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제2외국어습득이론(모국어 전이 및 보편문법)과 영어교수법

Second Language Acquisition:
L1 Transfer versus Universal Grammar and ESL Teaching
Methods

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초 록

보편 문법의 개념은 적어도 800년 전부터 시작하고 있다. 사실상, 그 자체의 개념으로 의미가 있다. 사람들이 의사소통을 하기 위해서, 언어는 어떤 논리적인 양식으로 배합되어야 한다. 그리고 그 보편 문법에 기초를 두고 있는 개념은 이해할 수 있는 패턴으로 단어를 형식화하기 위해 같은 종류의 인식 과정을 사용한다고 제안하고 있다. 그럼에도 불구하고, 최근에는 사람들이 처음에 언어를 어떻게 획득하는지와 제2언어 및 그 이후의 언어를 획득하는 데에 있어서 어떤 인지적인 과정이 포함되는지에 상당한 주의가 기울어졌다.

이 연구의 목적은 적절히 검토된 학술적인 문헌과 이 문제에 대한 그들의 견해를 가지고 있으면서, 캘리포니아에 살고 있는 멕시코-미국인의 제2언어를 배우는 사람들을 조사한 결과를 제공함으로써 보편 문법에 대한 모국어 전이 논쟁에 포함된 개념을 조사하는 것이다. 1장은 이렇게 고려중인 주제를 소개하고, 앞서 이야기 되어진 문제의 진술을 제공하며, 그리고 이 연구를 지지하는 목적과 중요성 및 이론적 해석을 제공한다. 2장은 현재까지 조사한 것을 요약한 것과, 모국어 전이와 보편 문법에 관해 최근 검토된 학술적인 문헌을 제공한다. 3장은 연구에서 사용된 조사 방법을 좀더 묘사한다. 그리고 4장에서는 제2언어를 배우는 사람들을 설문 조사한 결과를 통계 내어 자료를 분석한다. 끝으로, 현저한 결과물과 권고할 만한 것을 마지막 장에서 제공한다.

Second Language Acquisition: L1 Transfer versus Universal Grammar and ESL Teaching Methods

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Abstract

The notion of a universal grammar dates back at least 800 years, and in reality, the concept just makes good sense. In order for humans to communicate, their language must be grouped in some logical fashion, and the concepts underlying universal grammar suggest that all humans use the same sort of cognitive processes to formulate their words into such understandable patterns. In recent years, though, an increasing amount of attention has been paid to how people acquire language in the first place, and what mental processes are involved in the acquisition of second and subsequent languages.

The purpose of this study was examine the concepts involved in the L1 transfer versus universal grammar debate by providing a critical review of the relevant peer-reviewed and scholarly literature and the results of a survey of Mexican-American second language learners living in California concerning their views on these issues. Section one introduces the topic under consideration, presents a statement of the problem to be addressed, and provides the purpose, importance and rationale in support of the study. Section two provides a review of the recent peer-reviewed and scholarly literature concerning L1 transfer and Universal Grammar, including a recapitulation of the research to date. Section three describes more fully the research methodology used in the study, and an analysis of the statistical data resulting from the survey of second language learners is provided in Section four. Finally, a summary of the research, salient conclusions and recommendations are provided in the concluding section.

Section 1: Introduction

Today, more and more people are seeking timely and useful guidance concerning how best to learn foreign languages, and educators and linguists alike have become increasingly interested in how children and adults acquire language in response. In spite of this increased attention, there remains a paucity of recent studies concerning first language (L1) transfer¹⁾ and its implications for educators of second language learners. The studies of nonnative language (L2)²⁾ acquisition to date have largely concentrated on the role of the native language (L1)³⁾. A widely held belief that has emerged from this research concerns what takes place in the acquisition of a second language, and it suggests the process is dependent, at least in part, on the properties of the L1 grammar Flynn, Martohardjono and O'Neil (1998). This commonly held belief has received a great deal of empirical support over the past several decades as well (Flynn et al. 1998).

At first, the concept that emerged from this early research was that L1 transfer was associated with behaviorist⁴⁾ theories of language use and language acquisition however, today, L1 transfer has been largely separated from such behaviorist origins (Flynn et al. 1998). What remains in the process has been termed L1 influence, a concept that is less well understood and studied. According to Flynn and her colleagues, “Regarding the acquisition of grammatical knowledge,

1) L1 Transfer: The use of the first language (or other languages known) in a second language context

2) L2: A person's second language. To be more specific, one could refer to a person's L3, L4, and so on. However, the general term L2 is frequently used to refer to any language learning or use after the first language has been learned.

3) L1: A person's first language.

4) Behaviorism: A school of psychology that bases learning on a stimulus-response paradigm.

the consensus is that the grammatical properties of the L1 exert significant influence on the process - and hence the product(s) - of acquiring an L2. Such a consensus notwithstanding, work on L2 acquisition from within the Principles and Parameters framework has - until recently - provided few specific ideas concerning the extent and the exact nature of L1 influence” (Flynn et al. 1998).

1.1 Purpose of this Study

Adults learning a second or foreign language often produce errors or nonnative substitutions, including a foreign accent and normative grammatical utterances (e.g., an English speaker who fails to master the Spanish trill and subjunctive verb constructions). While learner's substitutions are frequently considered to be errors from the perspective that they are not native-like, they are nevertheless representative of an underlying system, just as a child learning a first language has an underlying linguistic system, although different from adult native speakers of that language (Major 2001). For instance, Major (2001) points out that an adult French learner of English may substitute [z] for [D] (the sound in *the*) but never [p], [b], [k], or [g]; the same learner may place the adjective after the noun (“I like that car green.”) but not place it randomly elsewhere (“I green like that car.”, “I like green that car.”).

