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Manifestations of language mode in lower level adult learners of English in relation to type of interlocutor

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Nam, Hyunjeong & van Vlack, Stephen. "Manifestations of language mode in lower level adult learners of English in relation to type of interlocutor." *The Journal of Modern British & American Language & Literature*. 30.1 (2012): 57-80. The study seeks to investigate if and how Korean L2 learners' language modes vary across communication situations with two different types of interlocutors. The results show that in interviews with both Korean bilinguals and native English speakers, the subjects were found to be in the intermediate mode but in varied extents. The extent of the subjects' intermediate mode was found to vary according to the interlocutor. The total L1-driven or L1 language production in English was found to be significantly less in interviews with native English speakers than in the interviews with Korean speakers. In addition, different types of L1-driven data were found in the interviews by different types of interviewers. Among the types of L1/L1-driven data, the area "L1 semantics at a sentence level" was most prevalent in interviews with Korean bilinguals, while the more English-like forms of language (Konglish words) were mainly chosen in the conversations with native English speaking interlocutors. The factors that may contribute to the manifestation of language modes lie in differences between the two types of interlocutors such as physical appearance in terms of ethnicity and language use itself such as accent. (Daegu Haany University, Sookmyung Women's University)

Key Words: Language Mode, Bilinguals, Native English Speakers, Konglish, Korean L2 Learners

I. Introduction

It has long been argued that native speakers of a language, due to their supposed infallibility with language (Chomsky, 1965), provide better models for language learners. Selinker's interlanguage hypothesis claims that language learners move through stages bringing them closer to native-like speech (Selinker & Lamendella, 1981). Under such claims, which have remained popular in the area of second language learning, it is thought that native speakers of the target language are indeed the best models. As a result, native speakers of English are sought after the world over as teachers (Graddol, 2006). As we move away from the conduit metaphor of language learning to one based more on usage and interaction, it would seem necessary to question some of the older assumptions that have guided learning considerations of the past.

From our observations as classroom teachers as well as researchers, it seems that the preference for native speakers of the target language has not diminished, but a full discussion of their advantages in interaction-based classroom scenarios is still forthcoming, particularly considering lower proficiency level students. This investigation, therefore, examines the language use patterns of lower proficiency Korean learners of English in interactional situations with two different kind of interlocutors. The goal is to see if and how the subjects alter their language based on the contextual variable or native/non-native interlocutor. This research implements the concept of language mode (Grosjean, 1997, 2001) but expands on the current literature by researching lower proficiency learners. In this way, the present study endeavors to determine how interactions with different types of interlocutors affects the language performance and, by extension, learning (Bybee, 2010).

II. Theoretical Background

Language mode, as conceived and elaborated by Grosjean (1997, 2001), is a powerful model for understanding bilinguals and how they process and produce language. Grosjean's view of language mode basically revolves around the idea of one specific linguistic code as forming the base system from which language is generated. As shown in other models (Myers-Scotton, 1995) this base, however, is never solitary or fixed. It may be more highly activated and hence used over other languages present in the bilingual system, but other languages are also available for use to various degrees depending on the mode. Grosjean (2001) lists three basic modes of operation: monolingual-like, mixed, and bilingual. Once more, these modes relate to both productive and receptive aspects of language. Linking Grosjean's model to Green's (1986, 1998) model of activation and inhibition, we can claim that a particular language functions as a base for two possible reasons; because it receives and has received higher activation in the past, or alternatively, due to environmental variables. Grosjean's model presents a very different view than the switch hypothesis (Hamers & Blanc, 2000: 174) because it allows two or more language codes to operate at the same time within a single base system.

This theory of language mode was developed based on Grosjean's observations of code-switching and code-mixing in both bilingual and multilingual individuals. In such situations, for the most part, it seems that bilingual speakers function within the confines of a certain base code and that the switches into different codes occur on top of, or in respect to, a specific base. He also identifies three basic different states that bilinguals or multilinguals find themselves in when they speak. The first of these is the monolingual mode. In this mode the

speaker sticks very closely to the norms of the base system and does not deviate very much from that system. The second mode is an intermediate stage in which a small but easily recognizable series of code mixes occurs on top of or in respect to the base system. These are more tentative, often pragmatic types of code mixes. The final mode would be one of fully bilingual or multilingual mode where there are much more and much larger switches either on top of a still presiding base or there can even be base system switches.

