

Dispositional Inference is Integration, and not Correction: When Cognitive Load Weakens the Correspondence Bias¹

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Abstract

This research compared two dispositional inference models. The correction model (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988) hypothesizes that processing situational information requires more cognitive resources than the initial dispositional process. The integration model (Trope & Gaunt, 2000) does not hypothesize prominent differences between these processes. This study used an ulterior-motive condition (Fein, 1996) for this comparison. Using an assigned-essay paradigm (Jones & Harris, 1967), this study demonstrated that the correspondence bias is weakened by cognitive load when situational information is quite available. This result is not consistent with the correction model and supports the integration model. The implications of this finding were discussed.

〈Key Words〉

Correspondence Bias, Fundamental Attribution Error, Cognitive Load, Trait Inference

The purpose of this study was to reveal how humans make inference about an actor's disposition from behavioral and situational information. A large amount of research has investigated this process by revealing the nature of the correspondence bias (Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Gilbert, McNulty, Giuliano, & Benson, 1992; Gilbert & Osborne, 1989; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988; Osborne & Gilbert, 1992; Quattrone, 1982; Trope, 1986; Trope & Alfieri, 1997; Trope & Gaunt, 2000; Trope & Liberman, 1993). Recently, two models of dispositional inference, the correction model (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988) and the integration model (Trope & Gaunt, 2000) have been discussed. The former model is better known and the latter one has been proposed as the counterargument to it. This study aims to compare the validities of the two models.

The correspondence bias refers to the tendency to overestimate the influence of an actor's disposition on a particular behavior that he/she has engaged in, even when there are situational factors that strongly determine the behavior (Jones & Harris, 1967). Presently, there is an unresolved dispute between the two models of dispositional inference, in which the correspondence bias is provoked.

The Correction Model

The most popular model of dispositional inference is the correction model (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988), which hypothesizes three stages of dispositional inference: in the first stage, perceivers interpret what the actor is doing (categorization). In the second stage, they infer the correspondent dispositions of the actor

(characterization). In the last stage, they correct this inference according to situational information if they have adequate motivation and cognitive capacities (correction). The central assumption of the correction model is that the first two stages, which deal with behavioral information, are relatively automatic, and the last stage, which deals with situational information, is *relatively* controlled. In this context, the term controlled means that the process has all/some of four characteristics: awareness (of the process taking place), intention (to start process), resource dependency (i.e., the process is easily prevented by cognitive load or lack of motivation), and controllability (once it starts). The term automatic means the opposite (Bargh, 1994). According to this model, the incidence of the correspondence bias is a result of insufficient correction. Once perceivers recognize a behavior, they automatically categorize it and infer the correspondent disposition. Then, along with circumstantial information they correct their inference. However, this correction process often ends up being inadequate because of cognitive load or lack of motivation to understand the actor. The fact that cognitive load intensifies the correspondence bias has been interpreted as evidence for the correction model by its proponents (Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Gilbert et al., 1992; Gilbert & Osborne, 1989; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988; Osborne & Gilbert, 1992).

The Integration Model

Although Gilbert's correction model has been spreaded extensively, an alternative model, called the integration model, has been proposed based on connectionist perspectives (Trope & Gaunt, 2000). The integration model does not hypothesize the prominent difference between the process dealing with behavioral information and that dealing with situational information (see Kunda, 1998; Read & Marcus-Newhall, 1993). In other words, both behavioral information and situational information are assumed to be processed via an equally automatic process. According to the integration model, when a person perceives someone engaging in a particular behavior, both explanations of behavior based on dispositional factors and explanations based on situational factors, are constructed in the first automatic stage. Further, these explanations are compared and integrated in the second controlled stage. If cognitive resources are scarce or there is a lack of motivation in the second stage, integration becomes inadequate, and the more available factor in the first stage becomes overvalued.

The integration model can consistently explain the fact that, in general, cognitive load intensifies the correspondence bias (Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Gilbert et al., 1992; Gilbert & Osborne, 1989; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988; Osborne & Gilbert, 1992). According to Trope and Gaunt (2000), this intensification of the correspondence bias is the consequence of inadequate integration, not of insufficient correction. The typical procedure of correspondence bias studies, in which participants are asked to infer dispositions, makes dispositional factors easily available, resulting in them being overvalued.

