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CONCLUSION

However, theorists in the field of L2 acquisition have come up with the following alternatives.

a. UG is available and works exactly as it does in L1 acquisition.

b. UG is totally unavailable in L2 acquisition (Clahsen and Muysken 1986;Schacter 1988).

c. Access to UG is mediated via the L1.

d. UG is available but does not work in identical fashion to L1 acquisition.

Lidia White believes that these four positions can be reduced to two main ones; the hypothesis that UG in some way or other plays a role in L2 acquisition which she calls the UG hypothesis, and the hypotheses that UG is to all intents and purposes inaccessible, which she calls the UG-is- dead hypotheses.

The proponents of pure UG hypothesis believe that L2 acquisition is assumed to be the result of a pure interaction between UG and the L2 data. The fact that the L2 learner already has knowledge of a language is considered irrelevant; there are assumed to be no effects from mother tongue. This would be a UG based equivalent of the Creative Construction (CC) model of Dulay and Burt (1974) or of Krashens theory of Acquisition (not learning).

UG is dead hypothesis on the other hand, assumes that UG is no longer available to L2 learners, at least to adults. Proponents of this view suggest that the learning mechanisms underlying adult L2 acquisition are radically different from those underlying L1 acquisition, and that they are not unique to language, explaining the variation in degree of success in L2 acquisition as being similar to the variation in degree of success in other kinds of skill acquisition (for example, L2 acquisition as problem solving (Bley-Veroman 1989).

fully the Universal Syntactic Principle of Subjacency. In contrast, other research *(Flynn & O´Neil1988)* suggest that adults are able to demonstrate knowledge of linguistic structure that is unavailable from their knowledge of L1 or from target language input.

Schachter (1988) points out that L2 learners often fail to use structures derived by movement, such as clefts, topicalization, or raising. She suggests that this is another indication of lack of success which cast doubt on a central role for UG in L2 acquisition.

However, it is quite clear that the competence of many L2 learners does include movement rules, since they produce structures like wh-questions, relative clauses, and passives. The difference, then, is that certain structures derived by movement are used less by L2 learners than by native speakers. These are performance differences and it is not at all clear that they stem from competence differences.

The information reported here offer conflicting evidence on the status of UG in L2 acquisition. Schachter's study suggests that only when a principle is activated in the L1 can it be readily accessed in the L2. In contrast, other studies by Otsu and Naoi (1986) suggest that principles which are not exemplified in the L1 can be activated in the L2. Learners appear to be able to go beyond the L2 input and do not, on the whole, accept or produce impossibleerrors. One recent study by Bley-Vroman (1988) suggests that L2 learners do considerably better than chance and hence that UG must be accessible in some form, even when the principles are not instantiated in the L1. However, indirect effects from the L1 can not be totally ruled out in most of these cases. Differences in methodology are probably partially responsible for these differences in the results. Clearly, the issue of whether UG operates in L2 acquisition has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. More rigorous studies are required in this direction.

this requires mediation of Universal Principles.

David Birdsong (1989) conducted a research entitled Ultimate Attainment In Second Language Acquisition. The researcher based his hypothesis on the following claims:

Although the prevailing view on the attainment of the second language acquisition is that native competence can not be achieved by postpubertal learners, *(adult learners)* convergent experimental evidences show that there are exceptions to this generalization.

Early arrival in the host country - even if past puberty, correlates with attainment of native norms on a variety of measures.
Although Coppieters has found competence differences in the syntax of the target language (French), contrary to the Coppieterss findings 1987, experimental performance is not predicted by status of given linguistic variable as within or outside the theoretical domain of Universal Grammar.

Birdsong starts with an attempt to replicate the competence differences found by Coppieters (1987). In regard to reliability and validity of results, Birdsong departs in certain respects from Coppieterss experimental design, procedure, and methodology. The two studies are alike, however, in that crucial data are Native Speaker (NS) and Non-Native Speaker (NNS) acceptability judgment.