Grosjean (2001) claims that language mode itself is a product of subconscious choice. This doesn't mean that bilinguals do not sometimes make conscious decisions, but most of the time since language production occurs so quickly speakers have to do things without actually consciously being aware of what they are doing (Jessner, 2006). In order for this to happen there must be some sort of trigger which causes one to behave in a certain way (Broersma, 2009). Triggers can come from both external and internal sources. In the case of language mode, the external trigger is going to be the overriding factor in making the decision about which linguistic state a speaker will be in. The external trigger is quite often the interlocutor or other elements of context, such as location or topic. When only one language is shared between interlocutors it is hypothesized that both speakers will be in monolingual mode. when two languages are shared the speakers can be in intermediate or fully bilingual mode, depending on their relationship and the context.

In this research we wish to use the concept of language mode to ascertain if lower proficiency Korean learners of English show sensitivity to contextual variables and are able to function in different modes, according to Grosjean's theory. We also investigate how language mode is triggered and manifests itself among such learners.

In doing so, we hope to accrue information that will help language teachers and program developers better understand facets of bilingual language use.

III. The Empirical Investigation

3.1. Design

This study seeks to investigate factors affecting how Korean L2 learners' language modes vary across communication situations with 2 different types of interlocutors. It explores whether/how a conversation in the target language with an interlocutor who shares both the L1 and target language leads to different types of language use in relation to a conversation in the target language with an interlocutor who has a different L1 (a native speaker of the target language). It further seeks to investigate what factors may contribute to the manifestation of language modes. Differences between the two types of interlocutors such as physical appearance in terms of ethnicity and language itself such as accent and fluency are considered in the present study.

3.2. Method

3.2.1 Subjects and Context

Thirteen subjects were involved in the present study. All of them were from different majors and taking a general English course at a university. They were 12 Koreans and 1 Chinese, all in their early 20s. According to the rating scale of the Multimedia Assisted Test of

English (MATE) for speaking, eleven of them are at the moderate level—able to produce language creatively, start, maintain, and end a simple conversation by asking and answering simple questions (MATE, 2011). The remaining two were tested at the rudimentary level—able to communicate minimally and with difficulty by using a number of isolated words and memorized phrases. They are all at the lower or even lowest end of the MATE scale.

Twelve MA students from the Graduate School of TESOL at Sookmyung Women's University were recruited as interviewers. Of the 12, six were native speakers of Korean and six were native speakers of English. All of them were working English teachers with a range of experience. To ensure the validity and overall similarity in the general structure of the interviews, all of the interviewers underwent several hours of interview training conducted by one of the researchers, a certified MATE rater and chief rater trainer and trained ACTFL OPI interviewer. The Korean interviewers were familiar to the subjects as they were involved in a speaking course the participants were taking as part of their TESOL training. Although the Korean interviewers did not use Korean in the class and certainly not in the interviews, the subjects were able to surmise from various features (name, ethnicity, accent) that they were bilingual speakers of both English and Korean. The subjects were not at all familiar with the native English speaking interviewers and the members of this group were simply introduced as native English speakers. The six native English speaking interviewers came from 3 different countries (the US, Australia, and South Africa) and 5 were caucasians with 1 being mixed Eurasian in ethnicity. None spoke Korean beyond the rudimentary level and were instructed to show no indication that they could understand Korean at all.

The interviews were conducted as part of a required course the

subjects were taking entitled English Speaking and Presentation. It was the second time they had been interviewed so they had some familiarity with the process. The interviews, and this was made clear to all involved, were not part of the subjects' grade in the course. Rather, they were being used to assess progress and the subjects were encouraged to perform as best they could.

