A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION BY PRESCHOOLERS

ISAAC C. MONDAY, *Ph.D*
Department of Early Childhood Education,
Heriot-Watt University
United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This study theoretical examine the characteristics of second language acquisition by preschoolers.Language is viewed as a means of expressing messages. The study defined language and noted that it had many implications, including body language, sign language, and animal communications. It also explained the concept of second language acquisition, features of second language acquisition by preschoolers, cultural diversity, and learning and behavioral problems, which were utilized to develop repetition as the concept of second language.The study concluded that language is a method of communication that uses sounds or gestures that are combined in meaningful ways according to predefined rules. People can express themselves through words, create poems and novels, and even ponder. Language is fundamentally human; however, it may not be restricted to humans. In turn, language proficiency should be viewed through the critical lens provided by trans-language methods for additional language instruction. Linguistics, on the other hand, is a scientific approach to language study. One of the recommendations made was that teachers should collaborate closely with the checklist to avoid impressionistic, subjective, and perhaps inaccurate self-evaluation.

Introduction

Speaking is as normal to many of us as waking up each day; it's an unconscious behavior that we rarely recognize we're doing. As a result, we rarely consider our language to be something that might wield power, spark debate, or even provoke violence (Clark & Henneberg, 2017). However, language can function in all of these ways. As these anecdotes demonstrate, language has an impact on many aspects of human civilization, including religious, political, social, and economic aspects. Many of the circumstances mentioned are upsetting.The prohibition of specific languages or the mandatory use of one over another has caused tension and anxiety, accusations of isolationism, and even racism and discrimination. Language, according to Kamusella (2016), is a rule-based system of signs. When people hear the phrase "language is rule-based," they frequently think of other situations in which rules are enforced by a specific authority. Consider classroom behavior as an example. Pupils are supposed to sit

still, be quiet, pay attention, and so on; if they do not follow these guidelines, there are usually penalties. Language norms, on the other hand, are not enforced by any authority figure; there are no language police. Language rules, on the other hand, are conventions.This means that they emerge from common practice among language users rather than from the imposition of an authority figure. As a result, members who adhere to their community's language conventions may be unaware that they are doing so. We refer to language as a system of rules or conventions since a single language norm, such as a single word, pause, or alphabet letter, does not provide much information beyond its immediate meaning. As a result, we generally blend these norms to convey broader meanings.

Concept of Language

The most significant aspect of language is that it is a means of communicating meaning. If it didn't do that, it would be as insignificant to most human activities as bird song or the sound of the waves. The latter types of sound are typically attractive to the human ear, but they do not aid us in our daily activities. Language accomplishes all of this and more (Agha 2006). However, just because language communicates meaning does not mean that defining meaning is simple. Ogden and Richards wrote a well-known book called"The Meaning of Meaning," which provided over twenty definitions of the word but failed to resolve the dilemma of how to deal with the topic of meaning. Language is used to communicate. It is a method of communicating our thoughts, ideas, sentiments, and emotions to another. Language is defined by Jack Richards and Richard Schmidt as "the system of human communication that consists of the structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation) into bigger units, such as morphemes, words, sentences, and utterances." It can also refer to non-human communication systems, such as the "language" of bees or the "language" of dolphins.

It is not a simple undertaking to define a language. Linguists have attempted to define language in a variety of ways. However, if we examine the definitions thoroughly, we will discover that each of them is incomplete in some way. These definitions will elicit a slew of queries. The following are some of the most widely accepted definitions of language as provided by linguistic experts: "Speech is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires through voluntarily produced symbols," says Edward Sapir. Language does not merely communicate "ideas, emotions, and wants," hence this definition is rather incomplete.The term "language" encompasses a wide range of meanings, including body language, sign language, and animal communications. "Language," according to Hall (1997), is "the institution by which humans communicate and engage with one another through the employment of frequently utilized oral-auditory arbitrary symbols." Hall's concept is limited because it only considers language as a human institution. We

know that animals communicate with each other. Animals have their own dialect. Language, according to Noam Chomsky, is "a set of (finite or infinite) phrases, each finite in length and composed of a finite set of parts." Chomsky focuses on language's structural properties. He demonstrated how language may be studied by dissecting it into its essential elements.Each of these linguists concentrates on some parts of language while ignoring others. However, everything they have said about language is correct, if not exhaustive.