Comparison between the Correction Model and the Integration Model

Some researchers have demonstrated that participants tend to overestimate situations when they are asked to make inferences about situational factors (Krull, 1993; Quattrone, 1982; Webster, 1993). These findings pose a potential challenge for the correction model, in which disposition, rather than situations, are automatically processed (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988). However, such inferences, under these special task requirements, can be considered to be exceptions, deviate from typical disposition inferences (i.e., they are not dispositional inferences, but situational inferences). Even in the absence of these special inferential requirements, Trope and Gaunt (2000) demonstrated that cognitive load attenuate the difference between inference under situational constraint and no constraint, when situational information is salient, highly accessible, or

specific to the case under consideration, and they asserted the superiority of the integration model. They claimed that hypotheses on the existence of correction processes that need more cognitive resources and that need less lack parsimony. However, this kind of dichotomy of automatic and control processes is clearly not popular in the current social cognition literature (e.g., Bargh, 1996). If there is a correction process that needs relatively less cognitive resources, the correction model explains that cognitive load does not intensify the correspondence bias, i.e., the cognitive demand of the correction process was not sufficiently strong to be interfered by the cognitive load.

Therefore, which model we should adopt depends on whether the processing of situational information always (unless there are special goals of inference; Krull, 1993) requires a greater or the same amount of cognitive resource than the processing of dispositional information. If the processing of situational information always requires a greater or the same amount of cognitive resource than the processing of dispositional information and cognitive load always strengthen or unchange the correspondence bias, the correction model has some validity, and to adopt the integration model is to overlook the important nature of dispositional inference. On the other hand, according to Trope and Gaunt (2000), if the processing of dispositional information sometimes requires more cognitive resources than the processing of situational information and if the effect of the cognitive load (i.e., strengthen, unchange, or, even weaken the correspondence bias) depends on which information is more easily available, the correction model is not valid.

The Present Experiment

We conducted an experiment to compare the validities of the correction model and the integration model. The correction model and the integration model have different predictions about the effect of cognitive load on the strength of the correspondence bias when situational information is easily available.

In this research, in order to compare the correction model and the integration model, we examine the prediction that cognitive load can weaken the correspondence bias when situational information is easily available. In this regard, the logic of this study based on that of Trope and Gaunt (2000). They manipulated some dimensions of situational information that were relevant to availability. However, although they found that cognitive load can weigh situation as much as disposition, they did not find that cognitive load can weigh situation greater than disposition, thus it remained unclear as to which model is valid. Therefore, we used another method to manipulate the availability of situational information.

To manipulate the availability of situational information, we used an “ulterior-motive condition,” in which situational information was quite available (Fein, 1996). For example, imagine that a job candidate is asked to give his/her opinion about an issue in an interview. The candidate is permitted to adopt whichever position he/she desires, but at the same time, knows the interviewer’s personal opinion. If the candidate expresses an opinion that accords to the interviewer’s position, then the perceiver will easily call to mind the candidate’s motives to please the interviewer. Thus, situational information can be available easily enough to be taken into account when making an inference. Under these conditions, the integration model predicts that the correspondence bias may be weakened by cognitive load, whereas the correction model does not.

In this experiment, we examined how cognitive load influences the strength of the correspondence bias under an ulterior-motive condition. In addition to this, we used a “no-choice” condition, in which a character simply obeys an assignment of a superior, as the control condition². This condition have a situational constraint comparable to that of the ulterior-motive condition, but is low in availability (Fein, 1996). In Fein (1996)’s experiment 1, participants spontaneously mentioned situational constraint and motives induced by situation in

ulterior-motive condition than in no-choice condition (and free-choice condition) when were asked to write about speaker freely, i.e., situational information is more available in ulterior-motives condition. Hence, no-choice condition might be more appropriate as the control condition than the free-choice condition, which has no situational constraint. Typically, the correspondence bias is observed (Jones & Harris, 1967) and intensified under cognitive load (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988; Trope & Gaunt, 2000) in the no-choice condition. However, with regard to the later point, some cultural differences, which we discuss in next section, were reported.

