, roll'; thin and long objects
mal.ta: 'roll'; a thin but a little wide object into a round shape.

    a. Nakk.si.cwul.ul *mal.ki.ka* e.lye.wess.e.yo. (x) *kam.ki.ka* (o)
      'It was difficult to roll fishing lines.'
    b. 'Twu si.kan tong.an kim.pap.ul *kam.ass.e.yo*. (x) *mal.ass.e.yo* (o)
      'I have rolled kimpap for two hours.'

kwan.sim: 'interest', concerned about a thing, so wish to know more about it
hung.mi: 'interest', wish to know more about something for fun

    a. Han.kwuk tu.la.ma.ey *hung.mi.ka* iss.e.yo. (o) *kwan.sim.i* (o)
      'I am *interested* in Korean soap operas.'
    b. Ka.nan.han sa.lam.ey.key *hung.mi.ka* manh.ta. (x) *kwan.sim.i* (o)
      'He/she is very *interested* in the poor.'

kwu.ha.da: seek/obtain something/someone by making considerable efforts
et.ta: obtain something/someone by chance

    a. A.lu.pa.i.thu.lul *et.sup.ni.ta*. (x) *kwu.hap.ni.ta* (o)
      'I am *looking for* a part-time job.'
    b. Kyeng.lyek sa.wen *et.um* (x) *kwu.ham* (o)
      'An experienced person is (lit. employee) *wanted.*

kwulk.ta: 'thick', mainly a big and lengthy object, but not wide in surface
twu.kkep.ta: 'thick', bulky and thick between surfaces, but not lengthy

    a. Pas.cwul.i *twu.kke.we.se* cap.ki.ka him.tul.ess.ta (x) *kwulk.e se* (o)
      'The rope was so thick that it was hard for me to hold.'
    b. Ku sa.cen.un a.cwu *kwulk.e.yo*. (x) *twu.kke.we.yo* (o)
      'The dictionary is very thick.'

ki.lu.ta: 'bring up, foster, raise', focused on stature and length
khi.wu.ta: 'bring up, foster, raise', focused on size and quantity

    a. A.i.tul.ul *khi.wu.ki.ka* him.tul.e.yo. (o) *ki.lu.ki.ka* (o)
      'It's difficult to raise children.'
    b. Cey chwi.mi.nun kkoc.na.mu *khi.wu.nun* ke.yey.yo. (x) *ki.lu.nun* (o)
      'My hobby is cultivating floral plants.'
    c. Kkwum.ul *ki.lu.nun* sa.lam.un seng.kong.han.ta. (x) *khiw.u.nun* (o)
      'The person who fosters his/her dream will succeed.'

ki.ppu.ta: feel excited and happy about a specific event and occasion
cul.kep.ta: feel pleasant about activities in general

    a. Wu.li.pan.ey.se 1.tung.ul.hay.se *cul.ke.we.yo.* (x) ki.ppe.yo (o)
      'I am happy because I won the top place in our class.'
    b. O.nul a.cwu *ki.ppu.key* nol.ass.e.yo. (x) *cul.kep.key* (o)
      'I have had a very good time today (lit, have played pleasantly).'

The above list contains only a few examples of lexical items with similar meaning, but it demonstrates the importance of identification and clarification of semantically similar words that cause confusions which most likely end up with erratic replacement. It will be necessary to reinforce the usage of these competing words by demonstrating the match or mismatch with accompanying lexical components, i.e. whether they are in a co-occurrence relationship.

3.2. Words of Similar Meaning and Form

The above subsection has demonstrated the practical and potential confusions that are caused by the definitional or semantic similarity. What makes learners more confused, however, is the case where not only the meaning of competing words but also their forms are similar. These words share both semantic and orthographic components, and thus appear to cause greater confusions in psycholinguistic aspects. A large portion of these pairs of words come from the same or associated semantic origin in essence but are cases where their semantic domain has been diversified, shifted or expanded to more specific and detailed aspects. These types of words puzzle not just KFL/KSL learners but also Korean L1 speakers in distinguishing one from another. In some general contexts these paired words may be interchangeable, but in a specific context only one of them matches with the particular context or the co-occurring lexical component, with a substitution with its counterpart ending up with the production of errors. The current error data presented earlier have identified a considerable number of such 'double trouble' cases, and some of the examples are listed in (26) below.