An adult second language learner's linguistic system is called the Interlanguage (IL)⁵⁾ or more simply, the language of a nonnative speaker. According to Major(2001), The nonnative characteristics of the IL of an adult learner are often due to negative transfer⁶⁾ or interference from the first language

5) IL: The language produced by a nonnative speaker of a language (i.e., a learner's output).

6) Negative Transfer: The use of the first language (or other languages known) in a second

(NL)⁷), that is, the system of the first language (L1) is transferred to the second language (L2). When the phenomena of the L1 and L2 are different, errors result. Transfer may occur at all linguistic levels: lexicon, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse, and culture. Taken together, these issues and the others discussed below suggest that L1 transfer and Universal Grammar⁸) remain better described than understood in the peer-reviewed and scholarly literature, which brings up the purpose of the instant study discussed further below.

The purpose of this study is to generally examine the concepts involved in the L1 transfer versus universal grammar debate by providing a critical review of the relevant reviewed and scholarly literature. To collect and analyze the results of a survey of Mexican-American second language learners living in California concerning their views on these issues and to discover to what extent L1 should be used in the classroom and what method of teaching best satisfies this need.

1.2 Overview of this Study

Because resources are by definition scarce, it is important for educators to identify what works and what does not in language acquisition classrooms, particularly when adult learners are involved. Language teaching came into its own as a profession in the last century. Central to this phenomenon was the emergence of the concept of methods of language teaching. The method concept in language teaching – the notion of a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning – is

language context resulting in a nontarget-like second language form.

7) NL: A person's first language.

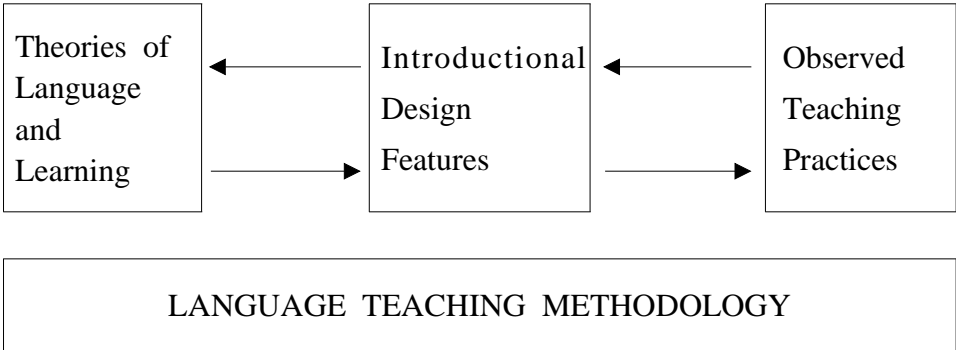
8) Universal Grammar: A set of innate principles common to all languages.

a powerful one, and the quest for better methods was a preoccupation of teachers and applied linguists throughout the 20th century. Howatt's (1984) overview documents the history of changes of practice in language teaching throughout history, bringing the chronology up through the Direct Method in the 20th century. One of the most lasting legacies of the Direct Method has been the notion of method itself.

Methodology in language teaching has been characterized in a variety of ways. A more or less classical formulation suggests that methodology is that which links theory and practice. Theory statements would include theories of what language is and how language is learned or, more specifically, theories of second language acquisition (SLA)⁹. Such theories are linked to various design features of language instruction. These design features might include stated objectives, syllabus specifications, types of activities, roles of teachers, learners, materials, and so forth. Design features in turn are linked to actual teaching and learning practices as observed in the environments where language teaching and learning take place. This whole complex of elements defines language teaching methodology.

9) SLA: The learning of another language after the first language has been learned. The use of this term does not differentiate among learning situations.

Figure 1. Language Teaching Methodology



The study of how SLA learners go about actually conceptualizing and expressing themselves in a second language can provide some useful insights into the underlying cognitive processes and how SLA learners go about applying grammatical concepts from their first language to secondary languages. Moreover, because there are some similarities as well as differences that exist among how SLA students accomplish this according to their mother tongue and the second language being learned, it is also useful to examine how these processes take place across a broad continuum rather than in an isolated fashion. In this regard, Kecskes (2000) says that, Mother tongue development is a very complex process including, among other factors, the development of the vocabulary, use of different syntactic structures, and application of communication strategies. Well-structured sentences and the adequate use of more complex sentence structures are the best signs of the developmental level of mother tongue use.

This study used a five-section format to address to above-stated research problem. The first section introduced the topic under consideration, presented a

statement of the problem to be addressed, and provided the purpose, importance and rationale in support of the study. Section two provides a review of the recent peer-reviewed and scholarly literature concerning L1 transfer and Universal Grammar, including a recapitulation of the scientific research to date. Section three describes more fully the research methodology used in the study, and an analysis of the statistical data resulting from the survey of Mexican-American SLA learners is provided in section four. A summary of the research and salient conclusions are provided in the concluding section.

