

A STUDY ON ERRORS IN THE USE OF NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS BY KOREAN LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH RUSSIAN AS THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE

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Abstract. *This study examines the difficulties faced by Russian native speakers in acquiring negative expressions in the Korean language, as well as the typical errors and effective teaching methods for addressing them. A survey was conducted with 30 students at the beginner and intermediate levels. The results showed that students encounter difficulties in correctly using negations in various contexts, which requires corrective measures in the teaching process. Based on these findings, recommendations for effective teaching were proposed.*

Keywords: *negative expressions in the Korean language, a native speaker of Russian learning Korean, learning difficulties, effective teaching methods*

I. Introduction

In the field of Korean language education, it is common for learners to experience difficulties with specific grammatical items depending on their native language. Among these, negative expressions often reveal significant differences between grammatical systems across languages. Learners whose first language is Russian tend to make various errors when using negative expressions in Korean. Korean negative constructions exhibit complex characteristics, including short and long forms, lexical negation, and double negation. Furthermore, their semantic functions extend beyond simple negation to include emphasis, irony, and euphemism, among others⁷⁵. These structural and functional complexities can pose challenges for Russian-speaking learners in acquiring and properly using Korean negative expressions.

This study aims to (1) outline the system of negative expressions in Korean, (2) analyze the types of errors made by Russian native speakers when learning these

⁷⁵ 남기심, 고영근, "표준 국어문법론", 서울, 탑출판사 (개정판), 1993

expressions, and (3) propose effective teaching strategies to address these difficulties. The research combines a review of relevant literature with a survey conducted among learners. Specifically, the study investigates the usage of negative expressions by 30 Russian-speaking learners at beginner and intermediate levels, identifying common error types and their underlying causes.

II. Theoretical Characteristics of Korean Negative Sentences

II-1. Overview of Negative Expressions in Korean

Negative expressions in Korean exhibit various characteristics from morphological, syntactic, and semantic perspectives. Generally, negation is expressed through the use of negative adverbs such as ‘안’ and ‘못’ negative auxiliary verbs like ‘-지 않다’ and ‘-지 못하다’, as well as lexical items such as ‘없다’, ‘모르다’, and ‘아니다’. The meaning and tone of a sentence can vary depending on the position and combination of these negative elements⁷⁶.

II-2. Formation of Negative Sentences

1. Short-form Negation : A sentence structure in which the negative adverbs ‘안’ and ‘못’ are placed before the main verb.

Ex. 비가 안 온다. (It is not raining.) / 나는 학교에 못 갔다. (I couldn't go to school.)

2. Long-form Negation: A structure where the negative auxiliary verbs ‘-지 않다’ and ‘-지 못하다’ are attached after the main verb.

Ex. 비가 오지 않는다. (It does not rain.) / 나는 학교에 가지 못했다. (I was not able to go to school.)

3. Negative Imperative Sentences: ‘-지 말다’ form is used to express prohibition.

Ex. 걱정하지 마세요. (Please don't worry.) / 떠나지 마세요. (Please don't leave.)

⁷⁶ 이문규, "한국어 부정 표현의 유형과 의미 기능". 『국어학연구』 43, 2008, p.211-236.

4. Lexical Negtion: Sentences that use predicates with inherent negative meaning, such as ‘아니다’, ‘없다’, and ‘모르다’⁷⁷.

Ex. 나는 학생이 아니다. (I am not a student.) / 그는 시간이 없다. (He has no time.) / 나는 그것을 모른다. (I don't know that.)

5. Double Negation: Sentences in which two or more negative elements are combined, often resulting in an affirmative meaning⁷⁸.

Ex. 그런 경향이 없지 않다. (= There is such a tendency.)

II-3. Semantic Functions of Negative Sentences

Korean negative expressions do not merely serve to negate statements but also perform various semantic functions, as outlined below:

1. Emphasis: Expressions used to emphasize by means of double negation or similar structures.

Ex. 안 간 게 아니라 못 간 거예요. (It's not that I didn't go, it's that I couldn't go.)

2. Irony: Although the sentence appears to be negative, it actually conveys a positive meaning.

Ex. 그 정도면 못 만든건 아니네요. (It's not that it can't be made to that extent.)

3. Euphemism: A softened expression used to avoid direct negation.

Ex. 지금은 그 일을 맡기에는 좀 어려울 것 같아요. (I think it might be a bit difficult to take on that task right now.)

In Russian, double negation is permitted, and negative expressions can affect various elements of a sentence, including verbs, nouns, and pronouns. Consequently, Russian-speaking learners often apply their native language rules directly to Korean negation, resulting in errors⁷⁹. Specifically, difficulties arise in distinguishing between the use of short-form and long-form negation, as well as in the application of lexical negations.

