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The acquisition of Focus in L2 Spanish [Recurso electrónico]/ Tania Leal, Emilie Destruel, Bradley Hoot

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición electrónica. Su acceso electrónico es a través del enlace de 'Acceso al documento'.

References: p. 473-477

This paper examines the strategies used by speakers of Spanish as a second language (L2) for marking Information Focus, a phenomenon found at the syntax–discourse interface. Sorace and colleagues have proposed the Interface Hypothesis, according to which the syntax–discourse interface poses unique challenges for bilinguals (Sorace, 2011). With respect to Spanish, there exists a gap between the theoretical and empirical literatures on Focus realization; the former suggests that Focus must appear in sentence-final position, yet recent experimental work challenges this claim, showing that Focus commonly remains in situ. Using a speeded production task, we compared the response patterns of L2 Spanish speakers to that of natives in order to bring additional evidence to bear on the debate. Results revealed an asymmetry: L2 learners converged with native speakers on Subject Focus but not on Object Focus, where proficiency mediated overall divergences, indicating a change toward more nativelike Focus-marking strategies over time. We discuss our findings in light of the Interface Hypothesis and existing theories of Focus marking in Spanish.

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1. Information focus 2. L2 learners 3. L2A 4. Spanish 5. Syntax–discourse interface

2

The acquisition of object movement in Dutch [Recurso electrónico] : L1 transfer and near-native grammars at the syntax–discourse interface / Liz Smeets

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición electrónica. Su acceso electrónico es a través del enlace de 'Acceso al documento'.

References: p. 502-504

This article investigates near-native grammars at the syntax–discourse interface by examining the second language (L2) acquisition of two different domains of object movement in Dutch, which exhibit syntax–discourse or syntax–semantics level properties. English and German near-native speakers of Dutch, where German but not English allows the same mapping strategies as Dutch in the phenomena under investigation, are tested on two felicity judgment tasks and a truth value judgment task. The results from the English participants show sensitivity to discourse information on the acceptability of non-canonical word orders, but only when the relevant discourse cues are sufficiently salient in the input. The acquisition of semantic effects on object movement was native-like for a large subset of the participants. The German group performed on target in all experiments. The results are partially in line with previous studies reporting L2 convergence at the syntax–discourse interface, but suggest that input effects should also be taken into account. Furthermore, the differences between the first language (L1) English and the L1 German group suggests that non-target performance at the syntax–discourse interface is not caused by general bilingual difficulties in integrating discourse information into syntax. The article elaborates on factors that contribute to (in)complete acquisition at the syntax–discourse interface.

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1. Interface hypothesis 2. L1 transfer 3. Near-native grammars 4. Object movement 5. Syntax–discourse interface

3

L2 distribution of Chinese connectives [Recurso electrónico]: towards a comprehensive understanding of a discourse grammar / Yuan Lu

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición electrónica. Su acceso electrónico es a través del enlace de 'Acceso al documento'.

References: p. 575-579

This study investigated second language distribution of Chinese connectives by tallying responses on a mini-discourse completion test taken by English-speaking learners with different language learning backgrounds and at different proficiency levels. The results showed that an underuse pattern underlay practically all Chinese

connectives as a result of learners' attention distributed among the three layers of language (i.e. semantic-lexical, syntactic-structural, and discourse-textual layers). The underuse of Chinese connectives, especially for obligatorily paired ones, was moderated by learners' heritage language background and increased proficiency. Even though Chinese connectives' syntactic position/obligatoriness effect was not evinced, learners demonstrated sensitivity to the cognitive complexity of semantic relationships marked by connectives, producing more connectives to signal more cognitively complex relationships in general. Meanwhile, the cognitive complexity of connectives seemed to have a threshold effect that beyond a certain level, the excessive cognitive load imposed on learners diminished their use of connectives. This study sheds light on the understanding of Chinese connectives as a multifaceted discourse grammar in second language acquisition.

Second language research. -- 2019 (October), v. 35, n. 4, p. 557-586

1. Attention 2. Chinese connectives 3. Cognitive complexity 4. Language learning background 5. Proficiency level 6. Syntactic position

4

Reassembly of plural and human features in the L2 acquisition of Chinese by adult Korean speakers [Recurso electrónico] / Jiajia Xu

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición electrónica. Su acceso electrónico es a través del enlace de 'Acceso al documento'.

References: p. 554-555

This article reports on a study investigating the second language (L2) acquisition of the plural and human features in Mandarin Chinese by adult Korean speakers. Both plural and human features are represented in Korean and Chinese, but assembled in different ways. Forty-eight L2 learners at beginner, intermediate, and advanced Chinese proficiency levels and twenty-three native speakers of Chinese were tested using a grammaticality judgment task. The results show that L2 learners can successfully reassemble the two features, though L2 specific contexts and restrictions on feature realization are difficult. The advanced group has achieved native-like performance. The findings provide empirical evidence for the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (Lardiere, 2009).

Second language research. -- 2019 (October), v. 35, n. 4, p. 529-555

1. Classifiers 2. Feature reassembly 3. L2 Chinese 4. The human feature 5. The plural feature

5

Input frequency and construction interference interactions in L2 development [Recurso electrónico] / Xiaopeng Zhang, Xiaoli Dong

Este artículo se encuentra disponible en su edición electrónica. Su acceso electrónico es a través del enlace de 'Acceso al documento'.

References: p. 525-527

The interaction between input frequency and constructional interference receives little attention in second language (L2) research. Two studies were conducted to test the effect of this interaction. Study 1 examined effects of both Zipfian frequency (ZF) and balanced frequency (BF) on L2 learning of English subject-extracted relative clauses (SRs). Participants learned SRs and finished a picture description task at pretest, posttest and delayed posttest. Results suggest that ZF was not superior to BF for learners to use SRs. Study 2 tested effects of ZF and BF on L2 learning of English object-extracted relative clauses (ORs). The learning and testing procedures were the same as those in Study 1, but different from Study 1 participants either with or without previous exposure to SRs learned ORs. Results show that ZF was not superior to BF for learners without previous exposure to SRs to use ORs, but more beneficial than BF for those with previous exposure to SRs to use ORs to describe pictures. These findings demonstrate that ZF was more effective than BF in inhibiting SR interference.

Second language research. -- 2019 (October), v. 35, n. 4, p. 505-527

1. Balanced frequency 2. Interference 3. Object-extracted relative clauses 4. Second language development 5. Subject-extracted relative clauses 6. Zipfian frequency