Section 2: Review of the Literature

2.1 Background and Overview

Gass and Selinker (1994) report that, SLA is concerned with the nature of the hypotheses (whether conscious or unconscious) that learners come up with regarding the rules of the second language. While much has been learned in recent years concerning the cognitive processes that underlie language acquisition in the first place, much more remains unclear concerning precisely how humans go about learning new languages. In this regard, Gass and Selinker (1994) note that questions remain concerning whether the rules involved are like those of the native language, whether they are like the rules of the language being learned, and whether there are patterns that are common to all learners regardless of the native language and regardless of the language being learned. These questions and others to be considered below are also the focus on this study, beginning with a discussion of L1 transfer and how researchers currently believe it affects second language acquisition. A discussion concerning the historical basis for universal grammar and its implications for second language acquisition is also provided, followed by a discussion of these issues as they apply to the pedagogy and a recapitulation of recent studies concerning L1 transfer and universal grammar.

2.2 L1 Transfer

According to Doughty and Long (2003), research has long shown the existence of universal processes in second language acquisition, such as L1 transfer, over-generalization, simplification, regularization and stabilization.

Surface manifestations of these processes include common errors and error types, developmental plateaus where L1 and interlingual structures are similar, and so on. Besides these findings, other studies have provided significant evidence that suggests there are various kinds of developmental sequences and stages involved in IL development, including the following: The four-stage sequence for ESL negation (Pica 1983, Schumann 1979), the six-stage sequence for English relative clauses (Doughty 1991, Eckman, Bell and Nelson 1988, Gass 1982); and, sequences in many other grammatical domains in a variety of L2s (Johnston 1985).

Despite these findings, it remains difficult or even impossible to translate them into an effective second language acquisition pedagogy in an across-the-board fashion: The sequences are impervious to instruction, in the sense that it is impossible to alter stage order or to make learners skip stages altogether. Acquisition sequences do not reflect instructional sequences, and teachability is constrained by learnability. *“The idea that what you teach is what they learn, and when you teach it is when they learn it, is not just simplistic, but wrong (Doughty and Long 2003)”*. In a recent study by Rasinger (2005), the author reports that an important issue in the area of SLA research is the influence of other languages represented in a learner's mind. Research has shown that L2 learners often produce structures that are different from the TL¹⁰⁾ (or are simply wrong), but which show notable similarities to the learner's L1.

10) TL: The language being learned.

Table 1. Errors Attributable to L1 Transfer (Major 2001)

L1	L2	Utterance	Explanation
Portuguese	English	I will decorate the phone numbers (meaning memorize)	Portuguese decorar means to memorize.
English	Portuguese	[paw] pau “stock”for pao “bread”	English does not have this sound but has [aw].
English	German	Hunds for Hunde (“dogs”)	Speakers uses the English plural.
Spanish	Portuguese	Phoenix esta em Arizona ,correct is “Phoenix e em Arizona.” “Phoenix is in Arizona.”	Although both Spanish and Portuguese have two verbs “to be”(ser and estar), their use is somewhat different.
Arabic	English	That's the woman that I love her.	Arabic permits pronouns in this position.
Portuguese	English	Give a kiss to your daughter and a hug to your wife.	Learner is transferring Brazilian culture. In the United States, a more appropriate remark might be, “How are your baby and wife doing?”

Research by Vainikka and Young-Scholten (1994) studied the status of functional categories in adult L2 acquisition of German to this end. These researchers maintained that only lexical projections are available at the earliest stages of L2 acquisition (for both adult and child L2) and that functional projections, which are input driven, emerge later with the I(nflectional) system emerging before the C(omplementizer) system. According to Flynn et al. (1998), in the context of child L2 acquisition, the emerging evidence regarding the status of functional projections seems to strongly suggest that functional categories and their projections are available from the very beginning stages of the L2. Vainikka and Young-Scholten (1994), made an extremely important contribution to the field of L2 acquisition research. In this regard, Flynn and her colleagues report that, without appealing to L1 influence, there is no way to account for the exhibited differences in the initial L2 developmental stage in the acquisition of German by, on the one hand, native (VO)¹¹⁾ Romance speakers, and on the other, native (O V)¹²⁾ Korean and Turkish speakers. It should be noted that there is no inherent incompatibility between the idea of L1 influence in L2 acquisition and the claim that L2 acquisition is driven by the continued access to the Principles and Parameters of UG. The (adult) L2 development, as analyzed by Vainikka and Young-Scholten (1994), is claimed to fall within the constraints of Universal Grammar.

Beyond the empirical findings, the Vainikka and Young-Scholten's study also offers an interesting hypothesis, with a principled grounding, regarding the extent of L1 influence. The concept of transfer under this theoretical position is

11) VO: verb, object word order.

12) OV: object, verb word order.

limited to lexical projections that are designated for headedness; however, the hypothesis advanced by Vainikka and Young-Scholten suggests very minimal L1 influence. In sum, the proposal advanced by Vainikka and Young-Scholten was that in the earliest phase of L2 acquisition, only lexical projections specified for headedness (from X-bar Theory) transfer these researchers propounded an approach they termed minimal trees, . . . [according to which] at any given stage of development, as few positions and projections are posited as are needed to analyze the data, and no more. According to Flynn and her colleagues one of the primary reasons for claiming that functional projections are not initially present is that the phonetic realization of grammatical features and/or lexical material most commonly associated with the respective functional heads (e.g., subject-verb agreement morphology in regard to INFL and complementizers in regard to COMP) is noticeably absent in the production data they examined. This study, though, failed to identify the full range of issues involved in the L1 transfer process. For example, Flynn et al. (1998) point out, as currently formulated, the Minimal Trees hypothesis seems to underestimate L1 transfer, for once the structures of lexical projections (in particular, the VP¹³) have been set to match those of the Target Language, the noted developmental differences between L1 and L2 acquisition still need to be explained. Under Minimal Trees, the robust V Adv O word-order error is left without an explanation. This would seem to indicate that allocating such a minimal role to the L1 grammar in L2 acquisition is too extreme. The study by Vainikka and Young-Scholten did suggest, though, that a natural explanation for these data can be found in a hypothesis that claims that the whole of the L1 grammar represents the initial state of L2 acquisition, specifically,

13) VP: verb phrase.

