

An Analysis of English Tense and Aspect Errors in Korean-English Translation*

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1. Introduction

Translators make every effort to deliver code-changed meanings as easily and understandably as possible through their careful thoughts about language-code changing. Therefore, their translation is said to be a systematic reflection of their knowledge about source and target languages as well as their language skills. However, they cannot sometimes avoid committing translation errors because the translation process requires varied knowledge about source and target languages. Making a careful examination on their translation errors, we can find that their translation errors are not committed at random.

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Therefore, it is significant to make an analysis of Korean student translators' systematic errors and suggest some common causes hidden behind those errors.

As is well-known, Koreans are likely to make a lot of errors in the proper use of English articles because Korean does not have any grammatical elements corresponding to English articles (Kim (2003)). Their errors are attributed to lack of intuition into English articles. When it comes to tense and aspect, however, the Korean language has the same grammatical elements of 'tense and aspect' as English, even though the two languages are different in the ways of implying tense and aspect. Koreans have a linguistic insight into tense and aspect unlike articles, and so Korean translators are expected to have little difficulty delivering tense and aspect in Korean-English translation. However, some previous studies on the use of English tense and aspect by Koreans (Lee (2005), and Jung (2006)) defy our expectations.

This is the reason why this research is to deal with Korean students' tense and aspect translation errors in Korean-English translation. In this paper we will illustrate why Korean translators make tense and aspect errors in Korean-English translation and how those errors can be explained logically. To achieve these purposes, In Section 2 we will consider what differences and similarities Korean and English show in terms of tense and aspect. Section 3 makes literature review on Korean students' tense and aspect in their writings and translations. Section 4 reveals the methodology of this research. In Section 5 we will make a careful analysis of Korean translators' tense and aspect errors, and provide error causes underlying those errors. Section 1 and 6 are the introduction and conclusion of this paper, respectively.

2. Tense and aspect

Generally speaking, both Korean and English have recognized tense and aspect as grammatical categories, but they show something in common and

some differences in their usage.¹⁾ Here we will briefly consider what similarities and differences they demonstrate on the basis of Deokyu Park (1996, 1999) and Quirk et al (1972) as far as the tense and aspect of the two languages are concerned. The two languages recognize only the present and past tense in consideration of their morphological counterparts (Korean: \emptyset vs. -ess(-으), English: -s or \emptyset vs. -ed)²⁾.

(1) English: Root Verb + -s/ed

Korean: Verb Stem + \emptyset /ess(other suffixes)-Sentence Ender

Neither language regards future as tense because it lacks a morphological counterpart. Future time in both languages, which lack future tense, can be expressed by the use of modals (English: will/shall, Korean: -keyss(-겠)/-l-kes(-ㄹ-것)), future-time adverbials (for example, tomorrow or next year) or their two combinations³⁾.

Despite these similarities in the use and expression of tense and aspect, the two languages display some distinct differences in the detailed use of tense and aspect. Firstly, in English tense and aspect are determined by a verb phrase containing the information of tense and aspect, but Korean tends to

1) According to Quirk & Greenbaum (1973:40), Time is a universal, non-linguistic concept with three divisions: past, present and future; by tense we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time. *Aspect* concerns the manner in which the verbal action is experienced or regarded (for example as completed or in progress).

2) The form \emptyset means a formless and invisible zero morpheme to imply the present tense.

3) When it comes to the future tense in Korean, Park (1996, 1999) says that Korean does not have the future tense like in English. Park (1999) argues that '-l-kes' (-ㄹ-것) and '-keyss'(-겠) are modal verbs with potential meanings of 'guess', 'future time', 'possibility', or 'willingness', but imply 'future time' only when they accompany future-time expressions. He adds that future time in Korean can be realized only with the aid of future-time adverbials.

depend on not only a verb phrase but also time adverbials and contextual information to determine tense and aspect. Let us consider the following examples:

(2)(a) He is singing (*sings) a song now.

(b) 그는 지금 노래를 부른다.⁴⁾

ku-nun cikum noray-lul pwulun-ta.

He-T now song-O sing-Tpr-E

'He is singing a song now'

The English example in (2a) clearly shows that the main determiner of tense and aspect is a verb phrase, not adverbials and contexts which are thought to play only a role of bolstering the tense and aspect determined by the verb phrase. When we see the Korean example given in (2b), however, the role between tense/aspect and adverbials/context is reversed. In other words, the present tense used in (2b) is interpreted to be present progressive (influenced by time adverbial 'now'). This fact shows that the main determiner of tense and aspect may be different in English and Korean.

Secondly, an English verb phrase closely related to tense and aspect strictly determines what adverbials it can be co-used with in a sentence, but Korean shows less strict co-occurrence restrictions between them. This is because Korean adverbial information in addition to a verb phrase is more frequently used to express time and aspect meanings. Let us compare the following English and Korean examples given in (3) and (4) :

4) Korean sentences will be represented in Yale Romanization and the following abbreviations will be used: T: Topic Marker, S: Subject Marker, O: Object Marker, E: Sentence Ender, Tpr: Present Tense, Tpa: Past Tense, Aper: Perfective Aspect, Aimp: Imperfective Aspect, M: Modal, Ad: adverbial Marker, L: Locative Marker. Bound morphemes will be signified by a hyphen, and optional elements will be put in parenthesis.

(3) (a) *I didn't see him so far⁵.

(b) I haven't seen him so far.

(4) (a) 나는 지금까지 그를 보지 못했다.

na-nun cikumkkaci ku-lul poci-mos-hayss-ta.

