

Correlation Between Interlanguage and Internalization in SLA

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Abstract

Interlanguage is the type of language or linguistic system used by second- and foreign-language learners who are in the process of learning a target language. Interlanguage is dynamic and permeable as it serves as a bridge between L1 and L2 when learners lack knowledge and fine mastery of rules. They refine certain rules and obtain new ones. (Study.com, 18 June 2018). Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis paved the way for Interlanguage theory in describing L2 learners' errors in the acquisition process of L2 (El khereshah 2015). Interlanguage changes all the time but can become fossilized language when the learners do not have the opportunity to improve. It is important for teachers to understand this and also to see interlanguage as a series of learning steps. The theory of Internalization put forward by Vygotsky suggests that an individual is able to observe and internalize the ideas and processes of their surroundings as they partake in social interaction defined as, "new ways of thinking" (Duchesne, S., & McMaugh, A., 2016). The continuous transformation of social meanings into private meanings and private meanings into social ones partly explains the richness and complexity of the second language learning processes (2013 Azarola). This is why the internalization area can widen the scope to illustrate the errors of the learners and minimize them. Through the usage of secondary information, internet and personal observation, as one of the processes of the qualitative research method would implicate better learning strategies and more progressed learners.

Keywords: Correlation: is a mutual relationship or connection between two or more things. Interlanguage: is the type of language or linguistic system used by second- and foreign-language learners who are in the process of learning a target language. Internalization: is the process of making something internal, with more specific meanings in various fields.

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Introduction

Interlanguage

Interlanguage is “An interim system of second language learners (L2), which has some features of the first language (L1) and second language (L2) plus some that are independent of the L1 and L2” (Yule 2010). Interlanguage is the type of language (or linguistic system) used by second- and foreign language learners who are in the process of learning a target language. An interlanguage, is always unique to a particular individual and is by definition never anyone's first language, as it is partially a product of a different language that the speaker already knows. Interlanguage typically contains elements of the speaker's original language and is often heavily influenced by L1 and interference from this may make it seem perfectly logical to the learner, although it is incorrect. It is important for instructors to understand this and also to see interlanguage as a series of learning steps as they can give appropriate feedback after checking out their students work. The influence of first language (L1) in the learning of second language (L2) has witnessed an intense debate during the past years, resulting in the prevalence of Error Analysis (EA) over Contrastive Analysis (CA). A great number of empirical studies indicated that neither L1 nor L2 was always responsible for learners' errors (Bailey et al. 1974; Krashen et al. 1978, Larsen-Freeman, 2003). CA and EA paved the way for Interlanguage theory (IL) in describing L2 learners' errors in the acquisition process of L2. IL, which has been in vogue for the last years, has witnessed huge criticism by different researchers and linguists from various L1 backgrounds. They all came to state that there are many points in this theory which are not clear (El Kheresheh 2015).

At the very beginning of second language learning, learners may have some ideas of what the foreign language is like, and how it works and according to these ideas they produce utterances, some of which may be correct, and others which may be wrong. As learners gain more knowledge about the language and its rules, they may come up with new and better ideas of how it works. The interlanguage is viewed as a separate linguistic system, clearly different from both the learner's ‘native language’ (NL) and the ‘target language’ (TL) being learned, but linked to both of them by interlingual identifications in the perception of the learner. Interlanguage proclaims the developing of ideas of how the other language works and produced by second- and foreign- language learners who are in the process of learning a language.

Before interlanguage hypothesis rose to prominence, the principal theory of second-language development was the Contrastive Analysis. This theory assumed that learners' errors were caused by the difference between their first language and their second language. Contrastive analysts had asserted that the second-language learner's language was shaped solely by transfer from the native language. Therefore a good contrastive analysis of the NL and the TL could accurately predict all the difficulties that learner would encounter in trying to learn the TL. These claims were made on logical grounds and almost always supported only by reference to anecdotal evidence. Thus, in the late 1950s and the 1960s, there were virtually not systematic attempts to observe learner language and to document scientifically the way in which learner language developed, or to independently and objectively verify the strong claims of the contrastive analysis hypothesis that language transfer was the sole process shaping

learner language. Lado (1957: 72), in an influential statement, explicitly characterized the predictions of contrastive analysts as statements that should be viewed as hypothetical until they could be validated by reference to 'the actual speech of students'.

