INFLUENCE OF THE FIRST LANGUAGE ON THE LEARNING OF THE LEXICON OF TWO SECOND LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT
The present study analyzes the influence of L1 on the learning of the lexicon of two L2s. While a number of studies have been conducted on the influence of first language on the learning of one second language, little work has been done on the influence of first language on the acquisition of two second languages. The data for the present study was collected from the Pakistani learner of English and Arabic as second languages in a madrassa named Dar-ul-Uloom Mhammadia Ghausia in Gujrat. Cummins' (1980) model of Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) and Separate Underlying Proficiency (SUP) was used as the theoretical framework. The data showed that Urdu played a largely facilitative role in the learning of the lexicon of both English and Arabic; however, there was a difference of the degree of facilitation. Due to the inherent similarities between Urdu and Arabic, Urdu played a more facilitative role in the learning of Arabic lexicon; whereas, due to the structural differences between Urdu and English, the former played a less facilitative role. Therefore, the learners found learning English more difficult than learning Arabic and the types of errors they made also proved the same.
Keywords: Two Second Languages, L1 Influence, Lexicon, English, Arabic, Urdu.

INTRODUCTION
Second language (henceforth L2) learning is a complex process involving a number of variables out of which influence of the first language (henceforth L1) is one of the most important and resultantly, most researched aspect of the L2 learning process. A number of studies have been conducted to find out how L1 influences the acquisition of different aspects of an L2 in different language teaching and learning environments (c.f. Alonso, 2016a; Alonso, 2016b; Brown & Gullberg, 2008; Gass & Selinker, 1992). the present study tries to analyze how L1 influences the simultaneous acquisition of two L2s. For that purpose, a madrassah (a Muslim religious seminary) named Dar-ul-Uloom Muhammadia Ghausia (henceforth DMG) presents a unique learning environment where the students are taught English and Arabic simultaneously. The students are taught English and Arabic during alternate years of their study. Although they study more subjects related to Arabic language due to religious association, yet the teaching of English is also quite rigorous and the students are expected to pass the examinations of different educational boards and universities. This presents the language researchers with a unique opportunity to find out how the L1 of the students (Urdu in this case) affects their acquisition of two L2s.

L1 influence is one of the most crucial factors affecting the process of second language acquisition and learning (Zhanming, 2014). Since L1 is viewed as a strategy for communication as well as learning (Chau, 1991), the learners interpret the meaning and context of the incoming L2 utterances on the basis of their understanding of L1 (Ringborn, 1987). The development of a large and well-

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organized lexicon in the L1 can enhance the potential for developing the vocabulary and lexical representation of L2 (Nation, 2003). The influence of L1 on L2 learning is a complicated phenomenon. Considering the complexity of the phenomenon this research papers aims at exploring the role of L1 in the learning of the lexicon of two L2s.

Acquisition of the lexicon of any language is an important first step towards the acquisition of the grammatical competence of that language. It is central to the whole system of a language because the lexicon of a language encodes phonological and morphological information that is vital in establishing the meaning contrasts. In addition, it is the source of important syntactic information in verb argument structure and also stores the concepts (Juffs, 2005). The present study, therefore, aims to investigate the facilitative and inhibitive influence of L1 on the acquisition of the lexicon of two L2s, namely English and Arabic.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The process of learning an L2 is an important but complex phenomenon which concerns many interrelated features. It deals with all factors affecting the learners as well as learning conditions (Ellis, 1985). The influence of L1 on the process of the acquisition of L2 is one of the most important features of L2 acquisition. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) can also be termed as second language learning. It is a step by step second language learning procedure. It can also be consolidated as the subsequent learning of all languages after the first language.

L1 is considered as the most influential factor in SLA which plays a vital role in the study of the acquisition process of a second language. It helps in classifying the language input and enhances the learning capability (Zhanming, 2014). In the successful learning of L2, the role of L1 is fundamental (Cummins, 1980). According to Nation (2003), L1 helps the learners in developing the semantic aspect of L2 in the process of developing the content and meaning of L2. Therefore, it has a central position in the acquisition of L2.

Both L1 and L2 interact with each other in the process of acquiring L2. It is through this interaction that L1 exercises its influence on L2. This interaction is known as Cross-linguistic influence (CLI). It is the result of the interface among the languages. It refers to the influence of source language over the target language, most likely because of the reasons that the learners construe their learning strategies depending on the primary language source. In general, CLI covers all type of effects and influences that a language can exert when it is used as a source language in the acquisition/learning of any other language (Kootstra, 2015).

Error Analysis

In SLA an error is defined as an unintentional deviation from the rules and structures committed by a second language learner. They are caused because of learners' un-sufficient knowledge about the target language. The errors are both systematic and organized deviance from the rules and regulation of second language (Cunningworth, 1987). Errors are valuable and natural part of the process of language learning. They reflect the pattern of developing interlanguage systems, shows gaps in the knowledge of the learners (Spada & Lightbown, 2010).