Cultural Difference

The present experiment was conducted in Tokyo, Japan. In general, people from the East tend to pay more attention to situational factors (for a review, see Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999). From this perspective, Knowles, Morris, Chiu, and Hong (2001) found that cognitive load intensifies the correspondence bias for people from the West (California, USA) but not for those from the East (Hong Kong, China). In the present experiment, the no-choice condition was similar to the East condition used by Knowles et al. In the ulterior-motive condition, the cultural difference might make the situational factors more easily available and make the hypothesis more verifiable.

Method

Overview

This experiment was partially based on Jones and Harris (1967), whose paradigm is called the assigned-essay paradigm. The participants read a situation description and an essay, and were then asked to infer the character's true attitude. The design was a Situation (no-choice vs. ulterior-motive) \times Essay (pro vs. con) \times Load (load vs. no-load) between-participants factorial. The participants were randomly assigned to one of eight experimental conditions. The main dependent measure was the inferred attitude. The more the inferred attitude conformed to the stance expressed in the essay, the stronger the correspondence bias was assumed to be.

Participants

Ninety-two participants (51 males and 41 females, mean age = 21.9 years), mainly students of the University of Tokyo, participated in the experiment, for 500 yen, extra points for a psychological course, or no reward, depending on their preference. Before the experiment, it was announced that the reward did not depend on the consequence. This variation in rewards is regarded as providing no difference on the consequences of this kind of task (i.e., assigned-essay paradigm; Quattrone, 1982; see also Tetlock, 1985).

Manipulation of the Situation and Essay

Participants read one of four situation descriptions in which a college senior, called M.H. was asked to make a presentation, as part of an oral examination, to the company that he/she aspired to join. It was explained that the purpose of the examination was to test the candidate's intellect and presentation ability, and there was only one interviewer to rate the candidate. The topic of the presentation was "Stocking carps into rivers as an urban policy." (There is a controversy regarding the release of carps, one of the most popular fish in Japan, into rivers). In the no-choice condition, an interviewer had instructed M.H. to make a presentation on this is-

sue from a pro (con) stance. In the ulterior-motive condition, the interviewer had instructed M.H. that he could adopt either stance, but the interviewer's personal opinion (pro or con) was known to him/her.

After this, the participants read one of two essays, which was allegedly a summary of M.H.'s speech. In the no-choice condition, the position expressed in the essay was the same as that in the interviewer's instruction. In the ulterior-motive condition, the position expressed in the essay was the same as the interviewer's personal opinion.

Two essays with low persuasiveness were used in this experiment because such essays make dispositional information less available (Gawronski, 2003; Schneider & Miller, 1984); in other words, they make situational information relatively available. A pretest was conducted for this purpose. Eighteen college students participated in this pretest. The participants read some essays either supporting or opposing stocking carps and rated their persuasive power on a 9-point scale. The assessed persuasive power of the selected essays were significantly lower than the scale midpoint, which was 5, for both pro ($M=3.13$, $t(7) = 3.23$, $p < .05$) and con ($M=3.60$, $t(9) = 3.10$, $p < .05$) conditions. The essay in favor of the release advocated taking into consideration the effect this would have on the environment, while the essay against the release highlighted the considerable costs involved and the limited benefits.

Manipulation of Load

Two eight-digit numbers were generated randomly for every participant. In the load condition, these numbers were presented one by one before the presentation of the situation description and essay, and the participants were asked to rehearse these numbers while reading each text. Then, they were asked to recall and write it down onto papers after each text was presented to verify whether they had actually retained the number in their memory. In the no-load condition, these numbers were presented in the same manner, the only difference being that the participants were not asked to rehearse the numbers but simply read them out. After reading the situation description and the essay, the participants were asked to simply transcribe the number, which was presented on the screen again, onto papers.

Dependent Measures

After reading the essay, all the participants were asked a series of questions in the order mentioned below; however, the second and third questions were presented in random order. For the first four questions, one of the two variations of the scale arrangement was randomly assigned to the participants.

