

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION ON ESL LEARNER

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Abstract

This paper is presenting the seven fundamental issues in Second Language Acquisition. The problems are acknowledged to have the potential to affect the learner's language output. Furthermore, it is included in the paper that the importance of teachers is served as external factors in second language acquisition. For students to become more motivated to study a second language, the teacher's involvement is crucial. This article also addresses the necessity for study on linguistic anxiety. It is explained that individual learner variations include a student's motivation and language anxiety as an internal component in learning a second language

Keywords: Fundamental issues, Second Language Acquisition, ESL Learner

INTRODUCTION

A wide range of abilities must be developed in order to successfully complete the demanding and dynamic process of learning a second language. These encompass social and cognitive skills in addition to language proficiency. Numerous factors affect this process, which is referred to as second language acquisition (SLA). Individual variances influence the course of SLA in a big way, including age, motivation, and learning preferences. Crucial factors also include the type and caliber of information and interaction, exposure to the target language, and chances for communicative practice. Moreover, the function of instruction which includes curriculum design, evaluation, and teaching methodologies can have a big influence on SLA results. For many stakeholders, it is crucial to comprehend these crucial SLA concerns. It can help educators make judgments regarding teaching strategies and resources, guiding their pedagogical practices. It has the potential to influence the course of empirical research and advance our theoretical knowledge of SLA. It can improve learning processes for language learners, increasing their efficacy and efficiency. Finally, it can assist policymakers in developing language education programs that support multilingualism and intercultural competency. SLA is a complicated, multidimensional process with wide-ranging effects as a result.

DISCUSSION

Ellis (1989) identifies seven key issues in learning a second language. These problems are:

a. The role of first language

People's learning of a second language (L2) is significantly influenced by their first language (L1). The influence of first language on second language learning varies

depending on several factors, including language kinds and phonological, morphological, and syntactic components.

Language transfer is the term used to describe how the first language affects the process of learning a second language. For example, when a Chinese individual writes an essay in English, the language and sentence structure are initially created in Chinese and then translated into English. English phrases would mimic the habits utilized in Chinese through this method. A native English speaker may have a negative transfer, or uncomfortable feeling, after reading an article written in English by a native Chinese due to differences in L1 and L2 processing methods. On the other side, positive transfer occurs when Chinese students find it easy to comprehend the structure of English sentences due to the closeness in syntax between the two languages.

Many academics have examined the impact of their mother tongue and compared two languages in the learning of, say, English during the past few decades. Some studies have also looked at the precise effects of L1, such as how it might lead to mistakes in the acquisition of L2. This knowledge of the L1 effect is important for education, particularly for second language instruction for young students. Not only would it benefit those wishing to acquire a third or fourth language, but it would also benefit those tackling their second language for professional requirements. For the individual student as well as the entire educational system, the progression is helpful in identifying effective methods of learning new languages.

b. The “Natural” route of development

The intriguing process of learning a second language along the "natural route of development" entails learners acquiring linguistic characteristics in a regular order. Regardless of the learners' original languages or if they have had official language training, this sequence is astonishingly consistent. According to Krashen (1982), "acquires of a given language tend to acquire certain grammatical structures early, and others later."

Over the last ten years, research has moved from focusing solely on language structural analysis to focusing more on the learner and the learning process itself. The idea that learners participate actively in their education is becoming generally acknowledged.

Krashen and Terrell organized the intricate process of acquiring a second language into four fundamental levels or phases, and described the actions of both teachers and students at each level in their teaching methodology, The Natural Approach. Based on the features of the learner, these stages are not defined but rather continuous.

The Silent Period (Preproduction Phase):

The first stage of language learning is called "Starting to Pick Up the Language." For this reason, it's commonly referred to as the "Silent Period"—especially for younger learners who tend to absorb language without actively speaking. The sounds, words, and patterns of language are absorbed by them like sponges.

Reacting Nonverbally and Listening: During this phase, students concentrate more on understanding and listening than on speaking. Instead of responding vocally,

they might make gestures, facial expressions, or nods. They are able to learn the language's fundamentals without feeling compelled to communicate by means of this silent observation.