There are two types in second language acquisition, i.e, intralingual and interlingual errors (Richards, 1974). Interlingual errors are the errors caused by language transfer (Chelli, 2013). These errors occur when the learners make errors in learning the target language due to the influence of their mother tongue (Richard, 1974). Intra-lingual errors, on the other hand occur due to the error in the misuse of a particular target language's rule. This type of errors considers the target language as a source of error. It occurs due to the partial or faulty learning of second language (Richard, 1974). These errors are caused by the learners' self-processing of the second language on their presupposed terms and conditions (Touchie, 1986).

Error analysis is a linguistics analysis of the errors that the learners commit in the production of their second language. Error analysis describes the reason behind the errors. It entails not only the analysis of the errors but also the logic behind them (Zhanming, 2014). It investigates the language learnt by the learners (Corder, 1974).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is based on the linguistic theories proposed by Cummins (1980). Observing the errors and accuracies of the learners, he proposed Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) model and Separate

Underlying Proficiency (SUP) model. Common Underlying Proficiency model purports that there are some proficiencies that are common across languages. These proficiencies facilitate the learners in learning their second language by using their L1 as a source. The more a language shares similarities with L1 the easier would be to learn it. On the other hand, separate underlying proficiency model proposes that there is not any single pair of languages that shares total similarities. There exist differences, but those differences occur only at surface level. The different in structures of the languages may result in differential transfer of the L2.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study employed a descriptive and qualitative methodology. It applied the model of "Common Underlying Proficiency" and "Separate Underlying Proficiency" by Cummins (1980) as a theoretical guide. Collecting the data descriptively, the study describes the features of the target population as well as the phenomenon that has been investigated. For having an in-depth investigation, the study employed a mixed–method approach.

The study chose the learners of Madrassah Dar-Ul-Uloom Mohammadia Ghausia (DMG) as the population of the study. A total of 100 male participants were chosen purposively out of which 50 were from matriculation and 50 from intermediate. For data collection, the study employed two tools, i.e., written samples and observation**.** For analyzing the inhibitive and facilitative roles of L1 in the learning of lexicon of Arabic and English, the study used the written translated samples of Arabic and English. The learners were assigned a paragraph, written in their L1 (Urdu), and were asked to translate it in Arabic and English. It provided the quantitative data, i.e., the lexical errors committed by the learners. The researchers also used participant observation technique for getting an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of L1 influence.

The data was collected in two phases. In the first phase the data was collected in the written form in the shape of written translated samples of both L2s. In the second the second phase a participant observation was conducted to observe the phenomenon and validate the authenticity of the data collected from written samples.

DATA ANALYSIS

From the evaluation of written samples three types of lexical errors have been identified. These are error of wrong word choice, errors of literal translation, and errors of misspellings. These errors are further sub categorized into inter-lingual errors (error of literal translation), and intra-lingual errors (Error of word choice and error of misspelling). It has been analyzed that intralingual errors, i.e., error of wrong word choice and error of misspellings, occur due to the learners' limited knowledge and vocabulary of their L2. The error of wrong word choice occurs due to the learners' partial and limited vocabulary of their L2. This limitation leads the learners to the failure in perceiving the contextual usage of a word. The learners oversimplify the usage of a word from one context to another context. On the other hand, the complex of the phonetic structure of the target language has been analyzed as the source of misspelling errors. The learners' L1 has only one sound associated with each letter, whereas English has a complex phonetic system. In English a single letter can have two sounds associated with it. This complexity of the target language leads the leaners to the error of over-generalization. The errors of literal translation have their grounds on the learner's excessive use of Mother tongue. The learners' attempts to translate word for word in the target language by using their L1, which resulted in an error (see Table No. 2)

Whereas, the lexicon of English is independent of the learners' L1 (Urdu). The differences and dissimilarities between L1 and L2 hinder the second language learning process. This hindrance causes errors. While evaluating the translated samples in English, it has been analyzed that to avoid repetition the learners employ excessive synonymy. Owing to this they wrongly choose a word which maybe semantically correct but fails to explain the pragmatic and contextual meaning. They use synonym as an advance language, which leads to incorrect usage of a word. The phonetic complexity of the target (English) is found to be the source of error of misspellings. The learners try to get competence in the target language by considering it as a complex phenomenon (see Table No. 1)

The comparative analysis depicts that the learners committed lesser errors in Arabic translation than in English translation. This is because of the surface similarity between the lexicon of Arabic and Urdu.

Table No.1: Lexical Errors in Translated Samples of English

Type of Error	Sentences	Explanation
Wrong word choice	He **accepted (embraced)** Islam at a very early age. Hazrat Mohammed s.a.w **liked (Loved)** you very much.	Here the word accepted is, although semantically accepted yet contextually wrong. In the following sentence, the word like is also contextually wrong.
Misspellings	He **participated (participated)**in many **bettles (battles)**and proved the iron of his braveness.	They can be termed as both interlingual as the sound attached with "c" in the word participant is the same as the sound attached with the phoneme "s" in Urdu word ous (he/she). It can be intralingual as if the phoneme "s" comes at the start of the word.