I-T so far ku-O see-not-Tpa-E

'I haven't seen him so far.'

(b) 나는 지금까지 그를 보지 못해왔다⁶.

na-nun cikumkkaci ku-lul poci-mot-hay-wass-ta.

I-T so far he-O see-not-APer-Tpa-E

'I haven't seen him so far.'

The English examples given in (3a) and (3b) indicate that adverbials of time indicators related to present time like 'so far' cannot be used with the simple past tense. These examples show that if sentences violate these co-occurrence restrictions, they are judged to be ungrammatical. However, the examples in (4) show that Korean does not observe the co-occurrence restrictions between adverbials and tense/aspect, which English keeps. There is no meaning difference between the two grammatical sentences of (4a) and (4b). We can see many Korean sentences violating the co-occurrence restrictions between adverbials and tense/aspect, but those sentences are accepted to be grammatical because their actual tense and aspect can be reinterpreted on the basis of time adverbials differently from their superficial tense and aspect indicated by VPs.

Thirdly, Korean frequently allows tense and aspect to be neutralized unlike English⁷. English does not allow tense and aspect neutralization except

5) An asterisk is used to indicate that an expression or a sentence marked with it is ungrammatical, while a question mark to imply that an expression or a sentence marked with it is uncertain in grammar.

6) The bound morpheme '-hay-wass' is an allomorph of Korean perfective aspect form '-e-iss.'

7) As for neutralization about each of tense and aspect, refer to Comrie (1976, 1985).

for special cases, in English a verb phrase performs a main function of expressing tense and aspect, and adverbials and contextual information only play a minor and complementary role in implying tense and aspect. Therefore, if tense and aspect were blurred in English on account of tense and aspect neutralization in tense/aspect markers in VPs, a lot of confusion would be triggered because, in most cases, English adverbials and contexts do not function critically enough to determine tense and aspect. On the other hand, Korean adverbials and contexts, in addition to a verb phrase, function as critical factors to determine tense and aspect. Therefore, though tense and aspect becomes obscure on account of their neutralization in a verb phrase, adverbials and contexts function to recover unclear tense and aspect. This is the reason why Korean allows tense and aspect to be neutralized.

Let us consider the following Korean examples showing the neutralization of tense and aspect:

- (5)(a) 그 때 그가 등장하더니 노래를 불렀다.
 kuttay ku-ka tungcangha-doni noray-lul pwul-ess-ta.
 That time he-T appear-(Tpa)and song-O sing-Tpa-E
 'At that moment, after he appeared, he sang a song.'
- (b) 그 때 그가 등장하더니 노래를 부른다.
 kuttay ku-ka tungcangha-doni noray-lul pwulun-ta.
 That time he-T appear-(Tpa)and song-O sing-Tpr-E
 'At that moment, after he appeared, he sang a song.'

The example in (5a) shows that its VP contains precise tense and aspect indicator. However, its counterpart in (5b) has a neutralized simple tense. The sentence in (5b), the counterpart of (5a), has the neutralized present tense after deleting the indicator (-ess) of the past tense which is also implied by the time adverbial "that time" in the sentence.

In conclusion, there is little difference in the usage of tense and aspect between Korean and English, but Korean and English have a big difference in

how to indicate tense and aspect in their VPs. While English sentences have unambiguous time and aspect indicators in VPs, Korean ones can have neutralized tense and aspect because Korean tends to simplify tense and aspect markers in a verb phrase when they are predictable on the basis of adverbials and contextual information.

3. Literature Review

Korean Translation Studies have not been spotlighted until recently, and so when we make an attempt to find some research about special topics in the field of translation studies, it is not easy to find a lot of relevant research literature. For this reason, the number of research literature available is much smaller since our interest is confined to Korean-English translation research. Below is a presentation of previous studies that dealt with the topic of tense and aspect in English translations and writings.

Lee (1995) made an error analysis on the use of tense and aspect in English sentences. The subjects of her experiment were 238 high school students and 129 college students. She asked them to fill in the blank in an English sentence by appropriately transforming a given verb. The following example is one sample example:

- (6) Anna (listen) _____ to loud rock music for about an hour when her friends arrived, but turned it off to study together.

She aimed to reveal how accurately Korean learners of English use English tense and aspect in given contexts. This experiment found that the college students demonstrated better results than the high school students in the use of tense and aspect. In addition, this research showed that both the groups produced the fewest errors in the simple present and past tense but the most

errors in the use of present and past perfect progressive.

Kim (2003) made an error analysis in English-Korean translation by checking nine Korean translation versions of Ernest Hemingway's *The Snow of Kilimanjaro*. He argued that the use of the present progressive in Korean sentences was thought to be awkward in some contexts and therefore the present progressive should be replaced with the future form. Let us look at the following example:

- (7) (a) "You're not going to die" "Don't be silly. **I'm dying now**. Ask those bastards"
 (b) 나는 지금 죽어가고 있는 걸/나는 지금 죽어가는 거요/난 지금 죽어가고 있어

The bold sentence in (7a) are the source text in *The Snow of Kilimanjaro*, and the Korean sentences given in (7b) are the several examples of the translation of the source text. All the nine Korean translation versions include the present progressive in their translations of the English sentence. As for the present progressive in the Korean translations, he said that the tense and aspect should be replaced with the future form in view of the naturalness of the Korean sentence and the usage of the English present progressive.