(26)
    ka.cok: 'a family, members of a family'; focused on people
    ka.ceng: 'home, a family, a household'; home as an establishment

    pi.nan: 'criticism, blame, reproach'
    pi.phan: 'criticism, judgement, comment'

    sey.sang: 'the world, society'
    sey.kyey: 'the world, the earth, the universe'

sup.kwan:	'one's habit, a custom'; individual
kwan.sup:	'conventional custom'; societal
ce.ki:	'that place, over there; both the speaker and hearer seeing
ke.ki:	'that place, there'; the speaker referring; may be unseen
cik.ep:	'one's occupation, vocation, job'
cik.cang:	'one's workplace, post, job'
hyu.il:	'a holiday, day off, rest day'; general
hyu.ka:	'holidays, leave of absence'; usually for employees
kong.hyu.il:	'a public holiday'
ke.cel.ha.ta:	'to refuse, reject, decline, turn down'
ke.pwu.ha.ta:	'to refuse, reject, deny, disapprove'
al.a.cwu.ta:	'to understand, appreciate, acknowledge'
al.lye.cwu.ta:	'to tell, let someone know'
cak.ta:	'to be small'; volume, length and size
cek.ta:	'to be few'; number and quantity
coh.ta:	'to be good, to like'
coh.a.ha.ta:	'to like'
ci.nay.ta:	'to pass, spend (time), live, get along'
ci.na.ta:	'to pass by, go past, pass through'

Competing pairs of words that share both semantic and graphic components become more complicated as lexical items become more elaborated or specialized according to the specific context or referent. For instance, *pyen.ha.da* 'to change, become different, be altered', which is often confused with *pa.kkwu.ta* 'to exchange, convert, change, alter', carry a variety of associated lexical items that were all derived from the same stem, e.g. *pyen.kyeng.ha.ta* 'to alter, change, modify', *pyen.tong.ha.ta* 'to change, alter, fluctuate', *pyen.hwa.ha.ta* 'to undergo a change, alter, vary', *pyen.hyeng.ha.ta* 'to change into, be transformed into', *pyen.cil.ha.ta* 'to change in quality, degenerate', *pyen.cel.ha.ta* 'to change sides/one's principles' and *pyen.sim.ha.ta* 'to change one's mind'. Each of these words has its own referent that it co-occurs with, and it is important for the learners to be aware of not only the semantic boundary or restrictions but also the matching referent that is in a concord relationship. This is particularly relevant to learners at an upper or advanced level as such courses normally introduce topics and tasks that require the use of elaborated words which need a distinctive clarification.

3.3. Words of Similar Form

Unlike the above two cases, some confusions are attributable to the formal similarity of the competing words, and in such cases, the learners erroneously apply the incorrect word that has little or no semantic relations but only shares certain formal components with the correct one. This case is different from that of homonyms in that the written forms and pronunciations of competing pair of words are not the same but similar. It may overlap with aspects of orthographic errors but it is largely different from spelling errors in that the production of errors in this case is not due to an orthographic or phonological shift but due mainly to the mismatch between the learner's intention and the outcome of the intention, and this is related to the understanding about the definitional or semantic differences between competing words that are similar in form. Some examples identified in KFL compositions include: *kes* 'a thing' vs *kos* 'a place', *kel.li.ta (kel.lye.yo)* '(it) takes (time) vs *ket.ta (kel.e.yo)* 'to walk', *kwang.ko.hak* 'study of advertisement' vs *kwan.kwang.hak* 'study of tourism', and *ic.e.pe.li.ta* 'to have forgotten' vs *ilh.e.pe.li.ta* 'to have lost'.

Many of the cases appear to be trivial to Korean L1 speakers but in some cases even Korean L1 speakers often get mixed up with the incorrect pair. For example, *ic.e.pe.li.ta* 'to have forgotten' vs *ilh.e.pe.li.ta* 'to have lost' is one of the pairs to which both Korean L1 speakers and L2 learners need to pay attention. (27) below lists some more examples.

(27)   *ka.lu.chi.ta*: 'to teach, instruct, tell'
        ka.li.khi.ta: 'to point at, indicate, show'

   a. Han.kwuk.mal com *ka.lu.chye* cwu.sey.yo. (o) *ka.li.khye* (x)
      'Please teach me some Korean.'
   b. Si.cheng ka.nun kil com *ka.li.khye* cwu.sey.yo. (o) *ka.lu.chye* (x)
      'Please show (indicate) me how to get the city hall.'
   c. I.lum com *ka.li.khye* cwu.sey.yo. (x) *ka.lu.chye* (o)
      'Please tell me your name.'

mac.chwu.ta: 'fix, put gether, make it tally, adjust, compare'
mac.hi.ta: 'guess, make hit the mark'

   a. Tap.ul.*mac.chwu.e* po.ca. (o) *mac.hi.e* (x)
      'Let's check the answers.'
   b. I.pen.un nay.ka tap.ul te *mac.hyess.ta*. (o) *mac.chwu.ess.ta* (x)
      'I have more correct answers this time.'

ssu.i.ta: 'write, be written; be spent; be used; be concerned'
ssuy.wu.ta: 'put something on, cover; impute (a guilt) to'

   a. Ku so.sel.un sip.nyen cen.ey *ssu.yess.ta*. (o) *ssuy.wess.ta* (x)

'The novel was written ten years ago.'
  b. Ye.ca a.i.han.they nay mo.ca.lul *ssuy.we* cwu.ess.ta (o) *ssu.ye* (x)
    'I put my hat on a little girl.'

