THIRD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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Overview

- TLA: Terms and Definitions
- Third Language Acquisition vs. Second Language Acquisition
- Metalinguistic Awareness
- Monitoring
- Cross linguistic interaction
- Factors Affecting Non-native Language Influence
- Prior Language Learning: An Obstacle or an Asset?
Different perspectives

One of them:

Cenoz (2003) states “[…] third language acquisition refers to the acquisition of a non-native language by learners who have previously acquired or are acquiring two other languages. The acquisition of the first two languages can be simultaneous (as in early bilingualism) or consecutive.”
Third Language Acquisition vs. Second Language Acquisition

- Most linguists, such as Singh and Carroll, Mitchell and Myles → no difference between acquisition of L2 and L3
  → ‘second’ language = any non-native language acquired beyond the first

- Hufeisen, Lindemann, Cenoz, Herdina and Jessner → learning L2 differs in many respects from learning L3
  → L3 acquisition is more complex
Metalinguistic Awareness

refers to the ability to focus attention on language as an object in itself, to think abstractly about language or to play with or manipulate language.

MA of multilingual speakers is higher as MA of monolingual speakers → multilingual speakers realize that there are more options for performance in a certain language
Monitoring

- The monitor hypothesis asserts that a learner’s learned system acts as a monitor to what they are producing.
  - while only the acquired system is able to produce spontaneous speech, the learned system is used to check what is being spoken.
- Before the learner produces an utterance, he or she internally scans it for errors, and uses the learned system to make corrections. Self-correction occurs when the learner uses the Monitor to correct a sentence after it is uttered.
Cross linguistic interaction

Multilingual learners are influenced by L1 as well as the non native languages

- L1 $\rightarrow$ L3
- L2 $\rightarrow$ L3

Mutual influence: L1 $\leftrightarrow$ L3 and L2 $\leftrightarrow$ L3

- Positive transfer
- Negative transfer
Factors Affecting Non-native Language Influence

Language Distance
affects cross linguistic influence in multilinguals

→ 1. knowledge of related and unrelated language → influenced by language that is the closest to the target language

→ 2. knowledge of languages that belong to the same language family, but not the same subgroup within the family
   → 1. influenced by the languages that are more closely related to the target language (as in the first case) or
   → 2. influenced by more than one language at the same time

→ 3. when learners have knowledge of languages that belong to the same family, and to the same subgroup within the family → non-native language = favourite source of information
Factors Affecting Non-native Language Influence

Level of Proficiency

▶ Transfer of meaning was found to be associated with high proficiency in the source language

▶ Transfer of form was found to be associated with low fluency in the source language
Factors Affecting Non-native Language Influence

Recency of Use

- it is easier to access a word which is used frequently than a word that is used less frequently
- learners are more likely to be influenced by those languages that are used often, and in the recent past.
Factors Affecting Non-native Language Influence

Order of Acquisition

- 3 languages can be learnt consecutively (L1, L2, and L3)
- 2 languages are learnt simultaneously after the acquisition of the first language (one L1 and two L2s)
- 2 languages are acquired simultaneously before learning the third language (two L1s and an L3)
- 3 languages can be acquired simultaneously (three L1s)
Prior Language Learning: An Obstacle or an Asset?

There are two critical questions:

How proficient in the non-native language one needs to be before multilingualism turns to an asset for the learner?

Can the linguistic development reached in one language be transferred to another language?

Prior language knowledge and previous learning experience have a positive effect on third or additional language learning

→ acquisition of languages beyond the L2 may further enhance cognitive development and progressively facilitate the language acquisition progress
References