Second language (L2) acquisition of Korean case by learners with typologically different first languages (L1s)
The role of L1 (L1 transfer)

- **Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis** (Lado 1957): the difficulty in mastering certain structures in an L2 depended on the difference between the learners' L1 and the target language

- L1 transfer (Gass and Selinker 1983; Goad and White 2004; Hawkins and Chan 1997; Hawkins and Franceschina 2004; Haznedar and Schwartz 1997; Montrul 1997; Odlin 1989; Ringbom 2008; Schwartz and Sprouse 2000)

- However, most studies were targeted with English or European languages

- The necessity of non-European languages
This paper investigates:

- the learnability for adult L2 learners’ specific grammar (case)
- the role of the different learner’s L1
- L2 learners’ perceptions of the grammar (case)
Two types of transfer (Sabourin et al 2006)

German, French, English (L1) -> Dutch L2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Neuter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>De</td>
<td>De</td>
<td>Hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Der</td>
<td>Die</td>
<td>Das</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Le</td>
<td>La</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two types of transfer (Sabourin et al 2006)

1) **Surface transfer**
Transfer of surface features = morphological features
(e.g., German L1 -> Dutch L2)

2) **Deep transfer**
Transfer of syntactic features that exist in the L1 and L2 but do not share similar morphological patterns
(e.g., French L1 -> Dutch L2)

The result: English< French< German
Why case?

All languages can express grammatical notions of subject and object DPs.
- However, they differ in how and to what degree case is realized morphologically.
- Morpho-syntactic phenomena (a good tool to see the learners’ acquisition proficiency)
Different case realization

<Korean>
Na-ka sakwa-lul mek-essta.
I-NOM apple-ACC eat-PAST
‘I ate an apple.’

<Japanese>
Watashi-ga ringo-o tabemasita.
I-NOM apple-ACC eat-PAST
‘I ate an apple.’

<English>
I love him.
He loves me.

<Chinese>
a. Wǒ xǐhuān tā.
I like he
‘I like him.’
b. Tā xǐhuān wǒ
He like I
‘He likes me.’
Case-features checking as uninterpretable features

DPs have uninterpretable (unvalued) case features which are checked by interpretable features on T and v, respectively. (Chomsky 1995)

All 4 languages have nominative/accusative structural case

Same syntax, different morphology-
## Case particles in Korean and Japanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>un/nun</td>
<td>wa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>i/ka</td>
<td>ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ul/lul</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Morphological Transfer Hypothesis

A morphological discrepancy in the L1 and L2 would impair the acquisition of the features in the L2
Degree of transfer: case

Korean L2 (case particles)
Chinese < English < Japanese

Deep transfer

minimal surface transfer & deep transfer

Surface transfer
L1 effect

How far is L2 from the learners’ L1

->

How difficult it is

(Lado 1957; Odlin 1979; Ringbom 2008)
The L2 learners’ perceived distance between their L1 and the target L2 (Kellerman 1979, 1983)
Previous study (L2 Korean case)

Japanese L1 VS English L1

- Brown and Iwasaki (2013)

Japanese is overall better
Writing is better than speaking

- Hwang (2002)
19 morphemes (Case particles, verbal morphemes) overall morpheme acquisition order was consistent
Nominative, Accusative and Topic particles, were acquired early
Research questions

1) Do L2 learners use morphological target features (case) in the written and spoken settings differently?  
   Quantitative

2) Will different L1s show different results?  
   Quantitative

3) What and how much is transferred from L1?  
   Quantitative

4) What are the learners’ perceptions of Korean and Korean case?  
   Qualitative

5) Do learners’ perceptions match their actual production?  
   Qualitative
Methodology

1) Quantitative data (70)
   • Spontaneous speech
   • Writing
   • Language survey

2) Qualitative data (56)
   • Interview (semi-structured):
Participants (quantitative)

Production task (70)
- 22 L1 Chinese,
- 27 L1 English,
- 21 L1 Japanese

Intermediate Korean learners (TOPIK test 3-4 and using pretest)