The results of acceptability judgment task suggest answers quite different from those offered by Coppieters, i.e., NNS and NS are found not to diverge dramatically in their judgments. In fact, several NNS in this study fall squarely within the range of performance attested by NS. Moreover, divergences between NNS and NS in regard with UG are not clearly identified in Coppieterss study. In brief, then, Birdsong found out that NNS can perform like NS; while Coppieters` study showed that not a single NNS performed within the NS range. Empirical studies by Johnson & Newport (1991) and Schachter (1989) have shown that adult L2 learners appear unable to access

(1987), Clahsen, Lust, Gass, Echman, Schachter who claimed that UG may not be involved in the adult L2 acquisition process in any way. No doubt, it would be useful to refer to some of these experiments under contradictory ideas about availability of UG in adult L2 acquisition.

CONTRADICTORY IDEAS ABOUT THE ROLE OF UG

(Coppieters 1986) looks in some detail at the internalized knowledge of adults who have been assessed as having near native speaker competence in their second language (acquired as adults) and who can be assumed to have completed the L2 acquisition process. *(The objective of research was to find out if native and near-native speakers develop essentially identical underlying grammars of the same language).* Looking at their competence is comparable to looking at the competence of adult native speakers, which is how linguists arrive at the putative properties of UG. Coppieters found interesting differences between these subjects and monolingual controls, especially as regards semantic factors relating to choice of certain tenses, pronouns and adjective positions. That is, properties of language that would not necessarily stem from UG. However, for the few principles of UG which were included in his investigation, the subjects and controls performed very similarly. That is, these L2 learners appeared to have internalized complex and subtle knowledge not obviously available in the input.

Of course, many L2 learners never attain a point where they are judged as being close to native speakers. Nevertheless, even if L2 learners grammar is not native-like, it can often be highly sophisticated and complex, revealing linguistic properties which could not have been induced directly from the input data. If the L2 learner goes beyond input, even though not as far as the native speaker, then there is potentially an L2 equivalent of the projection problem. That is, knowledge is attained on the basis of impoverish input, and

variation between languages is limited by the properties of the mind. UG studies what human minds, and hence human languages, have in common; this element of the theory is stable; any use must recognize the common aspects of language rather than individual or situational differences.

UG is taken to be a characterization of the childs pre-linguistic initial state. Experience serves to fix the parameters of UG, providing a core grammar, Universal Grammar is not learnt but already present in the mind; language input fixes the mental grammar into one of the few permissible form. The overall innatist position has been associated with generative grammar almost from the start, its explicit formulation in terms of UG has been current since the 1970s.

As proposed by Chomsky, Universal Grammar is present in the childs mind as a system of principles and parameters. In response to evidence from the environment the child creates a core grammar that assigns values to all the parameters, yielding one of the allowable human languages-French, Arabic, or whatever. To start with, the childs mind is open to any human language; it ends by acquiring a particular language, The principles of UG are principles of initial state. The Projection Principle, Binding, Government, and others, are built-in structure of the language faculty in the human mind.

Universal Grammar consists of principles which constrain the form and functioning of grammars. It gives the child advance knowledge of many abstract and complex properties of language, so that these do not have to be learned solely on the basis of linguistic input or by means of general learning strategies. In language acquisition Then, there is an interaction between the innate UG and the linguistic input from the language being acquired .

Experiments done by researchers such as Coppieters (1986), Birdsong, Otsu and Naoi (1986), Ritchie (1978) proved that UG mediates L2 acquisition. At the same time, there are researchers like Bley-Veroman

What is UG Theory?

Universal Grammar (UG) is a theory of the essential properties of grammars as well as a theory of a specific domain of human cognition. Its goal is to explain the rapid and uniform development of language despite limited and often degenerate experience and at the same time to explain the richness and complexity of the system of grammar for human language *(Chomsky 1981)*.