Ryu (2004) made an analysis of various errors shown in twenty-four collegians' English writings. As to the tense and aspect errors she found in the writings, it is said that the use of the present tense instead of the past tense accounts for 63% as the biggest proportion of the tense and aspect errors (the misuse of the past tense of the present tense (20%), the use of the past tense instead of the past perfect (9%) and the misuse of the past tense instead of the present perfect (8%)). Let us see some tense and aspect examples found in her research:

- (8)(a) I felt I *am (was) completely naked
 (b) Yesterday, the theatrical club I *belonged (belong) to performed

the play on the stage.

(c) I *didn't climb (haven't climbed) the mountain in years.

(d) I *didn't feel (hadn't felt) peaceful for a long time.

She argued that those tense and aspect errors given in (7) might be attributed to Korean students' lack of knowledge of English tense and aspect and the influence of Korean in which verbs can have neutralized tense and aspect because accurate tense and aspect may be speculated on the basis of time adverbials and contexts.

Lee (2005) gave a cloze-type test about English tense and aspect to seventy high school students to know Korean high school students' use of English tense and aspect. One example of her cloze-type questions is as follows:

(9) I _____ her since she was Just a kid. (know)

나는 그녀를 어린아이때부터 알고있다.

She found that students showed more errors in order of past progressive (78%), present perfect progressive (75%), present progressive (54%), simple past (49%), simple present (44%), present perfect (41%), and past perfect (32%). She said that the reason for those errors is the effect of the source and target languages on the use of English tense and aspect in the way of interference, overgeneralization, and simplification. Consequently, her conclusion about those errors is that she could find more intralingual errors than language transfer errors, which implies a direction of English education at school.

As far as error research on tense and aspect in Korean-English translation is concerned, we cannot ignore Jung (2006). She aimed to reveal how precisely Korean learners of English understand the usage of English tense and aspect in given contexts. She asked each of her subjects including 15 high school students and 15 adults to translate two English source texts into Korean, each

of which comprised about 400 words. Firstly, Jung (2006) noted that most of her subjects used the simple past tense in their Korean translation products to deliver the English perfect aspect not accompanied by time adverbials or other time elements. She argued that the reason for this was because Korean learners were not taught to use the Korean counterpart to the English perfect aspect. Secondly, when subjects translated English perfective implying the meaning of completion because of lack of adverbials, they tended not to specify perfective in their Korean translations. Thirdly, when the same tense and aspect of English were translated into Korean, different translators used different tense and aspect in their Korean translations. She argued that this was triggered by the ambiguity of Korean tense and aspect expressions. In addition, she said that Korean translators committed translation errors on account of the influence of Korean tense and aspect.

Jung (2009) was to investigate error patterns in Korean collegians' writings on the basis of 86 error-tagged English writing essays. She found that students made more errors in order of determiner (40%), noun ending (plural/possessive: 31%), verb tense (13%), verb form (10%) and subject-verb agreement (6%). As far as tense errors are concerned, students made the most errors in the use of the present and past tense by wrongly putting them in each other's places. Let us see some tense and aspect error examples found in her research:

- (10)(a) After I became a senior student, however, studying mathematics
 *is (was) no longer a choice
- (b) Another reason to learn responsibility is to get credit which
 *made (makes) people succeed.

According to her, Kim (1998) showed different research result from her research because students made less verb tense errors than verb form errors. Jung (2009) argued that these different research results of the two studies may be attributed to different written genres and topics.

4. Methodology

This research will analyze tense and aspect errors found in Korean-English translation produced by Korean student translators, and then explore why they commit such errors. For this research, 30 Korean-English translation assignments on three Korean source texts were collected. This paper is based on an error analysis of translation assignments submitted by 23 Korean students who studied in the Translating and Interpreting Course between 2006 and 2007. The students participated in the production of the thirty translation texts and seven of them provided two translation texts of different source texts. They were majoring in translating and interpreting in the Master's Degree Course for Translating and Interpreting at M University, Australia. Their writing skills are assumed to be at an advanced level because they were enrolled in the Translating and Interpreting Course provided by M University, which requires for admission IELTS of 7.0 overall with 7.0 in both reading and writing or Internet-based TOEFL test score of 100 with 26 in writing.

Three types of Korean source texts are utilized for the error analysis of tense and aspect in this research. The three Korean source texts were entitled "The 12th Pusan International Film Festival" (henceforth, 'PIFF'), "Australian Government Offers Apology for Oppression of its Aboriginal People" (henceforth, 'Apology'), and "Asbestos: the Fiber that Brings Sorrow in its Wake" (henceforth, 'Asbestos').

The PIFF is a newspaper article which contains approximately 280 Korean words, and expresses an opinion on the Pusan International Film Festival just after the event was finished. When it comes to tense and aspect, this article has many present and past tenses to describe the festival which just came to an end. The Apology consists of about 220 words and is a news article delivering the Australian Prime Minister's apology for oppression of Aboriginal people. This Korean text is a translation of an English news article, and thus includes many direct and indirect speech sentences.

The third material, 'Asbestos', contains the warning message against the damage of the use of asbestos in our life, and has run in the opinion section of a newspaper. This comprises about 150 words, and uses many present tense sentences useful for delivering hard facts.

A total of thirty English translation texts, which were obtained by producing ten English target texts corresponding to each of the three above-mentioned source texts, were used for the error analysis of tense and aspect. 157 tense and aspect errors were found in the thirty translation materials, and were carefully analysed to make research on the error causes of tense and aspect in Korean-English translation. To provide more precise error analyses, subjects' translations were double-checked by both an English native speaker and a Korean one.

