

The Asymmetric Behavior of Goal and Benefactive Double Objects in the English Interlanguage of Adult L1 Korean and L1 Japanese Speakers

Eunjeong Oh and Maria Luisa Zubizarreta
University of Southern California

1. Introduction

Recent work in second language acquisition (SLA) has brought to the fore the issue of an L1 transfer effect of overt verbal morphology in the acquisition of lexically-restricted syntactic structures: examples are Montrul's (1997) study on Adult SLA and Whong-Barr & Schwartz's (2002) study on Child SLA. The findings of these studies suggest that L1 morphology plays a role in the acquisition of certain L2 constructions.

The present study replicates Whong-Barr and Schwartz's study with adult L1-Korean and L1-Japanese learners of English. The objective of the study is to investigate whether overt morphology in the L1 plays a role in the acquisition of English goal and ben(efactive) Double Object (DO) constructions. On the basis of the data from a grammaticality judgment task, we conclude that L1 verbal morphology might play a role in the acquisition of English benefactive DOs by L1-Korean and L1-Japanese learners of English. We also consider some alternative explanations.

This paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we go over the relevant linguistic background. Section 2 also provides a brief overview of the Whong-Barr and Schwartz (W-B&S) 2002 study, which the present study is built upon. In section 3, we describe the current study and report the results. In section 4, we present an alternative to the L1 transfer based explanation, namely, a lexical-based explanation, based on the different grammatical status of goal DOs and benefactive DOs. (cf. Jackendoff 1990, Kay 2001, Fillmore 1965, Goldberg 2002).

2. Background

2.1. Double Object constructions in English, Japanese, and Korean

In this paper, we are concerned with the acquisition of the DO form of the English dative alternation by L1-Korean and L1-Japanese speakers. An interesting point about dative verbs in English is that not all dative verbs alternate between the Prepositional Dative form (PD) and the DO form (i.e. a ditransitive with two bare DPs), as exemplified in (1) through (4). This variation among the English dative verbs has posed a learnability problem for first language acquisition (FLA) as well as SLA (cf. Baker 1979 and Juffs 1996).

The Goal construction

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| (1) | a. | John gave a book to Mary. | (Goal PD) |
| | b. | John gave Mary a book. | (Licit goal DO) |
| (2) | a. | John explained the answer to Mary. | (Goal PD) |
| | b. | *John explained Mary the answer. | (Illicit goal DO) |

* We would like to thank Tania Ionin and Toben Mintz for discussion and suggestions concerning this study. We are also grateful to Kate O'Connor of Language Academy at USC for recruitment of subjects.

The Benefactive construction

- (3) a. Mary baked a cake for John. (Benefactive PD)
 b. Mary baked John a cake. (Licit benefactive DO)
- (4) a. John finished the painting for Mary. (Benefactive PD)
 b. *John finished Mary the painting. (Illicit benefactive DO)

In Japanese, a sequence of two object DPs can surface as Dative Acc(usative), but not as double Acc, as shown in (5) and (6).^{1,2}

- (5) Hanako-ga Taro-ni/*o hagaki-o oku-tta.³
 Hanako-NOM Taro-DAT/ACC postcard-ACC send-PAST
 ‘Hanako sent Taro a postcard.’
- (6) Hanako-ga Taro-ni/*o e-o kai-ta.
 Hanako-NOM Taro-DAT/ACC picture-ACC draw-PAST
 ‘Hanako drew Taro a picture.’

Like Japanese, in Korean, a sequence of two object DPs can also surface as Dative Acc. Additionally, it can surface as double Acc. Yet, there are restrictions. In the case of the goal construction (7), double Acc is severely restricted by the choice of the lexical verb. Only a small set of lexical verbs with a goal argument allow double Acc in Korean: *cwuta* (to give), *mekita* (to feed) and *kaluchita* (to teach). Importantly, no special morphology is required for the goal DO. On the other hand, the double Acc is allowed with any benefactive-dative verb, but only in the presence of the light verb *cwu-* (8).

- (7) John-i Mary-eykey/*lul senmwul-ul ponay-ss-ta.
 John-NOM Mary-DAT/ACC present-ACC send-PAST-DECL
 ‘John sent Mary a present.’
 Cf. John-i Mary-eykey/ lul senmwul-ul cwu-ess-ta.
 John-NOM Mary-DAT/ACC present-ACC give-PAST-DECL
- (8) John-i Mary-eykey/lul kulim-ul kuly-e **cwu**-ess-ta.
 John-NOM Mary-DAT/ACC picture-ACC draw-Linker Ben-PAST-DECL
 ‘John drew Mary a picture.’