Absolute L1 Influence. Flynn and her colleagues, caution, though, that, "Nevertheless, the precise role of L1 influence in a theory of L2 acquisition is certainly not settled. There is ample room for intermediate theoretical positions".

2.3 Recapitulation of L1 Transfer Studies

According to Green (1986), languages are most activated when they are selected; in other words, when they are currently being spoken and, therefore, control speech output. Languages are less activated when they are in regular use but are not spoken at the time. Active languages play a role in ongoing processing, and that accounts for the occurrence of language interference effects in bilingual lexical decision tasks or L1 transfer effects in L2 speech. The author notes that languages are least active, or perhaps not active at all, when they are dormant. "Dormant languages are not in regular use and do not affect ongoing processing."

Kaplan (2002) states that L2 reading strongly overlaps with SLA research on transfer. More specifically for reading, research on orthographic transfer seems to show an impact at early stages of L2 reading, though less of an impact at advanced levels. Much of this research can be linked to the Orthographic Depth Hypothesis, which states that readers of differing orthographies will develop somewhat different word recognition processing skills depending on the L1 orthography, but there is growing evidence that this hypothesis does reflect the learning behavior of certain groups of beginning L2 readers (e.g., Japanese readers of English, English readers of Japanese, Spanish readers of English, and English readers of Hebrew).

The findings of the study by Byon and Andrew (2005) suggest that

Koreans reflect much stronger power-sensitivity than Korean-as-a-foreign language (KFL) learners, and the distance variable seems to take precedence over the power variables in America. On the whole, the apology formulae usage of Korean native speakers supports the stereotypical description of Koreans as being more collectivistic, hierarchical, and formalistic in comparison with Americans. Furthermore, the results that the semantic formulae usage patterns of the KFL learners are, in general, consistent with those of the American English native speakers indicate the traces of L1 transfer effects. Although the existence of speech acts¹⁴⁾ is universal, the frequency and contents are culture-specific, speech acts reflect the fundamental cultural values and social norms of a target language and demonstrate the rules of language use in a speech community.

Ringbom (1985) analyzed the scores of 270,000 students (across a period of 10 years) on the English reading and listening comprehension tests given nationally in Finland, he noticed an interesting pattern. On the same English tests, Swedish-speaking Finns consistently did better than Finnish speakers. Palmberg (1985) states that Swedish children already knew a lot of English words when they started instruction in English because of the cognates in Swedish and English however, authors emphasize that it is also possible that some readers are not aware of cognates and cannot exploit this source of information to facilitate their reading comprehension. Because the students came from similar backgrounds, one likely explanation was that, when completing the English tasks, the Swedish speakers get more help from their L1 than Finnish speakers, as Swedish, but not Finnish, is related to English.

14) Speech act: Is referred to what one does with language (i.e., the functions for which language is used). Examples include complaining, complimenting, and refusing.

Ellis (1994) says that L1 transfer is subject to certain constraints. The author suggests that language transfer mainly takes place in the areas of lexicon, phonology, and discourse, while transfer of L1 syntax seems to be inhibited by learners' metalinguistic awareness¹⁵⁾ of grammar. In addition, L1 transfer is less common in formal situations (e.g., classroom settings), but takes place to a greater extent in informal contexts. No clear empirical evidence exists yet about the transfer of marked and unmarked L1 forms. Furthermore, it is unclear whether early or later learners tend to transfer structures from their L1.

Nagy, Garca, Durgunoglu and Hancin-Bhatt (1993) indicated that just knowing the Spanish word was not enough; an awareness of its cognate status was also necessary before this knowledge could help English comprehension. The study focused on the English reading comprehension of upper elementary Spanish-English bilingual students to determine whether knowing the Spanish cognates of some key words would help in comprehending the passages in English.

Major (2001) states that negative transfer occurs when L1 and L2 phenomena are different, resulting in errors, however, positive transfer¹⁶⁾ takes place when the phenomena are the same, resulting in native-like utterances. Positive transfer can be called a free ride because the learner does not have to acquire anything new. For example, an English learner of French and Spanish does not have to learn the word order for subject, verb, and object (for example, *John loves Mary*) because the unmarked case for all three languages is the same. A French learner of English does not have to learn [ʃ] (as in shoe) in English because

15) Metalinguistic Knowledge: What one knows (or thinks one knows) about the language. It is to be differentiated from what one does in using language.

16) Positive Transfer: The use of the first language (or other languages known) in a second language context when the resulting second language form is correct.