In some cases, the possible lexical errors of similar form need to be considered along with orthographic errors. One erroneous graphic or phonological shift produces a lot of competing lexical pairs with similar form which can be treated as orthographic errors with completely different semantic components. For example, an erroneous production of *mol.ta* 'to drive (vehicle)' can take the form of *mwul.ta* 'to bite', *mel.ta* 'to be far', *mal.ta* 'to roll' or even *mil.ta* 'to push'. Also, *col.ta* 'to doze' can be produced erroneously in such a form as *cwul.ta* 'to get smaller/decrease', *cel.ta* 'limp in, get salted' or *cal.ta* 'to be fine, small, tiny'. There are a considerable number of pairs or groups of words that have such a formal similarity in Korean, and it is worth identifying them for remedial and general teaching purposes.

Where applicable, a co-occurrence strategy which presents competing words with matching lexical items will give learners a succinct but clearer idea about the usage of potentially problematic words. For instance, *pyeng* 'bottle', *chim.tay* 'bed' and *nam.pi* 'pot' match with *ma.kay* 'stopper, cork', *teph.kay* 'cover' and *ttwu.kkeng* 'lid', respectively, and at the same time they have concord relationships with different verbs to mean 'to close' or 'to open': *mak.ta/tta.ta* 'to cork/uncork', *teph.ta/ket.ta* 'to cover/uncover' and *tat.ta yel.ta* 'to close/open', respectively. In fact, there are plenty of cases where concord relationships need to be emphasised in Korean (Chun and Kim 1994) and their types are various as well. Matching words that co-occur is one strategy to minimise lexical confusions and errors but a significant strategy to utilise in dealing with errors that are mainly caused by mismatch such as errors of similarities.

3.4. Suggestions for Practical Strategies

The usage and examples of problematic lexical items presented above can be utilised in a number of different ways when designing teaching materials and conducting a class. It is largely up to individual instructors to choose and decide how such problematic pairs or groups of lexical items should be presented and practised, although it is helpful to take note of convincing suggestions.

Norrish (1983: 94-96) suggests four general steps for remedial teaching and they can be summarised like this: 1) demonstrate errors; 2) demonstrate correct forms and explain; 3) practice exercise; and 4) practice activities. This procedure can be immediately applicable to most error contexts and for other contexts, it provides a basic framework to modify. Bearing the procedure

in mind, I will briefly present some types of practical exercises for remedial class with a particular focus on the usage of lexical items with semantic and formal similarities.

1) Slot-filling drills: Students are given a hand-out with slot-filling exercises and asked to fill the slot with the correct lexical item. Alternatively, if a student uses an incorrect lexical item, the instructor writes their sentence on the board with the offending item left blank and has the class fill the blank with the correct item.

◊ Lexical items: a.i.tul and ca sik 'children' – general and specific.
a. _____i.kong.wen.ey.se.nol.ko isse.yo
b. _____i.eps.u.myen no.nyen.ey oy.lowul. kes kath.a.yo.

2) Correction of errors: Students are asked to correct incorrect or inappropriate lexical items. This exercise is useful in that students themselves evaluate their knowledge on the usage of lexical items by identifying and correcting wrong ones.

◊ Lexical items: ka.lu.chi.ta 'teach' and ka.li.khi.ta 'point at'
a. Col.ep.ha.ko han.kwuk.ey.se yeng.e.lul ka.li.khi.ko.siph.e.yo.
b. Si.cheng ka.nun kil com ka.lu.chye cwu.sey.yo.

3) Substitution drills: An intensive way of practising the usage of a problematic lexical item is to get students to substitute nominals with other nominals that they choose. In each substitution students should choose a correct lexical item in accordance with the situation. Instructors should prepare a series of key sentences and some lists of nominals to substitute with for each sentence. Alternatively students may be given some visual materials to work with for either spoken or written production.

◊ Lexical items: *ic.ta* 'forget' / *ic.e.pe.li.ta* 'have forgotten' and *ilh.ta* 'lose' / *ilh.e.pe.li.ta* 'have lost'
a. mwe ilh.e.pe.lyess.e.yo?
a'. (ci.kap, ton, chayk, ka.pang, etc.) _____.
b. E.cey chin.kwu.ha.ko man.nal yak.sok.ul ic.e.pe.lyess.e.yo.
b'. Ku.lay.yo? Na.nun (suk.cey nay.nun kes, chayk pan.whan.ha.nun kes, cen.hwa.pi nay.nun kes, etc.) ul/lul _____.