Table 1 summarizes the above facts for Korean and Japanese.

Table 1. The availability of Double-Acc and Dative-Acc structures in Korean and Japanese

Language	Double-Acc structure	Dative-Acc structure
Korean	√	√
Japanese	*	√

2.2. Transfer of L1 Verbal morphology in SLA

2.2.1. Montrul 1997

Montrul 1997 found that when the L1, but not the L2, uses special morphology to mark a particular syntactic construction, speakers of this L1 tend to reject the relevant construction in the L2. Her data came from L1-Turkish and L1-Spanish speakers acquiring the inchoative construction of English.

¹ Due to the possibility of scrambling, the Acc can precede the Dative in Japanese.

² Both Korean and Japanese have double Nominatives (i.e. a sequence of two DPs marked Nominative). But only Korean has double Accusatives (i.e. a sequence of two DPs marked Accusative).

³ The examples in this section are taken from W-B&S’s study.

2.2.2. Whong-Barr & Schwartz 2002

Along the lines of Montrul 1997, W-B&S explore the role of overt verbal morphology in the acquisition of the English DO construction by 5 L1-Japanese children and 5 L1-Korean children. W-B&S used an Oral Grammaticality Judgment Task with the verbs in Table 2.

Table 2. 20 test verbs

Licit <i>goal</i> -dative	Illicit <i>goal</i> -dative	Licit <i>ben</i> -dative	Illicit <i>ben</i> -dative
1. Throw	1. Say	1. Make	1. Hold
2. Show	2. Whisper	2. Buy	2. Keep
3. Bring	3. Repeat	3. Draw	3. Watch
4. Send	4. Explain	4. Find	4. Fix
5. Hand	5. Shout	5. Get	5. Finish

There are several independent parts to W-B&S's hypotheses. First, they hypothesize that the double Acc structure in Korean corresponds to the English DO construction.⁴ Since Japanese lacks the double Acc structure, it is therefore assumed to lack the DO construction. Furthermore, W-B&S note that the Korean benefactive double Acc structure, unlike English benefactive DO, must be licensed by the presence of the bound morpheme *cwu-*. They then hypothesize that this difference should lead L1 Korean children to disallow benefactive DOs in English. The idea, based on Montrul 1997, is that when the L1 uses a special morpheme to mark a syntactic construction, L2-learners expect to see special morphology in the equivalent L2-construction as well. If the L2 lacks any special morphology (as English always does in the DO construction), learners will be inclined to reject this construction in the L2. Thus, it is predicted that L1-Korean children learning English, unlike their Japanese counterparts, will exhibit asymmetric treatment of goal DOs and benefactive DOs: they should accept goal DOs but not benefactive DOs in English, since their acceptance of benefactive DOs should be blocked by the transfer of overt morphology (see ex. (7) vs. (8)).

Finally, W-B&S hypothesize that all children have a developmental tendency to overaccept illicit DOs. In the case of L1-Korean children, this tendency is overridden by the L1-transfer effect of the benefactive verbal morpheme *cwu-*; the lack of benefactive morpheme in English causes L1-Korean children learning English to (correctly) disallow illicit benefactive DOs. L1-Japanese children, on the other hand, are expected to overaccept both illicit goal DOs and benefactive DOs in English.

The results of the study are summarized in Table 3. L1-Korean children, unlike L1-Japanese children, treated illicit goal DOs and illicit benefactive DOs differentially. Specifically, they rejected the illicit benefactive DOs but not the illicit goal DOs. The patterns of overacceptance support W-B&S's predictions. The difference between Korean and Japanese children in the domain of benefactive DOs lends support to a W-B&S's *transfer-based explanation*. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there were very few subjects and token items elicited, especially in the case of L1-Japanese children. This may render the results inconclusive.

Table 3. Summary of the findings of W-B&S's study

English construction	Results of Korean children learning English	Results of Japanese children learning English
Illicit goal DO	Over-acceptance	Over-acceptance
Illicit benefactive DO	Correct rejection	Over-acceptance

Two important questions are raised from W-B&S study. First, given the fact that *cwu-* in Korean is required for *all* benefactive DOs, it is predicted that L1-Korean children should reject *all* benefactive DOs in English, licit as well as illicit. Nevertheless, W-B&S found appropriate acceptance of licit benefactive DOs by L1-Korean children learning English. Second, the L1-English children in the study

⁴ This hypothesis is motivated by the assumption that the Dative Acc construction in Korean (*-eykey -ul*) and Japanese (*-ni -o*) does not correspond to the English DO construction. In order to support this assumption, W-B&S make another assumption, namely that *-eykey* and *-ni* are full-fledged postpositions. We disagree with their assumption – see section 3.1.