UG attempts to provide a system of principles, conditions, and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages, not merely by accident, but by necessity *(Chomsky 1975)*. These rules and principles specified by UG should rule out an infinite set of grammars that do not conform to these fundamental properties. UG specifies those aspects of rules and principles that are uniform -ally attained in language but underdetermined by evidence.

UG is a theory of knowledge, not of behavior; its concern is with the internal structure of the human mind. The nature of this knowledge is inseparable from the problem of how it is acquired, a proposal for language knowledge necessitates an explanation of how it came into being. UG theory holds that the speaker knows a set of principles that apply to all languages, and parameters that vary within clearly defined limits from one language to another. Acquiring language means learning how these principles apply to a particular value and which value is appropriate for each parameter. Each principle of language which is proposed is a substantive claim about the mind of the speaker and the nature of acquisition. UG is not making vague or unsubstantial suggestions about properties of the mind but precise statements based on specific evidence. The general concepts of the theory are inextricably connected with the specific details; the importance of UG is its attempts to integrate grammar, mind, and acquisition at every moment.

The property of mind described by UG is a species characteristic, common to all humans. The mental reality of language is shared by all human beings;

paradigms suggest a common set of principles that to some level might guide both L1 and L2 acquisition. In addition, they isolate a finite number of problems in L2 acquisition strongly suggesting a limited but an important role of experience in L2 acquisition. Theoretically however, neither a CA or CC theory can accommodate both aspects.

Requirements for a theory of L2 Acquisition

Flynn (1987) argued that the following set of criteria must be met in order to be able to develop a principled, explanatory theory of L2 acquisition.

The theory must be viable both psychologically and linguistically, This means that discussion of adult L2 learning must take place within a context that reflects what we currently believe to be true about human cognition in general. Theories that rely on behaviorist underpinnings, as do traditional CA modeled, will not provide the needed framework for such explanations. Linguistically, this means that such theories of L2 acquisition that rely upon structuralism analysis of language will again prove inadequate and not provide that insight needed to develop explanatory theories of L2 acquisition. Secondly, the theory must account for the constructive component of L2 learning, as suggested by a CC theory. That is to say, it must specify the mechanisms necessary to explain the role of a set of principles of acquisition common to both L1 and L2 learning. Thirdly, the theory must account for the role of experience in the L2 learning process. It must predict precisely when and where properties of the L1 experience emerge in L2 learning; and importantly, this contrastive component must be integrated with the constructive component above in a meaningful way. Many linguists have been convinced that the necessary requirements can only be found within the UG theory.

that emerge among different language groups learning a common L2 *(Flynn 1987)*.

What do the repeated failures and successes of these two theories tell us? Empirically, results from work within the CA framework suggest, in contrast to a CC theory, that L2 experience plays some role in the L2 acquisition process. For example, it has been demonstrated that the nature of the errors made by Spanish and Japanese speakers learning English as a second language differs at various points in the acquisition process *(Flynn, 1987)*. At the most general level, this suggests that knowledge of the L2 is an important factor in L2 learning. More specifically, results such as these suggest that one does not start with a clean slate; if this were the case, then we would expect no differences among various groups of L2 learners acquiring the same L2.

Results from empirical works within a CC framework suggest that all L2 learners regardless of their L1 share certain fundamental similarities in patterns of acquisition. Moreover many of these patterns are developmental and correspond to those documented for young children learning their L1s *(Bailey, Madden, and Krashen 1974)*. Consistent with findings from CA, this suggest that language learning in both arenas might be guided by a set of domain specific principles. If this were not the case, we would expect no similarities in patterns of acquisition between L1 and L2 learning. As it was discussed in CA, if patterns observed followed from principles tied inextricably or solely to development of cognition in other domains, we would not expect to see deep similarities between L1 and L2 acquisition. The development observed in L2 acquisition is not due to deficits that hold on other cognitive processes, for example, on memory. Adults are not subject to these constraints. Yet similar developmental patterns emerge for both L1 and L2 acquisition.