4) Choice between lexical items: In this exercise, students are given a list of several meaningful sentences with options of competing lexical items in the brackets and asked to choose the correct one.

◊ Lexical items: *hyu.il, hyu.ka, pang.hak* 'holiday'
a. Cik.cang.in.tul.un cwu.lo ye.lum.ey (hyu.il, hyu.ka, pang.hak)-ul/lul kan.ta.
b. I.pen kye.wul (hyu.il, hyu.ka, pang.hak)ey wu.li pan.ey.se ney myeng-i han.kwuk.e.lul kong.pwu.ha.le han.kwuk.ey kan.ta.
c. Ta.um cwu kum.yo.il.i (hyu.il, hyu.ka, pang.hak) in.tey tung.san.i.na kal.kka.yo?

5) Matching to make sentences: In this exercise, students are asked to match each noun/phrase in 'A' with the most suitable lexical items in 'B' and make sentences that give new information by giving an appropriate forms and expressions. Students are first asked to make simple sentences and then slightly longer sentences by adding more constituents.

◊ Lexical items: cak.ta, cek.ta, o.lu.ta, nul.ta, nulk.ta, nalk.ta, etc.

A	B
a. ka.kyek	cek.ta
b. ka.kwu	nul.ta
c. Yonsswu-uy khi	o.lu.ta
d. Il.han kyeng-hem	nulk.ta
e. han.kwuk.e mal.ha.ki	cak.ta
f. hal.a.pe.ci	nalk.ta

Individual exercises and intensive drilling on a focused lexical item has merit, but I must emphasise here that I do not intend to promote an outmoded structuralist approach to pedagogy. Rather I recognise that intensive repetition of target items and making conceptual features salient to learners are still important in foreign language pedagogy. It is important that where possible instructors should move away from excessive drilling and individual working through of exercises and find ways in which structure-based drill exercises can be incorporated with communicative activities.

4. Pedagogical Implications

I have attempted to address the linguistic and pedagogical significance of lexical error, with a particular focus on words of semantic similarity. A number of examples presented in each subsection demonstrate the importance of identification and clarification of such words of similarity. Such a grouping or comparison should be considered in conjunction with a future development of teaching materials and should work as an effective strategy for remedial teaching and reinforcement.

It is obvious that when the learners are not confident about the definitional concepts or semantic restrictions, they tend to rely on their memories or dictionaries to select what is available or what looks and sounds suitable. KFL/KSL learners' problem with concepts reinforces the necessity of a learner dictionary which is not only linguistically well phrased but also pedagogically friendly and relevant. A number of studies (e.g. H-S. Shin 1998; Kang 2000) point out the inadequacy of a dictionary for KFL learners and the need for an adequate learner dictionary, but currently KFL learners still rely on dictionaries which are generally considered to be inadequate. There seem to be at least three immediate problems in dictionaries that are currently available for KFL/KSL learners. Firstly, a dictionary that appears to be linguistically well researched and pedagogically well informed is not learner L1-specific but Korean-Korean (e.g. Seo et al. 2004). When learners consult such a dictionary, therefore, they find themselves daunting and annoying with unfamiliar words and linguistic terms in definitions or explanations. On the contrary, a learner L1-specific dictionary largely gives the primary meanings that often too simply define the particular lexical item and explain its usage. This type of dictionary is usually titled 'Conversational Korean', 'Travellers' Korean', etc. Thirdly, a learner L1-specific dictionary that appears to be linguistically well presented lacks in the illustration of examples of usage which are specifically relevant to KFL/KSL and the explanation for the usage which might be identical or compared to the learner's L1. This type of dictionary seems to be based on Korean dictionaries for Korean L1 speakers. As the first and most important step towards solutions for lexical errors, we need a linguistically adequate, learner-friendly and learner-relevant dictionary.

5. Conclusion

The identification of patterned lexical weaknesses of KFL/KSL learners and their likely causes provide a base for the design of remedial programs and the development of teaching materials including a learner dictionary. For instructors, there is a need to devise pedagogically effective learning and teaching strategies that prevent fossilization of certain errors in students' lexical

developments.[5] For students, it is necessary to understand how a lexical item is used in various Korean contexts, how the usage of the Korean 'equivalent' of their L1 lexis is different from that of L1 and what semantic restrictions a lexical item has. This is particularly relevant for vocabulary with similar and multiple meanings.

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[5] See H-H. Kang (2005) for the current problems of vocabulary teaching in KFL and future directions.