1. *Inferred attitude:* The question was "How much do you think M.H. in reality supports or opposes the release of carps?" The participants had to answer this by using a 9-point scale labeled "strongly opposes" on one end and "strongly supportes" on the other. The answer to this question was the main dependent measure of this study.

2. *Rating of the essay's assertion:* The question was "How much do you think M.H.'s presentation supports or opposes the release of carps?" on a 9-point scale labeled "strongly opposed" on one end and "strongly supported" at the other.

3. *Rating of situational compelling force:* The participants had to answer the question "In a similar situation, how many candidates do you think would adopt the same stance as M.H.?" on a 9-point scale labeled "quite few" on one end and "quite a lot" at the other.

4. *Rating of the interviewer's opinion:* The question was "What is the interviewer's personal opinion?" The participants had to answer the question by selecting one of the following options: "opposing," "moderate," and

“supporting;” alternately, they could select “I’m not sure”

5. *Open-ended question:* The question was “Why do you think M.H. adopts the stance he does?”

Procedure

The participants visited the laboratory individually or in small groups. They were informed about the rewards and the amount of time the experiment would take before they visited the laboratory. Then, they were individually invited into an experimental cabin.

The experimental instructions were provided verbally as well as electronically on a computer screen. The experimenter then left the cabin and the participants started the experimental program.

On the PC program, the first eight-digit number and the situation description were presented in this order. In the load condition, the participants were asked to rehearse the number while reading the description and were then asked to recall and write it. In the no-load condition, the participants were asked to read out the number, and after reading the description, they were asked to simply transcribe the number presented onto a paper. Then, the second eight-digit number and essay were presented in this order. After reading the essay, participants were asked to recall and write (load condition) or transcribe (no-load condition) the number, depending on the experimental condition. After this procedure, they answered a series of questions.

At the end of the experiment, the participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

Manipulation Check

In the load condition, the percentage of times the eight-digit number was completely recalled was 90.0% in the no-choice condition and 84.8% in the ulterior-motive condition. These figures were as large as those reported in previous studies (e.g., 77% to 88% in Trope & Gaunt, 2000).

To exclude the participants who did not understand the presented situation correctly, a manipulation check was conducted. First, the participants whose responses to the ratings of the interviewer’s opinion was “opposing” or “supporting” in the no-choice condition and was incorrect in the ulterior-motive condition were listed. Second, the participants’ responses to the open-ended question were coded by two coders who were unaware of the experimental condition. They coded whether or not the participants mentioned the stance assignment and also whether or not they mentioned M.H.’s ulterior motive. The consensus rate was high (100%). In the no-choice condition, two participants made failure answer about rating of interviewer’s opinion, and neither of them mentioned the interviewer’s assignment in the open-ended question; therefore, they were eliminated from further analysis. In the ulterior-motive condition, three participants did not rate the interviewer’s personal opinion correctly, but all of them clearly mentioned M.H.’s ulterior motives in the open-ended question and were therefore included in the analysis. This step made no significant difference to the analysis.

Participants’ mean ratings of the essay’s assertion were 6.88 in the pro condition and 2.82 in the con condition. The three-way ANOVA indicated that the main effect of Essay was significant ($F(1, 82)=300.57, p < .001, \eta^2=0.75$). This means that the intended manipulation of Essay was successful. The main effect of Situation, which was not predicted by the correction model or the integration model, was also significant ($F(1, 82)=3.99, p < .05, \eta^2=0.10$). This indicates that the essays were considered more supportive in the no-choice condition ($M=5.37$) than in the ulterior-motive condition ($M=4.98$); however, there were no interaction effect, therefore no theoretical suggestion. No other effect was significant (all F s $< 1.8, p$ s $> .18, \eta^2$ s $< .01$).

The three-way ANOVA of the rating of situational compelling force indicated that no effect, including the main effect of Load, was significant (all F s < 1.5, p s > .23, η^2 < 0.02). The mean rating of this variable was higher than the scale midpoint, which was 5 ($M=6.36$, $t(89)=6.84$, $p < .001$). This means that the participants in all the conditions equally assumed that the situation in which M.H. was placed forced him to take the stance.