Studying Korean in the U.S. and Korea
Learner info

- **Chinese L1**: Age 21.9, years spent learning 1.8, year spent living in Korea 1.1
- **English L1**: Age 25.5, years spent learning 2, year spent living in Korea 0.7
- **Japanese L1**: Age 28.9, years spent learning 1.9, year spent living in Korea 0.9
Results
(quantitative)
## Results: 1. Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Subject/Object</th>
<th>Chinese L1</th>
<th>English L1</th>
<th>Japanese L1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject DP</td>
<td>83% (311)</td>
<td>86.5% (302)</td>
<td>96.9% (382)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object DP</td>
<td>90% (261)</td>
<td>89.2% (256)</td>
<td>90.5% (258)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>87.85%</td>
<td>93.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spoken</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject DP</td>
<td>50.3% (554)</td>
<td>73.9% (435)</td>
<td>87.2% (677)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object DP</td>
<td>73.97% (435)</td>
<td>78.5% (318)</td>
<td>81.2% (233)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>62.13%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## T-test results for three pairings: Written task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Standard error of Difference</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese-English</td>
<td>0.7507</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.209</td>
<td>0.4566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(P&gt;0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Japanese</td>
<td>1.4813</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2.930</td>
<td>0.1453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(P&gt;0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese-Chinese</td>
<td>2.1723</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.106</td>
<td>0.0357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(P&lt;0.05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## T-test results for three pairings: Spoken task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Standard error of difference</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese-English</td>
<td>3.9725</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.955</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(P&lt;0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Japanese</td>
<td>2.0636</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.828</td>
<td>0.0447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(P&lt;0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese-Chinese</td>
<td>5.5671</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.241</td>
<td>0.000001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(P&lt;0.05)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Error types
Error types (Lee, Jang & Seo 2009)

- **Omission ("O" in subsequent tables)** – absence of a particle where its inclusion is expected;
- **Addition (A)** – inclusion of a particle where one is not normally required;
- **Replacement (R)** – a correct particle “replaced” by an incorrect particle; and
- **Malformation (M)** – a particle is used in the incorrect allomorph.
Chinese L1 written error types
(17% for subject/ 11.5% for object)
Chinese L1 spoken error type
(41.47% for subject/ 29.2% for object)

Subject NP
- Omission: 87.71%
- Replacement: 10.52%

Object NP
- Omission: 84.7%
- Replacement: 14.7%
Examples by Chinese learners

(1) 탐씨*-ø 지하철을 타는 것을 싫어해요.
   Tom-ssi-*ø cihacel-ul tanun kes-ul sirehay-yo
   ‘Tom hates taking a subway.’ (participant 5)

(2) 남편*을 친구예요.
   Nampyen-*ul chinku-yeyo
   ‘My husband is my friend.’ (participant 1)
English L1 written error types
(13.66% for subject/ 10.98% for object)
English L1 spoken error type
(26.14% for subject/ 21.47% for object)
Examples by English learners

(3) 제니*-φ 같이 보지 않았어요.
Jenny*-φ kachi boci ana-sse-yo
Jenny together see not-PAST
‘Jenny did not see it together.’ (participant 4)

(4) 얼굴*이 씻어요.
Elkul-*i ssisse-yo
Face-NOM wash
‘I wash my face.’ (participant 14)
Japanese L1 written error type
(3.6% for subject/ 8.41% for object)
Japanese L1 spoken error type
(12.75% for subject/ 18.8% for object)
(5) 슬슬 1년*가 다 갔어요
Sulsul 1nyen-*ka ta kasse-yo
Almost 1year-ka (NOM) all passed
‘Almost one year has passed.’ (participant 9)

(6) 받침*가 일본어는 없으니까..
Patchim-*ka ilbone-nun epsu-nika
Final consonant-ka(NOM) Japanese-TOP not-exist-so
‘Because there are no final consonants in Japanese.’
(participant 7)
Examples by Japanese learners

Insertion of –i for using –ka (Japanese spoken)

(7) 열*이가 나서
   Yel-*i-ka na-se (participant 20)
   Fever-i-ka (NOM) come out so
   ‘because I had fever’

(8) 음악*이가 좋아요
   emak-*i-ka coa-yo (participant 13)
   music- i-ka (NOM) good-DECL
   ‘I like music.’
Results: 2. survey & interview
Interview themes

1. Motivation
2. Difficulty
3. Language transfer
4. Perceptions of case particles
5. Strategies
Results
Motivation

- **Chinese L1**: 41% Cultural interest, 9% relationship, 0% linguistic interest, 5% school/job
- **English L1**: 46% Cultural interest, 15% relationship, 15% linguistic interest, 23% school/job
- **Japanese L1**: 52.60% Cultural interest, 5% relationship, 5% linguistic interest, 5% school/job
What is difficult?

