L1 and L2 acquisition

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Schedule

- Comparing L1 and L2 acquisition
- The role of the native language in L2 acquisition
- The critical period hypothesis [student presentation]
- Non-linguistic factors of L2 acquisition [student presentation]
- Krashon's monitor model of L2 acquisition

Differences

Prior linguistic knowledge

L2 learners know linguistic categories from their native language:

- ❑ Linguistic units: words, clauses, phrases
- ❑ Categories: nouns, verbs, pronouns
- ❑ Sentence types: declarative, interrogative

Knowing these categories can facilitate L2 acquisition (compared to L1 acquisition; but at the same time it can lead to errors.

- ❑ Lexical errors
- ❑ Pronunciation errors
- ❑ Grammatical errors
- ❑ Pragmatic errors

Errors of transfer and developmental errors

Developmental errors:

- ❑ Like children, L2 learners may overgeneralize (or undergerenalize) a new word
- ❑ Like children, L2 learners simplify morphological structure
- ❑ Like children, L2 learners produce overgeneralization errors such as *goed*
- ❑ Like children, L2 development often follows an U-shape

World knowledge

In L1 acquisition, vocabulary learning and the acquisition of new categories cooccur.

In L2 acquisition, vocabulary learning often involves the acquisition of a new phonetic form for an old concept.

Categorical/lexical differences:

argue   1. argumentieren
                  2. streiten

know   1. wissen
                  2. kennen

Unknown categories:

Schadenfreude

Tea time

Cognitive maturity

In L1 acquisition linguistic and cognitive development cooccur.

- ❑ Theory of mind
- ❑ Analogical reasoning
- ❑ Working memory

(1) Peter thought Sally didn't know they would come.

Adult speakers constantly assess the ‚mental states'of their communicative partners:

- ❑ Is this familiar information or is it new?
- ❑ How much background information is needed to say x.
- ❑ If A says *The door is open* although s/he knows that I know it is, what does A want to say?

Sperber and Wilson: Relevance Theory

Relevance

Meredith: Band-aid.
Experimenter: Where's your band-aid?
Meredith: Band-aid.
Experimenter: Do you have a band-aid?
Meredith: Band-aid.
Experimenter: Did you fall down and hurt yourself.

Meredith: Band-aid.
Mother: Who gave you the bandaid.
Meredith: Nurse.
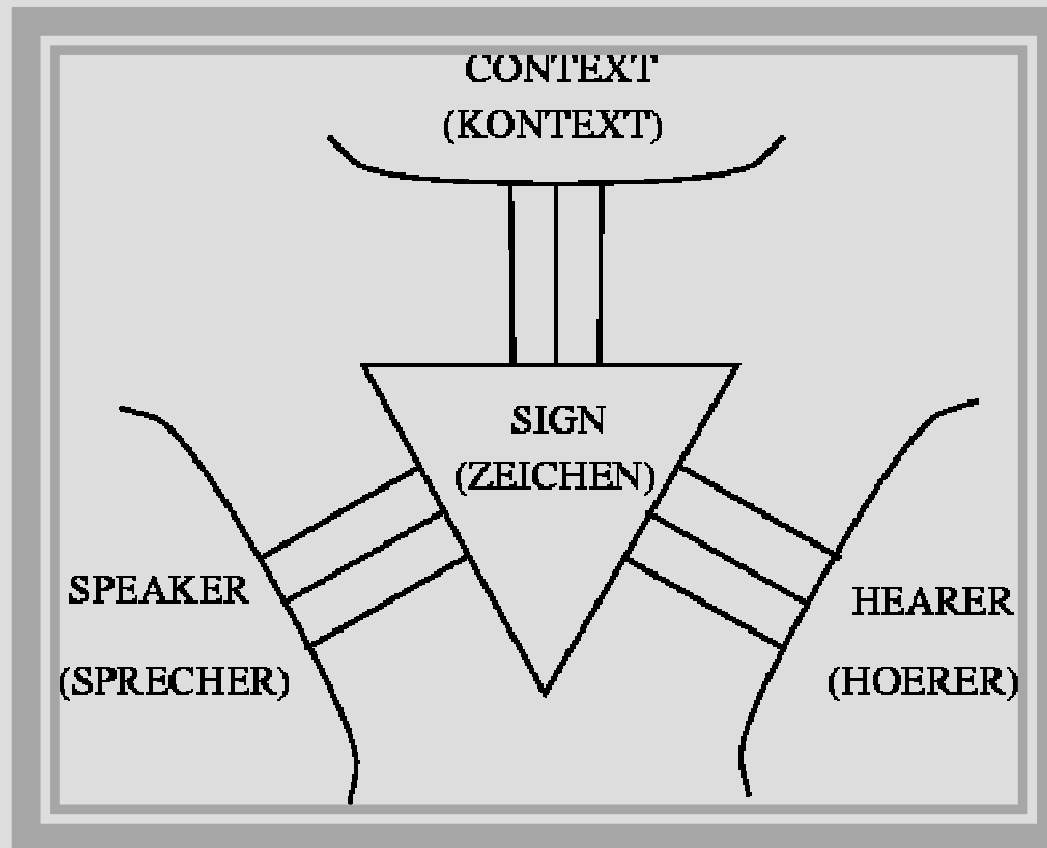Mother: Where did she put it?
Meredith: Arm.