French also has this sound. By contrast, the majority of Spanish speakers will show negative transfer, using [c] (as in chew) for [ʃ] because most Latin American varieties of Spanish do not have [ʃ]. However, a native of the Chihuahua, Mexico dialect will evince positive transfer for [ʃ], because this dialect has [ʃ] but no [c]. Therefore, for the same phenomenon, transfer can be positive or negative, depending on the native languages and dialects of the learners involved. While the IL can contain nonnative elements due to negative transfer and native-like elements due to positive transfer, it can also be composed of native-like elements that are not attributable to positive transfer, simply because the learner has correctly learned these L2 structures. For example, a French speaker who says “I’m reading a difficult book” indicates the learning of word order and the progressive, as French word order places the adjective after the noun and French does not have a progressive aspect. In addition to the IL being composed of elements of the L1 and L2, there are elements that are neither, for example, a Chinese speaker of English who says “Does he goes to school?” Because Chinese has no verb inflections at all, this mistake cannot be attributed to L1 transfer, and certainly is not native-like in the L2.

Iorio (2003) states that Spanish is a pro-drop language that permits dropping of pronouns and nouns in the topic position if the topic is referred to in another way. For example, the subjects in pro-dropped sentences are usually referred to in Spanish by an inflection on the verb. In most cases, subjects are dropped in Spanish unless the speaker is trying to place emphasis on the subject or relationship of the subject to the topic. The subject of this case study lived in Mexico most of his young life before moving to the U.S. The author found that

when the subject was asked to produce a list of things that he needed, wanted, or had for school in complete sentences and a list of those things that he did not need, the subject consistently produced the structure “No need (object)” and “Need (object).”

Wode (1977) maintained that there is a predictable order of structures and that certain developmental structures must be used by learners before they can be expected to have a significant influence on second language production.

Rasinger (2005) found that During the last 20 years or so, studies of SLA have been concerned not only with the analysis of the acquisition process and the description of interlanguage stages, but has increasingly focused on extra-linguistic factors that influence the acquisition process and its final success, that is, learners' eventual proficiency in the target language. The factors of learners' age of arrival and their length of residence in the target language country have been of interest of both linguists and psychologists, and both age and length of residence appear to be related to the speed with which learners acquire the target language, as well as their eventual proficiency in terms of native-speaker likeness. Very often it is assumed that the ability to acquire any TL up to a level of native speaker likeness decreases, the older the learners are.

Cook (1990) measured comprehension time in investigating parameterized binding (as revealed in reflexives and pronouns) among native speakers of English and Romance-language, Norwegian, and Japanese learners of English, languages which have increasingly ‘distant’ settings from English and found that the relative processing difficulty of binding in different types of sentences in English is the same regardless of the L1 setting for the governing category parameter. This

reaction-time study applied to second language acquisition data has clear implications for the study of grammatical competence in so-called monolinguals.

Schweers (1995) begins by discussing negotiated interaction and L1 transfer; examples of negotiated interaction are presented in which native speakers of Spanish studying English converse with a variety of interlocutors. The various examples showed development of a lexical form through conversational interaction; correct learning through interaction; incorrect learning through interaction; and no learning in spite of interaction. Recommendations are provided by the author for promoting effective negotiated interaction and beneficial L1 transfer.

Hawkins (2001) suggests that L1 influence occurs only at the point in the sequence where the particular property becomes relevant; for example, the fact that Spanish marks subject-verb agreement only speeds up the acquisition of the subject-verb agreement in English by Spanish speakers in advanced stages of acquisition. The author maintains that in native English copula-‘be’ and auxiliary-‘be’ are verbs which project to VP, but which also raise to I to pick up agreement and tense inflections. Hawkins suggests that copula-be is likely to move from VP to IP early in the acquisition process; in addition, the author maintains that the acquisition of copula-be triggers the development of IP.

Gass and Selinker (1994) says a basic precept of the notion of interlanguage in the first place is the concept of fossilization, which generally refers to the cessation of learning; the authors provide definition of fossilization of a linguistic form, feature, rule, and so on in the following way: to become permanently established in the inter-language of a second language learner in a

form that is deviant from the target-language norm and that continues to appear in performance regardless of further exposure to the target language. Knowing a second language well means knowing information similar to that of a native speaker of a language.

2.4 Universal Grammar

The notion that all humans share some commonalities in the manner in which they organize their syntactical arrangements of words, or a so-called universal grammar, dates back at least eight centuries. For example, in her book, *Universal Grammar in Second Language Acquisition: A History*, as reported by Thomas (2004), the fundamental insight captured by the expression universal grammar is that human languages have significant properties in common despite their obvious differences. She also mentioned that the term universal grammar, along with a related term (sometimes used synonymously), ‘general grammar,’ did not have much currency before the early seventeenth century.

Thomas also notes that various versions of the concept of universal grammar can be traced much further back in the Western linguistic tradition. For example, Thomas (2004) cites Roger Bacon's observation in 1270 that, “grammar is substantially one and the same in all languages, despite its accidental variations”. While this Baconian observation is often cited as an early reference to universal grammar, a number of more recent historiographical studies have considered these issues in different ways. Thomas cites Bacon because, legitimately or illegitimately, many people since his day have taken his statement to present most clearly and unconditionally the basic principle of universal grammar, (Hovdhaugen

1989). According to Thomas (2004) during the Middle Ages following Bacon's day, one language - Latin - achieved a preeminent intellectual and social position. Medieval grammarians valued Latin as a unique reflection of human cognition and the structure of reality, and so projected the West's first explicit notion of what is essential to language from the categories and features of Latin.