5. Error Cause Analysis in English Translations

Korean student translators are likely to make common mistakes because of their common language background about source and target texts, even though they may show a little difference in translation errors due to their idiosyncratic language abilities. We can confirm this fact in the tense and aspect translation errors we examined. Let us look at the following examples:

- (11)(a) The scale *was [has been] bigger and the number of programs *increased [has increased]. (규모는 커지고 행사는 늘어났지만)
- (b) It *was called [has been called] 'a miracle mineral' since it was discovered 4000 years ago. (4000년전 발견이라 기적의 광물로 통했다.)⁸⁾

8) As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, this translation error may be attributed to either a literal translation error or a student's lack of English grammatical knowledge. In addition, there were more error examples to make me hesitate to decide which error types they should be classified as. I frankly acknowledge that those cases were

- (c) The apology of the PM has been made 11 years after a report revealed that the government *sent [had sent] one out of three to ten Aboriginal children by force to white families and institutions according to its assimilation policy from 1910-1970.
(총리의 사과 는 1910년부터 1970년까지 정부가 통화정책에 따라 원주민 자녀 3-10명 중 1명을 백인 가정과 단체시설에 강제로 보냈다는 보고서가 나온지 11년만에 이뤄졌다.)
- (d) The future of film *is not [will not be] in the theatre but in laptops where a one-to-one interaction is possible.
(미래의 영화는 극장이 아니라 1대1로 관계를 맺는 랩톱안에 있다.)

The translation errors found in (11) are some of the common errors student translators as the subjects in this research were found to commit. Certainly, common causes must be hidden behind their common errors shown in the example (11) because the Korean translators have the same language background about Korean and English.

A natural question to ask at this stage is to wonder why Korean student translators show such common translation errors and how they can be explained. It is certain that the above translation errors give us clues to answering both what linguistic and hidden causes are behind those common translation errors and whether the translation errors can be explained logically. Their translation errors about tense and aspect given in (11) are thought to have occurred because of their incorrect interpretation of contexts and time adverbials in the source texts like in (11a) and (11d), literal translation of the source texts like in (1b) and their imperfect knowledge about the target language like in (11c). On the basis of this guess about error causes, therefore, we will attempt to divide their translation errors into the following four categories:

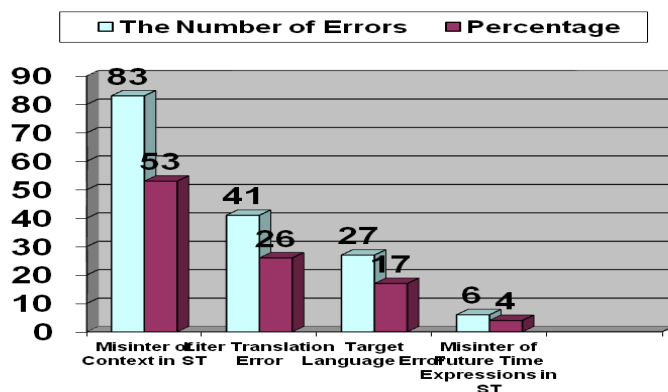
determined by my subjective judgement.

(12) Tense/Aspect Translation Errors

- (a) Misinterpretation of Context in Source Text
- (b) Literal Translation Errors
- (c) Target Language Errors
- (d) Misinterpretation of Future-Time Expressions in the Source Text

Before we consider the actual examples of tense and aspect errors related to each of the four categories, we need to have a look at the overall number of tense and aspect errors on each of the four categories. The following chart shows us the percentage and frequency of tense and aspect errors under each of the categories:

Chart 1 A Total of Errors in the Target Text based on Error Causes



The above chart indicates that more than 50% out of the total tense and aspect errors were caused by the misinterpretation of contexts for tenses and aspects given in the source texts. The second most frequent errors are found in the literal translation, accounting for about 26% out of the total errors. This indicates that in Korean-English translation, the translators could not be completely free from the influence of their source texts. The chart also indicates that translators' knowledge about their target language is important for

delivering correct translations because 17% of the total errors were triggered by their insufficient knowledge of English grammar. The errors caused by the misinterpretation of future-time expressions in the source texts turned out to be trivial, and the reason for this may be that only a few future-time expressions were used in the Korean source texts. In more detail, we will see what actual errors were found in each of the four categories, and in a more concrete way explain why those errors were made.

5.1 Misinterpretation of Context in Source Text.

The misinterpretation of context in source text means that Korean student translators commit tense and aspect errors in Korean-English translation because of the wrong interpretation of source text contexts implying tense and aspect. In Korean texts, tense and aspect contained in VPs of Korean sentences are likely to be marked as neutralized tense 'the simple present tense or the simple past tense', and their recovery is made possible through contexts. The correct interpretation of contexts to recover neutralized tense and aspect in Korean is vital, but sometimes Koreans commit tense and aspect errors in Korean-English translation by interpreting difficult and complicated contexts incorrectly.

Let us consider the actual examples showing the misinterpretation of contexts in determining tense and aspect:

(13) Misinterpretation of Contexts in the Source Texts

- (a) "Like we don't know the end of our lives, I don't tell the endings to the actors. I *rewrite [used to rewrite] the scenarios every night after the shooting and *don't control [wouldn't control] the weather in the scenes"

(우리가 죽는 날을 모르는 것처럼 배우들에게도 시나리오의 결말을 보여주지 않는다. 촬영후 매일밤 시나리오를 다시 썼고 극중 날씨도 통제하지 않았다.)

