

The Limitation of the Impact of Bilingualism on the Acquisition of an Additional Language

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Keywords: Sla, Bilingual, Monolingual, Impact, Communication, Grammar

Abstract: The aim of Agustín-Llach's study is to look into the impact of bilingualism on lexical knowledge, lexical cross-linguistic influence (CLI), and lexical fluency. In the research, there are 86 Spanish monolinguals and 87 Spanish-Basque bilinguals EFL learners were tested on lexical knowledge. This study shows that bilingual learners are slightly better at lexical knowledge than monolingual learners. He thought typological distance between Basque and English and the homogenization effect of schooling are thought to abandon the potential benefits of bilingualism. This research has a good experimental background and group, and has certain guiding significance for further study. But at the same time there are some limitations and unreasonable aspects. First of all, the study only involves lexical knowledge, and lacks other extensive studies such as pronunciation, grammar and language communicative competence. Secondly, the test method is too simple, which makes the topic of words output by students relatively simple and does not have enough academic value. Finally, there are only two cohorts of 17 to 18-year-old adolescents in the study. It needs to fully understand the characteristics and advantages of learners at different ages in the research. At the same time the factor of intercultural sensitivity should be involved in the test. Language learning is also inextricably linked to individual background, language study history, language study experience, motivation, emotion, etc. So sociolinguistics is also an integral part of additional language acquisition.

1. Introduction

Bilingualism is a field that has always generated a strong response (Agustín-Llach,2017). In the past, bilingualism was believed to delay linguistic development, academic learning, and to have a generally negative effect on cognition (cf. Fessi, 2015; Palinkasevic, 2014). However, more and more studies have recently begun to demonstrate that bilinguals have more advantages on the additional language acquisition than monolinguals because bilingual learners have a better working memory and executive control. In Agustín-Llach's study, the students in the two experimental groups were asked to complete a lexical knowledge writing test. In the test, the students were asked to write as many English words as possible within two minutes. The topics of these words are closely related to our daily life: *hobbies, town, countryside, and food and drink*. Lexical availability tasks are aimed at identifying the lexical availability of learners (Agustín-Llach,2017). Through a series of statistics and analysis, the research shows that the two groups of bilingual learners and monolingual learners show very similar results in lexical knowledge tests. Therefore, this result is unable to support the

conclusion that bilingual learners have more advantages in additional language acquisition. In this sense, because both learner cohorts share a knowledge of Spanish (also to native-like competence level) which is typologically closer to English TL, any possible benefit from the bilingualism of the Basque–Spanish learners might be limited (cf. Gallardo del Puerto, 2007; Szabo, 2016). At the same time, the two groups of adolescents come from the same grade in the same school, so the additional language knowledge learned by the two groups of students comes from the same teaching method and mode. This might have contributed to homogenizing TLA and discarded any potential advantage for bilinguals (Agustín-Llach, 2017). The influence of current Spanish school education and similar EFL learning experience is enough to get rid of any possible advantages from bilingual teaching.

2. Discussion

As the theoretical research method of the paper, the test is limited to test students' lexical knowledge ability, and does not involve other aspects such as pronunciation, grammar and communicative ability. This is one of the limitations of observation and comparison. Pronunciation refers to the sound of a language. English as the additional language for two groups of informants, pronunciation and semantics are closely linked. Psychologists believe that oral English is the most important part in English learning, while writing is just the written symbol of oral English. For the two groups of informants, the spoken English pronunciation is an important criterion to evaluate the students' additional language acquisition level, which is not reflected in the test. So it is necessary to design a set of pronunciation parts in the test. The spoken English test might include phonemes, minimal pairs, syllable, words, phrases, sentences and passages. The difference between Spanish monolingual learners and Spanish-Basque bilingual learners is assessed by different recordings of the informants. The evaluation criteria include clear pronunciation, fluency, stress, pronunciation and intonation, etc. Pronunciation test parts can not only test language learners' proficiency in additional language acquisition, but also have guiding significance for future research.

In addition, language grammar is also a discipline that shows and explains the rules of grammatical structure, and an understanding and explanation of the objectively existing grammatical system. From this, it can be analyzed that the mastery of grammar should also be included in the test when evaluate the proficiency of additional language acquisition. The task of grammar is to describe and explain the rules and forms of sentences that make up words and phrases. Understanding grammar can solve the problems of language sense or vocabulary shortage in reading, which better reflects the informants' language proficiency. For the accuracy of the test, grammar tests should be added when comparing the language proficiency of the two groups of informants. In grammar test parts, tenses, voices and clauses should be checked. In short-term tests, it is difficult to evaluate informants' language comprehension and writing ability. However, the addition of grammar examination can help to evaluate students' comprehensive language ability.