Taken together, the results from studies conducted within CA and CC

framework, L2 learning, as did L1 learning consisted of the learning of a fixed set of habits over time. In L2 acquisition, The learner, it is argued, attempts to transfer the linguistic habits from the L1 to the L2. Where the L1 and L2 match, positive transfer takes place; where they do not match, there is a negative transfer of habits. At points of interference, the learner must acquire the new habits for the L2 through modification of the L1 habits, for example, by addition or deletion. *(Clearly, this theory was oriented towards behaviorist foundation)*. Stripping this theory away from behaviorism, we can see that it captured an important aspect of the adult L2 acquisition process, that is, the role of the L1 knowledge in L2 acquisition, yet, it failed to provide a complete theory of L2 acquisition for the following reason; it could not reliably predict when interference would occur in L2 acquisition. That is, surface structure contrasts between the L1 and the L2 do not reliably predict L2 acquisition problems.

Perhaps then the learning of the L2 is like the learning of the L1 in some fundamental way. Such was the point of view of another major theory put forward for L2 acquisition: Creative Construction *(Dulay and Burt, 1974)*. Within this theory, the L1 and L2 acquisition process are not distinct but are argued to follow from the same set of innate principles. In contrast to Contrastive Analysis, a Creative Construction theory claims that prior L2 experience does not determine subsequent L2 acquisition. Rather, the structure of the language to be learned and the creative construction powers of the L2 learner which all learners share as part of the human competence, determine L2 acquisition patterns. However, this theory, like CA theory, fails to provide a complete theory of L2 acquisition for the following reasons;

1) The nature of the deep principles argued to determine L2 acquisition are never specified.

2) A CC theory is unable to account for documented systematic differences

role of UG in L2 acquisition. In order to follow an exact line in presenting the ideas, the organization of the article

has been based on first things first. Theories of L2 acquisition come first. Three major theories are discussed; Contrastive Analysis (CA), Creative Construction (CC) and the UG theory. Next, the requirements for an effective theory of L2 acquisition are discussed. Since it is only the UG theory which carries the full requirements, a detailed explanation of UG has been included. Contradictory ideas concerning the role of UG in L2 comes next. This section reviews some experimental research as a source of inspiration for further studies.

Theories of L2 Acquisition

We all know that adults are capable of learning L2s. However, how this learning occurs is not well understood, in spite of the fact that adults have been acquiring L2s, it is not yet clear what principles guide the adults construction of the L2 grammar. Does the learning of an L2 follow from a set of principles distinct from those that determine the learning of L1? Or is it possible that a comparable set of principles, at least in some domains, guides the L2 acquisition process as well?

Let´s consider the adult learner. First, in contrast to the study of L1 acquisition, the study of L2 acquisition involves individuals who have reached steady states in terms of their L1 development. This means that unlike the L1 learner, the adult already knows a particular language. And second, unlike the L1 learner, the adult L2 learner has reached maturity in terms of overall cognitive development.

These differences suggest that the learning of the L2 may in fact be distinct from the learning of the L1. One early approach to L2 acquisition, Contrastive Analysis (Fries,1945; Lado, 1957) claimed this. Within this

SOME IDEAS ON THE PRESENCE
OR ABSENCE OF UG IN L2 ACQUISITION

Ahmad Sedighi

Introduction

Although the majority of linguists believing in Chomskyan revolution have no doubt about the presence of UG in L1 acquisition, its availability in L2 acquisition in general, and in adult L2 acquisition in particular, is controversial. On the one hand, there are proponents of the access to UG in L2 acquisition, Lidia White for example, says: therange of option available to the second language learner is constrained by UG in ways similar to what happens in first language acquisition (1985);on the other hand, Bley-Vroman, an opponent to the theory, argues against the notion that adult second language learners have access to Universal Grammar. Nevertheless, in spite of these controversial views, the notion that innate linguistic principles of UG are available to adult language learners has been an appealing one both from a theoretical perspective and from a data-driven one, since learners do not appear to violate universals in production.

The present study aims at surveying the contradictory ideas around the