Early Production:

- Three months to a year of English study: After passing the Silent Period, students go on to the Early Production stage. After being exposed to the language for three months to a year, this usually occurs.
- Speech emergence. Short words and basic sentences are first used by learners. While their vocabulary is still little, they might start to speak. Simple communication attempts are what define this level.
- Intermediate fluency stage with additional exposure and practice. They are able to have longer conversations, compose more intricate sentences, and convey concepts in more depth. While they happen frequently, mistakes are a necessary component of learning.
- Advanced Fluency: Learners advance to this level of language proficiency. Their ability to comprehend subtle language use, express oneself more accurately, and communicate successfully in a variety of contexts is enhanced. A higher level of language acquisition is indicated by this phase.
- It is crucial to remember that mastering the new language via regular practice and participation in conversations is essential to become proficient in both writing and speaking. Language acquisition also requires motivation, particularly in situations where survival or personal development requirements call for the language.

c. Contextual variation in language-learner language

An interesting field of research called contextual variation in language-learner language explores how language usage circumstances might affect how language is learnt and retained. This idea is especially pertinent to the study of language acquisition, as a learner's surroundings and conditions can have a big influence on how they learn.

The input variety. Children's language development is a complicated process that is influenced by many different things. Contextual variation, or the variety of language input a child hears, is one of these factors. This includes the numerous vocabulary and linguistic constructions that are employed in different social contexts, at home, and in the classroom. A child's overall language development can benefit from the distinctive linguistic experiences offered by each of these environments.

The language used at home is frequently more informal and colloquial. Children can pick up colloquialisms, idiomatic idioms, and informal language patterns that are frequently employed in daily discourse in this setting. They pick up the skills necessary to engage with family members in a laid-back and comfortable manner as well as to convey their needs and feelings. Children need this informal language use to comprehend and participate in everyday interactions.

The language employed in schools, however, is usually more official and regulated. Children are exposed to academic language in this context, which includes formal conversation patterns, complicated sentence structures, and vocabulary related to

the subject matter. They pick up more formal language skills through writing academic papers, taking part in class discussions, and presenting material. Children who are exposed to formal language use are better able to acquire the communication skills that are required for both academic success and professional communication in the future.

In addition, children come across diverse linguistic contexts in a range of social settings beyond their home and school, including playgrounds, sporting events, and cultural gatherings. Through these encounters, they are exposed to a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures, which improves their capacity to modify language use based on context.

Interactional variation is an intriguing aspect of language use that illustrates how dynamic communication is. The idea that language is a tool that is shaped and adjusted by the social environment in which it is used—rather than being employed in a vacuum—is emphasized.

The interaction between the speaker and the listener lies at the core of interactional variation. Numerous elements pertaining to the listener may have an impact on the speaker's language choice. The speaker's choice of language, for example, can be greatly influenced by the listener's degree of linguistic proficiency. A non-native speaker or a language learner may choose to use more explicit grammar structures, a slower speech rate, and a simpler vocabulary in order to make their message easier to understand. This is frequently observed in interactions between students and teachers as well as in talks between language learners and native speakers.

Interactional variation can also be influenced by the rapport that exists between the speaker and the listener. When there is a close relationship between the speaker and the listener, the language used may be more informal, full of idioms and colloquial expressions, as well as shared jargon or code words. Conversely, the language employed tends to be more conventional, formal, and free of colloquialisms in more formal circumstances or when the speaker and the listener are not well acquainted.

Interactional variety is also significantly shaped by social conventions of the trade. Regarding proper language use in diverse social circumstances, different cultures have varied norms and expectations. For instance, using honorifics and formal language while speaking to superiors or elders is considered acceptable in some cultures, whereas a more egalitarian approach to language use is valued in others.

Interactional variation has significant implications for language learning. In addition to knowing the syntax and vocabulary of the target language, language learners also need to know how to apply it in various social situations. This entails learning how to navigate the social norms of the target language, know when to use formal or informal language, and adapt language use based on the listener's language proficiency. The ability to use language responsibly and successfully in a variety of social circumstances is known as communicative competence, and interactional variation helps to develop it.

