

Abstract for the  
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**Title: Conceptual salience to Korean cultural information by Korean users of English in FL and L2 setting**

This paper examined whether and how the lexical conceptual systems of second language learners change depending on the social context of learners' exposure to target languages and cultures. My focus is the lexical items that have translation equivalency in L1 Korean and L2 English but may differ as to the conceptual level carrying the socio-cultural load.

Socio-cognitive view claims that bilinguals with insufficient fluency or limited exposure to L2 cultural context operate an L1 conceptual system to produce L2 word. But, relatively balanced bilinguals have a shared conceptual system in their mind that moves on a continuum of bidirectional influence between two languages and cultures (Cook, 1997; de Groot, 1997; Grosjean, 1989; Jiang, 2004; Kecskes, 2000; Kroll & Tokowicz, 2001; Pavlenko and Jarvis, 2002). Participants of this research included 15 Korean monolinguals, 15 Korean users of English living in Korea, 15 Korean users of English living in the U.S., 15 American English monolinguals. Three main points will be discussed as a result of comparing the four groups: 1) what kind of definition, thought, or image on each word initially appears to them 2) in what context participants express the word 3) whether the conceptual change affects the person's attitude/emotion that originally developed in one's own culture. All these aspects take into consideration of collective prior experience as well as privatization of it.

The finding shows that Korean users of English in the U.S. who are living in the L2 socio-cultural context at certain length (i.e. in this research, at least 2 years) go through to some extent the transformation of the existing L1-based to the L2-based word concept. Also, the salient concepts and contexts that are common to Korean monolinguals and Korean learners of English in Korea are no longer activated, and neither the same nor completely different from each monolingual speakers of Korean and English.