- **Chinese**
  - Listening: 13.33
  - Speaking: 23.33
  - Vocab: 3.33
  - Grammar: 33.33

- **English**
  - Listening: 10.71
  - Speaking: 39.28
  - Vocab: 3.57
  - Grammar: 46.42

- **Japanese**
  - Listening: 17.39
  - Speaking: 65.21
  - Vocab: 3
  - Grammar: 8.69
Case particles?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Ok</th>
<th>Easy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36.36</td>
<td>13.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>57.69</td>
<td>34.61</td>
<td>7.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>47.36</td>
<td>36.84</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qualitative study (interview)
Methods: Interview (Korean or English)

- What is your goal for learning Korean?
- What is difficult when learning Korean?
- What is relatively easy in learning Korean?
- Which grammar parts in Korean are especially difficult?
- How often are you exposed to Korean and where do you encounter it? (e.g., media, friends, books and etc.)
- Do you think case particles are difficult to understand or learn? Why or why not?
- Do you have any strategies for learning/understanding case particles?
- Do you think that any other L2 which you have learned can help you to learn Korean? If so, which language?
Results: difficulties
(excerpts)
The grammar is like opposite of English; basically it’s about the furthest that I ever seen a language. And speaking is difficult. It’s the worst because I don’t do ...I can’t make more difficult forms. (participant 7)

Honorifics are hard. It’s hard to do it... which one to use... Case particles are hard. (participant 8)

At first, pronunciation is difficult.. Vocab also... Word order...no overt subject...Particles are the most difficult. (participant 11)
I: 한국어 어렵습니까?
I: Is Korean difficult?
p13: 아닙니다. 쉽습니다.
I: 쉬워요? 뭐가 쉬워요?
I: Easy? What is easy?
p13: 단어. 발음 비슷해요. 문법도 ..문법도 조금 쉬워요.
p13: Vocab.. Pronunciation is similar.. Grammar is also a little bit easy.
Difficulty: Chinese learners

*Chinese p1:* 조사.. 사동이.. 사동 용법.. 좀 애매해요. 중국어에는 조사 많이 없어요. 조금.. 많이 사용하는 조사.. 3개.. 세개만..

*Chinese p1:* **Case particles**... Causative structure.. the usage.. it’s confusing. In Chinese, there are not many particles.. Just a few... A few that are used often. Only three particles...
I: Do you think Korean is easy?
Japanese p3: I guess so.
I: What is easy?
Japanese p3: Grammar! But it’s only for grammar.
I: You mean word order...
Japanese p3: 네 ..같아서
Japanese p3: yes, they are same’... Case particles... those are easy.
Japanese p1: 이거 정말 특히 발음 어려워서 어제도 남자친구가 나에게 너 진짜 발음 안 돼. 말해요. 문법은 진짜 쉬웠어요. 근데 문법 거의 비슷하니까...발음.. 지금도.. 남자친구가 항상 진짜 안돼. 근데 문법 거의 비슷하니까 가끔 다른 거 있으면 이해하기가 어려워요.

Japanese p1: This... especially pronunciation is difficult so even yesterday, my boyfriend said that “you are really not good at pronunciation”. Grammar was really easy. But it’s because grammar is similar (to Japanese). Even now.. my boyfriend said that I am poor (at pronunciation). But grammar is almost similar so when there is some different grammar, it is difficult to understand.
Chinese p6: 순서! 달라요. 중국어하고 영어 또 비슷해요. 그리고 한국어와 일본어 그 순서 ..비슷하다 그래서 우리반 일본 사람 한국어 배웠을 때 좀 쉬웠어요.