Situational variation is a crucial component of language acquisition and communication. It speaks about how language use varies according on the situation or context of the conversation. This idea is based on the knowledge that language is never used in a vacuum; rather, it is always employed in a particular context that shapes the way it is presented.

Many things, such as the topic of conversation, the formality of the situation, and cultural conventions, might affect the context. For example, the vocabulary used at a formal business meeting will be very different from the language used in a casual talk with friends. In a similar vein, the vocabulary employed to explain a scientific idea will differ from that of a narrative.

Situational variation is significantly influenced by cultural norms as well. Language usage expectations in many settings vary among civilizations. For instance, whereas direct language is preferred in some cultures, indirect language may be considered courteous in others.

A language learner's pragmatic competency can be substantially increased by comprehending and adjusting to situational diversity. The capacity to use language successfully in a social setting, including knowing how to modify one's language use to suit the occasion, is known as pragmatic competence. Language learners can communicate more effectively and appropriately in a range of circumstances by being aware of these distinctions and learning how to adjust their language usage accordingly.

d. Individual Learners Differences

- **Personality features:** The process of learning a second language may be greatly influenced by personality features. For example, it has been discovered that the Big Five personality traits—conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—correlate with success in learning a second language. However, depending on the situation and the particular work at hand, the influence of particular personality qualities might change.
- **Motivation:** Developing motivation is essential to learning a second language. It acts as the catalyst that keeps second language acquisition going even in the absence of conducive learning conditions. Strong motivation has been linked to improved performance when learning a second language and increased language competency. The success and velocity of language learning can also be influenced by the type of motivation—instrumental or integrative.
- **Language Aptitude:** The capacity to pick up a new language is referred to as language aptitude. better aptitude learners of second or foreign languages frequently make faster learning progress and reach better levels of proficiency in the end. It has been discovered that aptitude is more closely related to conscious learning environments and the early phases of L2 development.

It's critical to remember that these elements interact with one another and the learning environment, which contributes to the complexity and individuality of the second language acquisition process. For instance, a learner's motivation might affect how they approach learning and ultimately succeed in picking up a second language, depending on how their personality traits and linguistic ability interact.

e. The Role of the Input

Linguistic input does play a crucial role in the acquisition of a second language. It describes how much exposure students have to the language they are trying to learn.

There are several ways to get this exposure: you can watch movies, read books or articles, listen to music, or have conversations with people who are fluent in the language. A learner's comprehension of the language is enhanced by the distinct learning experiences offered by each of these activities.

Learners absorb more information when they are more fully integrated into the language context. Living in a nation where the language is spoken is one method of achieving physical immersion. Other types of immersion are still feasible in the digital age we live in, though. Online communities and applications for language learning provide a virtual immersion experience by exposing students to the language in a range of settings. The exposure of learners to authentic scenarios can greatly augment their comprehension of the language's everyday usage.

Reading on one's own initiative is another essential component of language acquisition. Students are usually more motivated and engaged when they read in the target language on their own. A deeper comprehension of the language may result from this increased engagement. Reading exposes students to a large vocabulary and grammatical structures, frequently in contexts that are meaningful and can help with language acquisition.

But quality is just as important as quantity when it comes to input. Learners especially benefit from comprehensible input, which is language intelligible to non-native speakers. Learners can deduce meaning and progressively pick up new grammar and vocabulary from easily understood materials.

In summary, language input—both in terms of quantity and quality—plays a big part in second language learning. Through immersion and self-initiated reading, learners can increase their chances of mastering the language they are studying by exposing themselves to high-quality materials. As a result, in order to optimize language learning, both teachers and students should work to provide as much high-quality as possible input. This strategy will not only increase the effectiveness of the learning process but also make it more enjoyable.

f. Learner process

The process of second language acquisition is a complex one, involving a variety of cognitive and individual factors.

