1. Background

It has been debated whether the effect of age of acquisition (AoA) can be explained by word frequency. Zevin and Seidenberg (2002) reported that the AoA effects observed in previous studies would be confounded with the cumulative frequency. On the other hand, some studies reported the effects of AoA using naming, lexical decision, and eyetracking (Juhaz & Rayner, 2006) and have discussed its locus. This study examined whether there would be independent AoA effects and also explored its locus using equi-biased homophones in Korean.

2. AoA effect and Subjective effect (exp. 1 & exp. 2)

In Experiment 1, after collecting the data of age of acquisition and subjective frequency of 1105 noun words with the assumption that subjective frequency would reflect the cumulative frequency well, we constructed the sentences with early (e.g., supgwan (habit)) and late (e.g., nolli (logic)) acquired target words closely matched in subjective frequency. We found that the durations for first fixation, single fixation and gaze were shorter in early acquired words than in late acquired words. In Experiment 2, participants read sentences with high (e.g., yoksim (greed)) and low frequency (e.g., kkoebyeong (malingering)) words closely matched in AoA. We found that there was no difference between high-frequency and low-frequency words.

3. The semantic locus of AoA effect (exp. 3)

In Experiment 3, we explored the semantic locus of AoA effect with equi-biased homophones, assuming that the early acquired meaning of a homophone would be more accessible than the late acquired meaning even if the two meanings are equally frequently used. We manipulated the meaning ambiguity (ambiguous vs. unambiguous) of a word and followed it with a word that disambiguated toward (the early acquired meaning vs. the late acquired meaning) as illustrated in (1). We found that the go-past times of the disambiguating word in (1a) and (1b) were not different but the go-past times of the disambiguating word in (1c) were longer than in (1d).

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4. Reference