Table No. 2 Lexical Errors in Translated Samples of Arabic

Type of Error	Sentences	Explanation
Literal Translation	اسلام (**أسلم**) في سن مبكرة.	In the first sentence, the error that the learners have committed is the error of literal translation. The learners committed the error while relying on their L1 pattern.
Misspellings	لقد كان (**رجلاً**) شجاعًا جدًا ولا يعرف الخوف رجلاً.	In the second sentence, the learners committed the error of misspelling.

Analysis of the observation data

The facilitation L1 in learning any other language is dependent on the extent they share commonalities at surface and deeper levels. As Cummins (1980) proposed in CUP hypothesis that though all languages are different from each other at surface level, they share similarities at deeper level. Furthermore, among the languages, there can also occur similarities at surface level. Corresponding to different aspects, they may have some common features.

At the surface and deeper levels the learners' first language was seen as a facilitative source in the learning of Arabic as a second language. On the surface level, because of the similarity between the lexicon of Urdu (learners' L1) and Arabic (learners' L2) it has also been analyzed that the learners were more comfortable in the learning of the lexicon of Arabic (L2). In the learning of English as L2, it was also observed that the learners' L1 (Urdu) playing a supportive role, yet only at deeper level. Relying on L1 (Urdu) the learners were trying to learn the lexicon of English. They were constantly translating the new words in their L1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data revealed that L1's primary function is to facilitate the learning process. Learners' competency and comprehension in L2 can be predicted based on their proficiency in L1. L1 guarantees a high level of comprehension when learning L2. It assists the learners at various levels, making learning easier. The level to which a learner understands a text in L2 is determined on their L1 literacy knowledge.

Cummins (1980) represented this facilitatory view of L1, in his theory of common underlying proficiency. According to CUP L1 and L2 proficiencies overlap below the surface level. L2 learners categorize their linguistic capabilities in two modes: the native language and second language. The skills, concepts, and knowledge developed in learners' L1 can be transferred to L2. The Learners can be dependent on their L1 in the learning of L2. They continuously seek to facilitate their language learning task by utilizing the linguistic knowledge of their L1. L1 acts as a mediator in the learning of other languages.

Learners use their L1 as a source language to improve their proficiency in the target language. They are more likely tending towards the usage of L1 in the learning of L2. Learners use their L1 features in L2 production while learning. This is also known as language transfer. Language transfer can occur at both surface and deeper level. Regarding surface level, transfer can occur at all linguistic features of language, i.e., grammar, syntax, phonology, and lexicon of a language. Transfer occurs due to the similarities between L1 and L2 in SLA. As the data collected from observation tool suggests that the learning process accelerates where the learners perceive any kind of similarity between their L1 (Urdu) and L2 (Arabic and English). This is called positive transfer. It can be both overt and covert. While observing, it has been analyzed and observed that due to the positive overt transfer the learners were at ease in the learning of lexicon of Arabic. That positive transfer assists the learners enabling them to comprehend their L2. Along with the positive transfer, negative transfer also occurs in SLA. It occurs because of the differences and dissimilarities among the languages. The more the language possess dissimilarities the more the negative transfer occurs. It is evident from the analysis of lexical errors of translated samples that the learners committed more errors in English than Arabic. This because of the reason that learners' L1 (Urdu) shares no similarity with English at lexical level. Owing to this the learners committed more errors. Yet negative transfer is only overt. It occurs only at surface level.

Alongside of the facilitating role, L1 possesses inhibiting role also. The inhibiting role of L1 incurred in form interference of L1. The inhibition of L1 occurs because of the proficiencies that are language specific. As SUP hypothesis purports that they are some linguistic proficiencies that are language specific and vary from language to language. They are not transferable. As it has come to light from the data analysis, the learners' L1's (Urdu) specific skills, and L2's (English) specific skills, i.e., the syntactic rules, are un-transferable. They determine the extent of inhibition of L1 in SLA. This un-transferability of skills inhibits the language learning process.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the data it can be concluded that L1 can have facilitative as well as an inhibitive role in SLA. The role of L1 in SLA varies from one language to another. Even it varies within a language from one aspect to another. The extent of facilitating role of L1 is dependent on the similarities between L1 and L2. Moreover, the level of proficiency in L1 predicts the learners' proficiency of comprehension in L2. A learner's ability to learn L2 improves as his knowledge of L1 enhances.

Like the facilitating role of L1, the inhibiting role of L1 also varies. The inhibition of L1 hinges on the dissimilarities between L1 and L2. The extent of dissimilarities shows the inhibition of L1 in the acquisition L2. At the surface level, there are some language-specific skills that differ from language to language. As in the SUP, Cummins (1980) proposed that there are some proficiencies that vary between the learners' target language (L2) and the learners' source language (L1). They can be termed as language specific proficiencies and they are un-transferable. In short, at the surface level, both positive and negative transfer occurs. Owing to this variation of the transfer between L1 and L2, L1 plays inhibitive and facilitative roles.

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