(the control group) exhibited the same pattern as the L1-Korean children. Yet, the transfer-based explanation cannot apply to them. Thus, we may ask whether L1-Korean and L1-English children fail to overaccept illicit benefactive DOs for the same reason.

3. Present study

The present study replicates W-B&S's experiment with adult L1-Japanese and L1-Korean learners of English, using a written grammaticality judgment task. Furthermore, this study expands upon W-B&S by testing adult L2 learners at different levels of proficiency with the intent of gauging the developmental pattern of the acquisition of DOs. Moreover, unlike W-B&S's study, the present study compares the learners' knowledge of illicit goal DOs with illicit benefactive DOs, as well as licit goal DOs and licit benefactive DOs, with the goal of gaining a more comprehensive view of the role of transfer in the acquisition of English DOs by L2 learners.

The objective of the current study is to investigate whether overt morphology in the L1 plays a role in the acquisition of the English DO construction (in particular, benefactive DOs, licit as well as illicit) by L2-English learners in these two language groups.

3.1. Theoretical assumptions and hypothesis

Two important theoretical assumptions are made in the present study. First, contra W-B&S, we assume that Japanese *does* have a DO construction. This assumption is based on the following reasoning. The DO construction is syntactically defined in terms of an asymmetric c-command relation between the two objects: see Barss and Lasnik 1986, Larson 1988, 1990, Aoun and Li 1989, Pesetsky 1995, Zubizarreta 1992, among others. In the DO construction in English, the first (goal/ benefactive) DP asymmetrically c-commands the second (theme) DP. In the Japanese Dative Acc structure, the goal/ benefactive DP does in fact asymmetrically c-command the theme: see Hoji 1985, Takano 1998, Yatsushiro 1998, 2003, among others. The same holds for the Korean Dative Acc structure: see Lee 1991, 1993 and Cho 1994. Therefore, we assume that Japanese as well as Korean has a DO construction.⁵

Secondly, we note that Japanese, like Korean, also has benefactive verbal morphology. In other words, Japanese has a counterpart of Korean *cwu-*, namely *ageru*. While it is highly preferred in certain discourse contexts with benefactives, it is not obligatory (see Kuno 1973, 1976, Tsujimura 1996, McGloin 1989, Shibatani 1990). Nevertheless, our test sentences with benefactive verbs sound unnatural without *ageru*, and depending on the choice of lexical verbs, sometimes unacceptable. (Emi Mukai, Yasuo Ishii. p.c.).

It is important to note that *cwu-* and *ageru* function similarly. First, when they are used as lexical verbs, they correspond to English *give* (9, 10 below).

(9) John-i Mary-eykey senmwul-ul **cwu-ess-ta.**
 John-NOM Mary-DAT present-ACC **give-PAST-DECL**
 'John gave Mary a present.'

(10) Haha-ga tomodati-no Yamada-kun-ni susi-o **ageta.**
 Mother-NOM friend-GEN Yamada-DAT sushi-ACC **gave**
 'My mother gave my friend Yamada sushi.'
 (Tsujimura 1996:336-337, ex. 93)

Secondly, when *cwu-* and *ageru* are affixed to another verb, they denote benefaction, functioning as an auxiliary (light) verb (11, 12 below).

(11) John-i Mary-eykey kulim-ul kuly-e **cwu-ess-ta.**
 John-NOM Mary-DAT picture-ACC draw-Linker **BEN-PAST-DECL**
 'John drew Mary a picture.'

⁵ Pronominal variable binding facts in Japanese and Korean provide further support for the existence of a DO construction in these two languages.

- (12) Watashi-wa ane-ni seetaa-o katta-**ageta**.
I-TOP my sister-DAT sweater-ACC buy-gave
‘I bought my sister a sweater.’ (McGloin 1989:130, ex.3)

Table 4 summarizes the functions of *cwu-* and *ageru* that have been presented above.