Following a period of relative inattention during the Renaissance, a wide range of concepts of universal grammar emerged which were no longer tied strictly to Latin. Instead, grammarians began to consider what is universal in human languages to the particular or special properties that serve to differentiate one language from another. In this regard, Thomas (2004) reports that Johann Heinrich Alsted provided a useful definition of general grammar in his 1630 *Encyclopedia* as the pattern [norma] of every particular grammar. Likewise, the British grammarian John Wilkins contrasted what he termed, natural grammar with instituted and particular grammar. According to Thomas (2004), "The former 'should contain all such grounds and rules, as do naturally and necessarily belong to the philosophy of letters and speech in the general, whereas the latter ' doth deliver the rules which are proper and peculiar to any one language in particular".

To Wilkins (1668), the job of grammarians was to evade being prejudiced by the common theory of the languages they [are] acquainted with so that they may abstract their rules according to Nature. Other authorities subsequently took up the subject of universal grammar and made their own particular contributions. For example, In France, scholars speculated about language commonalities and differences, most famously in the 1660 *Grammaire Gnrle et Raisonne*. This text, and others of its genre, argued for a rationalist basis for universal grammar, and

tried to work out what it would mean to learn a language, granted the roots of general grammar in human cognition.

In his analysis of ancient and medieval grammatical theory, Herman (1995) cites Robins' (1951) useful working definition of the term grammar itself: Robins states “we may consider that, in the most general terms, grammatical study begins whenever in the stream of speech or the expanse of writing there are observed, and in some way systematized, similarities of form or patterns of arrangement, and these are partly at least correlated with the meanings or functions of the utterances in which they occur”.

By the end of the eighteenth century, researchers concerned with universal grammar were highly influenced by the concepts of nationalism and romanticism and shifted their attention away from similarities across languages to the characteristics of individual languages. Thomas (2004) also states that universal grammar remained in retreat as comparative-historical and typological studies of languages flourished in the 1800s. Then at the beginning of the twentieth century, Ferdinand de Saussure asserted that languages could, and should, be studied as autonomous systems independent of their histories. Historians conventionally take Saussure as the starting-point of autonomous or structuralist linguistics, which extends to the present day.

According to Gass and Selinker (1994), “Whereas the typological approach begins with cross-linguistic investigations into co-occurrences, the approach to second language acquisition known as Universal Grammar (UG) begins from a different perspective--that of learnability”. From this perspective, universal principles form part of the mental representation of language. It is properties of the

human mind that make language universals the way they are. If properties of human language are part of the mental representation of language, it stands to reason that they do not cease being properties in just those instances in which a nonnative language system is being employed. The assumption that universal grammar is the guiding force of child language acquisition has long been maintained by many and has only recently been applied to the case of second language acquisition.

The theory in support of universal grammar is based on the assumption that language is comprised of a set of abstract principles that characterize core grammars of all natural languages. In this regard, Gass and Selinker (1994) reports that if children have to learn a complex set of abstractions, there must be something other than the language input to which they are exposed that enables them to learn language with relative ease and speed. UG is postulated as an innate language faculty that limits the extent to which languages can vary. That is, it specifies the limits of a possible language. The task for learning is greatly reduced if one is equipped with an innate mechanism that constrains possible grammar formation. According to Epstein et al. (1996), there have been three logical possibilities advanced concerning the role of universal grammar in L2 acquisition:

- (1) a. The no-access hypothesis that maintains no aspect of UG is available to the L2 learner;
- b. The partial access hypothesis that argues only L1-instantiated principles and L1-instantiated parameter-values of UG are available to the learner;
- c. The third, termed the full access hypothesis, universal grammar in its

entirety constrains L2 acquisition (Epstein et al. 1996).

Despite the popularity of these linguistic theories, Epstein and his colleagues maintain that there is no compelling evidence to support either of the first two hypotheses, and provide evidence concerning functional categories in L2 acquisition consistent with the claim that UG is fully available to the L2 learner.

To help illustrate these concepts, Gass and Selinker cite White (1989, also 2003 elsewhere herein) and demonstrate the range of possibilities for changing ‘*want to*’ to the more informal, ‘*wanna*’ however, there are many times in English where the sequence ‘*want to*’ cannot be replaced by the more informal *wanna*. According to these authors, “Without some prior information, it would be difficult to determine the correct distribution of *want to* versus *wanna* in informal English. The input does not provide sufficiently specific information about where to use *wanna* and where not to. White explained that there are principles of universal grammar involving question formation to account for the distribution of these English forms. However, the input alone does not provide this information. This is called the poverty of the stimulus¹⁷⁾ argument” (Gass and Selinker 1994).

According to Cowie (1999), the poverty of the stimulus argument maintains that empiricists have failed to provide a viable framework that can transform the raw materials of experience into concepts and beliefs, rather than stressing, as do poverty of the stimulus arguments, that some of the components are missing. This author adds that, “While claims to the effect that empiricists’ explanatory pretensions outrun their explanatory capacities should, perhaps, give us

17) Poverty of the Stimulus: A proposal made within the confines of Universal Grammar that input alone is not sufficiently specific to allow a child to attain the complexities of the adult grammar.

pause, the immediate message of this argument is that empiricists should elaborate their theory; not that they are wrong. Poverty of the stimulus arguments, by contrast, bear much more directly on the truth of the empiricist's acquisition theory. Rather than stressing the meagerness of the empiricist's account of processes like abstraction, they stress instead the meagerness of the experiential input to those processes” (Cowie 1999). Advocates of this argument recognize that it may be premature to criticize empiricists based on the fact that their theory is underdeveloped because “... these are, after all, difficult questions” (Cowie 1999). Indeed, one of the fundamental issues that emerged from this literature review was just how complex L1 transfer appears to be, and these issues are discussed further below.