3.2.2 Materials & Procedure

Each interview was conducted in a separate room and voice-recorded. Interviewers used the same basic procedures for carrying out the interviews, which involved combining elements of the ACTFL OPI (Swender, 1999) and the MATE (van Vlack, 2002). In order to elicit refined data, language mode was carefully set. As Grosjean (2001: 16) suggests, any instructions, preliminary tasks, or reminders were provided before the interview only in the target language and all use of a non-target language (Korean) was avoided. Likewise the presence of any other subjects in the room where the interviews were conducted was strictly prohibited. Any evidence of written Korean was removed from the interview settings.

One subject and one interviewer were allocated to a classroom and each subject was interviewed twice. Half of the subjects had interviews with Korean interviewers first and the other half with native English speaking interviewers first, so as to avoid any possible undue non-target language influence. Each interview lasted for about 25 minutes, depending on the subjects' proficiency level as determined during the course of the interview. For a more comfortable atmosphere, all interviewers were trained to make sure the subjects were warmed up and employed a variety of strategies to keep the subjects comfortable throughout the interview despite some difficult

tasks.

3.2.3 Data Treatment

The recorded interviews were manually transcribed and cross-checked by the authors. Since the duration of the conversation for each subject was different, the total words each subject produced and L1-induced cases were counted and calculated to determine the actual degree of bilingual mode (Korean and English are activated and employed) as opposed to a strictly monolingual mode (exclusively English). Language fillers such as "hmm" or "ah" were not included in the total word count.

3.3 Results

Table 1
Interviews with Korean interviewers

S	TW	P	L1 semantics		L1 Syn	Kon	L1 use				Pro	Sum
			Sen	W			N	V	A	O		
EJ	254		1									1
ES	188				1		1		1	4		7
HE	457						1					1
HJ	367		6		1		1			1		9
JH	353		4				4		1			9
JW	590		2			3	2			4		11
JY	514					1	1			1		3
PP	376					1						1
SJ	201				1					1		2
SO	566		3		1		2			4		10
SH	347		7						1			8
SY	718		3	1	1					1		6
WK	345	1					1			1		3
Sum	5276	1	26	1	5	5	13	0	0	3	17	71

Note. S: subjects, TW: total words, P: L1 pragmatics, Sen: sentence level, W: word level, Syn: syntax, Kon: Konglish word, N: noun, V: verb, A: adjective, O: others. Pro: pronunciation

Table 1 shows the cases where each subject's production was either in non-target language (L1) or L1-driven in the interviews with Korean interviewers. Such slips in the L1 are taken to indicate that the subject was in intermediate or bilingual mode. The data supporting the subject's particular mode were found most in the area of "L1 semantics at the sentence level" (marked as "Sen" in Table 1), where the subject's English was based on L1 meaning configurations at the sentence level. For example, "[He is] drunken like a dog" (He was very drunk and acted stupid) and "the father is always forgotten his memory" (He blacked out when he was drunk). One example at the word level, on the other hand, is "appointment" in the context where the Korean word *약속* fits rather than in an English context "I have plans with my friends tonight".

The section "L1-based pronunciation" (marked as "Pro" in Table 1) was the second most distinctive indicator of the subjects' intermediate or bilingual mode. The examples are *모델/model/ 좀비/zombie/ 카카오/kakao/ 장르/jaŋri/*. L1 nouns were third most used in subjects' production in English; for example, *태국*(Thailand, *마우이족*(Maui natives), *악몽*(nightmare), *북극*(North Pole), *참치*(tuna), *볶음밥*(fried rice), *국수*(noodle), *폭탄주*(bomb shot drink), *개고기*(dog meat), *뽀뽀* (kiss), *기러기*('goose father' in this context: a father who sends his wife and young children overseas for a better education), *토*(vomit).

Other examples are *아냐*(no), *그리고*(and), *찰칵*(click) as L1 slips in the area "others"; *오바이트*(vomit), *멜로*(romantic movie), *댄디*(stylish), *아르바이트*(part-time job) in the area "Konglish words"; *school nearby store* (*학교근처가게*; a store near school), *brown color* (*브라운색*;

brown) in the area of "L1 syntax".