⁷⁷ 국립국어원, 『표준국어문법론』, 서울: 태학사, 2020.

⁷⁸ 김수자, "러시아어권 학습자의 한국어 부정 표현 오류 분석", 『외국어로서의 한국어교육』 19(2), 2012, p.101-124.

⁷⁹ 허용·김선정, 『대조언어학』, 소통, 2013

III. Error Analysis of Negative Expressions by Russian-Speaking Learners of Korean

III-1. Overview of the Survey

This study analyzes the difficulties and error types related to the use of negative expressions in Korean by Russian-speaking learners, particularly those at the beginner and intermediate levels. A total of 30 learners participated in the survey, with 18 at the beginner level and 12 at the intermediate level. The survey was designed based on negative expression sentences commonly encountered in real communication situations, focusing on expressions that learners frequently encounter but tend to make errors with.

The results of the survey showed that 26.7% of the learners found negative expressions "very difficult," while 46.7% found them "difficult." This indicates that approximately 73% of the respondents perceive negative expressions as challenging. This difficulty can be attributed to the fact that negative expressions are not merely simple grammatical elements but also play a significant role in conveying meaning in actual communication. Among the respondents, 63.2% identified "lack of understanding of grammatical content" as the primary cause of difficulty. Additionally, 36.7% of the learners indicated that the influence of Russian grammar made the expressions difficult, confirming that native language interference is one of the key factors.

III-2. Types of Common Errors

1. Confusion Between ‘안’ and ‘못’

: Learners perceive both expressions as negative, but they struggle to distinguish between negation of will and ability.

Ex. 나는 학교에 못 갔다 (I couldn't go to school) vs. 나는 학교에 안 갔다 (I didn't go to school).

2. Errors in Responses to Negative Interrogative Sentences

Ex. 안 더워요? (Aren't you hot?)

Yes, 안 더워요. (O) / No, 안 더워요. (X)

3. Literal Translation Errors in Double Negation

: In Russian, double negation does not express a positive meaning, but in Korean, double negation often conveys a positive meaning.
Ex. 나는 아무것도 안 하지 않았다 → 나는 아무것도 하지 않았다 (I didn't do anything).

4. Errors in Negative Imperatives

Ex. 안 가세요. (X) / 가지 마세요. (O) (Please don't go.)

III-3. Analysis of Error Causes

1. Interlingual Interference⁸⁰: The negation system of Russian influences learners' use of Korean negative expressions.

2. Limitations of Instructional Materials: Various forms and semantic functions of negation are not systematically organized or adequately presented in educational resources.

3. Lack of Understanding of Semantic Functions: Learners tend to overlook that negation in Korean can function beyond simple denial, including emphasis, irony, and euphemism.

According to the learner response survey, many Russian-speaking learners found the '-지 않다' form relatively easy to understand. However, they experienced confusion when using negative adverbs such as '안' and '못', and showed little understanding of the semantic shift involved in double negation. These findings are consistent with the observed error patterns and indicate the need for a more detailed and nuanced instructional approach.

III-4. Pedagogical Implications

1. Categorized Instruction by Type of Negation

: Negative expressions should be taught progressively by distinguishing among different types such as short-form, long-form, and lexical negation.

2. Integrated Teaching Focused on Semantic Functions

: Learners should be exposed to the semantic functions of negation—such as emphasis, irony, and euphemism—through diverse and natural contexts.

3. Reinforcement of Contrastive Instruction

⁸⁰ 김중자, "스리랑카 한국어 학습자의 쓰기 자료에 나타난 오류 연구", 계명대학교 대학원, 석사학위논문, 2015

: By explicitly comparing the differences between Russian and Korean negative expressions, interference-related errors can be reduced.

4. Feedback Based on Error Analysis

: Tailored feedback should be provided using real examples of learner errors to enhance understanding and accuracy.

IV. Conclusion

This study analyzed the difficulties and error types encountered by Russian-speaking learners of Korean in acquiring negative expressions, and proposed effective pedagogical strategies. The findings indicate that insufficient grammatical understanding and first language interference are the primary causes of these difficulties. As a result, the study highlights the need for contrastive instruction and context-based training to address these issues effectively.

Moving forward, more refined error analyses and instructional experiments involving learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds are necessary. Furthermore, future research should focus on developing instructional materials that are applicable in actual educational settings and on evaluating their effectiveness through empirical studies.

Such follow-up research will contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of teaching Korean negative expressions.

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