Corder (1967, 1981) was the first and most persuasive scholar to develop an alternative framework: the idea that second-language learners do not begin with their native language, but rather with a universal 'built-in syllabus' that guides them in the systematic development of their own linguistic system, or 'transitional competence.' Corder also pointed out that the native language often serves as a positive resource for second-language acquisition, facilitating the learning of TL features that resemble features of the NL. He argued that second-language learners' errors were evidence of the idiosyncratic linguistic system that they were building and so were valuable data for research into the nature of the built-in syllabus. Corder called for research involving the analysis of learner errors gathered longitudinally, proposed a framework for eliciting and analyzing those errors, and posed the goal as one of characterizing the built-in syllabus and the transitional competence of second-language learners. Errors may include; borrowing patterns from the mother tongue, extending patterns from the target language to express meanings or even misusing words and grammar rules.

Steve Krashen (1981 - 1982) then proposed the Monitor Model in the Interlanguage Hypothesis. The Monitor Model initially relied heavily on the work of a group of researchers (the creative constructionists) who claimed that there was no evidence at all of native language transfer in the morpheme accuracy rates of child second-language learners; thus, the contrastive analysts had got it all wrong, at least as far as children were concerned. Where the Interlanguage Hypothesis accords a central role to native language transfer, the Monitor Model does not. The Monitor Model suggests that when second-language learners, adult or children, acquire a second language unconsciously, there will be no evidence of native language transfer; it is only when they consciously learn a second language that transfer effects appear. The study of the role of universal grammar in the process of second-language acquisition similarly has tended to downplay the role of native language transfer in that process.

One of the contributions of the Interlanguage Hypothesis to the field of second-language acquisition in the early 1990s is, thus, a historically rooted, research-based, and theoretically motivated framework for the study of second-language acquisition, which can easily account for both role of native-language transfer and of universal grammar in shaping interlanguage.

The significance of interlanguage theory lies in the fact that it is the first attempt to take into account the possibility of learner conscious attempts to control their learning. It was this view that initiated an expansion of research into psychological processes in interlanguage development whose aim was to determine what learners do in order to help facilitate their own learning, i.e. which learning strategies they employ (Griffiths & Parr, 2001). This linguistic system encompasses not just phonology, morphology, and syntax, but also the lexical, pragmatic, and discourse levels of the interlanguage. The interlanguage system is clearly not simply the native language morphological and syntactic system relexified with target language vocabulary; that is, it is not the morphological and syntactic system that would have

been evidenced had the learner tried to express those meanings in his or her native language. But also it has pragmatic outlook which is the study of the ways in which non-native speakers acquire, comprehend, and use linguistic patterns (or speech acts) in a second language.

Interlanguage fossilization is a phenomenon of second language acquisition (SLA) in which second language learners develop and retain a linguistic system, or interlanguage, that is self-contained and different from both the learner's first language and the target language. This linguistic system has been variously called interlanguage, approximate system idiosyncratic dialects, or transitional dialects. Selinker suggests that the most important distinguishing factor related to second language acquisition is the phenomenon of fossilization. However, both his explanation that "fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular native language will tend to keep in their interlanguage relative to a particular target language, no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation or instruction he receives in the target language". This hypothesis on interlanguage fossilization is contradicting the basic understanding of the human capacity to learn. The concept of fossilization in SLA research is so intrinsically related to interlanguage that Selinker considers it to be a fundamental phenomenon of all SLA and not just adult learners. Fossilization has such wide recognition that it has been entered in the "Random House Dictionary of the English Language (1987)". Interlanguage can fossilize, or cease developing, in any of its developmental stages. Its rules are claimed to be shaped by several factors, including: L1 transfer, transfer of training, strategies of L2 learning (e.g. simplification), strategies of L2 communication, and overgeneralization of the target language patterns. Selinker (1970) noted that most L2 learners fail to reach target language competence. That is, they stop learning when their internalized rule system contains rules different from those of the target language. This is referred to as 'fossilization'. Scovel (1988), like Selinker, argued that the causes of phonological fossilization are neurolinguistics in nature and related to the process of cerebral lateralization, which is completed at puberty. But there is certainly disagreement among interlanguage researchers as to both the inevitability of fossilization and relatedly the causes of fossilization.

Internalization

Internalization is a social perspective to teaching and learning a second language in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) utilizes the notion of internalization to capture both the social origin of learning—even in private settings—and the non-mechanistic or simplistic quality of the processes involved in learning and communicating in new languages (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). Research on internalization explains how the social plane is the starting point to construct new meanings when we learn a second language. When learning a new language, our social communicative activity is the origin for noticing and understanding words and phrases. These words and phrases, which we encounter in oral and written discourse, are then transformed into personal meanings; and at the same time, our personal meanings are again transformed into social communication. This continuous transformation of social meanings into private meanings and private meanings into social ones partly explains the richness and complexity of the second language learning processes. Interaction contributes to second language

acquisition. Interaction refers to communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to prevent a breakdown in communication (Ellis, 1999). Research on interaction is conducted within the framework of the Interactive Hypothesis, which states that conversational interaction "facilitates language acquisition because it connects input [what learners hear and read]; internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output [what learners produce] in productive ways" (Long, 1996, pp. 451-452). Interaction provides learners with opportunities to receive comprehensible input and feedback (Gass, 1997; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994) as well as to make changes in their own linguistic output (Swain, 1995). This allows learners to "notice the gap" (Schmidt & Frota, 1986, p. 311) between their command of the language and correct, or target-like, use of the language.