Cognitive Factors:

- **Sensory memory:** Our cognitive processes rely heavily on sensory memory, which serves as the first line of defense against new sensory data. When it comes to learning and processing languages, sensory memory is essential for identifying the important sounds, or phonemes, in a language.

The smallest components of sound in a language that are capable of differentiating one word from another are called phonemes. For instance, the phonemes /p/ and /b/ in English are different from one another because they distinguish words like "pat" and "bat."

Our sensory memory register dedicated to auditory information, the echoic memory, is where the sounds associated with spoken language are stored when we hear them. This memory lasts for only a few seconds, usually three or four. Nonetheless, our brains have ample time to absorb the sounds and identify them as distinct phonemes during this period.

The ability to recognize is essential for both producing and comprehending language. It enables us to translate the continuous stream of phonemes into comprehensible words and phrases. Furthermore, it makes it possible for us to mimic these sounds when we speak, improving our ability to communicate.

One of the most important steps in learning a new language is comprehending its phonemes. It helps students appropriately detect and create language sounds, which improves their comprehension and pronunciation abilities.

- **Long-term memory:** Our cognitive system's long-term memory, where knowledge is retained for epochs ranging from minutes to lifetimes, is an essential part. In the context of learning and using languages, long-term memory is important for a number of reasons.
 - **Vocabulary Storage:** Storing vocabulary is one of the most basic functions of long-term memory in language. All the words we acquire are retained in our long-term memory. We are able to communicate our ideas and comprehend others because to our vast mental lexicon. Our understanding and communication can be more sophisticated the more terms we are familiar with and can remember.
 - **Grammar Rules:** A language's rules, often known as its grammar, are also retained in long-term memory. This covers morphology (the structure of words), semantics (the meaning of words and sentences), and syntax (the way words are put together in a sentence). For instance, we are aware that the normal English sentence structure is Subject-Verb-Object and that a verb's past tense is indicated by adding the suffix "-ed".
 - **Exceptions and Irregularities:** Every language has its quirks and exceptions, and our long-term memory stores them as well. The past tense of ordinary verbs in English, for example, is obtained by adding "-ed". However, we also recall that the past tense of "go" is "went", not "goed". After being mastered, these exceptions are kept and retrieved from our long-term memory.
 - **Language Evolution:** We can also follow the development of our language abilities over time thanks to our long-term memory. Our vocabulary increases, our comprehension of grammar develops, and we get better at dealing with exceptions and irregularities as we study and mature. Our capacity for efficient communication and linguistic proficiency are shaped by this never-ending learning process.

Individual factors in Learning:

- **Affective Factors:**

- Motivation: This refers to your level of desire to pick up a language. It helps if you're enthusiastic about it. It can be more difficult to study if you're uneasy or uninterested.

- Attitudes and Emotions: Learning becomes more pleasurable if you have a positive attitude toward the language and its origins. But it can make learning difficult if you don't enjoy it or are stressed out.

- **Aptitude:**

- Innate Capacity: Some individuals pick up languages effortlessly and without much effort. Don't worry, though, if you're not one of them. With practice, everyone can learn.

- **Learner Agency:**

- Assuming Responsibility for Learning: This refers to taking charge of your own education. You are in control if you actively seek out opportunities to practice and make objectives for yourself.

- **Learning Strategies:**

- Contextual Learning: It is very beneficial to learn in real-world scenarios, such as when conversing with others.

- Repetition: Practicing anything repeatedly aids in memory retention.

- Memory Techniques: You can improve your memory by using strategies like mental imagery or associations.

- **Motivation:**

- Intrinsic Motivation: You will improve your language skills if you find learning enjoyable for its own sake. It's similar to playing a great game.

- Extrinsic Motivation: Getting incentives, such as accolades or high grades, might inspire you. For long-term success, however, liking the process is much more crucial.

g. The Role of Formal Instruction

The importance of formal instruction: Learning a second language requires formal instruction. Teachers of English as a second language who use the Communicative Approach may find that it is worthwhile to incorporate structured lessons to help their students become more proficient in using the tenses in the language.