Table 4. Functions of *cwu-* and *ageru*

	Lexical verb	Auxiliary (light) verb (suffixed to V ₁)
Japanese <i>ageru-</i>	√ (meaning: give)	√ (meaning: benefaction)
Korean <i>cwu-</i>	√ (meaning: give)	√ (meaning: benefaction)

The fact that *cwu-* and *ageru* are present in the benefactive DO construction in the two languages under discussion indicates that the benefactive construction in these languages is morphologically licensed. English differs from both Korean and Japanese in not having a morphological licensor for the benefactive construction, as shown in the table below.

Table 5. Licensor type in the benefactive DO construction in English, Japanese and Korean.

	Type of licensor
English benefactive DO	Lexical licensing
Japanese benefactive DO	Morphological licensing (<i>ageru-</i>)
Korean benefactive DO	Morphological licensing (<i>cwu-</i>)

Given the facts in Table 5, it is predicted that the same transfer effects of the benefactive morphology, which we refer to as a *blocking effect*, should hold for both Japanese and Korean learners of English acquiring the English benefactive DO construction. Therefore, we advance the hypothesis in (13) and its related predications in (14):

- (13) L1 Japanese and L1 Korean L2-English learners expect morphology to license benefactive DOs in English. Since English lacks benefactive morphology, these L2-English learners are expected to reject licit as well as illicit benefactive DOs in English.
- (14) L1 Korean and L1 Japanese speakers learning English will exhibit asymmetric treatment of benefactive DOs and goal DOs (licit as well as illicit). More specifically,
- (i) Illicit benefactive DOs should be rejected more strongly than illicit goal DOs.
 - (ii) Licit benefactive DOs should be accepted less than licit goal DOs.

Unlike W-B&S's study, we predict the blocking effect of *cwu-* for licit as well as illicit benefactive DOs. Furthermore, we predict the same blocking effect for Korean and Japanese speakers. A caveat is in order at this point. Although we predict the blocking effect of *cwu-* and *ageru* for both licit and illicit benefactive DOs, we do after all expect more acceptance of licit benefactive DOs than of illicit ones as a function of input since the positive input does to some extent override L1-transfer. The same holds for the goal construction.

3.2. Experimental Design

In this section, we will describe the experimental design used to test the predictions in (14).

3.2.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 65 adult L1-Korean learners of English (mean age: 28.38) and 52 adult L1-Japanese learners of English (mean age: 25.13). Additionally, 11 native speakers of English participated in this study as the control group (mean age: 28.64). The participants completed a

cloze test, which assessed their overall level of English proficiency.⁶ This test contained three paragraphs in which every 5th word was removed, resulting in 75 blanks. The subjects filled in the blanks with the word most appropriate for the context. The learners were classified into three proficiency groups based on the results of the cloze test. The cloze test results for the two L1 groups are shown in tables 6 and 7. Results of the L1-English controls are included in both tables, for comparison.

Table 6. Classification of Korean speakers, based on the cloze test

Group	Mean score of cloze test	Standard Deviation	Min-Max
Beginners (n = 16)	26.44	7.87	7-34
Low intermediates (n = 23)	42.13	3.83	35-48
High intermediates (n = 26)	54.54	4.46	49-65
Controls (n = 11)	64.91	3.65	60-70

Notes: ANOVA: $F(3, 72) = 156.68, p < .001$

Table 7. Classification of Japanese speakers, based on the cloze test

Group	Mean score of cloze test	Standard Deviation	Min-Max
Beginners (n = 21)	24.52	7.34	11-34
Low intermediates (n = 15)	43.77	3.17	37-48
High intermediates (n = 16)	54.69	3.6	50-61
Controls (n = 11)	64.91	3.65	60-70

Notes: ANOVA: $F(3, 59) = 186.22, p < .001$

3.2.2. Experimental tasks

3.2.2.1. Vocabulary Translation Task (VTT)

In the VTT, the learners were asked to translate 20 test verbs into their native language.⁷ The purpose of this task was to ensure that the learners knew the verbs used in the grammaticality judgment task. In computing group results, we only counted the responses to those verbs in the grammatical judgment task that the participants correctly translated in the VTT.

3.2.2.2. Written Grammaticality Judgment Task (GJT)

In the GJT, the main task of this study, 20 pairs of target sentences were tested, with a PD and a DO form in each pair. It consists of 4 target constructions (i.e. licit goal, illicit goal, licit benefactive and illicit benefactive DOs), each appearing with 5 different verbs. Furthermore, 40 filler sentences were used as distracters. Subjects were asked to evaluate the grammaticality of the sentences, using a scale ranging from -3 (completely unnatural) to +3 (completely natural). The subjects were also asked to correct a sentence if they had given it a negative score. This correction was intended to monitor the reasons behind the subjects' responses.

