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【研究論文】

**Analysis of Listening Acquisition Patterns in Korean-Language
Learners: Beginning and Intermediate Learners**

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Analysis of Listening Acquisition Patterns in Korean-Language Learners: Beginning and Intermediate Learners

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The purpose of this study is to analyze the listening acquisition patterns of Japanese learners of Korean language. The present study analyzes the process by which beginning and intermediate Korean-language learners acquire listening skills. It also assesses the acquisition patterns and characteristics for individual listening test items in an objective listening test for assessment of listening skills. Beyond this, the study investigates the differences in acquisition patterns according to proficiency level and identifies the items that are most affected by the proficiency level. Finally, statistical analyses are performed to examine listening acquisition patterns in Korean-language learners at different proficiency levels.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to analyze the listening acquisition patterns of Japanese learners of Korean language. While a balance in acquisition of four areas—listening, reading, writing, and speaking—is important in foreign language learning, listening acquisition is particularly important as it makes it possible to communicate with others. A plethora of studies have been conducted on Korean-language teaching and learning methods for Koreans. However, no research has been conducted on foreign language listening acquisition using objective assessment of study participants in different learning levels and using statistical analysis. For improvement in Korean-language learners' listening skills and effective learning methods, research on changes in and characteristics of the listening acquisition process is required.

The present study analyzes the process by which beginning and intermediate Korean-language learners acquire listening skills. It also assesses the acquisition patterns and characteristics for individual listening test items in an objective listening test for assessment of listening skills. Beyond this, the study investigates the differences in acquisition patterns

according to proficiency level and identifies the items that are most affected by the proficiency level. Finally, statistical analyses are performed to examine listening acquisition patterns in Korean-language learners at different proficiency levels.

2. Study Participants and Research Methods

This study investigates Korean-language listening acquisition patterns in Japanese learners using the Listening Test results of the Korean Language Proficiency Test, an objective assessment of listening skills. The KLPT is conducted in Japan and consists of a written test and a listening test.¹ The test has been conducted by the Korean Language Proficiency Association since 1993 to assess learning outcomes of Korean-language learners. It is the most commonly conducted assessment of Korean-language proficiency in Japan and it is designed for Korean-language learners whose native language is Japanese.² Therefore, the KLPT's Listening Test is an objective assessment, and the test results are adequate materials for research analysis on listening language patterns in Japanese learners of Korean language.

Previously, I have researched the KLPT Written Test results, including the analyses on the percent correct and the scores by item types using the Written Test Level 5,³ the Korean-language proficiency level of the intermediate learners using the Written Test Level 3,⁴ and the acquisition process and the challenging learning content for Korean-language beginners using the Written Test Level 4.⁵ As these analyses on Korean-language acquisition were conducted using the KLPT Written Test, the present study is conducted using the KLPT Listening Test and the test results to examine the patterns of listening acquisition by Korean-language learners.

KLPT has five levels (1–5) with Level 1 being the most difficult and Level 5 being the least difficult. The Korean Language Proficiency Association has designated test levels⁶ as

¹ Level 1, the highest level test, includes a writing test.

² For further information, refer to the Korean Language Proficiency Association's website.

³ Kim Haejin (2006).

⁴ Kim Haejin (2015).

⁵ Kim Haejin and Kim Euijin (2017).

⁶ Each level is further classified into the first half and the second half, but this study uses the three large categories of Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced.

follows: Levels 4 and 5 as beginner levels; Levels 2.5 and 3 as intermediate levels, and Levels 1 and 2 as advanced levels. The present study examines the Korean-language acquisition process and the item-specific acquisition patterns and characteristics of beginner and intermediate learners by analyzing the test results of students who have taken the KLPT Level 4 for beginners and Level 3 for intermediate learners. The study also investigates the differences in acquisition patterns according to proficiency level, and identifies the items that are affected by the proficiency level. Finally, statistical analyses are performed to examine listening acquisition patterns in Korean-language learners of different proficiency levels.

