



## The Role of First Language on The Second Language Acquisition

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### Abstract

The concept of acquisition is recognised for obtain the language, though the term of learning is used for the same notion often. Even they are different in their meaning and sense, but the term of acquisition is more academic and appropriate than the term of learning. This term is mostly used for the first language which its meaning is different of learning if we think about it in term of the first language compare to the second language. When the children acquired their first language, they achieved the completed grammar or the rules (competence) of their mother tongue. Once some people desire to learn the second or another language, the completed systems of the grammar that they obtained have a great influence of the acquiring the second language. This paper is about that effect and it will be more clarified in detail in the context. This topic is really significant in the modern world because a lot of people wish to learn another languages, that each one has a factor of acquiring second language such as business, study, technology, science, travel, and work opportunity.

**Keywords:** First language, Second language, Role, Acquisition, Learning, Universal Grammar

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### Introduction

In the today's modern world, all people have their first language in other words everyone can speaks at least by one language, which it called mother's tongue or native language. The

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mother's tongues have own rules, it means every language has special rules, which are different from other language rules. The purpose of language is communication. Globalization made the world very small like a village, people can communicate each other straightforwardly and they also can get information or news speedily. Therefore, learning another language or becoming multilingual is strongly necessity. Most people want to learn a second language in term of needed or interested. Thus, they are studying a second language in their countries or in the abroad, in that process the second language learners face some issues such as making mistake in their speaking because of the influence of their first languages on target languages. Some people believe that the second language affect by negative role of the first language. Nevertheless, some others include myself think that certainly the first language has a significant positive role on learning a second language. In this assignment we will write about the relation between the first and second languages, the first language role on learning a second language. Then we will demonstrate some examples, which that role occurs unconsciously and automatically then we can recognise the role obviously.

First of all, we need to investigate for relationship between the first and the second languages and then ask our self whether first and second languages have relation or no. If they have we should be able to understand and recognise that link between them. In the time of 70's and 80's numerous studies has shown that first and second language learners displaying which phonemes played a role in the utterer's native categories. To clarify the operative of the first in the second language a few models were suggested. The first model is talking about the connection among speaking insight and developed phonological, which this to analyse the working of speaker's first language phonological system in the awareness of non-native language sounds was developed. The next model emphasizes on the problem of second language part acquisition is the talking learning model, which it attempts to realize in what way speech insight influence phonological acquisition in distinctive between the two types of sounds such as "new" which is not recognized by none of the first language sounds and "similar" which recognized by the second language sounds. The last model is phonological acquisition interaction and it describes the grammar features, which features are used regularly in the language's phonology. Therefore, features more important in the first language system and it will significantly affect learner's insight of the new sounds of the second language (Sinha, Banerjee, Shina & Shastri, 2009, p. 118). The first language role

appears in all fields of second language acquisition such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantic, lexicon and pragmatic. But this role is more active in a few of those fields like phonology and syntax.

Those people who support the idea that the first language has negative impact on the second language acquiring, Lott stated that the learners of second language make mistakes, which it belongs to their native languages. Similarly, Brown entirely believes that the vital basis of errors for all learners is inter-lingual transmission. In addition, he claims that in the starting phases of learning a second language, the learners are open for the negative transfer from their native languages and also he says in these steps of learning a second language merely prior linguistic system is the native language, which that transfer is pretty common but by the time learners can reduce that role. In the different areas of language learning negative transfer happens. For instance, in phonology field Kurdish learners of learning English language face difficulty. Generally they get mispronunciation and they pronounce /s/ instead of /θ/ and they pronounce /z/ instead of /ð/ because Kurdish language does not have these two dental fricative sounds, hence, it is certainly hard and tricky for Kurdish learners to pronounce these two consonant sounds properly, Brown and Lott's study (as cited in Muhammed & Ameen, 2014, p. 354). Those people also contend that the negative sight of L1 impact on L2 is initially divided for two theories, contrastive analysis and contrastive Rhetoric. Contrastive analysis says that in the foreign language learning process, mother tongue has more negative than positive. Contrastive analysis include psychological and linguistic features, the psychological feature is constructed on behaviourist learning model besides linguistic feature built on structuralist. Behaviourist principle stating that in learning the interference means difficulty and the difference among the languages is the evidence of structuralist linguistics. Contrastive analysis hypothesis highlighted two vital ideas; first idea says that definitely transmission is frequently negative from mother language to the second language in the learning process. Second idea says that in linguistic difference learning problems might be expected between two languages. The grade of trouble is depending on the framework which L2 designs are alike to L1 designs or different (Hui, 2010, p. 98). According to this view, the acquisition of second language does not get useful role from first language and it is not helpful for second language learners because it has negatives more than positives. Those people claim that the first negative role generally appears in the phonetic field, in other words the first language accent has a negative influence on the pronouncing the second language, for example, accent of Chinese and Indian English speakers are different from Australian

accent and American Accent. Once non-native of English language are speaking English directly you know and realise that they are not English native speaker but may you figure out they are Chinese, Indian, Malaysian, Thailand or Pakistani an. And besides the second negative role occurs in the grammatical field, it means the second language learners are making sentence structure as the first language structure, which the grammatical rules are cause for these mistakes, for instance, Arabic language sentences start by verb, which is different from English that start by subject hence when Arabian people speak or write by English language, they face that problem. And also it is right for other languages. Relevant with the sounds likewise all languages are different for using or having sounds, such as the first language learners do not have some sounds, which the second language has, this makes difficulty for learning a second language and surely the learners cannot pronounce them correctly.

Despite these arguments in support the idea that first language has a negative role on a second language, there are significant arguments against this because the first language positively helps second language learning process.

