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## (De) Constructing The Correlation Between First Language Acquisition And Second Language Learning

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### Contents:

- [Introduction](#)
- [Critical Literature Review](#)
- [Complex Mistakes](#)
- [Novel Mistakes](#)
- [Second Language Acquisition of Child vs Adult](#)
- [Shift of first Language to Second Language Writing](#)
- [Empirical Discussion](#)
- [Conclusion and Implications](#)
- [References](#)

**Abstract:** Language acquisition is a significant and captivating hallmark of human development. This review article briefly describes a few hindrances that the learner of English as being second language learner may deal with. It searches out the essential factors which play a significant part in the second language (L2) learning process. There is a common notion that the learning of L2 is affected by the learner's first language, so we may assert that the mother tongue or first language can interfere with the learning process of L2. The current review showcases the dissimilarities and similarities between L1 and second language acquisition, which is finally concluded with a few implications for language researchers and teachers of English as a Second/ Foreign/ Additional Language.

**Key Words:** Language Acquisition, Second Language Learning (L2), First Language Acquisition (L1), (De)constructing, Interference, Language Learning

### Introduction

The first language is synonymous with primary, mother language or native language or L1. It is defined as the language which a child acquires before reaching the age of three (Manzoor et al., 2019). At the same time, a second language is synonymous with the official language or L2 or societal language. It is acquired for education and job hunting, such as English, the official language

of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and many other states.

Many researchers investigated the learning of L2 or a second language. The common notion is that it consists of a transfer of the first language. Most of the research recommends that there remains some interference of L1 in L2 learning. For instance,

Manzoor et al. (2019) found in the study that writing in a second language affects the first language in it. Additionally, the mother language

and official language differ in consonant clusters pronunciation. Learners faced hindrances in uttering L2 pronunciation due to different rules of phonology between L2 and L1. However, Yan (2019) found that bilingual communities member lose their mother language by being a learner of L2.

The contrastive analysis hypothesis has two assumptions. Firstly, the linguistic differences between the two languages serve as a measure of the difficulty level. Secondly, the level of simplicity between the two languages is measured through their similarities. It will be easier for the language learner. Another researcher suggests that the first language has a minimal but significant role of influence in its morphological and pragmatic essence. The effect of the mother tongue on L2 has shown less progress in

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learning a language which may be minimised through natural intake, and it can be eliminated by language use (Cao et al., 2014).

## Critical Literature Review

### The Second Language Acquisition

A student can only begin to communicate in a second language if they feel that all lexicons in the mother tongue have mono translations in the target language (Panhwar, 2020).

Second-language learners use components from their mother tongue while writing or speaking in the second language. Many errors occur in L2 when the syntax is different, showing that the mother tongue interferes with the official language. When pupils are learning a second language, interference refers to mistakes that are attributable to L1 (Panhwar, 2020).

A language learner encounters problems in the second language regarding grammar structures, phonological constructions, and lexicon creation due to the interference of habits from the first and second languages (Alzamil, 2019). Errors produced while the acquisition of a second language causes interference, which can be characterised as follows:

### Progressive Mistakes

Mistakes unrelated to the learner's mother tongue are known as progressive errors (Alzamil, 2019).

### Complex Mistakes

These mistakes incorporate interruptions and progressive errors (Paradis, 2019).

### Novel Mistakes

Those that do not fall under the categories of interference or Progressive mistakes. Old habits from the mother language produce interference, which ought to be unlearned before the new foreign language patterns can be taught (Paradis, 2019).

Learners attempt to shift their mother tongue's syntax, semantics, and cultural implications to the target language during second language acquisition. When L2 habits are learned, L1 patterns are passed on, and mistakes are made. Similarly, it believes that L1 habits interfere with learners' ability to learn L2 phonology, vocabulary, and grammar (Paradis, 2019).

Only a limited number of second-language learners achieve first-speaker competency. In contrast, most second language learners cannot do so. Furthermore, research analysts proved that, while learning an L2 differs from learning an L1, L1 and L2 learners make comparable errors. According to language scientists, When learning a new language,

two types of transfer can occur: positive and negative. In positive transfer, L1 aids in the learning of L2. However, the first language has a negative transfer which has a detrimental effect on the official language. It affects the mother tongue (Zhou et al., 2020).