3. Listening Acquisition Patterns in Beginner Learners of Korean Language

3.1 Listening Test Items

This chapter examines listening acquisition patterns in beginner learners of Korean language by analyzing the results of the Listening Test from Japanese learners who have taken the 43rd KLPT Level 4. For a multifaceted assessment of Korean listening comprehension, the Level 4 Listening Test includes seven types of multiple choice items: [1] Listening to a Korean word and choosing it among written choices, [2] listening to a sentence in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the sentence, [3] listening to a question in Korean and choosing the answer, [4] listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation, [5] listening to a conversation in Korean and choosing an answer to a question, [6] listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a sentence in Japanese that matches the content of the passage, and [7] listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer by making an inference based on the understanding of the passage. The test includes 20 items: four items of the first type, two items of the second type, three items of the third type, three items of the fourth type, two items of the fifth type, four items of the sixth type, and two items of the seventh type. Although the number of items varies across the item types, the numbers are not considered in the analyses, and only the percent-correct for each item type will be examined.

The analyses in this chapter were conducted with 18 Japanese college students who took the 43rd KLPT Level 4. These students were classified into two groups based on their

listening test scores for analysis of listening acquisition patterns of beginner learners of Korean language according to proficiency level. According to the Korean Language Proficiency Association, the national average score of the 43rd KLPT Level 4 Listening Test was 26 points out of 40. Therefore, in this chapter, the participants with scores of 26 or higher are classified as high scorers and those with scores below 26 are classified as low scorers. Based on this classification, nine high scorers and nine low scorers were identified. The high-and low-score groups are titled as Beginner_H (high) and Beginner_L (low), respectively.

3.2 Listening Acquisition Patterns in Beginner Learners of Korean Language by Proficiency Level

Table 1 shows the percent-correct for each item type of the Beginner_H and Beginner_L Listening Tests. The following section examines the listening acquisition patterns in beginner learners of Korean language by proficiency level, emphasizing items they had difficulty with.

Table 1. Percent Correct for Individual Item Types by Proficiency Level
(Level 4 Listening Test)

Item Type Proficiency \	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]
Beginner_H	94.4%	66.7%	81.5%	96.3%	50.0%	61.1%	88.9%
Beginner_L	75.0%	38.9%	55.6%	66.7%	50.0%	52.8%	38.9%

Table 1 shows that, for high scorers (Beginner_H), the percent correct was highest for (4) “Listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation” (96.3%), and second highest for [1] “Listening to a Korean word and choosing it among written choices” (94.4%). Item types with relatively high percents correct included [7] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer by making an inference based on the understanding of the passage” (88.9%) and [3] “Listening to a question in Korean and choosing the answer” (81.5%). Item types with relatively low percents correct included [2] “Listening to a sentence in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the sentence” (66.7%), and [6]

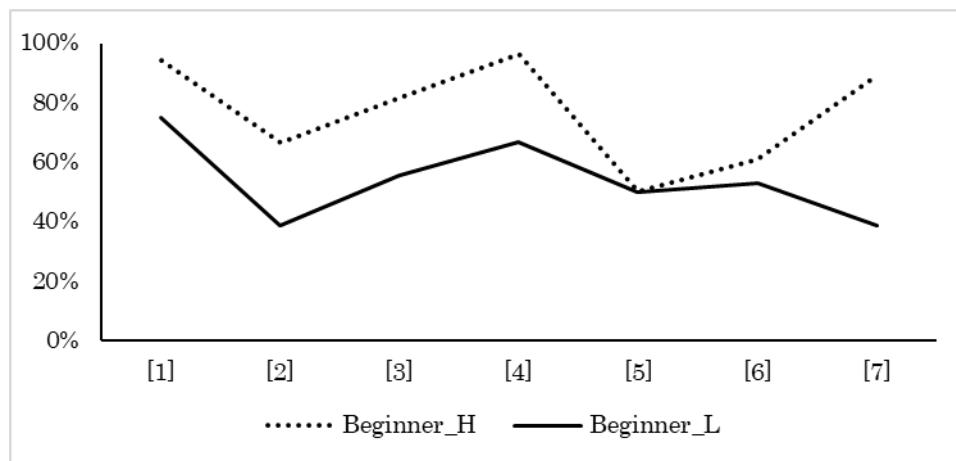
“Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a sentence in Japanese that matches the content of the passage” (61.1%). The item type with the lowest percent correct was [5] “Listening to a conversation in Korean and choosing an answer to a question” (50.0%).