Concept of Second Language

A second language, or L2, is one that is not the speaker's native language (first language, or L1) and is learned later (typically as a foreign language, but it can be another language used in the speaker's own country). A speaker's dominant language, or the language with which he or she is most comfortable, is not necessarily the speaker's first language (Noack & Gamio, 2015). The dominant language can also be the second. The Canadian census, for example, defines "first language" for its purposes as "the first language learned in childhood and still spoken," acknowledging that the earliest language may be lost for some, a process known as "language attrition."This can occur when young children transition to a new language setting. The concept of L2 ("non-native language," "second language," or "foreign language") presupposes the availability of an L1 or some form of bilingualism. Again, the usage of the L2 set of terms serves a dual purpose: it signals something about the language's acquisition as well as something about the nature of the command. To summarize, the word "second language" has two meanings. For starters, it relates to the sequence of language learning. A second language is any language learned (or to be learned) after the native language (Nicholas & Stephen, 2009).Second, the phrase "second language" refers to the level of command of a language compared to a primary or dominant language. In this context, "second language" refers to a lower level of actual or perceived skill. As a result, the term "second" can also signify "weaker" or "secondary."

Applied linguistics and second-language (L2) acquisition and teaching have been fields of significant research and development over the last several decades (Canagarajah, 2005). Academics in domains such as linguistics, education, psychology, and sociology provide language learning professionals and researchers with access to a wide range of studies. Years of extensive, rigorous, qualitative and quantitative, short- and long-term research into the most reliable method of teaching foreign languages have resulted in a credible repertoire of teaching methods. Nonetheless, teachers and researchers should resist referring to a single most effective strategy for advancing learners to a fully functional level in the target language.As a result, this article makes no attempt to provide an explicit, definitive answer to the pressing question of how additional languages should be taught. Rather, it identifies key themes in the field of applied

linguistics, with a specific emphasis on teaching and learning second languages in the classroom (Opitz & Degner, 2012).

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Characteristics of Second Language Acquisition, Cultural Diversity and Learning/Behavior Disabilities

When determining if a diverse learner has a disability, it can be difficult to distinguish between the intrinsic features associated with cultural and linguistic demands and a learning or behavioral handicap. We begin by offering an overview of second language acquisition, with a focus on the behaviors that are normally expected as a learner progresses through the phases of language acquisition. Following that, there is a discussion of cultural variety and varied behaviors that reflect distinct values and conventions. Then specific behaviors, which are frequently related to learning difficulties and behavioral disorders, are presented.

An overview of Second Language Acquisition

Second language acquisition is influenced by a variety of cognitive and environmental factors (Cummins, 2000; Hamayan & Damico, 1991). These are some examples:

- Age: Children who begin the process of learning English as a second language during their early childhood years generally achieve higher levels of proficiency (Krashen, Long, & Scarcella, 1979).

- Acculturation: Patterns of second language use will take learners longer to internalize over the more outward aspects of a new culture (e.g., clothing styles, music) (Ovando, Collier, & Combs, 2003).

- Attitude and Motivation: A postive attitude along with high levels of motivation are important aspects necessary to achieve proficiency in a second language (Hamayan & Damico, 1991).

- Learning Style: A learner's culturally influenced preferred styles of learning may differ from the teacher's preferred styles of teaching, resulting in inadequate learning progress (Grossman, 1995), including progress toward learning a second language.

- Native Language Proficiency: Proficiency in the preschoolers/pupils first language provides the foundation for successfully acquiring a second language (Coyne, Kame'enui, & Carnine, 2007; Cummins, 1989).

- Community/Family: Cultural and linguistic values and abilities are essential to successful second language acquisition (Baca & Cervantes, 2004).