Inferred attitude

Figure 1 presented the inferred attitude of the candidate on stocking carp into rivers.

A2 (Situation: no-choice vs. ulterior-motive) \times 2 (Essay: pro vs. con) \times 2 (Load: load vs. no-load) ANOVA was conducted considering all the factors between participants. The main effect of the Essay was significant ($F(1, 82)=34.41$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2=0.24$); in general, this means that the correspondence bias occurred. More importantly, this effect was qualified by the expected three-way interaction ($F(1, 82)=12.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2=0.08$). Therefore, an analysis of the simple interaction of Essay \times Load in each Situation condition was conducted. This simple interaction was not significant in the no-choice condition ($F(1, 39)=2.83$, $p > .1$, $\eta^2=0.04$). This means that cognitive load did not affect the correspondence bias in this condition, and is consistent with Knowles et al. (2001). On the other hand, in the ulterior-motive condition, this simple interaction was significant ($F(1, 43)=11.09$, $p < .005$, $\eta^2=0.16$). This means that cognitive load weakens the correspondence bias in this condition. To confirm this point, the difference between the inferred attitude in the pro condition and that in the con condition, which is assumed to be the correspondence bias, was examined. The difference was significant in the no-choice & no-load condition (M s=5.55 vs. 4.00; $F(1, 18)=6.93$, $p < .025$, $\eta^2=0.28$), in the no-choice & load condition (M s=6.85 vs. 3.80; $F(1, 21)=21.473$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2=0.51$), and in the ulterior-motive & no-load condition (M s=5.54 vs. 3.09; $F(1, 22)=38.99$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2=0.64$), but not in the ulterior-motive & load condition (M s=4.87 vs. 5.00; $F(1, 21) < 1$, $\eta^2 < 0.01$). In short, the correspondence bias was observed in all the conditions except for the ulterior-motive & load condition.

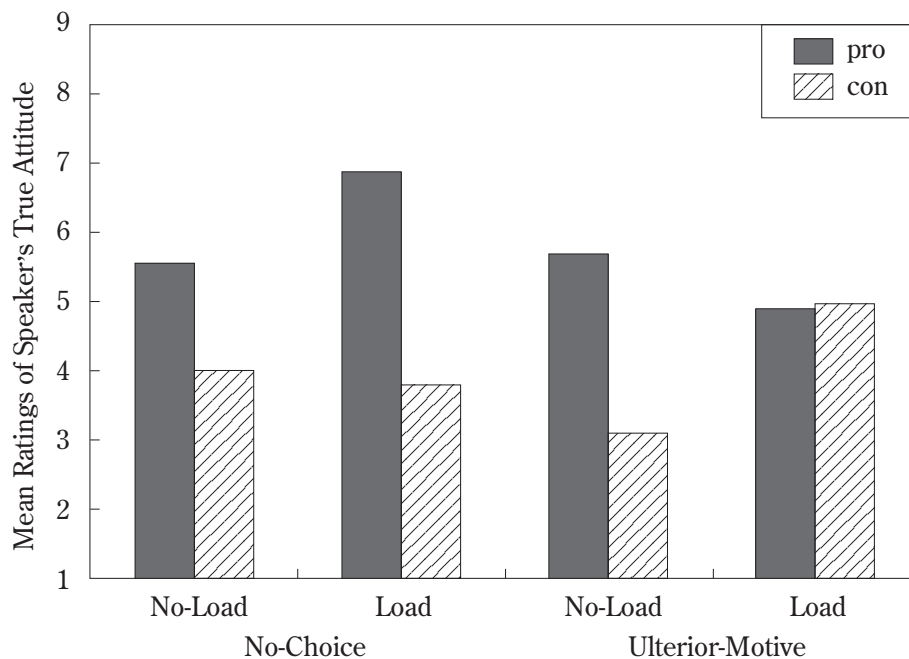


Figure 1. Inferred attitude as a function of Essay, Load, and Situation

An analysis of the simple interactions of Situation \times Essay in each Load condition was also conducted. This simple interaction was significant in the load condition ($F(1, 42) = 11.18, p < .005, \eta^2 = 0.17$). On the other hand, this simple interaction was not significant in the no-load condition ($F(1, 40) < 1.8, p > .19, \eta^2 = 0.02$). This means that the effect of the suspicion of ulterior motive attenuating the correspondence bias (Fein, 1996) is observed only in the load condition.