- (b) Although the size of festival *expanded [has expanded] and the number of events *increased [has increased], inexperienced

management relying on short-term contract workers and volunteers were the main problem.

(규모는 커지고 행사는 늘어났지만 단기계약과 자원봉사에 의존하는 스테프들의 비전문성이 문제였다.)

- (c) Aboriginal children coercively removed *were called [are called] the stolen generations', which means having their heritage and living habits broken.

(강제로 끌려간 원주민 어린이들은 전통문화와 생활습관에서 단절됐다는 의미로 '도둑맞은 세대'로 불린다.)

- (d) It *has been used [is used] in approximately 3000 kinds of manufacturing goods.

(제품화돼 생활속에 파고든 것만도 3000 여종이다.)

- (e) This analysis *was [is] based on the fact that asbestos was widely used for building during the construction boom of the 1970s when Japan made a rapid economic growth.

(1960-70년 고도성장기 건축 붐 때 석면을대량 사용한 점을 감안한 분석이다)

The context in (13a) indicates that a French film director delivers his past filming experience in the direct speech style. Therefore, we can guess in the context that the situation of 'rewriting' and 'controlling' occurred in the past when he filmed movies, and furthermore, to reflect this fact in the source text, the past tense marker '-ess' for the verbs 'rewrite' and 'control' was used in the Korean text. However, a student translator unexpectedly misused the simple present tense for both the verbs. Judging from the context and the past tense marker in the source text, the simple present tense of 'rewrite' and 'control' should be changed into the past tense.

In the example (13b), the tense markers for the verbs 'expand' and 'increase' in the Korean text are the present and past tense, respectively. A student translator translated the present and past tense in the source text into the same past tense in the target text, which is judged to be wrong, because in English the past tense is used to depict past facts and events not linked to the

present time. But the Korean context containing the example (13b) implies that the size and the event number of the film festival have gradually increased from the first festival to the current twelfth film festival, which requires the use of the present perfect. In the example (13b), the wrong past tense used in the English text must result from the misunderstanding of the Korean context.

The tense marker of the Korean source text corresponding to the English VP 'were called' in the example (13c) is the simple present tense. In addition, the Korean text containing the example (13c) indicates that Aboriginals, who were cut off from their traditional culture and customs, have recently begun to be called 'the Stolen Generations' and now are still called so. Considering this context and the source text, the past tense of the VP 'were called' in the target text in (13c) is incorrect, and should be shifted into the simple present tense 'are called' (or the present perfect 'have been called'). If the past tense of the VP 'were called' is kept intact, the target text wrongly says that now those Aboriginals are not called 'the stolen Generations' any more.

The source text in (13d) implies that the current number of daily products using asbestos reaches as many as about 3,000 products, and the overall tense used in the source sentence is the present tense. Judging from the context of the source text, therefore, the present tense needs to be used in translating the Korean text in (13d) into English. However, a translator, who misinterpreted the context of the Korean text in (13d), wrongly used the present perfect, which can indicate that about 3,000 daily products using asbestos were used in the past time as well as in the present time. The present perfect in the target text in (13d) delivers wrong information because many products among about 3,000 products are thought to have been unavailable in the past, and so it should be changed into the simple present tense.

The Korean tense marker for the VP 'be based' in (13e) is presented as the present tense, and in addition, the Korean context under which the example (13e) is used is closely related to the current time because the context highlights the Japanese current analysis and estimate to predict Japanese

asbestos-related death tolls in the future. Therefore, the target text tense in (13e) should be present, not the wrong past tense.

We have seen the actual examples of tense and aspect errors caused by Korean translators' misinterpretation of Korean contexts implying tense and aspect. Generally speaking, Korean texts contain so many neutralized tenses and aspects that in many cases Korean tense and aspect can be determined properly on the basis of contexts. Therefore, Korean sentences may have real tense and aspect different from superficial tense and aspect marked in the VPs. To grasp correct tense and aspect in Korean texts, it is important to comprehend actual tense and aspect depending on contexts independently of tense and aspect shown in tense and aspect makers. As contexts are sometimes very complicated and difficult, however, the reasoning of correct tense and aspect based on such contexts does not seem to be simple and easy. This is the reason why Korean student translators made the most tense and aspect errors in this category. In addition, we can guess that many errors result from carelessness and lack of deeper understanding of the source language.

5.2 Literal Translation Errors

It cannot be denied that student translators are likely to make literal translation errors because their understanding and delivery are mostly conducted on the basis of visual source text letters. Tense and aspect errors in Korean-English translation cannot be an exception from this fact. In many cases this literal translation unconsciously leads up to incorrect rendering of tense and aspect in the target texts. Literal translation errors of tense and aspect signify that translators make incorrect literal translations of tense and aspect expressed by VPs in the source text, which should not be literally translated.

Let us look at the following actual examples showing literal translation errors of tense and aspect:

(14) Literal Translation Errors

- (a) It *is [was] the first time that indigenous Australians entered Parliament of Australia.
(원주민이 의사당에 들어간 것은 사상 처음이다.)
- (b) The former Prime Minister, John Howard, who had taken the control of Australian government for eleven and half years, constantly denied any formal apology, saying that this generation *does not have to feel [did not have to feel] sorry for the wrong in the past.
(지난 해 까지 11년 반동안 장기집권했 던 존 하워드 정부는 과거의 잘못에 대해 현세대가 죄책감을 느낄 필요가 없다며 정부차원의 사과를 거절했었다.)
- (c) Asbestos *turned [turns] out to have another side.
(석면은 두 얼굴을 가졌다.)
- (d) Asbestos, formed when lava *has become [becomes] solid during volcanic activity, is a natural mineral with long, thin fibrous crystals.
(석면은 화산활동 때 용암이 응고하면서 생기는 천연광물. 머리카락의 약 5000분의 1 정도되는 가늘고 긴 섬유질의 결정체다.)
- (e) All these matters *are [were] trivial, but there are some voices worrying that they could ruin the hard-earned reputation that the festival has achieved over a long period of time.
(작은 악재들이지만 그간의 성과를 무너뜨릴 수 있다는 우려가 나온다.)