Table 2
Interviews with native English speaking interviewers

S	TW	P	L1 semantics		L1 Syn	Kon	L1 use				Pro	Sum
			Sen	W			N	V	A	O		
EJ	217					1						1
ES	425	1								2	4	7
HE	549											0
HJ	441		1		1		1					3
JH	307	1	1			2	1					5
JW	641		4									4
JY	763	1				1						2
PP	885					3						3
SJ	269						1					1
SO	242											0
SH	657					1	1					2
SY	1006		2									2
WK	263					1						1
Sum	6665	3	8	0	1	9	4	0	0	2	4	31

Note. S: subjects, TW: total words, P: L1 pragmatics, Sen: sentence level, W: word level, Syn: syntax, Kon: Konglish word, N: noun, V: verb, A: adjective, O: others. Pro: pronunciation

Table 2 shows the cases where each subject's production was either in non-target language (L1) or L1-driven in the interviews with native English speaking interviewers. The data supporting the subjects' bilingual mode were found most in the area of Konglish. The examples are *클래식*(classical music), *워커*(Doc Martins, combat boots), *파라솔* (beach umbrella), *아르바이트*(part-time job), *원피스* (dress). The second most common data supporting the subject's bilingual mode were found in the area of "L1 semantics at the sentence level" (marked as "Sen"

in Table 2), where the subjects' English was based on L1 meaning configurations at the sentence level. The examples are, "He did tattoo on his breast" (가슴에 문신을 했다; He has a tattoo on his chest"), "Sydney was the summer" (그때 시드니는 여름이었다; "It was summer in Sydney"), and "Skin color is yellow" (피부색이 누렇다; "She looks Asian").

Other examples observed are 아이 어떡해(an expression of frustration), 땀(L1 slip: the first syllable of the L1 word 땀사람 other people) in the "Others"area (marked as "O" in Table 2), 볶음밥(fried rice), 간장(soy sauce), 인삼(ginseng) in the "L1 noun" area (marked as "N" in Table 2), and personal questions such as marital status and age in the area of "Pragmatics" (marked as "P" in Table 2).

Table 3
Percentage of L1 activation in interviews with Koreans

Subjects	Total words	L1 activation	Percentage
EJ	254	1	0.39
ES	188	7	3.72
HE	457	1	0.22
HJ	367	9	2.45
JH	353	9	2.55
JW	590	11	1.86
JY	514	3	0.58
PP	376	1	0.27
SJ	201	2	1.00
SO	566	10	1.77
SH	347	8	2.31
SY	718	6	0.84
WK	345	3	0.87
Total	5276	71	18.82
Mean	405.84	5.46	1.45

Tables 3 and Table 4 show the number of the cases of L1-driven or L1 language production in English for each subject. As shown in Table 3, an average 5.46 cases of L1-driven or L1 language production in English were found in the interviews with Koreans. Considering the different number of words the individual subjects produced during the interview (mean 405.84 words), an average of 1.45% and total of 18.82 L1-driven or L1 language production in English was observed.

Table 4
Percentage of L1 activation in interviews with native English speakers

Subjects	Total words	L1 activation	Percentage
EJ	217	1	0.46
ES	425	7	1.65
HE	549	0	0.00
HJ	441	3	0.68
JH	307	5	1.63
JW	641	4	0.62
JY	763	2	0.26
PP	885	3	0.34
SJ	269	1	0.37
SO	242	0	0.00
SH	657	2	0.30
SY	1006	2	0.20
WK	263	1	0.38
Total	6665	31	6.90
Mean	512.69	2.38	0.53

As shown in Table 4, an average 2.38 cases of L1-driven or L1 language production in English were found in the interviews with native English speakers. Considering the different number of words individual subjects produced during the interview (mean 512.69 words), an average of 0.53% (total 18.82%) of L1-driven or L1 language

production in English was observed.