Discussion

The present study compared the correction model (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988) and the integration model (Trope & Gaunt, 2000) of dispositional inference. The correction model hypothesizes that the link between actor and disposition is created in a relatively automatic process at first when an observer perceives a behavior, following which the correction according to situational information is done in a relatively controlled process. The integration model does not hypothesize the difference in automaticity between the disposition and the situation processes. It hypothesizes that both processes were automatically executed equally and then integrated by the controlled process. For this comparison, we examined the effect that cognitive load has on the correspondence bias (Jones & Harris, 1967) when the situational information is easily available (i.e., ulterior-motive condition; Fein, 1996).

In the present experiment, under the ulterior-motive condition, cognitive load weakens the correspondence bias. This clearly contradicts to the correction model, which predicts that the correspondence bias would not be weakened by cognitive load. Although Krull (1993) proposed a revised version of the correction model, the present results cannot be explained by the revised model. He added the hypothesis that when people have a goal to infer a situation, situational information is processed more automatically and dispositional information is processed less automatically, to the correction model, and actually demonstrated that if the participants' goal is to infer the situation, cognitive load can weaken the correspondence bias. However, it is difficult to believe that participants in the present experiment had a goal to infer the situation as default. This is because unlike the ulterior-motive condition, cognitive load did not weaken the correspondence bias in the no-choice condition. Moreover, the assumption that the situational goal emerged only in the ulterior-motive condition lacks parsimony, because unlike Krull's (1993) situational-goal and dispositional-goal conditions, in the present study, the same introduction was used for the no-choice and the ulterior-motive conditions.

On the other hand, the integration model can consistently explain the results of the present experiment and Krull's (1993) experiment. According to the integration model, Krull's results indicate that a goal of inferring the situation makes the situational information more available as availability of the situation itself does.

Is it possible that the effect of cognitive load demonstrated in this experiment emerged not by the integration process but by the mediation of the lower process, such as identification of behavior or situation? First, is it possible that cognitive load made it difficult to understand the essay contents? Even if the correction model is valid, if the identification of behavior becomes moderate, the inferred attitude may also become moderate. This is not likely to be the case for two reasons. The first reason is that the rating of the essay's assertion was independent of the Load manipulation. Neither the main effect nor the interaction was significant as far as Load is concerned. The second reason is that, unlike the ulterior-motive condition, the moderation of dispositional inference caused by cognitive load did not occur under the no-choice condition. This makes it highly unlikely that cognitive load could result in the moderation of attitude inference by interfering in behavioral identification.

Second, is it possible that the cognitive load affected the identification of situations in the ulterior-motive condition? Even if the correction model is valid, the moderation of inferred attitude may emerge if situation identification becomes more extreme. However, in the present study this was not the case. The rating of situational compelling force was independent of any manipulation, including that of Load.

In sum, like in Gilbert, Pelham, and Krull (1988), cognitive load affected neither the identification of behavior nor the identification of the situation directly but it affected the inference process using behavioral and situational information.

Cultural assumption

Cultural psychologists have indicated that people from the East pay more attention to situational information in interpersonal relationships as compared to people from the West (for a review, see Choi et al., 1999). Consistent with this view, Knowles et al. (2001) demonstrated that cognitive load under the no-choice condition does not strengthen the correspondence bias for people from the East, whereas it does for people from the West. This result was also observed in the present experiment. Knowles et al. explained this finding from within the framework of the correction model (Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988), such that a correction according to situational information is efficient for people from the East. In addition to this, they also suggested another, relatively unparsimonious, possible explanation that people from the East do not have the first dispositional stage, which people from the West have. However, with regard to the result of the ulterior-motive condition, the integration model can provide a more comprehensive explanation; that is, in the no-choice condition, where situation is less available as compared to the ulterior-motive condition, because situation is equally available as disposition, cognitive load does not provide an overestimation of disposition for people from the East.