The process of internalization starts with learning what the norms are, and then the individual goes through a process of understanding why they are of value or why they make sense, until finally they accept the norm as their own viewpoint. Internalized norms are said to be part of an individual's personality and may be exhibited by one's moral actions. However, there can also be a distinction between internal commitment to a norm and what one exhibits externally. George Herbert Mead illustrates, through the constructs of mind, society and self, the manner in which an individual's internalizations are affected by external norms. One thing that may affect what an individual internalizes are role models. Role models often speed up the process of socialization and encourages the speed of internalization as if someone an individual respects is seen to endorse a particular set of norms, the individual is more likely to be prepared to accept, and so internalize, those norms. This is called the process of identification. Internalization helps one define who they are and create their own identity and values within a society that has already created a norm set of values and practices for them. From a pedagogical point of view, in second language teaching, research on the internalization of second languages is thought to be the key to understanding learning processes from a sociocultural perspective. Consequently, understanding and promoting internalization is the key to properly organizing adequate teaching efforts in classroom settings (Lantolf, 2003). This is the basis for a conceptual approach to teaching languages (Negueruela, 2003). The category of internalization reaches the field of SLA from the field of social psychology, specifically sociocultural theory (Wertsch, 1985; Lantolf, 2000). Internalization is a psychological construct that articulates the connection between the world outside us—our external bodily experiences in the contexts in which we live—and the world inside us—our internal experiences, that is, our self-conscious awareness. According to Vygotsky (1930/1978), internalization processes originate socially in concrete human activities and are culturally mediated by semiotic tools, primordially language. Internalization is not immediate and mechanical but mediated and transformative.

Describing and understanding the specific connection between our social speech and our inner order and its critical role in learning a second language is the goal of research on internalization in SLA. This connection is not direct or simple. As learners of new languages, many of us have experienced how the social context provides a rich source of experiences for communicating with others. We hear new words, notice new sounds, and try using phrases that we just heard or read. However, we also experience that it is not only about noticing language features and using them to communicate in a social setting. Some features of languages are not easily noticed and used. Second language teachers, and sometimes even friends who communicate

in the second language better than we do, often give us feedback about language features that we keep using incorrectly, mistakes we make with pronunciation, and phrases we keep forgetting when we write. The connection between what we learn in social settings and what we take away and use in different contexts, what we internalize and take with us, is not simple and direct.

The link between social interaction and personal intra-action is fluid, transformative, and necessary from a learning/teaching perspective. In the L2 classroom, promoting developmental transformation is based on mindfully engaging with concepts as tools of the mind in meaningful pedagogical tasks. Pedagogical tasks that promote mindfully engaging with concepts are the critical element to transform interaction into intra-action (Azarola 2015). In order to explore these ideas we first review Vygotsky's proposal on social interaction and development as the basis to understand a sociocultural take on L2 classroom interaction. Then, we explain the learning and development dialectic, the zone of proximal development in Vygotskian theory, and the notion of internalization. Finally, we focus on three areas where interaction and intra-action meet from a Sociocultural Theory perspective (SCT), an SCT perspective: gestures as meaning-making resources with both a social and a private function, interaction and social speech as the basis for dynamic assessment, and conceptual categories of meaning as psychological tools to be transformed by L2 learners when properly guided by teachers. It is proposed that a SCT take on interaction leading to intra-action should focus on development as conscious awareness through internalizing conceptual categories. In this context, introducing meaning-based conceptual categories, exploring the gesture-speech interface, and dialectically connecting teaching and assessment is critical for researchers and practitioners who intend to foster development in the L2 classroom.

Conclusion

The correlation between interlanguage and internalization can be compared to the relation between route and rate in SLA. The route is the development of the language acquisition, i.e. the nature of the stages all learners go through when acquiring the second language (L2). This route remains largely independent of both the learner's mother tongue (L1) and the context of learning (e.g. whether instructed in a classroom or acquired naturally by exposure). The rate of the learning process is the speed at which learners are learning the L2, and the outcome of the learning process, i.e. how proficient learners become, or both. Both speed of learning and range of outcomes are highly variable from learner to learner as some do much better and much more quickly than others. If we could see interlanguage as the route which is reflected in the developmental process of the learner till reaching the proficiency competence of the target language. While internalization is mirrored as the rate in which the implementations of language is activated within social communicative environment resulting the enhancement of learners manifesting the individual differences.