Theory of mind

Dyadic interaction

Theory of mind

Triadic interaction

Working memory

Language is a linear medium that extends in time

$$W1 \ W2 \ W3 \ W4 \ W5 \ W6 \ \ldots$$

Limitations of working memory could potentially influence the L1 acquisition

Liz Newport (1990) In the long run L1 learners may have an advantage over L2 learners because children ‚start small'.

Metalinguistic awareness

CHILD: Want other one spoon, daddy.
FATHER: You mean, you want the other spoon.
CHILD: Yes, I want the other spoon.
FATHER: Can you say 'the other spoon'?
CHILD: other … one … spoon.
FATHER: Say 'other'.
CHILD: Other.
FATHER: 'Spoon'.
CHILD: Spoon.
FATHER: 'Other spoon'.
CHILD: Other … spoon. Now give me the other one spoon.

Negative evidence plays a fundamentally different role in L1 and L2 acquisition.

Acquisition vs. learning

The result of language acquisition … is subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a 'feel' for the correctness. Grammatical sentences 'sound' right, or 'feel' right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated.

[Krashen 1982: 10]

We will use the term 'learning' henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In nontechnical terms, learning is 'knowing about' a language, known to most people as 'grammar' or 'rules'. Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language or explicit meaning.

[Krashen 1982: 10]

Learning environment

The learning environment of L1 acquisition is more homogeneous than the learning environment of L2 acquisition.

second language acquisition vs. *foreign language learning*

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Self consciousness

Children begin to talk naturally, i.e. they do not reflect their linguistic performance and their attempts at speaking and communicating are not affected by nervousness or anxiety.

Adult speakers are often self-conscious when talking in a foreign language.

Motivation

Children seem to be inherently motivated to learn a language, but adult L2 learners differ tremendously as to the degree to which they are motivated to learn a second language.

Why do we learn a second language?

- ❑ for professional reasons
- ❑ to adapt to a new environment
- ❑ to get a good grade at school
- ❑ to be able to communicate on vacation
- ❑ for fun

Input

Children seem to be inherently motivated to learn a language, but adult L2 learners differ tremendously as to the degree to which they are motivated to learn a second language.

- Special prosodic features: exaggerated stress / intonation
- Many repetitions
- Many vocatives/attention getters
- Many questions (often in place of an evaluative statement)
- Simple sentences and simple grammatical constructions
- Basic vocabulary

Do L2 learners receive special input?

Does foreigner talk help to learn a second language?

End stage

Children reach full mastery of their native language, but most L2 language of adult do not reach full native-like competence.

Why do most L2 learners do not acquire native-like competence?

- Cognitive explanations
- Pragmatic explanations
- Social explanations

Parallels

Errors

Interference errors occur only in L2 acquisition, but so-called 'developmental errors' occur in both L1 and L2 acquisition:

Both L1 and L2 learners commit ...

- errors of omission
- errors of commission

Overextensions: *doed, hitted*

U-shaped development

(1)   There are also **two deserts**.

(2)   I bought **a couple of towel**.

(3)   So, when I like to park my car, there is no place to put it,
        and how **many ticket** I took.

(4)   There is **many kind of way** you make baklawa.

(5)   **The streets** run from east to west, **the avenues** from north
        to south.

(6)   Just **a few month** he will finish from **his studies**.

(7)   I go to university **four days** a week.

(8)   Egypt shares **its boundaries** with the Mediterranean.

(9)   There is **a lot of mosquito**.

(10)   **Many people** have **ideas** about Jeddah and **other cities**
        located in Saudi Arabia.

(11)   When he complete **nine month** …

(12)   He can spend **100 years** here in America.

(13)   There are **many tents**—and **goats** running around.

(14)   There are **two mountains**.

(15)   How **many hour**?
        [native speaker of Arabic]

Variability

Both child and L2 language varies to a much greater extent than the speech of native speakers.

Developmental sequences

Klima and Bellugi (1966): Development of negation in L1 acquisition:

1. No milk.
2. No more apple.
3. No singing song.
4. No the sun shining.

1. He not little, he big.
2. He no bite you.
3. I don't want it.
4. We cant talk

1. No, it isn't
2. That was not me.
3. Paul didn't laugh.
4. Why don't you leave.

Developmental sequences

John Schuman (1979): Development of negation in L2 acquisition:

1. No me.
2. No mine.
3. No open it.
4. No lookit.
5. No break?
6. Susie no wan get off.

1. I no want.
2. No tree.
3. You dont put down mine.
4. We no going outside.
5. I dont gonna be your friend.
6. Dont tell me.

1. She no talk English.
2. No, I dont remember.
3. He dont like him.
4. I can't see yet.
5. I am not listening.
6. Chris is not playing.