Table 5
Comparison of the subjects' bilingual mode in interviews with Koreans and native English speakers

TW	P	L1 semantics			L1 Syn	Kon	L1 use				Pro	Sum	Sum %
		Sen	W					N	V	A			
K 5276	1	26	1	5	5	13	0	0	3	17	71	18.82	
E 6665	3	8	0	1	9	4	0	0	2	4	31	6.90	

Note. TW: total words, P: L1 pragmatics, Sen: sentence level, W: word level, Syn: syntax, Kon: Konglish word, N: noun, V: verb, A: adjective, O: others. Pro: pronunciation, %: percentage, K: interview with Koreans, E: interview with native speakers of English

Table 5 shows the extent of all the subjects' bilingual mode in interviews by Koreans and native English speakers. The total L1-driven or L1 language production in English was found to be 6.90% in interviews with native English speakers, which is significantly less than the 18.82% found in the interviews with Korean speakers. Bilingual mode was found most demonstrative in the areas of "L1 semantics at a sentence level" (marked as "Sen" in Table 5), "L1 noun use" (marked as "N") and "pronunciation" (marked as "Pro"). It should be noted that more Konglish words were used in interviewees with native English speakers.

Table 6
A comparison of each subject's bilingual mode in interviews with Koreans
and native English speakers

Subjects	Interview with Koreans	Interview with English speakers
EJ	0.39	0.46
ES	3.72	1.65
HE	0.22	0.00
HJ	2.45	0.68
JH	2.55	1.63
JW	1.86	0.62
JY	0.58	0.26
PP	0.27	0.34
SJ	1.00	0.37
SO	1.77	0.00
SH	2.31	0.30
SY	0.84	0.20
WK	0.87	0.38
Total	18.82	6.90

As shown in Table 6, most of the subjects produced L1/L1-driven English in interviews with Koreans more than with native English speakers, which suggests a more distinctive intermediate and possibly even a bilingual mode with Korean bilingual interlocutors. There are, however, two subjects yielding counter evidence. Subjects EJ and PP produced more L1/L1-driven English in interviews with native English speakers.

Table 7
The case of subject EJ

S	TW	P	L1		L1 Syn	Kon	L1 use				Pro	Sum
			semantics	W			N	V	A	O		
			Sen									
EJ	K	254	1									1
	E	217				1						1

Note. S: subjects, TW: total words, P: L1 pragmatics, Sen: sentence level, W: word level, Syn: syntax, Kon: Konglish word, N: noun, V: verb, A: adjective, O: others. Pro: pronunciation

Although the ratio including the total number of the words the subject EJ spoke in each interview indicates a slight increase of L1 activation in English, she produced the same number of L1 driven English in both interviews. As shown in Table 7, it should be noted that the type of L1 activation seems different. She produced an English sentence based on L1 meaning configurations in the interview with a Korean bilingual, but a Konglish word in the interview with an English native speaker. The consideration of type brings her results in line with the main group.

Table 8
The case of subject PP

S	TW	P	L1		L1 Syn	Kon	L1 use				Pro	Sum
			semantics	W			N	V	A	O		
			Sen									
PP	K	376				1						1
	E	885				3						3

Note. S: subjects, TW: total words, P: L1 pragmatics, Sen: sentence level, W: word level, Syn: syntax, Kon: Konglish word, N: noun, V: verb, A: adjective, O: others. Pro: pronunciation

Subject PP was a Chinese exchange student majoring in Korean language in Korea when the study was being conducted. It might be seemingly contradictory to see a higher indication of bilingual mode in the interview with a native English speaker (0.34%, see Table 6) than in the interview with a Korean bilingual (0.27%, see Table 6), but her background could lead to marked differences from the main group of Korean subjects. For PP, the interview with an English native speaker yielded much more language overall. Due to a shared non-Koreanness, she may have felt more comfortable with the native English speaking interviewer. Despite the greater number of total words produced, she used the same Konglish word *albeit*/아\크바\오\트 (part-time job). The Konglish word was used once in the interview with a Korean interviewer, but repeated three times in the interview with a native English speaker.