Research has shown that many factors have impact on a second language learning process and the first language role is one of those factors. Numerous linguists have investigated that first and second languages have connection. Although, learning the second language get important effect from the first language and studying the mechanism of this influence is significant and complicated, for the reason that second language acquisition is creating input on several areas such as teaching and mind. More, the central feature of the impacting on second language is the first language (Zhanming, 2014. P. 57). By this idea the first language has a great impact on second language learning process and no one can avoid of this influence.

Without doubt, all languages have similarity in some aspects such as all kids in the world learn the first language by listening then start speaking. It would be right for second or third languages. In other words in the learning a second language, the learners can discover the strategies for learning languages, which they learned and found of first language also this process will be easy for third and fourth languages. The theory of first and second languages claims that the first and second languages acquisition are on the same way, then the second language acquisition strategies are not appear because of first language policies and the process of habit formation but like L1 learners L2 learners can creative process to take the dynamic role (Villanueva, 1990, p. 74). It means the policies of learning all languages are the

same and learners gain those tactics while they learned the first language. Likewise, everyone has cognitive and competence for learning languages, by learning the first language the learning competence is improving.

The next view related to first language positive role on learning a second language, which it presented by a research. This positive role appears and a research in the Iranian university students has been presented. Students and teachers should be cooperating to learning the second language and also they should be very competently and resourcefully for that process. According the present models of second language acquisition and it would be realized that the learner's first language has a facilitating and essential role on each language learning and teaching feature. It means that gaining many supports for multilingual approach by first language students are integrating such as learning implement and similarly like a helper for a well-organized communication. Support for an English just rule has been decreasing in the same period. Moreover, explore of the using the first language by Iranian university students' and their point of view and insights. Besides, Prodromou did a survey and amazingly the consequences were inconsistent toward all previous parallel studies and then Iranian university students stated unwillingness to use their first language, Prodromou's study (as cited in Nazary, 2008, p. 138). According this research in the first stages it is better second language learners' use their first language and then this usage step by step will be decrease.

A further argument in positive role of the first language, we will emphasis on that opinion, which says of course the first language has a valuable role on a second language learning. Research presented the learner's native language will be able to pass a benefit influence in the target language learning process. When foreign language learners practice the mother tongue in the classrooms, these are leaning tasks which would be prepared in the second language learning like dialogue activates, discuss of focusing reading and preparation for writing, which done in the first language (Nation, 2003, p. 2). This statement means that the process of the learning all languages are based on the same system or way and the first language is the basis of learning the second or third languages. In other words first language has a helpful role on learning a second language and it will be easier for learning third or fourth languages etc.

Again in term of first language positive role on acquisition a second language, we can realise positive transfer. A second language learning process facilitate by the first language, once some similarities appear between first and second languages this procedure happens. Besides, Ringbom emphasized that the learner's are looking for similarity anywhere they able to

discover them; they do not look for variances, which this occurs consciously or unconsciously. Henceforward, he states that the similarity made up as a rudimentary and the difference made up as subordinate. Then, Odlin indicated that while the learners are studying different native languages the results of facilitative merely would be seen furthermore, it does not mean that the errors are nonappearance but the root of behaviourist ideas of optimistic transmission would be predicted for decrease the amount of errors and also for the degree of learning, Odlin and Ringbom's study (as cited in Ellis, 2012, p. 355). In term of sounds there are some sounds, which are common among some languages, for example, my first language, which is Kurdish language has a lot of sounds as the same as English language sounds, this helps Kurdish learners for learning English language straightforwardly compare to other languages. Also in grammar field or sentence structures Kurdish and English languages are close, which Kurdish language structure is based on SOV, and English language structure is based on SVO that differ from Kurdish language, both language structures start with subject and also both languages use subject, verb, and objective in the sentence structures. Therefore, Kurdish learners of second language learning can learn English language easier than Arabic language because Kurdish and English languages have some similarity in contrast of Arabic language, likewise, Kurdish and English languages are in the same family group, which is Hindu European group. However, both languages have some difference; they have some similarity like they are similar of having or using speech categories.

According to Carrol that says learning the second language situations are the same with the native tongue, often from a language to other languages occasionally and interference the method will intrude into the talking. Learning is more successful, which it seems the circumstance in first and second languages are learned and saved as probable separately. The learners to learn necessitates of a second language effectively frequently prevent the first language constructions for the second language procedure when two languages are definitely different of structures, Carrol's study ( as cited in Bhela, 1999, p. 23). About learning a second language vocabulary, study says that there are different pictures, which presents by non-native language and the learners are prepared with the first language, and also the stage of learning word passed. In other words they have learned experience of the first language how it works with world learning new words. It is clear that native language has an important impact on foreign language how to be learned and sometime second language learners can guess the word meaning then they can save the words and meaning together (Pakzadian, 2012, p. 1148). So, according to this idea the base of learning vocabularies of second

language is the first language, which it is very helpful for the learners and develop their lexicon. Hence, the first language system is essential and it has a great role in the process of learning or acquiring the second language.

### **In conclusion**

In the current world, every person has or speaks a language and it uses to communicate among people, which it known as first language or native language. This language has special rules, which is different of other languages. In todays world most people have to learn a second language in term of necessary for study and work or just like hobby. Hereafter, they are learning another language and then they realise the first language role of the second language learning process. Sometime this role makes the second language learning process easy and often it makes problem for learners like phonetic problem, speaking mistakes and grammatical error. The role occurs automatically and unconsciously, which it is the same for all languages in the world. About the benefits of first language role on the second language acquisition, many people say that the first language role has disadvantages for the second language learning. Nevertheless, I believe that the first language role has many advantages. If the second language learners use or practice first language strategies of learning a second language, those strategies will help them and they can learn a second or third languages easily.

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