3.2.2.3. Sentence Translation Task (STT)

In the STT, the last task administered in this study, the subjects were asked to translate 15 sentences (5 licit goal DOs; 5 licit benefactive DOs; 5 benefactive PDs) into their native language. The goal of this task was to monitor the usage of *cwu-* and *ageru* in the benefactive DOs and PDs by the participants.

⁶ We thank Hiroyuki Oshita for allowing us to use the cloze test that he designed for his dissertation (Oshita 1997; part of the test is published in Oshita 2001).

⁷ Since we intended to replicate W-B&S's study, exactly the same 20 test verbs used in the W-B&S's study were used in the present study.

3.3. Results

3.3.1. VTT and STT

In the VTT, with the exception of a few beginners and low intermediates, the participants accurately translated the 20 test verbs. In the STT, several interesting results were obtained. First, in translating the DO sentences into their L1, both L1-Korean and L1-Japanese participants used Dative Acc structures. This result is particularly interesting in two respects. First, despite the availability of the double Acc structure in Korean, L1-Korean learners of English still opted for the Dative Acc structure. Importantly, while they used the Dative Acc structure to translate the DO forms, they didn't use it for the PD forms. This implies that they differentiate the DO forms from the PD forms and that furthermore, they assume that the Dative Acc structure corresponds to the English DO. This result supports our assumption that the Dative Acc structure in Korean and Japanese corresponds to the English DO construction. Secondly, the participants indeed used *cwu-* and *ageru* to translate the benefactive DO construction.⁸ For numerical results of the STT, and for more detailed discussion of this task, see Oh & Zubizarreta (in preparation).

3.3.2. GJT: Group Results⁹

We are concerned mainly with the results from the DO forms. To briefly summarize the results for the PD forms, the means for both the control group and the two experimental groups are above +2, clearly indicating that native and nonnative English speakers alike considered goal and benefactive PDs equally acceptable. In the following two subsections, we report the results for the DO forms for Korean and Japanese speakers, respectively. We report the results of the control group for comparison.

3.3.2.1. Results of L1-Korean learners of English

The comparison between Korean speakers' performance on licit goal DO and licit benefactive DO is depicted in Figure 1.

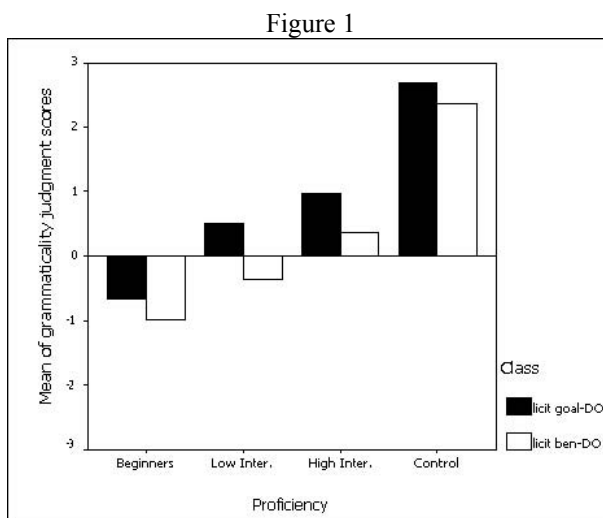


Table 8 summarizes the results of paired sample *t*-tests, which compare the mean responses to the licit goal and licit benefactive DOs for each proficiency level. The results of the *t*-tests show that there

⁸ The usage of *cwu-* and *ageru* was lower in the translations of the PD forms. This is due to the fact that *no tame ni-* ('for' in Japanese) and *ulwihay-* ('for' in Korean) used in the PD construction encodes the benefactive meaning, making the benefactive morpheme redundant.

⁹ In analyzing the data, we discounted results from target sentences involving *say*, due to the fact that the control subjects rated both the PD and DO forms of *say* ungrammatical. They reported that *tell* (rather than *say*) would be the appropriate verb in the context provided.

are statistically significant differences in mean responses to licit goal DOs and licit benefactive DOs for the low and high intermediates. As demonstrated in Figure 1, this result arises from these L2-learners’ asymmetric treatment of goal and benefactive DOs: licit benefactive DOs are rejected more strongly than licit goal DOs. This asymmetric treatment is most clearly shown in the case of the low intermediates, who tended to correctly accept licit goal DOs while incorrectly rejecting licit benefactive DOs. The high intermediates also treated the two structures as significantly different. However, their mean responses to both forms are on the positive side. Nonetheless, the difference between the two constructions goes in the predicted direction. The high intermediates, having presumably had more input than the low intermediates, are beginning to accept all licit constructions more.