2.5 Recapitulation of Universal Grammar Studies

Epstein et al. (1996) State that the theory of Universal Grammar (UG), principles and parameters are hypothesized to constitute the innate cognitive faculty that makes language acquisition humanly possible. An important tenet of this theory is that this faculty is autonomous; in other words, it is an independent cognitive module that may interact with, but does not derive from other cognitive faculties. Universal grammar theory is, strictly speaking, a theory of grammatical competence, not of a learner's actual performance. The theory is based on abstraction: “To discover the properties of Universal Grammar and core grammar, we must attempt to abstract away from complicating factors of various sorts, a course that has its hazards but is inescapable in serious inquiry”. Whether UG is accessible in L2 acquisition depends largely on how one understands the

relationship between UG and core grammars. When parameters are fixed during L1 acquisition, UG itself becomes the core grammar. Under this view, parameter setting changes the initial form of UG. Subsequent relations between UG and the grammar of the L2 are necessarily indirect, mediated by the core grammar of the L1. Traditionally, second language researchers have come from departments of linguistics, applied linguistics, and ESL or TESOL. The dominant paradigm for these researchers is universal grammar theory as advocated by Chomsky and his proponents.

Tarone et al. (1994), says parameter models are insufficiently robust insofar as they account for what Chomsky termed the ‘chasm’ between the complexity of a language and the limited amount of relevant linguistic data to which the learner has access. “Parameter models need to postulate considerably less acquisition in language competence, which seems to be consistent with observations of first languages even if it seems somewhat less so as far as adult second languages are concerned. In any event, if learning the L1 is a matter of setting parameters, then learning an L2 is a matter of resetting parameters”. Generalized Phrase-Structure Grammar (GPSG) or Head-Driven Phrase-Structure Grammar (HPSG) theories have not received the attention they deserve in SLA research: “Parameter models have so far taken the GB framework for granted, even though alternative accounts of some of the phenomena handled by parameter models have been developed in these other theories”.

Paribakht (2004), followed an earlier study that demonstrated that extensive reading leads to significant gains in vocabulary knowledge, and focuses on the strategies used by learners as they attempt to construct the meanings of

unfamiliar words while reading English texts. Concurrent think aloud and immediate retrospective data collection techniques were used with ten intermediate level ESL students from various first language backgrounds. Findings show that while learners use a number of knowledge sources in order to compensate for gaps in their lexicon, grammatical knowledge is most frequently used. The author suggests that this evidence provides support for the intrinsic value of grammar instruction.

White (2003) says that universal grammar is based on learnability and that the subtle and abstract knowledge attained by native speakers goes far beyond the input that they receive as young children. In L2 acquisition, learners are faced with a similar task to that of L1 acquirers, namely the need to arrive at a system accounting for L2 input; in addition, L2 learners are also faced, at least potentially, with a logical problem of language acquisition, in that there are abstract, complex and subtle properties of grammar that are underdetermined by the L2 input. L2 learners already have a means of representing language, namely the grammar of the mother tongue. Therefore, it is possible that there is, in fact, no under-determination problem: if L2 learners demonstrate the relevant kind of unconscious knowledge, it might be the case that they are drawing on the L1 grammar instead of the UG itself. If L2 learners acquire abstract properties that could not have been induced from the input, this strongly suggests that principles of UG constrain interlanguage grammars, parallel to the situation in L1 acquisition; this would hold even if the linguistic competence of L2 learners differs from the linguistic competence of native speakers. In other words, it is not necessary for L2 learners to acquire the same knowledge as native speakers in order to demonstrate a

poverty-of-the-stimulus situation in L2 acquisition; it is sufficient to show that L2 learners acquire complex and subtle properties of language that could not have been induced from the L2 input.

Doughty and Long (2003), states that if adult foreign language learners are to sound like natives, they need to be exposed to realistic (genuine or elaborated) samples of target language use as input components of pedagogic tasks, and then helped to incorporate, store and retrieve whole chunks of that input as whole chunks. Adult native speakers do this frequently, using repeating resources, resulting in a correspondence effect¹⁸⁾, in other words, instead of constructing each utterance anew, speakers track and use chunks of previous discourse in formulating new utterances.

2.6 Summary: L1 vs. UG

Complex questions require complex answers in many cases, and the issues involved in the L1 transfer versus universal grammar debate are no exception. Fortunately, some authors have provided some useful guidance that can help conceptualize what is involved as well as methods for better understanding universal grammar. For example, Kaplan (2002) makes the following concrete assertions concerning L1 transfer: “The issue of L1 transfer has been explored extensively, and a useful set of findings can be offered at this point. It appears that L2 readers do transfer L1 syntactic knowledge of various types to their L2 reading, even at relatively advanced stages. Sometimes the transferred knowledge is supportive and sometimes it causes interference”. Likewise, in her book, White

18) Correspondence: A term used in the Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin Hierarchy of Difficulty to refer to the situation in which there exists a one-to-one relationship between a native language and target language form.

(2003) points out that besides universal principles, universal grammar also includes principles that have a limited number of built-in options (e.g., settings or values) that provide linguists with the ability to analyze crosslinguistic variation these principles are known as parameters: Most parameters are assumed to be binary, that is, they have only two settings, the choices being predetermined by UG. L1 acquisition consists, in part, of setting parameters, the appropriate setting being triggered by the input that the child is exposed to. A central claim of parameter theory, as originally instantiated in the Principles and Parameters framework, is that a single parameter setting brings together a cluster of apparently disparate syntactic properties.