For low scorers (Beginner_L), item types with the highest percents correct included [1] “Listening to a Korean word and choosing it among written choices” (75.0%) and [4] “Listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation” (66.7%). Item types with relatively low percents correct in the 50% range included [3] “Listening to a question in Korean and choosing the answer” (55.6%) and [6] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a sentence in Japanese that matches the content of the passage” (52.8%) and [5] “Listening to a conversation in Korean and choosing an answer to a question” (50.0%). Item types with the lowest percents correct at 38.9% included [2] “Listening to a sentence in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the sentence” and [7] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer by making an inference based on the understanding of the passage.”

Table 1 shows a common pattern of listening acquisition between high and low scores: Two item types with high percents correct for both groups were [4] “Listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation” and [1] “Listening to a Korean word and choosing it among written choices.” One item type with a low percent correct for both groups was [2] “Listening to a sentence in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the sentence.”

In contrast, for [7] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer by making an inference based on the understanding of the passage,” the percent correct was high (88.9%) for high scorers, but the lowest (38.9%) among seven items types for low scorers. The large gap in percents correct for Item Type [7] between the groups suggests that it is significantly affected by proficiency level.

Graph 1 is a visual representation of Table 1 that compares percents correct for individual item types between high scorers and low scorers.



Graph 1. Visual representation of percents correct for individual item types of Listening Test Level 4

As shown in Graph 1, the percents correct for high and low scorers was the same for Item Type [5], and showed similar trends for Item Types [1], [2], [3], [4], and [6]. However, the graphs for the two groups showed the opposite trends with a large gap in the percents for Item Type [7]. Item Type [7] requires the ability to understand the overall content of a passage in Korean and make an inference within a specified time, and high scorers showed a high percent correct, whereas low scorers showed the lowest percent correct, revealing a difference in listening acquisition pattern.

3.3 Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis on the listening acquisition patterns of beginner learners of Korean language was performed using a 2x2 crosstabulation with counts of participants with correct and incorrect answers in the high-scorer group (Beginner_H) and the low-scorer group (Beginner_L). Statistical techniques commonly used to determine the statistically significant difference between the counts in the crosstabulation include Fisher's Exact test, a nonparametric test, and the Chi square test, which is a parametric test. In this study, Fisher's Exact test was used because the tabulation included cells with less than 10 observation counts,

as shown in Table 2. The results of Fisher's Exact test are tallied on the far-right column of Table 2.

Table 2. A Crosstabulation of Counts and the Results of Fisher's Exact Test

Item Type	Correct Answer Counts for Beginner_L	Correct Answer Counts for Beginner_H	Fisher's Exact Test (two-tailed)
	Incorrect Answer Counts for Beginner_L	Incorrect Answer Counts for Beginner_H	
[1]	27	34	$p (=0.0457) < 0.05, *$
	9	2	
[2]	7	12	$p (=0.1811) > 0.1, \text{n.s.}$
	11	6	
[3]	15	22	$p (=0.077) < 0.1, \dagger$
	12	5	
[4]	18	26	$p (=0.0112) < 0.05, *$
	9	1	
[5]	9	9	$p (=1.0) > 0.1, \text{n.s.}$
	9	9	
[6]	19	22	$p (=0.6344) > 0.1, \text{n.s.}$
	17	14	
[7]	7	16	$p (=0.0045) < 0.01, **$
	11	2	

As shown in Table 2, the results of the statistical analysis revealed a significant difference in counts of participants with correct and incorrect answers between the two groups for Item Types [1], [4], and [7].

The results suggest that the listening item types that beginning learners score most regardless of their proficiency levels are [1] “Listening to a Korean vocabulary word and choosing it among written choices” and [4] “Listening to a

Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation; the item type that is most affected by proficiency level is [7] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer by making an inference based on the understanding of the passage.”