Chinese p6: Word order! Different (in Chinese and Korean). Chinese and English are similar. And in Korean and Japanese...word order is similar. So when my Japanese classmates in my class learn Korean, it’s easy (for them).
문법. 듣기, 말하기보다 더 쉬워요. 쓰기도 어려워요. 이번에는 39회 토픽시험 쓰기 좀 못해요. 어려워요. 높임말도 어려워요.. 중국에서는 그런 것 없는 것 같아요.

Grammar is easier than listening and speaking. Writing is also difficult. This time, I was not so good at writing in the 39th TOPIK test. It’s difficult.. Honorifics is also difficult...In Chinese, it seems that there was no such thing (honorifics)...
Difficult because different

그.. 순서가 달라요. 중국 사람은 보통.. 저는 먹어.. 음식 이렇게 말해요. 하지만 한국 사람은 저는 그 음식을 말해요. 이렇게 말해요. 처음 한국에 와서 너무 익숙하지 않아요.

 Wort (Word) order is different. Chinese people usually say that ‘I eat food’. But Koreans say that ‘I food eat’. When I first came to Korea, I was not used to it. (Chinese participant 7).
가장 어려운 거요. 발음.. 발음이 어려워서. 일본어는 받침이 없어서..

Difficult thing is.. pronunciation.. pronunciation is difficult..
Japanese does not have final consonants so.. (It’s hard).
(Japanese participant 2)

한국어는 발음이 어려워요. 예를 들어.. ‘오’ 같은 발음
있잖아요. ‘오’, ‘어’. 일본에서는 그냥 한개만 있는데 한국어는
두 개 있어서 어려워요.

As for Korean, pronunciation is difficult. For example, the
pronunciation like ‘o’. ‘O’ and ‘uh’.. In Japan(ese), there is only
one (vowel), but Korean has two sounds so it is difficult.
(Japanese participant 13)
L2 transfer to L3
English P6: **Case particles... Those are the first things I learned in Japanese. So that made it a little more easy to understand.... ..**

Typologically similar or close L2s helped facilitate the learning of an L3 (Andersen 1983; Kellerman, 1983, 1995; Rothman 2010),
**Chinese P2:** Korean particles.. case... difficult. But **Russian** has 6 cases. I can understand the concept (of case).

**Grammar is easy for me..** because I have learned many foreign languages..this..oh, also exists in English. Oh this exists in French..
I learned Latin so it has very explicit cases and declensions of nouns so I am used to seeing different forms for different grammatical functions. Latin also has a lot of tenses like a lot of tenses for like a lot for different things so I am used to things like verbs which take which cases.

(English participant 9)
Psychotypology
Chinese VS English

Chinese L1s think that Chinese is similar to Korean. English L1s think that English is not similar to Korean. Yet, English L1s performed better overall than Chinese L1s.
Chinese P3: But we (Chinese) understand why (Koreans) use (language) this way. Or certain culture.. like we (Chinese and Koreans) use different (lunar) calendar. People in other countries might ask that “why do they do in this way?”.. or during tests, a sentence saying a mother to her child... To Chinese people, finding a main idea of the sentence is easy. Because the thoughts in China and Korea are similar.
Discussion & conclusion

1) Knowing VS correct use in on-line spontaneous speech
- Syntax plays a role but morphology also plays an important role (Montrul 1997, 2000)

2) Writing VS Speaking
- Off-line VS on-line production (more time constraints)
3) Different L1s can influence the learning of a target feature in an L2.
Chinese < English < Japanese
- Surface Transfer (morphological transfer) plays a bigger role than Deep Transfer
4) Learners’ perceptions of the difficulty of certain L2 features are supported by their data.
5) Learners perceive language transfer from their L1 and other L2s (difficulty because different)
The role of the L1...

...is tremendous.

The lack of overt morphology in Chinese seems to interfere with the realization of L2 Korean case particles.

Motivation or psychotypology seem to be overridden by a learner’s actual L1 features.
Classroom implication

Knowing individual differences
- More and more diverse learners come to Korea language classes
- We can be aware of their language background
- Knowing their L1 and previous acquired languages can help to understand their difficulties and strategies

Further studies:
1) Longitudinal studies
2) different pedagogical tools in the classroom
감사합니다!
Thank you!

Thanks to Korean teachers and learners at the University of Washington and Pusan National University