

Acquisition of the Attributive Adjectives and the Noun Adjuncts by the L3 Learners of French and German: Further Evidence for the Typological Proximity Model

Authors : Ali Akbar Jabbari

Abstract : This study investigates the role of the prior acquired languages, Persian and English, concerning the acquisition of the third language (L3) French and German at the initial stages. The data were collected from two groups of L3 learners: 28 learners of L3 French and 21 learners of L3 German, in order to test the placement of the attributive adjectives and the noun adjuncts through a grammaticality judgment task and an element rearrangement task. The aim of the study was to investigate whether any of the models proposed in the L3 acquisition could account for the case of the present study. The results of the analysis revealed that the learners of L3 German and French were both affected by the typological similarity of the previous languages. The outperformance of the German learners is an indication of the facilitative effect of L2 English (which is typologically more similar to the German than that of French). English had also a non-facilitative role in the acquisition of French and this is proved in the lower performance of the French learners. This study provided evidence for the TPM as the most accepted model of L3 acquisition.

Keywords : cross-linguistic influence, multilingualism, third language acquisition, transfer

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