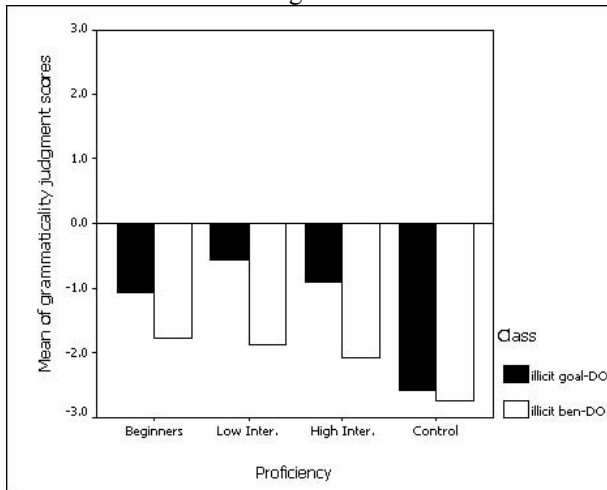
Unlike the low and high intermediates, the beginners and the control group do not show a statistically significant difference in responses to the two constructions. The control group treated both (licit) structures as equally acceptable. The beginners tended to reject both constructions. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the difference still goes in the predicted direction for beginners. Like the intermediates, the beginners rejected licit benefactive DOs more strongly than licit goal DOs.

Table 8. Paired-sample *t*-tests: licit goal DOs and licit benefactive DOs for L1-Korean speakers

Group	Significant difference between licit goal DO and licit ben DO ($p < .05$)
Beginner	* ($p = .237$)
Low intermediate	$\sqrt{p = .009}$
High intermediate	$\sqrt{p = .02}$
Control	* (accept both)

Next, the comparison between Korean speakers’ performance on illicit goal DO and illicit benefactive DO is depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2



The results of paired sample *t*-tests are provided in Table 9. The results show that the mean difference in responses to illicit goal DOs and illicit benefactive DOs reaches significance for all proficiency levels of L2-learners.

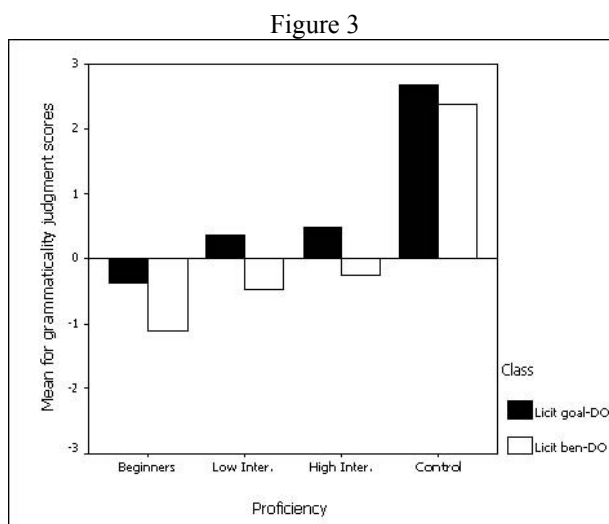
Table 9. Paired-sample *t*-tests: illicit goal DOs and illicit benefactive DOs for L1-Korean speakers

Group	Significant difference between illicit goal DO and illicit ben DO ($p < .05$)
Beginner	$\sqrt{p = .003}$
Low intermediate	$\sqrt{p < .001}$
High intermediate	$\sqrt{p < .001}$
Control	* (reject both)

As clearly shown in Figure 2, this result arises from asymmetric treatment of illicit goal DOs and illicit benefactive DOs: illicit benefactive DOs are rejected more strongly than illicit goal DOs at all proficiency levels. This is the predicted pattern. On the other hand, no statistically significant difference was attested for the control group, who correctly rejected both illicit constructions. It is important to note that at all proficiency levels, and for goal and benefactive DOs, licit constructions were accepted more than corresponding illicit constructions. This difference is attributed to a function of input.

3.3.2.2. Results of L1-Japanese learners of English

The comparison between licit goal DO and licit benefactive DO for L1-Japanese speakers is depicted in Figure 3. It should be noted that the patterns in Figure 1 and 3 are very similar. This implies that L1-Korean and L1-Japanese speakers behaved similarly on licit DOs in English.