When learning a second language, especially English as a second language (ESL), formal instruction is essential. ESL teachers frequently use the Communicative Approach, which emphasizes interaction as the ultimate goal of language learning as well as its means. Nonetheless, this strategy can be greatly improved by incorporating formal instruction, particularly when it comes to helping students become more proficient with the use of English tenses.

In the sentence "formal instruction" refers to the explicit teaching of grammatical structures and rules. This is especially helpful for learning how to use the tenses in English, which can be tricky because of all of the exceptions and irregularities in the language. Teachers can help students understand when and how to use each tense

correctly by giving them examples of the various tenses along with clear explanations of each.

Furthermore, by offering a strong grammatical foundation on which communicative skills can be developed, formal instruction can support the Communicative Approach. Formal instruction makes sure that the language is used correctly, even though the Communicative Approach emphasizes using the language in everyday situations. With this combination, students can communicate more effectively because they will be able to express themselves and their ideas in a way that is understandable to others.

Moreover, formal education can support the growth of metalinguistic awareness, or the capacity to consider and evaluate language as a subject of study. This may result in a better comprehension of the language and, eventually, increased competence.

In summary, formal instruction should be included even though the Communicative Approach has advantages, especially when teaching English tenses. This can result in a more thorough learning process. It enables the improvement of grammatical correctness as well as communicative competence, resulting in more efficient English communication. Therefore, incorporating formal instruction into their teaching strategies may be advantageous for ESL teachers.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) pros:

1. Understanding Individual Differences:

Teachers can adapt their teaching strategies by taking into account the distinctive qualities of every student, including their age, motivation, and preferred learning styles. This individualized method improves language acquisition efficiency while simultaneously raising student involvement. Teachers may foster an inclusive and diverse learning environment in the classroom by acknowledging the uniqueness of every learner and designing a learning environment that respects and accommodates these differences.

2. Natural Development Stages:

Krashen and Terrell's stages of language development offer educators a path forward. Teachers can anticipate possible obstacles and plan suitable countermeasures by being aware of these phases. This methodical technique guarantees that students receive the appropriate assistance at the appropriate moment, improving their language learning experience.

3. Contextual Variation:

The use of language is situational and does not remain constant. Teachers can better prepare their students for language use in the actual world by incorporating this concept into language training. With the support of this dynamic approach to language acquisition, children can become adept and adaptive in a variety of language contexts, giving them the tools they need to speak effectively in a variety of settings.

4. Cognitive Factors:

The process of learning a language is intricate and involves a number of cognitive processes, such as working memory, long-term memory, and sensory memory.

Teachers can improve their retention and understanding rates by incorporating these cognitive elements into language training. This all-encompassing method of teaching languages recognizes the intricacy of the process and offers insightful advice on how students can digest and remember new material most effectively.

5. Linguistic input quality:

Learners' ability to acquire a language is greatly influenced by the caliber of the language input they are exposed to. Exposure to meaningful and understandable language improves learners' capacity to infer meaning, pick up new vocabulary, and successfully apply grammatical structures. By emphasizing the caliber of language input, teachers can guarantee that students have the tools necessary to be successful in their language learning endeavors.

6. Individual Learner Differences:

Each learner is distinct, possessing a unique combination of motivations, personality traits, and language skills. Acknowledging these individual variances enables teachers to establish a learning atmosphere that is more welcoming and encouraging. Teachers can make language learning more pleasurable and fulfilling for students by accommodating a variety of learning styles and motives.

In summary, there are a lot of advantages to second language acquisition (SLA). Along with teaching students a new language, it also creates a welcoming, active learning environment that values individual diversity and encourages efficient study techniques. By taking use of these benefits, teachers can improve the language learning process and assist students in meeting their language learning objectives.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) cons:

1. Individual Variations and Learning Environments:

Each learner is distinct, possessing a unique combination of cognitive capacities, learning preferences, degrees of motivation, and cultural upbringings. The effectiveness and speed of language acquisition can both be strongly impacted by these individual variances. In a similar vein, learning outcomes can also be influenced by the learning context, which includes formal classroom settings, online learning environments, and international immersion. It is a difficult undertaking to standardize language education programs to accommodate these various circumstances.