Researchers compare learners who speak diverse indigenous languages to assess the influence of L1 on the learning of L2 when a negative transfer occurs. The acquisition of a first language might be employed to overcome learning and communication challenges. The transfer is a cognitive, verbal, communicative, behavioural and social activity in which L2 learners increase their interlanguage abilities by generating and utilising earlier language material. While many linguists examine the influence of L2 learning on L1 acquisition, few studies examine the inverse scenario (Iqbal, 2016).

An English speaker with a higher Spanish proficiency may have difficulty in both languages. He talks Spanish in an English-like style, yet his English words sound less English than those of a monolingual English speaker. Individuals who learn an L2 are unable to enunciate ideas in both languages as fluently as native speakers. As a consequence, students can choose between three options:

1. They will be able to maintain their mother tongue pronunciation. However, they will not be able to acquire native-like Second language pronunciation.
2. They abandon their mother tongue in order to achieve second-language pronunciation akin to that of a native speaker.
3. Lose of native speakers in the mother language and target language: "One may believe that when a learner's skill level rises, they are becoming more able to work independently in the Foreign language" (Osborne & Simonet, 2021).

However, recent research demonstrating simultaneous participation of phrases in the first and second languages during visible, audible, and spoken phonological awareness demonstrate that proficiency in L2 does not entail the capacity to turn off the effect of the L1 (de Jong et al., 2013).

### Second Language Acquisition of Child vs Adult

According to language researchers, a relationship has been identified between age and various elements of L2. Age has a crucial influence on the development of L2. Furthermore, learning two languages simultaneously is the most effective way to learn an L2 (Meisel, 2011).

Hopp (2013) identified two criteria of L2 acquisition regular language learning throughout infancy. The commencement of puberty is the second major turning point in a person's life. Language development requires the brain's plasticity and the result of incorporating capacities which are no longer present. Humans may learn languages as early as kindergarten; if they don't, their language skills will decline by puberty. The left hemisphere is substantially more engaged in communication and speech in development compared to the right part. The two hemispheres become very functionally separate because youngsters cannot transfer and keep their L1 vocabulary into puberty. They have an edge while learning a language since they are not distracted by their voice.

Because lateralisation has not yet been achieved, learning L2 before the age of roughly a second language has a higher probability. For several decades, L1 of adult Second language accomplishment was the only significant source. Moreover, individuals must begin learning a second language at a young age. Second, as a kid grows older, the brain lacks flexibility and reorganisational capacities that are necessary for language development. Children are more successful at learning a new language than adults because their brains are more malleable. They are more open to language because their brains are more pliable than adult learners (Hopp, 2013).

When a youngster tries to explain himself or herself, his or her parents are pleased and appreciate their child's point of view. They comprehend whatever he speaks and does not criticise a learner's verbal articulation or functional, systematic grammar. However, the classroom instructor is concerned with what the students talk about. They constantly rectify their language, so the class environment is unrealistic compared to mother-child conversations (Sun et al., 2016). Grammar may have a different crucial time than verbal utterance (around 13 years). On the contrary, young students could be capable of achieving native grammatical correctness in speaking and writing in addition to complete language competency (Sun et al., 2016).

Morpheme experiments, for instance, demonstrated that newborns and adults both learned a set of English morphemes in the same manner. Adult second language acquisition is equivalent to child first language acquisition, according to several researchers, such as Dulay, Burt, and the learners' mother tongue background has no impact on L2. Regarding adult language acquisition, the native-like ability is typically far off. Several theories have been proposed to explain this poor accomplishment, including crucial times for language learning, sociocultural variances,

motivational differences, and restricted input. According to the research, "adults have difficulty associatively understanding form-meaning relationships in language compositions" (Verhoeven & Perfetti, 2011).

### **Shift of first Language to Second Language Writing**

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When learners come into syntactical voids in their foreign language whilst writing in a foreign language, they fall back on the syntactical patterns of their first language. An error develops in L2 when the structures of the first and second languages are similar due to the learners' lack of comprehension of the native language (Wei et al., 2020).

The transfer may be considered a learning tool and a solution for overcoming communication challenges in a second language. Language learners can employ Mother tongue strategies in their Second language since L1 and L2 are similar. Suppose the student has a poor command of the chosen language. In that circumstance, they will use their native language to communicate, which can be beneficial or detrimental (Wei et al., 2020).