How do cultural factors affect the ulterior-motive condition? According to the integration model, the extent to which each dispositional and situational factor is weighed in the dispositional inference depends on the extent to which each factor is available. Therefore, the conditions for the correspondence bias to be weakened by cognitive load may be easily satisfied under the environment where situational information is easily available; that is, in the case of people from the East. In this regard, the attenuation of the correspondence bias caused by cognitive load might easily occur in the case of people from the East than in the case of people from the West. It is possible that cognitive load does not weaken the correspondence bias for the people from the West even in the ulterior-motive condition; however, it still poses an empirical question.

When and How Suspicion Works?

The present research provides suggestions as to when and how suspicion works. The correspondence bias is a robust phenomena (for a review, see Jones, 1979), but in situations where suspicion on an actor's ulterior motive rises, the bias tends to be weak or even diminished (Fein, 1996). However, in the present experiment, this relative attenuation of the correspondence bias under the ulterior-motive condition as compared to that under the no-choice condition was observed only in the load condition. According to the integration model (Trope & Gaunt, 2000), this result can be explained as follows. In the load condition, where the controlled integration process is interfered with, thus, increasing suspicion about ulterior motives, the more easily available situational factor is overweighed relative to the less easily available dispositional factor. Therefore, the correspondence bias is weakened. In contrast, in the no-load condition, where participants can fully engage in the integration process, the overestimation of situational factors does not occur, and the correspondence bias

is not weakened. In accordance with this explanation, Fein's (1996) experiment was conducted in large or small groups (experiments 1-4) or as part of a variety of judgment tasks (experiment 5). These factors might interfere with the participants' ability to concentrate and thus attenuate available cognitive resource. As compared to this, when individually participating in a single task in the experimental cabin, participants in the no-load condition of the present experiment might be able to easily concentrate on the inferential task and tend to accept dispositional explanation. Although disposition is not exclusively processed automatically, persons tend to explain acts by disposition (Heider, 1958; Jones & Harris, 1967). Thus, a situation that raises suspicions about an actor's ulterior motives easily weakens the correspondence bias when the condition wherein the overestimation of the situation is likely to occur is satisfied.

Hilton, Fein, and Miller (1993) discussed that an actor can be put at a disadvantage when the correspondence bias does not emerge because the observer becomes suspicious about the actor's ulterior motives. For example, consider an employer observing a Black employee working hard. As there is a stereotype of Blacks being lazy in the United States, the employer may have unnecessary suspicions about the employee's motives; for instance, the employer may feel that the Black employee is only pretending to be a hard worker. As in this case, counter-stereotypical behavior engaged in by members of negatively stereotyped groups is likely to arouse suspicions of the observer's mind, which then prevents the stereotype from diminishing (Hilton et al., 1993). The present research suggests that this harmful influence of situational factors arousing suspicion is likely to occur when cognitive resources are scarce or motivation to know one correctly is low.

Future Directions

Currently, the evidence supporting the integration model has been demonstrated only in the assigned-essay paradigm, wherein the stimulus was presented in the form of words. Meanwhile, evidence supporting the correction model is not limited to the assigned-essay paradigm (Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Gilbert et al., 1992; Gilbert & Osborne, 1989; Gilbert, Pelham, & Krull, 1988; Osborne & Gilbert, 1992). The integration model can consistently explain Gilbert and his colleagues' observations; however, more research needs to be carried out to see whether the weakening of the correspondence bias caused by cognitive load can be observed in other paradigms or when the stimuli are presented in other ways.

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Footnote

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2 Free-choice condition is frequently included as a control condition in correspondent inference studies (e.g., Jones & Harris, 1967; Trope & Gaunt, 2000) in aiming to estimate the situational influence from comparison between the free-choice condition and other conditions. However, in our study, in order to estimate the situational influence, we use another popular strategy, that is, comparison between pro and con condition (i.e., correspondence bias). For this reason, we presume that free-choice condition would provide us with no additional information and would not be necessary. Rather, we believe that comparison between comparable situational constraints (i.e., no-choice condition) is essential in order to yield sufficient information.