The item types for choosing the word that matches its pronunciation (Item Type [1]) and for translating into Japanese, learners’ native language (Item Type [4]) could be the learning areas in which beginning learners could relatively easily develop listening skills, whereas the item type for assessment of comprehension with ability to understand the overall content and make an inference (Item Type [7]), rather than knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, is likely to be greatly affected by proficiency. While high scorers who are proficient can easily grasp the entire content, low scorers are likely to have the most difficulty in listening acquisition for Item Type [7]. As in the discussion on the listening acquisition patterns by proficiency level in Section 3.2, the statistical analysis results provided more objective patterns of listening acquisition.

Regarding Item Types [2], [3], [5], and [6], no significant group differences were found in terms of counts, although Item Type [3] showed a significant trend.

4. Listening Acquisition Patterns in Intermediate Learners of Korean Language

4.1 Listening Test Items

This chapter examines listening acquisition patterns in beginning learners of Korean language by analyzing the results of the Listening Test from Japanese learners who have taken the 41st KLPT Level 3. For multifaceted assessment of Korean listening comprehension, the Level 3 Listening Test includes six types of multiple choice items: [1] Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the passage, [2] listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a word that describes the passage, [3] listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer appropriate for the content, [4] listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation, [5] reading a

passage in Japanese and choosing the correct Korean translation from the choices in spoken Korean, and [6] listening to a passage in Korean and choosing the sentence in Korean that match the overall content of the passage. The Listening Test Level 3 includes 20 items: two items of the first type, four items of the second type, four items of the third type, four items of the fourth type, four items of the fifth type, and two items of the sixth type. Although the number of items varies across the item types, the numbers are not considered in the analyses, and only the percent correct for each item type will be examined.

To compare Levels 3 and 4, two item types in Level 4 — [1] “Listening to a Korean word and choosing it among written choices” and [6] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a sentence in Japanese that matches the content of the passage” — were not included in Level 3. Instead, Level 3 included two new item types — [2] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a word that describes the passage” and [5] “Reading a passage in Japanese and choosing the correct Korean translation from the choices in spoken Korean.”

The analyses in this chapter were conducted with 12 Japanese college students who took the 41st KLPT Level 3. The students were classified into two groups based on their listening test scores to analyze the listening acquisition patterns of intermediate Korean-language learners according to proficiency level. According to the Korean Language Proficiency Association, the national average score of the 41st KLPT Level 3 Listening Test was 26 points out of 40, the same as for Level 4. Therefore, in this chapter, the participants with scores of 26 or higher are classified as high scorers and those with scores below 26 are classified as low scorers. Based on this classification, five high scorers and seven low scorers were identified. The high and low score groups are titled as Intermediate_H (high) and Intermediate_L (low), respectively.

4.2 Listening Acquisition Patterns in Intermediate Learners of Korean Language by Proficiency Level

Table 3 shows the percent correct for each item type of the Intermediate_H and

Intermediate_L Listening Tests. The following section examines the listening acquisition patterns in intermediate learners of Korean language by proficiency level, with an emphasis on items they had difficulty with.

Table 3. Percent Correct for Individual Item Types by Proficiency Level
(Level 3 Listening Test)

Item Type Proficiency	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
Intermediate_H	100.0%	60.0%	80.0%	90.0%	75.0%	50.0%
Intermediate_L	92.9%	50.0%	35.7%	82.1%	67.9%	28.6%

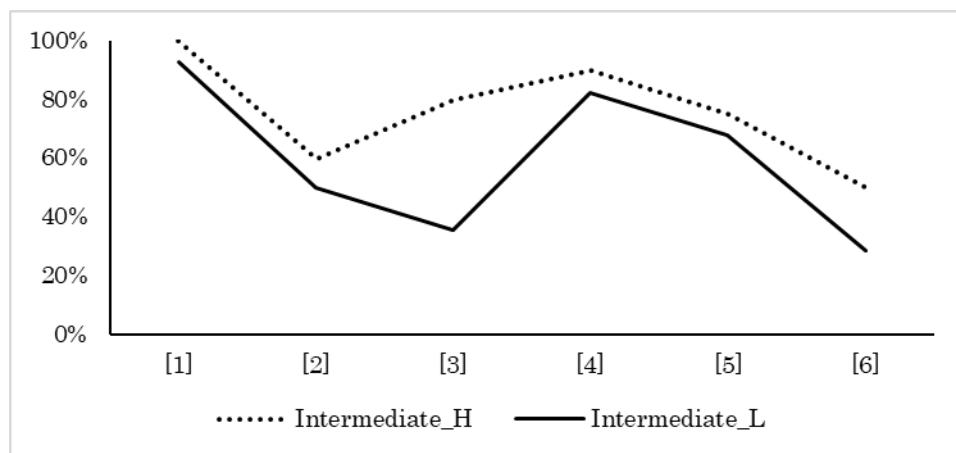
Table 3 shows that, for high scorers (Intermediate_H), the percent correct was highest at 100% for [1] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the passage” for which everyone scored correct. The item type with the second highest percent correct was [4] “Listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation” (90%), followed by [3] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer appropriate for the content (80%), which is a relatively high percent correct. The percent correct of [5] “Reading a passage in Japanese and choosing the correct Korean translation from the choices in spoken Korean” was 75%, and the percent correct of [2] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a word that describe the passage” was 60%. The item type with the lowest percent correct was [6] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing the sentence in Korean that match the overall content of the passage” (50%).