In the example (14a), the source text uses the present tense for the verb 'be', and considering the present tense in the source text, a translator literally translated it into the present tense verb in the target text. However, the context of the Korean text indicates that the actual tense of the verb 'be' is not present but past because its tense should coincide with the tense used to describe the fact that indigenous Australian entered the Parliament of Australia. This incorrect translation may result from the literal translation of the source text.

The translation errors shown in (14b) are certain to be triggered by a translator's wrong faithfulness to the source text letters with its source context

unnoticed. The VP 'does not need to feel' has the present tense in the source text, and therefore, considering this fact, a translator used the simple present tense for the VP in the target text. When we look into the context of the source text carefully, however, it is clear that the tense of the VP should be past because Prime Minister John Howard's remark was made in the past.

When we compare the source and target texts in the example (14c), we can see that its tense error can be attributed to the literal translation of the source text. The content of the source text in (14c) delivers the general fact that asbestos is convenient to use but harmful to our health, but unusually uses the simple past tense marker '-ess' in its VP. Because of the past tense marker used in the source text, a translator must have used the wrong past tense in the target text. Even though the source text contains the past tense, it should be interpreted to be the present tense because it delivers a general fact about asbestos. Therefore, the past tense in the target text should be revised into the present tense.

The underlined present perfect 'has become' of the target text given in the example (14d) is an interesting error example greatly influenced by a tense-related expression in the source text. It may be thought that the Korean VP part corresponding to the target text 'has become' indicates a duration required for the lava to become solid. Based on this guess, a translator must have used the past perfect form in the target text to be faithful to the duration expressed in the source text. But the content of (14d) delivers a general fact or a truth, and so it requires the use of the present tense, not the present perfect.

Considering the source text in the example (14e), its part for the verb 'are' is expressed as the present tense. The present tense in the source text had so great an impact on the wrong choice of tense that the wrong present tense was used in the target text. When we consider the context of the source text in the example (14e), it is evident that these trivial matters occurred during the PIFF, which just came to an end. Therefore, the Korean context requires the verb 'be' to be not present but past, and the present tense should be shifted into the

past tense.

As we have seen, most literal translation errors of tense and aspect are found in the present and past tense because the Korean source texts contain a larger number of the neutralized present and past tense. Even though we do not know precisely why student translators commit literal translation errors, we can speculate that those errors result from carelessness, visual influences and lack of deeper understanding about the linguistic features of Korean. Therefore, translators need to develop a further insight and understanding about the language in addition to paying more attention to translation.

5.3 Target Language Errors

Most target language-related errors arise from ignorance of linguistic features of a target language. To translate Korean into English properly, translators should have a firm and broad knowledge about the linguistic and grammatical features of English. The actual examples of tense and aspect we will discuss here indicate the fact that English-related errors happened because of the translators' insufficient knowledge about English grammar. Let us consider the actual examples triggered by the translators' lack of understanding of English grammar:

(15) Target Language Errors

- (a) According to an official estimate of the ministry of Environment, the number of patients *would [will] increase, so {that} 50,000 people *would [will] die of mesothelioma.
(환경성은 환자가 더 늘어나 5만명이 중피종으로 사망할 것이란 추산을 내놓았다)
- (b) He also said that we *apologize [apologized] for the indignity inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture.
(리드 총리는 “금지높은 사람들과 자랑스런 문화를 모욕한 데 대해서도 사과한다”고 밝혔다.)

- (c) On 12 October, the 12th Pusan International Film Festival **has closed*. [closed]
(제 12회 부산영화제가 10월 12일 막을 내렸다.)
- (d) This analysis takes into consideration the fact that large amounts of asbestos **have been used* [were used] in building during the development period between 1960 and 1970.
(1960-70년 고도성장기 건축 붐 때 석면을 대량 사용한 집을 감안한 분석이다)
- (e) It **is* [has been] termed “a miracle mineral” since its discovery four thousand years ago.
(4000년전 발견 이래 기적의 광물로 통했다.)

When we carefully examine the tense markers used in the Korean example (15a), it is found that the tense marker of the verb combined with the noun ‘estimate’ is the italicized past tense. On the one hand, the tense markers of the verbs linked with the subject ‘the number of patients’ are present, but the present verb actually implies future-time because the meaning of the noun ‘estimate’ indicates the action ‘the increasing number of patients’ will happen in the future. Therefore, the past tense ‘would’ should be transformed into the present form ‘will’. Meanwhile, the tense marker of the verb linked with the subject ‘people’ has a Korean modal verb -l- kes (-르-것) meaning ‘will’. Considering this context and tense/aspect-related facts of the verb linked to the subject ‘people’ in the source text, the past tense auxiliary verb ‘would’ in the English example (15a) should be changed into the present form ‘will’. This translation error must have been caused by the translator’s ignorance of English grammar which requires the difference of tense use between main and subordinate clauses as follows:

- (16)(a) It estimated that average salary increases would remain around 4 percent.
- (b) According to its estimate, average salary increases will remain around 4 per cent.