According to researcher Zang, if learners have a conversation in their L1 before completing an assignment in the L2, They do well in English writing since they are allowed to grasp the topic of the job completely. They came to identical findings. Assume students have a team preliminary first language talk. Students who have a preparatory L2 conversation in groups can perform considerably higher in the L2 written work. As a consequence, if students desire to increase their L2 performance, L1 may be useful in assisting them (Wei et al., 2020).

### **Resemblances in Written Strategies In L1 and L2**

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Several language experts have compared and contrasted the writing styles of second and first languages and discovered commonalities (Uysal, 2012). Less proficient writers may find it difficult to transfer strategies from their original language when writing in a second language. Thus they rely on their native language source for idea generation, follow-up, and lexical searches. L2 readers can read in their native language because it is available to them.

Uysal (2012) conducted an empirical study to compare and contrast first and second-language writing. This study's participants had a variety of health issues. There were at least 26 different first languages reported. The participants were American undergraduate pupils with advanced degrees in English language competence and a wide variety of

written abilities. According to Silva's research, authors assigned work in their first and second language concentrated more on producing fabric in the second language than in the first. They perceived content development in the second language to be more complex and less successful. Many L2 elements were not included in the participants' written sources.

Furthermore, Uysal (2012) observed that authors conducted less planning at higher levels. The extensive indicator shows that the author delves into the subject from various angles. On a more basic level, the author is negotiating her lexico-grammatical options against the backdrop of her own written text.

Second-language writers set fewer goals and had more difficulties organising their work (The same authors had no problem in their first tongue). Composing in an L2 as a grownup was typically less productive than writing in one's native language. Second, language writing is more technically varied and far less sophisticated in structure, which was a lower-level concern. However, there are many differences between first and second-language reading. A learner's reading abilities and techniques are transferred to their second language reading if they have a good educational background in their native language (Riazi et al., 2018).

EFL writers with much experience utilise methods comparable to those employed by native English speakers. Four Japanese academics were interviewed in English as a Foreign Language on their research paper writing processes and tactics (EFL). Scholars with liberal arts majors from American institutions who have authored in both English and Japanese were recruited for this study. Every one of the respondents began to learn English as a Second Language when they were 12 years old. The study's outcomes revealed that participants employed the same approach and techniques in second-language and native-language writing (Saito, 2011).

The fact that all of the participants claimed they don't use first-language-to-second language translation in their academic article writing processes — in other words, they do not compose in Japanese first and then translate the information into English, is an intriguing result in this study. Furthermore, participants' observations on writing in a first or second language and writing, in general, were identical. According to Saito (2011), every writing action must have something fundamentally ordinary present, specifically, anything non-linguistic but mental strategies that aid authors in achieving the goal of producing effective and consistent writing (Saito, 2011).

According to Wang, when learners want to respond in L2, They speak in their own speech (2020). When the syntax of two languages deviate, the second language suffers from a high incidence of mistake, signalling that the first tongue interacts with the second language (Wang et al., 2020).

## **Empirical Discussion**

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A language expert named Bhela examined the writing of learners because they owned small school-aged youngsters who frequently requested educational aid. A total of four people took part in the study. They were given two sets of sequential images and told to make a tale out of them, starting with the initial step and finishing with the final. Learners should initially make written compositions independently, without the assistance of any organisation, before speaking with one another if they choose (Osman, 2016).

Before reproducing the narrative in their own tongue, they must write in a foreign language (English). They were then tasked with writing a tale in English and their mother tongues, replete with additional drawings. It gave a solid foundation for examining the errors committed and a representative copy of published material. In an interview session after the writing work, they explored why they use a certain pattern in their first and second languages. The data indicated that four students have issues with their second-language text and first-language material. When a student commits a mistake in L2, it displays less L2 expertise since the students utilise the L1 form in L2 and make blunders. The students relied on their frameworks for assistance in writing L2 texts, demonstrating that L1 and L2 are in direct conflict (Osman, 2016).