For low scorers (Intermediate_L), the item type with highest percent correct was also [1] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a picture that matches the content of the passage” (92.9%) as with high scorers, followed by [4] “Listening to a Korean sentence and choosing a correct Japanese translation” (82.1%). The item type with the lowest percent correct was also [6] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing the sentence in Korean that match the overall content of the passage” (28.6%) as was the case with high scorers. The percents correct of other items were 67.9% for [5] “Reading a passage in Japanese and choosing the correct Korean translation from the choices in spoken Korean”; 50.0% for [2]

“Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a word that describes the passage”; 35.7% for [3] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer appropriate for the content.”

Table 3 shows that the item types ranked highest, second highest, and sixth highest in percent correct in the listening test were same for high and low scorers.

Graph 2 is a visual representation of Table 3 that compares percents correct for individual item types between high scorers and low scorers.



Graph 2. Visual representation of percents correct for individual item types of Listening Test Level 3

As shown in Graph 2, the percents correct for high and low scorers showed similar trends for all item types except Item Type [3], for which the two groups showed a large difference—there was a high percent correct for high scorers and a low percent correct for low scorers. As shown in Table 3, the percent correct for [3] “listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer appropriate for the content” was 80.0% for high scorers, while the percent correct was less than half that of high scorers (35.7%) for low scorers. This suggests that Item Type 3 is greatly affected by proficiency, resulting in a large difference in acquisition between high and low scorers.

4.3 Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis on the listening acquisition patterns of intermediate learners of Korean language was performed using a 2x2 crosstabulation with counts of participants with correct and incorrect answers in the high scorer group (Intermediate_H) and the low scorer group (Intermediate_L). Statistical techniques commonly used to determine the statistically significant difference between the counts in the crosstabulation include Fisher's Exact test, a nonparametric test, and the Chi square test, a parametric test. In this study, Fisher's Exact test was used because, as with Section 3.3, the tabulation included cells with less than 10 observation counts as shown in Table 4. The results of Fisher's Exact test are tallied on the far-right column of Table 4.

Table 4. A Crosstabulation of Counts and the Results of Fisher's Exact Test

Item Type	Correct Answer Counts for Intermediate_L	Correct Answer Counts for Intermediate_H	Fisher's Exact Test (two-tailed)
	Incorrect Answer Counts for Intermediate_L	Incorrect Answer Counts for Intermediate_H	
[1]	13	10	$p (=1) > 0.1$, n.s.
	1	0	
[2]	14	12	$p (=0.5651) > 0.1$, n.s.
	14	8	
[3]	10	16	$p (=0.0033) << 0.01$, **
	18	4	
[4]	23	18	$p (=0.6829) > 0.1$, n.s.
	5	2	
[5]	19	15	$p (=0.7502) > 0.1$, n.s.
	9	5	
[6]	4	5	$p (=0.4028) > 0.1$, n.s.
	10	5	

As shown in Table 4, the results of the statistical analysis revealed a significant difference in counts of participants with correct and incorrect answers between the two groups for Item Type [3].