To demonstrate the idea, if for instance learners at their primarily phase of L2 learning use overgeneralization to express themselves in a social situation (interlanguage), the teacher in an attempt to convey the correct usage of the language in a similar situation would present a video acted by native speakers and ask the learners to listen and watch sensibly. Then the learners would be asked to act the

same situation using the language in the video. Meanwhile the teacher would observe their performances and take remarks and give comments.

When the students watch the video and listen to the language of the native speakers, they will internalize the norms of meaning introduced through the phonological aspect (hearing), the syntactic aspect (structure of sentences) as well as the gestures in the video would accelerate the meanings to get them internalized in the memory of the learners (input). The native speakers are representing the role models to the learners because they are using the adequate language that should be used in a similar situation. Acting the scene by the learners will authenticate how each and every learner internalized the norms of meaning they learnt and produce them in his/ her own way (output).

Accordingly, the teacher should practically be able to specify the problems of interlanguage and internalization of the learners whether in grammar, sentence structure, pronunciation, pragmatic or vocabulary; this leads to constructing the learning materials for those learners upon their actual needs. Specifying the problem leads to choose the reliable learning strategy for the learning imperfection. Selecting the interactive learning method using social situations is the best strategy for improving the acquisition of L2 (internalization). Following the procedures of introducing new materials (e.g.in social situations), monitoring learners' performances, identifying the defects (errors) and designing an improvement scheme, should lead to the development of learners L2 acquisition (interlanguage). The interlanguage is proved to be permeable and dynamic not static, the development that will occur in the learners' second language can be measured through assessing the output of the learner (internalization) in a specific area of knowledge to ascertain the development.

The learning materials should vary in shape and content to include social communication activities not just books, because the social plane is the starting point to construct new meanings, they are the origin for noticing and understanding phrases and words. Beside, following the advice of Krashen in creating a relaxing atmosphere in class to enhance and boost the conscious of learners to interact, perform and use the learnt language freely. Teachers can reach this relaxing atmosphere through inspiring the self-confidence of the learners via individual guidance and constant motivation while monitoring the interlanguage upgrading of the second language.

Involving the students in social activities and social interactions with each other in group or pair work reveal the commitment of the internal norms externally to judge them linguistically by the teacher. Conversational interaction facilitates the language acquisition because it connects inputs and outputs, it also helps in providing learners with comprehensible feedback and aids in improving learners' linguistic competence while noticing the gap between the learners command of the language and the correct target use of it. This is why the SCT (Sociocultural Theory perspective) focusing on the three areas of interaction; the gestures, the social speech and the conceptual categories of meaning, is considered an effective tool for the second language learning, because this interaction eventually leads to the intra-action of the language hitting the target goal of the SLA process.

The problem of Fossilization which is ‘freezing’ the transition between the native language and the target language should be remediated when occurred. Many scholars analyzed the cause of fossilization into personal and general factors. General factors related to the individual differences among learners, their cognitive capabilities, the manner in which people perceive, conceptualize, organize, and recall information. Each person is considered a more or less consistent mode of cognitive functioning. Attitudes and motivation, Schumann (1978) lists ‘attitude’ as a social factor on a par with variables such as ‘size of learning group’, and ‘motivation’ as an affective factor alongside ‘culture shock’. Gardner and Lambert (1972) define ‘motivation’ in terms of the L2 learner’s overall goal or orientation, and ‘attitude’ as the persistence shown by the learner in striving for a goal. Personality, one of the intuitively appealing hypotheses that has been investigated, as extroverted learners learn more rapidly and are more successful than introverted learners. It has been suggested that extroverted learners will find it easier to make contact with other users of the L2 and therefore will obtain more input. Personal factors are represented in group dynamics, anxiety and competitiveness in which some classroom learners make overt comparisons of themselves with other learners. In another kind of comparison, learners calculate how they are progressing against their expectations. Often these comparisons result in emotive responses to the language-learning experience. Competitiveness may be manifested in a desire to out-do other language learners by shouting out answers in class, or by racing through examinations to be the first to finish. However, once group dynamics transfers at the negative direction, students will feel apprehensive and shameful (Manqiu Qian & Zhihong Xiao 2010).

The more the teachers investigate and explore the social and psychological areas of learning to visualize new zones and widen their scope of knowledge, the more they will be able to conduct their classes effectively and contribute to the progress of their students in acquiring and accelerating the second language.

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