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Linguistic Transfer: Studying Third Language Acquisition in University Context

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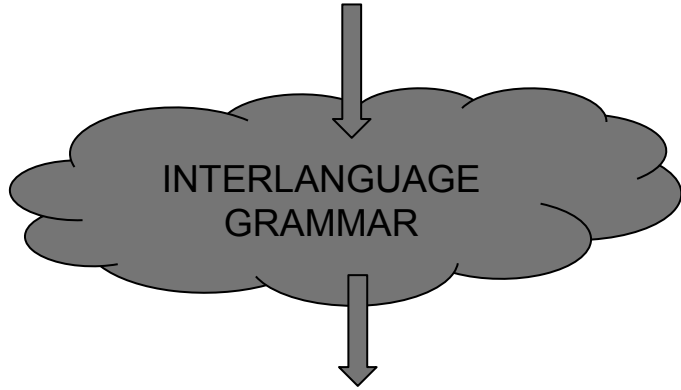
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Linguistic Transfer: Studying Third Language Acquisition

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General Concepts

First Language (L1) Mental Grammar



Second Language (L2) Production

L2 Initial State: Starting point of non-native grammatical knowledge -- still debated

Interlanguage Grammar is still unformed and found at various stages of development during the process of L2 acquisition.

“Transfers” or “interferences” occur when conflicting rules in Interlanguage Grammar influence an incorrect production with the L2.

First Observations

Example from speaker of L1 English, acquiring L2 Spanish:

“Estoy embarazada” → *“I’m pregnant”*; Intended meaning: *“I’m embarrassed”*

Example from speaker of L1 English, L2 Spanish, acquiring L3 French:

“J’espère le métro” → *“I hope for the metro”*?; Intended meaning: *“I wait for the metro”*

What is known already?

- The role of an L2 in the acquisition of an L3 is extremely important
 - Even when languages show very similar “typologies,” this structural relationship may not indicate higher frequency of linguistic transfers
 - In one study, no L1 transfer could be absolutely determined from the data gathered
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Identifying Further Research

In the acquisition of a third language, do transfers originate more frequently with the first language or the second language?

Studies show both cases with more L1 transfers than L2 transfers, as well as cases with more L2 transfers than L1 transfers.

Gather qualitative data to better narrow areas needed to investigate.

Proposed Methodology, Outcomes

1. Identify general characteristics of language that students commonly struggle with in acquiring a third language
 2. Create speech tasks of varying formality to engage with these errors that individuals commit
 3. Identify errors as transfers or not
 4. Compile and analyze data
 5. Data can be used in pedagogical environment
 6. Data can be used to further theoretical discourse
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