In the example (16a), the sentence has two clauses, which are connected by the conjunction 'that'. The tense of the main clause is marked as the past by the verb 'estimate', and therefore the tense of the subordinate clause dominated by the main clause should be past to observe the agreement rule of tense between main and subordinate clauses. This is the reason why the auxiliary verb 'would' is used in the subordinate clause in (16a). However, the example (16b) has only one main clause led by VP 'will remain' in addition to a phrase including the noun 'estimate'. The auxiliary verb 'will' is used in the main independent clause, and therefore its tense should be decided in itself without being influenced by any other verbs. For this reason, the auxiliary verb has the present tense form in the main clause (16b). The translator who delivered the target text of (15a) did not notice this grammatical fact in English, and therefore committed the tense error shown in (15a).

The error revealed in (15b) is also attributable to the misunderstanding of the grammatical fact explained in (16). The source text of (15b) is delivered in the direct speech form, and therefore the source text for the verb 'apology' is also expressed in the present tense. However, the translator delivering the target text of (15b) changed the direct speech form of the Korean source text into indirect speech in the target text. While shifting from the direct speech form to the indirect speech form, the translator did not catch an important grammatical fact about tense mentioned in (16). This is the reason why the present tense 'apology' was used in the subordinate clause, which finally violates the above-mentioned tense agreement rule between main and subordinate clauses because the main verb 'say' includes the simple past tense.

The tense and aspect error of the target text (15c) was also triggered by the translator's insufficient understanding about English grammar. English prohibits the present perfect from being used with adverbials implying obvious past time, which signifies that an event or a situation is completed in the past time, and therefore is regarded as being unrelated to the present time. When we have a look at the example (15c), the target text has an evident

past-time-indicating adverbial 'On 12 October', and therefore the target text of (15c) should not have the present perfect. The present perfect wrongly used in (5c) should be transformed into the simple past tense. The example (15d) can also be explained in the same way as the example (15c), even though the sentence structure of the former looks a little more complicated than that of the latter.

When we see the target text of (15d), the tense of its main clause is present, and so its subordinate clause does not need to abide by the tense agreement rule mentioned above. However, the subordinate clause should have the past tense not because of the tense agreement rule but because of an adverbial indicating past time. The prepositional phrase led by 'during' in the target text of (15d) indicates that the enormous use of asbestos was made over the past period between 1960s and 1970s. The prepositional phrase, which semantically plays the role of a past time adverbial, requires the past tense to be used in the subordinate clause, and therefore the present perfect wrongly used in the target text of (15d) should be corrected into the past tense. Time adverbials in (15c) and (15d) indicate that actions in the two sentences were completed in the past. The only difference between time adverbials in (15c) and (15d) is that the former adverbial like the past date 'On 12 October' implies a moment or a point in time, while the latter like 'during the development period between 1960s and 1970s' indicates a period or a duration. This difference must have led a translator to use the wrong present perfect in (15d), which is different from the wrong present tense in (15c).

The error of the example (15e) can be attributed to the target language-related error caused by lack of knowledge about English grammar. A translator is likely to commit a tense error in the English text example (15e) on account of his or her ignorance of the fact that a clause should use the present perfect in its VP to indicate the meaning of continuation up to the present time when it is combined with a clause or a phrase led by 'since' implying the initiation of an event or a situation happening in the past. The

translator delivering the English text in (15e) does not have any reason to use the present tense in the target text because its source text corresponding to the English verb 'be' is marked as the past tense marker '-ess'. This is the reason why the error found in (15e) is dealt with under the category of target language errors, not under a literal translation error.

These errors related to English grammar can be overcome by translators' effort and willingness. If Korean translators know more about English grammar and its linguistic features, they can reduce English grammar-related errors in Korean-English translation. These errors highlight the importance of the target language grammar in delivering translations. Translation education should also help trainees know more about the English grammar and reduce English grammar-related errors.

5.4 Misinterpretation of Future-Time Expression in Source Text

Park(1999) regarded '-l- kes' (-ㄹ-것) and '-keyss'(-ㄹ것) as modals, which can indicate future time among its potentially different meanings including 'guess', 'future time', 'possibility', or willingness only when they accompany future-time expressions. Koreans are likely to pay little attention to this fact and commit mistakes in their use of tense and aspect. In addition, future-time words including nouns, adjectives and adverbials allow VPs to have neutralized tense and aspect. Determining English tense and aspect on the basis of Korean texts in Korean-English translation, some Korean students tend to adopt wrong tense and aspect in compliance with tense and aspect markers in Korean VPs with future-time expressions unnoticed. This is the reason why we deal with future-time-expression -related errors separately from the category of context misinterpretation in the source text, even though the number of these errors is so small, which may be attributable to the limited use of future time in the Korean texts.

Let us consider some future time-related errors as follows:

(17) Misinterpretation of Future-Time Expressions in the Source Text

- (a). Movies in our future *would [will] not be in movie theatres but on a laptop where movies and audience can establish a one-to-one relationship.

(미래의 영화는 극장이 아니라 1대1로 관계를 맺는 랩톱안에 있다.)

- (b). The advance of Korean film industry *would [will] happen when we have masters like those people.

(한국영화의 진정한 발전도 이런 거장들이 속속 나와 줄때 가능할 것이다.)

- (c). The real development of Korean movies *is not [will not be] possible until such masters exist on a continuous basis.

(한국영화의 진정한 발전도 이런 거장들이 속속 나와 줄때 가능할 것이다.)