Table 9
Results of interviews with Korean interviewers with relatively native-like accents

Subjects	Total words	L1 activation	Percentage
EJ	254	1	0.39
ES	188	7	3.72
JY	514	3	0.58
PP	376	1	0.27
SO	566	10	1.77
JW	590	11	1.86
SY	718	6	0.84
Mean	405.84	5.46	1.45

Tables 9 and 10 show whether the Korean-English bilingual interviewer's Korean accent affects the extent of the participants' L1 activation. That is, whether the accent of an interlocutor regarding adherence to native-like norm in the target language affects a

subject's language mode. Seven subjects were interviewed by Korean bilinguals who had relatively native-like accents (as judged by both researchers). Four out of the seven subjects interviewed by these individuals yielded less L1/L1-driven production in English (0.39%, 0.58%, 0.27%, 0.84%) than the average (mean 1.45%).

Table 10
Results of interviews with Korean interviewers with relatively noticeable Korean accents

Subjects	Total words	L1 activation	Percentage
JH	353	9	2.55
SJ	201	2	1.00
SH	347	8	2.31
Mean	405.84	5.46	1.45

As shown in Table 10, two out of three subjects interviewed by Korean interviewers with relatively distinctive Korean accents (as judged by the researchers) yielded more L1-driven data (2.55%, 2.31%) than the average mean 1.45%. Overall, six out of ten subjects were found to be sensitive to interlocutor's accent, which, though interesting, seems difficult to regard as significant.

3.4. Discussion

As Grosjean (2001: 7) proposes the possibility that "the other language is probably never totally deactivated at the monolingual end", in this research, Korean L2 learner's use of non-target language (Korean) in English did not totally disappear even when a monolingual mode (English) was established. In interviews with both Korean bilinguals and native English speakers, the subjects were found to be

in the intermediate mode to a certain extent. It should be noted however that the extent of the subjects' intermediate mode was found to vary according to the interlocutors with whom they had conversations. In most cases, except two, more L1 or L1-driven utterances were found in interviews with Korean bilinguals. Even in the seemingly conflicting cases of the two subjects, the same number of the L1-driven utterances was observed in each interview for one subject (subject ES), and the same word was repeated in a different number of times (subject PP), which in turn makes the inconsistent results trivial. The fact that PP is a native speaker of Chinese, and shows different patterns, is also quite telling and shows that her background may have led to somewhat different modes than the Korean subjects.

It is interesting to observe that different types of L1-driven data were found in the interviews by different types of interviewers. Although the total ratio of the L1-driven English was lower in interviews with native English speakers, more Konglish words were used (9 cases) than in interviews with Korean bilinguals (5 cases). Similar cases were also found in the data of the subject EJ and PP which seem to contradict the evidence supporting the larger extent of intermediate mode in a conversation with Korean bilingual interlocutors, but confirm some basic assumptions about language modes in general. Despite the ratio of L1 driven English being slightly higher in the interview by an English monolingual, the subject EJ produced the same number of the L1-driven English in each interview; however, interestingly she underwent a conversion from L1 meaning configurations at a sentence level in the interview with a Korean bilingual to the use of a Konglish word in the interview with a native English speaker. The subject PP with the ratio of L1 driven English

being slightly higher in the interview by an English monolingual, also repeated the same Konglish word she used with the Korean bilingual interlocutor three times more with an English monolingual. All the results show that although L1/L1-driven English was found less in the interviews with native English speakers, Konglish words among the types of L1/L1-driven data were mainly chosen in actual production. This suggests that the more English-like forms of language are produced in the conversations with native English speaking interlocutors.

Due to the lack of L2 conceptual resources in the subjects' mental lexicon, the meaning is accessed via L1 concept mediation (Kroll & Tokowicz, 2001) and thus the process of constructing a sentence based on L1 meaning configurations may be hard to circumvent for the subjects even when the task expects them to be in monolingual mode (English). This may be evident in the findings that L1/L1-driven English was most prevalent in the area "L1 semantics at a sentence level" in interviews with Korean bilinguals, and to a lesser extent but noticeable in interviews with native English speakers.