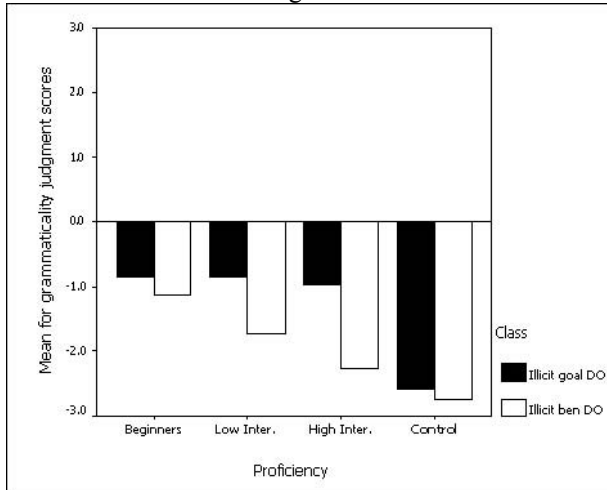
The results of paired sample *t*-tests in Table 10 lend support to the aforementioned observation. As was the case for the low and high intermediates in the L1-Korean group, the mean difference between the licit goal DOs and licit benefactive DOs is statistically significant for the low and high intermediates in the L1-Japanese group. Like their Korean counterparts, the L1-Japanese intermediates did significantly better with the licit goal DOs than with the licit benefactive DOs, accepting the former more than the latter. In the case of the beginners, a marginally significant difference in the predicted direction was attested. That is, licit benefactive DOs were more strongly rejected than licit goal DOs. On the other hand, no significant difference was attested for the control group.

Table 10. Paired-sample *t*-tests: licit goal DOs and licit benefactive DOs for L1-Japanese speakers

Group	Significant difference between licit goal DO and licit ben DO ($p < .05$)
Beginner	* ($p = .109$)
Low intermediate	√ ($p = .005$)
High intermediate	√ ($p = .047$)
Control	* (accept both)

Next, the comparison between illicit goal DO and illicit benefactive DO is depicted in Figure 4. This figure clearly suggests that like L1-Korean learners of English, L1-Japanese learners of English treated the two types of illicit DOs differently. This asymmetric treatment became stronger as proficiency increased. This is supported by the results of paired sample *t*-tests.

Figure 4



The results of the *t*-tests are presented in Table 11. The paired sample *t*-tests show significant differences between the mean acceptance rates of the two types of illicit DOs for the low and high intermediates but not for the beginners or for the control group. Nevertheless, it should be noted that even the beginners, like the low and high intermediates, rejected illicit benefactive DOs more strongly than illicit goal DOs, as predicted. Like their L1-Korean counterparts, at all proficiency levels of the L1-Japanese group, licit constructions were accepted more than corresponding illicit constructions, which is attributed to a function of input. This holds for both goal and benefactive constructions.

Table 11. Paired-sample *t*-tests: illicit goal DOs and illicit benefactive DOs for L1-Japanese speakers

Group	Significant difference between illicit goal DO and illicit ben DO ($p < .05$)
Beginner	* ($p = .130$)
Low intermediate	$\sqrt{p < .001}$
High intermediate	$\sqrt{p = .003}$
Control	*

3.4. Discussion of Group Results

We now evaluate our hypothesis, repeated in (15), and its related predictions in (16) in light of the results obtained.

- (15) L1 Japanese and L1 Korean L2-English learners expect morphology to license benefactive DOs in English. Since English lacks benefactive morphology, these L2-English learners are expected to reject licit as well as illicit benefactive DOs in English.
- (16) L1 Korean and L1 Japanese speakers learning English will exhibit asymmetric treatment of benefactive DOs and goal DOs (licit as well as illicit). More specifically,
 - (i) Illicit benefactive DOs should be rejected more strongly than illicit goal DOs.
 - (ii) Licit benefactive DOs should be accepted less than licit goal DOs.