22 female and male students aged 17 to 26 were randomly selected from 3 courses at the Qeshm and Mashhad Language Institutes. They were all native Persian speakers who were initially assessed individually in a quiet room. There were five sentences in this research. Each phrase had at least 2 clusters, for a total of 14 groups. The sentences must be read aloud by the students. Only the words the analyst documented and reported were examined, and the learner's voice output was captured using MP4. "All phonetic transcripts in the sentences are in the same sequence as their phonemic transcripts: proof>, strength>, class>, stole> (Ali Fatemi et al., 2012).

According to the study, the difference in syllabic structures between Persian and English is the reason for Persian learners' pronunciation difficulties. When Persian language learners studying L2 (English) encounter syllables that do not exist in the L1 (Persian) linguistic construction, individuals depend on their L1

development to address linguistic obstacles. Because Persian and English syllable structures are so divergent, learners attempt to employ their internalised phonological understanding of the syllabic organisation, which leads to learning errors (Ali Fatemi et al., [2012](#)).

Another Language researcher studied L2 acquisition and phonological change in the first language. Twelve language students were arbitrary to one of two teams: control and experimental. The experimental group is made up of native English speakers with a top standard of Spanish proficiency. The control group, contrarily, comprises English

and Spanish monolinguals. First, the participants were asked to complete a language baseline inquiry on their language comprehension and utilisation. They record the occurrences and then present a sequence of individual words. The tasks were done in their L1 by the monolingual control groups. The experimental group, on the other hand, conducts it in both languages, which are Spanish and English. The findings of the current investigation revealed that respondents' attentiveness to their speech influences the impacts of L2 acquisition interruption in L1 (Eckman & Iverson, [2012](#)).

Jabbari and Samavarchi ([2011](#)) studied how Persian pupils syllabify L2 (English) linguistic consonant clusters. Youngsters in the initial L2 learning level participated in the research. They participated in a vocal production activity in which the writer repeated the sentences twice before instructing the children to repeat the words independently. The first and second replications of this assignment were videotaped to check if they were comparable. When students used epenthesis, they syllabified syllable-initial clusters once more instead of elimination, resulting in 1 syllable being syllabified into 2 (2-consonant collections), 3 or 4 syllables.

Because essential consonant clusters do not exist in L1, there was a poor transition from the first language to English acquisition learners who failed to pronounce them. A vowel is inserted before or after the cluster to make it easier to pronounce. As a result, major consonant clusters are forbidden in the Persian language. Persian speakers occasionally leave off one of the consonants in a three-consonant ending cluster. This approach can also make challenging consonant clusters easy (Jabbari & Samavarchi, [2011](#)).

## Conclusion and Implications

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In a nutshell, The primary goal of the recent review is to emphasise the role played while acquiring a second language and its impact on the first language or mother language. It is proved that there is an interference of L1 in developing an L2. Many factors cause interference in second language

acquisition: the dissimilarities and similarities in the construction or structures of both L1 and L2. And the consonant cluster's structure between the first and second language matters a lot in acquiring second language learning. The more similarities in first and second language structures, the fewer difficulties the second language learner would face. The level L2 differs from L1 would have that level of hindrances the second language learner would deal with in the acquisition process (Cao et al., [2014](#)).

A person's first language might have a detrimental or beneficial impact on their second language. The poor shift occurs when the forms of both languages diverge. In contrast, a positive transfer occurs when the conditions are comparable, and the mother tongue supports L2 learning. However, as language acquisition researcher Lord pointed out, learning a second language might impact learning L1. He says that when pupils learn a second language, they cannot communicate successfully in their own tongue. Bilinguals use their L1 skills by reading or listening to a second language (Dewaele & Alfawzan, [2018](#)).

The age of first language acquisition is a deciding factor in L1 and L2 learning performance. The impacts of L1 learning age on L1 and L2 results must be examined at almost every degree of linguistic structure, particularly syntax, phonetics, and lexicon. The findings revealed that L1 acquisition provides skill with the L1's language framework and the ability to learn in the L2 linguistically. Written CF research primarily relies on first- and second-language written composition theories. In contrast, oral CF research mainly relies on SLA theories and hypotheses (Marini et al., [2016](#)).

Much research has been performed to determine the interference of L1 in learning an L2. However, only a few studies have been conducted to assess the interference of foreign languages in the mother tongue. Studies are needed to determine how L2 influences L1 and L1 influence L2. These researchers are essential in language pedagogy (Derakhshan & Karimi, [2015](#)).

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