2. An overemphasis on formal training

It might limit possibilities for learners to engage in authentic communication, even while mastering grammatical structures and norms is essential. This could result in a situation where students understand grammar rules but have difficulty using language in everyday situations. Achieving a balance between communicative and formal language training is crucial in enabling learners to utilize the language proficiently in authentic settings.

3. Forecasting Learning Pathways:

Acquiring language skills is not a straight-line process. Students may advance at varying speeds, and a wide range of factors, including as motivation, exposure to the language, and the caliber of instruction, can impact their learning paths. It is difficult

to create individualized language education programs that meet the specific requirements of each learner because of this unpredictability.

4. Resource Intensiveness:

A significant amount of resources are needed to create individualized training and immersive language learning environments. For organizations with constrained resources and infrastructure, this can be a serious problem. Resources may be strained by the demands for varied learning opportunities, high-quality linguistic input, and attention to student variations.

5. Negative Language Transfer:

Learners' initial language might occasionally impede their ability to utilize a second language effectively. Pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary are just a few of the areas of language use that can be impacted by this phenomenon, sometimes called negative transfer. In language teaching, it is essential to comprehend and deal with the dynamics of language transfer.

6. Finding a Balance between Formal Instruction and Communicative techniques:

Too much emphasis on either formal instruction or communicative techniques might impede the growth of communicative and spontaneous language abilities. For educators and legislators, finding a balance between these two strategies while operating under resource limits is a recurring problem.

In summary, even though SLA comes with a lot of difficulties, knowing these complexities can aid educators and decision-makers in creating language education initiatives that are more successful. To ensure that learners can successfully acquire and use a second language, this discipline demands ongoing study, innovation, and flexibility.

Conclusion

In conclusion, learning a second language (SLA) is a dynamic, multidimensional process that is impacted by a variety of circumstances. Individual variances influence how SLA develops in many ways, including age, motivation, and learning preferences. Since language transfer has an impact on how learners approach and absorb a second language, the first language plays a critical role.

According to Krashen and Terrell, the "Natural" path of development identifies discrete phases in language learning and emphasizes the significance of consistent practice and conversational engagement for mastery. The influence of the learning environment on language acquisition is further highlighted by contextual variation in language-learner language, which includes input variety, interactional variation, and situational variation.

The complexity of second language acquisition is influenced by individual variations in personality characteristics, motivation, and linguistic ability. An essential component of successful language learning is both the quantity and quality of linguistic input, which can be attained in a variety of ways, including voluntary reading and immersion.

The capacity of a learner to pick up a second language is influenced by a variety of psychological and cognitive elements, including emotional factors, learner agency, working memory, long-term memory, sensory memory, inhibitory control, and learning techniques. It emphasizes how important formal education is, especially when it comes to teaching grammar rules and structures. It is also emphasized how complementary formal

education is to communicative techniques and how important it is for fostering metalinguistic awareness.

To put it simply, in order to customize successful language education programs, educators, researchers, and legislators must have a thorough grasp of these variables. Language teachers can choose effective teaching methods, materials, and curriculum by taking into account how these factors interact. In the end, this information may enrich the process of learning a language, increase learner effectiveness, and aid in the growth of multilingual and culturally aware people

CONCLUSION

This research has shed light on the significant influence of English movies on English education students' proficiency in the Sriwijaya University. The findings indicate that English movies serve as a valuable resource for language learning, offering students an engaging and realistic context to practice and improve their language skills. The study revealed that a majority of the participants expressed positive attitudes towards watching English movies, indicating enjoyment and comfort in consuming this type of media. Despite the challenges associated with the difficulty in understanding without subtitles and varying levels of proficiency among participants, the overall impact of English movies on students' language proficiency was positive, suggesting that they can be an effective tool for language learning. Moreover, the research emphasized the potential of using English movies in educational settings to motivate students and create opportunities for discussion and exploration of different themes and perspectives. Implementing movies in English as a Foreign Language classroom was seen as a way to enhance student engagement and satisfaction with the learning process

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