The findings of the present study generally support the hypothesis and predictions. With respect to the low and high intermediates in both language groups, the results fully supported the predictions (16i) and (16ii). These learners rejected benefactive DOs more strongly than goal DOs. This holds for both licit and illicit DOs. Moreover, all of the differences are statistically significant. Results from the beginners in both language groups partially supported the predictions (16i) and (16ii). Beginners in the two language groups also rejected benefactive DOs more strongly than goal DOs, for both licit and illicit DOs. Although the mean difference between goal DOs and benefactive DOs doesn't reach statistical significance in most cases for beginners, it does go in the predicted direction. It should also be noted that despite the blocking effects of the benefactive morphology, in both language groups, licit

constructions were after all accepted more than corresponding illicit constructions, as predicted. This fact strongly suggests that positive input does to some extent override L1-transfer. The results discussed above are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12. Summary of results (K=L1-Korean speakers; J=L1-Japanese speakers)

Group	Licit goal DO vs. Licit ben DO	Illicit goal DO vs. Illicit ben DO
K. beginner	√ ($p = .237$)	√ ⊙
K. low inter.	√ ⊙	√ ⊙
K. high inter.	√ ⊙	√ ⊙
J. beginner	√ ($p = .109$)	√ ($p = .130$)
J. low inter.	√ ⊙	√ ⊙
J. high inter.	√ ⊙	√ ⊙

√ = The predicted numerical difference was found:

(i) Illicit benefactive DOs are rejected more strongly than illicit goal DOs.

(ii) Licit benefactive DOs are accepted less than licit goal DOs.

⊙ = The difference is statistically significant.

As expected, the results lend support to a transfer-based explanation: the L1 transfer of benefactive verbal morphology (namely *cwu-* and *ageru*) has a blocking effect on the acquisition of English benefactive DOs by L1-Korean and L1-Japanese learners of English. L1 transfer of overt verbal morphology leads these L2-learners to expect benefactive morphology in English benefactive DOs (but not in English goal DOs). The lack of benefactive morphology in English causes the learners to reject both licit and illicit benefactive DOs, resulting in the asymmetric treatment of goal DOs on the one hand and the benefactive DO on the other.

4. Concluding Remarks

In this study, we replicated W-B&S's study with 65 adult L1-Korean and 52 adult L2-Japanese learners of English. Contra W-B&S, we assumed that Japanese as well as Korean does have a DO construction. Moreover, we noted that Japanese (like Korean) also has a benefactive morpheme, *ageru*. Given the presence of a benefactive morphology in Korean and Japanese, we explored how L1 verbal morphology affects the acquisition of benefactive DO construction in L2-English. The results suggest that the L1 verbal morphology does play a role for both L1-Korean and L1-Japanese learners of English. More specifically, these L2-learners rejected benefactive DOs more strongly than goal DOs (whether licit or illicit). The results obtained can be accounted for by a *transfer-based* explanation.

Yet, there are plausible alternative interpretations of the results. We briefly consider two such alternatives. We first consider, and argue against, a *frequency-based* explanation, which has to do with the frequency of the prototypical verb of the DO construction. The frequency-based explanation claims that the asymmetric treatment of goal DOs and benefactive DOs is due to the more frequent appearance of goal DOs than benefactive DOs in the input. In fact, Goldberg et al. 2003 advanced a similar frequency-based proposal of Child FLA. Extending Goldberg's et al's proposal for Child FLA to Adult SLA could be one way of accounting for the results of the present study. However, a frequency effect, although plausible, is insufficient to account for the differential treatment of illicit goal DOs and illicit benefactive DOs. Neither illicit goal DOs nor illicit benefactive DOs appear in the input. Nevertheless, L2-learners still differentiate between the two types of illicit DOs.

Another alternative to the transfer-based explanation is a *lexical-based* explanation, based on the hypothesis that goal DOs and benefactive DOs do not have the same grammatical status; the goal verb is inherently ditransitive, while the benefactive verb is inherently transitive (see Jackendoff 1990, Kay 2001, Fillmore 1965, Goldberg 2002).¹⁰ In the goal DO, both the goal and the theme are arguments of the verb. On the other hand, in the benefactive DO, only the theme is an argument of the verb. The benefactive is an argument of the structure. It is in fact plausible to assume that the benefactive is an argument of the light verb, *cwu-* and *ageru*, in Japanese and Korean respectively. (cf. Shibatani (1994) for an analysis along these lines). In English, we could postulate the existence of empty light verb that licenses the benefactive argument.

¹⁰ Shibatani (1994) independently argues for transitive status of benefactive verbs in Korean and Japanese.

Given what we have said above, there are potentially two different factors at play. One is the overt vs. null status of the light verb that licenses the benefactive argument. The other factor is the fact that the benefactive is not an argument of the verb while the goal is an argument of the verb. We can consider that the goal DO is the unmarked configuration, while the benefactive DO is the marked one. We may then hypothesize that the learners acquire more easily the unmarked configuration. In order to tease apart the above-mentioned factors, further research is needed.

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