Cultural Diversity

The values, norms, practices, and behaviors connected with cultural variety are intertwined with second language acquisition demands, behaviors, and traits. Learners experience difficulties as they attempt to acclimate to a new culture, resulting in circumstances in which misinterpretation of culturally desirable behaviors is interpreted by educators as learning or behavior disorders. Aside from language, several elements represent learners' various cultural experiences, such as learning styles, prior educational experiences, or family/community perspectives on education, respect, time, belonging, and individual achievement (Grossman, 1995). To distinguish behavioral variances from problems, educators must first understand the learners' cultures, as well as how those cultures teach and interpret distinct behaviors.It is neither practical nor helpful to describe all of the various behaviors that are frequently mistaken as diseases; instead, several common instances are presented in Baca and Cervantes (2004), Hoover and Collier (2004), and Winzer and Mazurek (2004). (1998). These examples are not exhaustive and are provided to underscore the vital need of understanding the culture in which you teach before making conclusions about a suspected handicap.

Cooperative versus Competitive Learning:According to Grossman (1995), cultures differ in the degree to which they stress cooperation, competition, and individualism. In some cultures, cooperatively sharing information is encouraged and supported. In schools, this may be misinterpreted as copying or cheating. Conversely, some cultures teach children to be self-reliant when completing work and solving problems. This should not be misinterpreted as an inability to work with others or as conflict-generating behavior. Within many cultures, however, cooperative learning is preferred over competitive learning, which, for many pupils, presents significant problems should the classroom instruction be independent and competitively based. Knowing a diverse learner's cultural views toward cooperative versus competitive learning is essential to avoid misinterpreting such behaviors as indifference, avoidance, or laziness (Winzer & Mazurek, 1998).

Active and passive learning: In addition to issues of cooperative and competitive learning, cultures vary in how they prefer to emphasize active and passive learning (Grossman, 1995). Children in the nursery who prefer passive learning are taught to sit quietly, be attentive, and respond verbally only when asked or called upon in the classroom. Educators who prefer a more active learning posture may misinterpret these behaviors as extreme shyness, laziness, or emotionally based insecurity. Although "active participatory learning has proven to be more effective than passive learning for most learners" (Grossman, 1995), not every child comes to school ready for active learning and must be taught this way of education. These preferences for learning also include cultural values pertaining to the extent to which learning should be teacher- or learner-directed. A learner's inability to engage in active learning in school should not be

automatically considered a problem and must be considered relative to the cultural values of that learner, ranging from preschoolers to students.

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Motivation: The extent to which a preschooler is motivated to learn also has underpinnings in cultural values and norms. For example, how the home supports learning is one of the key elements of motivation (Winzer & Mazurek, 1998). If a culture teaches us that certain fields of study or careers are more male- or female-specific, then motivation to succeed in different subjects may be culturally based. The cultural backgrounds of preschoolers provide a foundation for shaping how he or she views various aspects of education, and the importance of these must be known prior to considering lack of motivation as a characteristic of a disability rather than a cultural preference.

Aggression: Behaviors typically associated with aggression (e.g., defending oneself, strong verbal expression of views) may be encouraged and taught in different cultures. Tolerance of aggressive behaviors may vary across cultures, and educators must be familiar with cultural expectations concerning aggression prior to labeling it as a behavior disorder. Furthermore, learners who are new to school in the United States may be unfamiliar with acceptable behaviors, which may be more restrictive to the learner than in previous settings or cultural preferences (Hoover & Collier, 2004). It is important to note that aggressive behavior that is hurtful or harmful to others is not to be tolerated; rather, culturally based aggression often becomes an issue for educators, not when it is hurtful but when it becomes more assertive than is typically preferred by the teacher. However, if the student or pupil is behaving in a culturally taught manner, this more assertive behavior should not be misinterpreted as a disorder.

Locus of control: Learners' locus of control refers to the extent to which learners perceive whether they are controlled by internal or external forces (Hallahan et al., 2005). Learners' perceptions of the locus of control vary significantly across cultures. In some cultures, learners believe that certain events (e.g., success, control over one's own future, responsibility for certain things) are beyond their control. This external locus of control drives how and to what extent various life tasks are undertaken. In other cultures, a more internal locus of control (i.e., being in charge of one's own efforts and future) prevails, which in turn drives task completion and views toward the achievement of goals (Hoover & Collier, 2004). Although many educators strive to assist learners to achieve an internal locus of control, for many diverse learners, the external locus of control is a cultural value and/or a temporary expected result as learners adjust to new cultural environments (i.e., acculturation) and should not be viewed as a disorder.

