



Lecture 7

Second Language Acquisition Theories - II

Error Analysis

A: I go New York.

B: You're going to New York?

A: What?

B: You will go to New York?

A: Yes.

B: When?

A: 1972

B: Oh, you *went* to New York in 1972.

A: Yes, I go 1972.

(Brown 2006: p.228)

Errors and mistakes

- Errors – systematic lapses because learners lack knowledge of particular aspect of L2
- Mistake – random lapse or slips due to processing load in a particular context

- Mistakes - one-time-only events
- An error - systematic.
- Likely to occur repeatedly and is not recognized by the learner as an error.
- Viewed in this way, errors are only errors from a teacher's or researcher's perspective, not from the learner's.

Error analysis

- Pit Corder
- L2 learners' errors not “bad habits”; as sources of insight into the learning processes
- Errors – evidence that learners are hypothesizing and constructing an L2 system

- Errors are a sign that the learner is (perhaps unconsciously) exploring the new system rather than just experiencing “interference” from old habits.
- Learner language different from both L1 and L2.

- Larry Selinker introduced the term 'Interlanguage' (IL)
- intermediate states (or interim grammars) of a learner's language as it moves toward the target L2.

Characteristics of Interlanguage

- Reduced system, both in form and function.
- Less complex grammatical structures (e.g. omission of past tense marker '-ed' in English).

- Systematic and dynamic
- Governed by rules which constitute the learner's internal grammar.
- These rules are discoverable by analyzing learners' language
- Changes frequently

- two main error types within an error analysis framework: interlingual and intralingual.
- Interlingual - errors which can be attributed to L1
- Intralingual - errors that are due to the language being learned

- A sample analysis
- Korean speaker learning English as an L2
- The weather **is been**¹ very hot in **the Washington D.C.**² **There climate**³ last week **warm**⁴.

(Troike & Barto, 2016: 42)

(1) Use of *is* instead of *has*

(intralingual/developmental error). This is evidence that the speaker/writer is learning the English auxiliary verb system, but hasn't yet mastered the distinction between forms of *be* and *have*.

(2) Use of *the* with a place name

(intralingual/developmental error). This is evidence that the speaker/writer is learning to use articles in front of nouns but hasn't yet learned that they don't occur before most place names.

(3) *There climate* is a direct translation of the Korean phrase which would be used in this context (interlingual/interference error).

(4) In Korean the word for 'warm' is a verb itself, but in English it is an adjective and needs 'be' verb (interlingual/interference error).