When we look at the example (17a) in the source text, the tense marker in the VP shows the simple present tense. However, the Korean text contains a future-time word ‘future’(미래) and so the word makes it possible to change the present tense in its VP into future time. Unexpectedly, a student translator used the past form of a modal verb ‘will’ in the target text example (17a). The reason why the past form was used in (17a) is not clear, but the error is thought to be triggered by the same problem as in the example (16). In other words, the Korean text of (17a) was delivered in the direct speech form, but a translator intended to shift the Korean direct speech into the form of indirect speech in the target text, and then made a tense error by changing only the tense of the modal verb on the basis of the indirect speech form while its speech form was kept direct.

The same source text examples (17b) and (17c) have a future-time adverbial expressed by ‘when’ and the modal verb ‘-l-kes’, and therefore the modal verb indicates future time. This interpretation requires the two target texts to have future-time modal verb ‘will’ in their VPs. However, each VP of the two English texts contain the past tense ‘would’ and the present tense ‘is’,

which are thought to be wrong. The former should be shifted into the present tense form 'will' and the latter should replace the present tense form 'is' with the present tense form containing modal verb 'will' in its VP. Presumably, the reason why the past form 'would' was used in the English translation (17b) is that its source text must have been interpreted to be a sentence containing a subjunctive mood. In Korean, it is sometimes confusing to discern between indicative and subjunctive mood because their difference sometimes depend on contexts. Let us consider the following Korean sentence:

(18) 그가 이것을 볼때면 화를 낼 것이다

It is possible to interpret the Korean sentence either as a subjunctive meaning or as an indicative meaning depending on given contexts as follows:

- (19) (a) If he saw this, he would be angry.
 (b) When he sees this, he will be angry.

However, there is a big difference between the source texts in (17b) and (18), which we cannot miss: the latter uses the conjunction '-tamyen'(when) allowing the two interpretations of subjunctive and indicative meanings, while the former uses the conjunction '-l-ttay'(if) allowing only the interpretation of an indicative meaning. Therefore, there is no reason to use the subjunctive 'would' in (17b).

In the target text (17c) the present tense form 'is' is wrongly used, and the reason for this error is the overuse of the present tense form of the verb 'be'. The simple present tense can imply future time only under special circumstances. The English text of (17c) containing idiomatic expression 'not-until' does not provide any special condition to replace the VP containing the structure of 'will + be' with the VP structure including the present tense 'is'.

The error examples we have just seen show how difficult it is to have a

good grasp of the Korean language, and make us realize that professional translators need to have professional knowledge not only about a target language but also about their mother tongue. As far as tense and aspect are concerned, we can confirm in the above examples that to reduce the number of tense and aspect errors it is vital to make a precise interpretation of Korean contexts on the basis of precise understanding about the role of time-related expressions and the functions of modal verbs in Korean.

6. Implications

We have analysed Korean students' Korean-English translation errors and accounted for basic reasons hidden behind those errors from the viewpoints of context misinterpretation in the source texts, literal translation, target language-related errors and future-time expression misinterpretation in the source texts.

This research is significant in that it not only reveals the causes of Korean translators' tense and aspect errors in Korean-English translation, but it also indicates what should be done to prevent students from committing such errors. It provides useful information about what English tense and aspect should be stressed to would-be Korean translators and how English tense and aspect should be dealt with in Korean-English translation class. Giving careful thought about Korean students' tense and aspect errors, we can derive several significant implications for students translators and translation education.

Above all, Korean student translators need to understand the usage of English tense and aspect, and use them as correctly as possible. Koreans were found to have difficulty in using the English perfect and overuse the English present and past tense. These facts must have resulted from the influence of Korean source texts overusing the present and past tense and from improper knowledge about the usage of the English perfect. If student translators try to

understand the proper usage of English tense and aspect, they can have confidence in the proper use of the English perfect and reduce the overused errors of the English past and present tense. It should be remembered that the problem of English tense and aspect where Korean translators committed a lot of errors can be overcome depending on translators' effort because English tense and aspect do not require Koreans to have any special intuition like in English articles.

In this research the significance and direction of translation education can be found. In view of the analysis of translation errors, translation education for Korean students should focus not only on teaching grammatical and linguistic features of English but also those of the Korean language. Generally speaking, a Korean-English translation class is likely to highlight the importance of the target language, and get a translation teacher to touch on only the linguistic features and expressions of the target language. However, it should be stressed in a Korean-English translation class that the linguistic features and grammar of Korean should be as important as those of English, and the class should help would-be Korean translators have new perception of the source language.

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[Abstract]

An Analysis of English Tense and Aspect Errors in Korean-English Translation

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We analysed Korean translators' errors in the use of tense and aspect in Korean-English translation. Their errors can be classified into the four main categories, which are Misinterpretation of Context in Source Text, Literal Translation Errors, Target Language Errors, and Misinterpretation of Future-Time Expressions in the Source Text. These four main categories demonstrate that Korean translators are likely to make common mistakes because of their common language background about source and target texts, despite their idiosyncratic language abilities. This research is significant in that it not only shows the causes of Korean translators' tense and aspect errors in Korean-English translation, but also indicates what should be done to prevent Korean translators from committing such errors. It provides useful information about what English tense and aspect in particular Korean translators need to be careful about, and in addition, how Korean tense and aspect should be delivered in Korean-English translations.

▶ Key Words: Korean-English translation, Tense and Aspect, Misinterpretation of Context in Source Text, Literal Translation Errors, Target Language Errors

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