These results suggest that the item type that is most affected by proficiency level is [3] “Listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer appropriate for the content.” This item type requires quick comprehension of a passage in Korean within a specified time limit to find an appropriate sentence for the context of the passage, which can be difficult for low scorers who struggle with listening acquisition in general.

Regarding Item Types [1], [2], [4], [5], and [6], no significant group differences were found in terms of counts.

5. Comparison of Listening Acquisition Patterns in Beginning and Intermediate Learners of Korean Language

Based on Chapters 3 and 4, similarities and differences in listening acquisition patterns according to proficiency level between beginning and intermediate learners of Korean language can be summarized as follows.

First, on the items for listening to a passage in Korean and choosing a matching picture, the percent correct was lowest for Level 4 Beginner_L, but highest for Level 3 Intermediate_L. In other words, learners had most difficulty with the task of listening to and understanding a passage in Korean in order to find a picture that represented the situation at the beginner level; however, learners found the task easier at the intermediate level through changes in the acquisition process. It is likely that learners’ listening skills greatly improve as they continuously acquire vocabulary and various types of grammar usage between the beginning and intermediate levels. As with any foreign language acquisition, learners experience much difficulty at the beginning level as they have never studied the content before. However, their learning items increase over time. Specifically, the listening skills required for comprehending spoken Korean to match it with a picture shows the greatest improvement in listening acquisition at the intermediate level.

Second, for the item type for listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an appropriate answer to a question, the percent correct ranked around the middle among six item types for both Beginner_H (fourth among seven types) and Beginner_L (third among seven types). However, the item type's percent correct ranked low (fifth among six types) for Intermediate_L, while it ranked around the middle (third among six types), as with the beginner groups. These results suggest that the item type is not difficult for both proficiency levels at the beginning level, but becomes difficult for the low-proficiency learners at the intermediate level. This item type assesses listening skills that allow learners to continue conversations with Korean speakers. Therefore, research on effective learning methods that familiarize learners with a wide range of questions for Korean conversation is required.

Third, the items on translation were barely affected by learners' proficiency level. Ranks of the percents correct of the item types on the translation from Korean to Japanese and the translation from Japanese to Korean in Levels 3 and 4 for learners with different proficiency levels were either identical or similar. The percents correct of the Korean to Japanese translation item type ranked highest and second highest among seven item types in Beginner_H and Beginner_L, respectively, and second highest among six item types in both Intermediate_H and Intermediate_L. The percents correct of the Japanese to Korean translation item type ranked similarly between Intermediate_H and Intermediate_L (fourth and third among the six item types in Intermediate_H and Intermediate_L, respectively). These results suggest that the percents correct of the translation item type are barely affected by learners' proficiency level. In particular, the percents correct of the Korean to Japanese translation item type were high for both beginning and intermediate learners. Therefore, translation items are likely to be easier than other listening assessment items that are barely affected by learning stage and proficiency level.

Fourth, the item type for listening to a passage in Korean and choosing an answer by making an inference based on the understanding of the passage was found to be most difficult for all learners at both the beginning and intermediate levels regardless of proficiency level. The percent correct of the item type was high at 88.7% in Beginner_H, and lowest in Intermediate_H. This suggests that even highly proficient beginners experience the most difficulty in comprehending overall content and context in terms of listening acquisition.

Moreover, considering that the percents correct of the item type were lowest among all item types in both Beginner_L and Intermediate_L, learners with low proficiency have difficult with the item type regardless of their levels (beginning and intermediate). Further research is required to identify the effective learning methods for the item type.

6. Conclusions

This study investigated listening acquisition patterns in Japanese learners of Korean language by analyzing the results of KLPT Listening Test Level 4 (the 43rd) and Level 3 (the 41st) from 18 Japanese learners in Level 4 and 12 Japanese learners in Level 3. The study included a comparison between beginner and intermediate learners in the process of listening acquisition in Korean and the acquisition patterns and characteristics for individual types of listening test items, and the item types that are affected by proficiency level. Moreover, statistical analyses were performed to examine listening acquisition patterns in Korean language learners of different proficiency levels, and item types that show significant differences in counts of correct and incorrect answers between two proficiency groups in each level—Beginner_H and Beginner_L in the beginning level, and Intermediate_H and Intermediate_L in the intermediate level—were identified.

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