The ultimate goal of language learning is communication. In second language acquisition, foreign language learners need to strengthen their language skills and communicative competence while mastering certain language skills. Communicative competence can reflect whether foreign language learners can use the language with ease in various situations in daily life. In 1972 Hymes put forward the definition of communicative competence. In his opinion, the communicative competence is the application of the potential knowledge and ability. A speaker who fulfills all four aspects is competent. The first one is formal possibility. It means something possible with in a formal system is grammatical, cultural, or communicative. The second one is feasibility in which the psycho-linguistic factors are the predominant concern. When adding a cultural level, features of the body and of the material environment must be considered as well. The third one is the appropriateness in which he employed the tacit knowledge and the sense of relating to the contextual features. The last one is the

actual performance in which occurrence can be left out. If not, something may be possible, feasible and appropriate, but may never occur. In this theory, language acquisition not only includes the linguistic knowledge and skills but also includes communicative competence, which is more important than the former (Hymes D, 1971).

In second language acquisition, learners should focus on setting up or simulating different situations to use the language so as to master the language. The purpose of additional language learners to learn a foreign language is to enable them to communicate fluently and comfortably in a foreign language. Therefore, they must have a solid language foundation. A solid language foundation includes two aspects: language competence and communicative competence. They are basis of comprehensive use of language, without which communication is impossible. Therefore, in addition to the lexical knowledge and the above-mentioned pronunciation and grammar evaluation two groups of informants, an important language competence evaluation item: language communicative competence should also be involved in the test. In the evaluation of communicative competence, test can be designed as two groups of students to talk about the given topic in the language. The design can include talking about pictures with their partners, carrying out their opinions on specified topics, etc. The topics are best in line with the informants' existing language ability, and the informants' language expression can be used to evaluate their language ability and proficiency.

Language learners must have certain language skills, i.e. the comprehensive knowledge of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar, so that they can understand the language structure accurately and use the language appropriately. On the other hand, if learners can successfully use linguistic and non-linguistic ways to achieve a specific communicative purpose, then they can be thought to have a certain comprehensive knowledge of language. Therefore, in the process of a second language or an additional language, the cultivation of foreign language learners' communicative competence cannot be ignored in the whole process of language acquisition. If adolescents do not have the certain communicative competence, it is difficult to master a foreign language and to communicate with others. Therefore, in the test, we should pay attention to informants' communicative competence, fully understand the basic knowledge of the additional language, and sum up experience according to the test results in the third language acquisition, so as to optimize and improve the way of language teaching.

The slight advantage of bilingual learners has not been fully explored in the research conclusion of the paper. For a long time, language learning has remained at a level of pronunciation, spelling and writing in school teaching. The lack of attention to its cultural factors has affected the improvement of its intercultural communication ability and cannot ensure effective communication between different cultures. The lack of effective cross-cultural communication will also affect the evaluation of additional language acquisition. Intercultural sensitivity is a very important link in second language acquisition and additional language acquisition. Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC), as one of the research fields of intercultural communication, has been given much importance from scholars all around the world. Intercultural sensitivity is one of the three dimensions in Dr Chen's ICC model.(Investigating the Reliability and Validity of Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) against Chinese Cultural Background,2013) Therefore, it is also possible to combine the relevant theories of intercultural communication in the experimental research test to study the actual situation of intercultural sensitivity and culture-loaded vocabulary acquisition of bilingual and monolingual learners with English as a third language and the relationship between the two, so as to further prove the advantages of bilingual learners in the additional language acquisition. The intercultural sensitivity of the two cohorts of students was quantitatively analyzed by adding an Intercultural Sensitivity Scale to the research method. Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) is the main assessment tool for measuring intercultural

sensitivity as an affective component of intercultural communication competence. Through such a survey, we can examine the intercultural sensitivity of students who have learned different languages in a monolingual and bilingual way, so as to observe the advantages of bilingual learners more clearly.

3. Summary

Second language acquisition and additional language acquisition of monolingual learners and bilingual learners are meaningful in our life, and the theory and practice of language acquisition are closely linked with the development of other disciplines. In the field of second language acquisition, there are different requirements for examining different abilities of language learners, which demands more close examinations in future research. In this study, I have gained a lot and have also produced a lot of thinking in the process of dealing with the research. In the process of nowadays language theoretical analysis, more attention might be paid to the conclusion, and the unreasonable and limited parts of the theory are seldom reflected. Through the analysis of the whole research, I had a better understanding of the methods and study of the extended research under the second language acquisition theory, and also thought about many problems that are often neglected in the analysis process. The design of the test, the selection of samples, the influence of age distribution and intercultural factors are several factors that haven't been all included in the design of some current study's test, and future work will benefit from exploring these variables. I also found that all the researches and tests might have some certain limitations, which needs close experiments to improve and supply.

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