Acculturation: In addition to affecting the process of second language acquisition, acculturation has specific implications when considering a diverse learner with a

suspected behavioral disorder. Diverse learners who are acclimating to a new educational environment may find this experience highly stressful and difficult to manage (Hoover & Collier, 2004). The stress and confusion often associated with acculturation may be evident in several behaviors considered disruptive in school, including withdrawal, aggressive acting out, distractibility, or confusion with locus of control. Educators must consider potential behavior problems in relation to the acculturation levels diverse learners are experiencing. As learners become more acculturated to the school and learning environment, the side-effect behaviors of acculturation will diminish, clearly indicating the lack of a behavior disorder.

Disabilities

As suggested, for some educators, the cultural and linguistic behaviors and characteristics previously discussed are often misinterpreted as one and the same as learning or behavior disorders, due to a lack of understanding of diverse cultural values and norms. To assist in determining the difference between a disorder and a difference, the characteristics of learning and behavioral disabilities are discussed, followed by a comparison of all three behaviors (i.e., second language, cultural, and disability) to best differentiate difference from disability.

Learning Disabilities (LD): Historically, a number of inherent factors have contributed to classifying learning disabilities, including the concept that LD involves intrinsic, biologically based learning difficulties (i.e., as opposed to learning failures associated with culture, language, and socioeconomic variables), as well as specific cognitive deficits or sets of deficits (i.e., as opposed to generalized learning difficulties due to differences across cultures and languages). There are several definitions of learning disabilities, each with advantages and disadvantages. An accepted operational definition of learning disabilities best serves our interests related to the discussions in this book and is as follows: As applicable to other categories of preschoolers with learning disabilities, they exhibit learning and cognitive disorders that are intrinsic to the learner (Bradley, Danielson, & Hallahan, 2002) and are reflected in academic achievement deficits. Characteristics often associated with learning disabilities include one or more of the following, along with an academic deficit (Hallahan et al., 2005):

Attention deficits: Problems maintaining attention to and remaining on tasks.

Impulsivity: Tendency to respond quickly, leading to frequent errors.

Hyperactivity: Persistent pattern of and inappropriate degrees of excessive movement (Cohen, Spenciner, & Twitchell, 2003)

Deficits in information processing (e.g., memory, perception, and thinking). Problems with long- or short-term memory, perceiving and processing information, using problem-solving abilities, and regulating and adjusting one's performance as needed While not all characteristics are found in all pupils with learning disabilities, these are presented so that problem-solving teams can understand potential similarities in behaviors often associated with learning disabilities and those reflective of the educational needs of learners resulting from cultural and linguistic diversity.

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Behavior Disorders: As discussed in the previous section, many learners' behaviors that are consistent with diverse cultural norms, teachings, and expectations are misunderstood or misinterpreted by educators, resulting in a misdiagnosis of a behavior problem or disorder. Similar to learning disabilities, various definitions of behavior disorders exist, and each has its critics. Also, similar to the LD definition, professional organizations have generated operational definitions of behavior disorders to best serve educators and their preschoolers, pupils, and students. An operational definition of this type best serves our discussions. The Mental Health Special Education Coalition, formed in 1987, generated the following: It is quite true that those with behavior disorders exhibit "behavioral and emotional responses in school programs so different from appropriate age, cultural, or ethnic norms that the responses adversely affect educational performance, including academic, social, vocational, or personal skills" (Fiedler, 2003). This operational definition further emphasizes that if the exhibited problems are temporary or expected responses to stressful events in the environment, they are manageable with routine interventions and are not considered behavior disorders.

Conclusion

The study concluded that language is a method of communication that uses sounds or gestures that are combined in meaningful ways according to predefined rules. People can express themselves through words, create poems and novels, and even ponder. Language is fundamentally human; however, it may not be restricted to humans. In turn, language proficiency should be viewed through the critical lens provided by trans-language methods for additional language instruction. Linguistics, on the other hand, is a scientific approach to language study.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should collaborate closely with the checklist to avoid impressionistic, subjective, and perhaps inaccurate self-evaluation.

2. Readers should be encouraged to experiment with the frequency that best suits their objectives.

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