Overall, the results of the present study lead to three possibilities to explain the Korean L2 learners' language mode. First, the interlocutors' language itself may be attributed as playing a role in the subjects' language mode along the lines of McNamara and Lumley's (1997) seminal study of interlocutor effects in relation to testing. Although three of the Korean interviewers have native-like fluency in English and the other three are highly proficient users of English on a daily basis, the quality of their English could be expected to be different from that of highly educated English native speakers. Although the results show that Korean bilinguals' Korean accents in English may act as a trigger and contribute to more L1 activation in

English, the results here are not strong enough to generalize the findings. However, this issue should not be disregarded in the discussion of future studies.

Second, apart from the fact that language cues affects the activation and the de-activation of a lexical item in the selection process (de Bot & Schreuder, 1993), subtle paralinguistic cues might also be attributable to it. Given that the interviewer's facial expression and body language may be cues for the subjects (Grosjean, 2001: 16), there may be a possibility that the subjects were directed more to the intermediate mode on the continuum by the Korean interviewer's approving smile or nodding to the subject's L1-induced production in English. Although they were trained to be neutral in their responses to the subjects' Korean or Konglish words, paralinguistic cues might have been displayed even if they were not deliberate but incidental.

Third, ethnicity may have an effect on language mode in that Korean ethnicity seems to trigger the subjects' L1. This may also explain why the subjects tried to switch to the more English-like Konglish words in the conversations with ethnically non-Korean native English speakers. The choice of the words might have been made based on the presumption that their attempts to use Korean would not work with the native English speaker interviewers and thus chose Konglish words instead. It should be noted that while the Korean L2 learners' perception of the Konglish words is that they are English, Konglish words are activated from L1 lexical entries (Nam, 2010). The Korean L2 learners' Konglish-English equivalence hypothesis that Konglish would work exactly in the same way as English (Nam, 2009) may have facilitated the use of Konglish words rather than L1 words in interviews by English monolinguals.

IV. Conclusion

Despite some obvious limitations regarding scope and areas of focus, this exploratory study is able to show that even lower proficiency level Korean/Chinese learners of English reveal different language modes and, therefore, display some sensitivity to the context of the situations in which they find themselves. These are important findings for the classroom apart from already attested findings in the areas of testing (McNamara & Lumley, 1997) and collaboration in classrooms (Kim & McDonough, 2008). The findings reveal a deep subconscious process related to the social aspects of language use. When looking at language from this social point of view, movement into an intermediate or bilingual language mode is not a failure to perform effectively, but rather use based on contextual variables. The subjects, even those outside of the normalized group (EJ and PP), showed sensitivity to the context as embodied by the interviewers. According to Grosjean's (2001) theory of language mode, we would expect language users to do just this. Their switches into the L1, particularly in the interviews with Koreans, on this view, are examples of effective language use. The switches into Korean are not necessarily mistakes, but part of a shared experience between interlocutors and it is interesting to find that even lower level speakers are able to display such features.

It should, however, be noted that a reliance on Korean whenever L2 learners have difficulties using the target language should not be encouraged by Korean English teachers in Korea as students need to develop a fuller repertoire of strategies. Given the results that the subjects tried to use more English-like (Konglish) words rather than Korean words or structures in the interviews with native English

speakers than in the interviews with Korean bilingual speakers offers evidence that Korean English teachers may need to try harder to encourage their students to use the target language when the target English word is not readily available in their lexicons so that they do not simply settle on Korean. In this way Korean L2 learners may develop effective conversion skills from Korean to English, initially relying on Korean and going through the form of Konglish words, and then using communication strategies in English such as “circumlocution” (Tarone, Cohen & Dumas, 1983) or “exemplification”(Færch & Kasper, 1983).

As an exploratory study, the present study has some limitations. the number of subjects and interviewers. Future studies may include a larger number of subjects and interviewers for more refined data. In particular, studies focusing on different possible variables or triggers would provide much needed additional information.

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