This, for example, was part of the rationale for the Null Subject Parameter, which related the possibility of null subjects to other syntactic and morphological properties found in null subject languages. The rationale in support of the proposal for parameters is that they should greatly reduce the acquisition task. In other words, instead of learning a number of seemingly unrelated properties individually, the second language learner would just have to identify the appropriate setting of a parameter and a range of associated syntactic properties follows automatically. According to White (2003), some L1 acquisition research has provided evidence in favour of clustering, showing that properties which are argued to be consequences of a particular parameter setting emerge at about the same time.

Based on existing proposals, White (2003), notes that parametric differences between grammars are associated with properties of lexical items, especially so-called functional categories¹⁹⁾.

19) Functional categories: Categories that carry primarily grammatical meaning, such as morphemes for tense and determiners.

(2) Lexical categories

- a. Verb (V);
- b. Noun (N);
- c. Adjective (Adj);
- d. Adverb (Adv);
- e. Preposition (P)

(3) Functional categories

- a. Complementizer (Comp or C),
- b. Inflection (Infl or I) (often split into agreement (Agr) and tense (T));
- c. Negation (Neg);
- d. Determiner (Det);
- e. Number (Num) and others

According to White (2003), Functional categories have certain formal features associated with them (such as tense, number, person, gender and case). Functional categories and features form part of the UG inventory. There are three potential sources of cross linguistic variation that relate to above-listed functional categories, as follows :

- (4) a. Languages can differ as to which functional categories are realized in the grammar. On some accounts, for example, Japanese lacks the category Det.

- b. The features of a particular functional category can vary from language to language. For instance, French has a gender feature, while English does not.
- c. Features are said to vary in strength: a feature can be strong in one language and weak in another, with a range of syntactic consequences. For example, Infl features are strong in French and weak in English, resulting in certain word-order alternations between the two languages.

“The lexicons of different languages, then, vary as to which functional categories and features are instantiated and what the strength of various features may be. Such variation has a variety of syntactic effects” (White 2003). In L1 acquisition, UG is the initial state Chomsky (1981), determining, in advance, the form and the functioning of language-particular grammars. Although UG represents the initial state (or S_0), it remains unclear what happens subsequently. In that is, whether UG somehow turns into a particular steady-state grammar (S_S) in the course of language acquisition or whether it remains distinct from specific instantiations White (2003). Possibly because this matter is of little consequence for researchers interested in L1 acquisition or in native speaker competence, the issue has been relatively little discussed; where it is discussed, the former assumption is often adopted. In this regard, DeGraff (1999) points out that L1A is the process by which exposure to PLD transforms the innately specified experience-independent *faculté langage* into a language-particular grammar by assigning fixed values to parameter arrays specified by UG.

In the context of L2 acquisition, the question of whether UG becomes a

particular grammar or remains distinct from particular grammars is central. If UG is transformed into a grammar which may subsequently be modified during the course of acquisition (S_0 , S_1 , S_s), then only the particular steady-state instantiation of UG would remain available in non-primary language acquisition. Perhaps the first person to raise this issue in the L2 context was Bley-Vroman (1990: 1819), who suggested the following computer analogy: The author provides the useful analogy of an application program that came with an installation-configuration program, with which consumers can set parameters to customize the application to their preferences for their computer: “You use this installation program just once, it sets up the application to operate properly, often stripping it down, removing options your machine cannot implement. You never use the installation program again. The application program is now a particular program for your machine. In other words, UG survives only as the language-specific mother-tongue grammar. Bley-Vroman's Fundamental Difference Hypothesis rests on the assumption that UG as a distinct 'entity' does not survive L1 acquisition. On this view, the initial state of L2 acquisition is, necessarily, the L1 grammar ($L1 S_s$), as shown in Figure 1 below. Subsequently, there may be development away from the L1 grammar, until a steady state interlanguage grammar is attained ($IL S_s$)” (White 2003).

Figure 2. L2 acquisition without UG

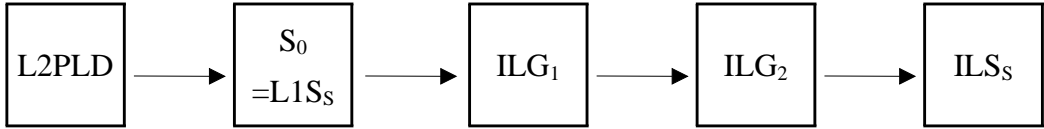
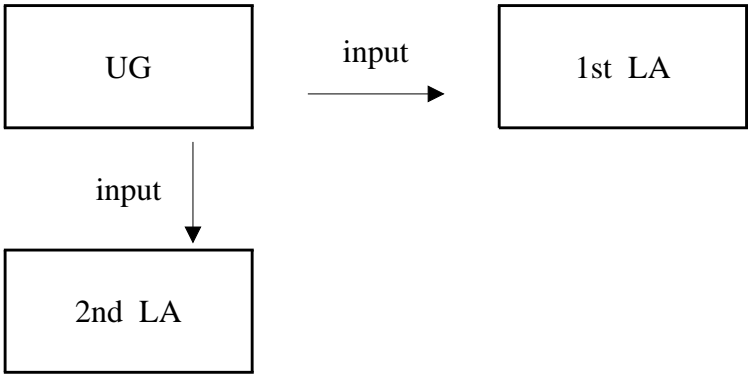


Figure 3. L2 acquisition with UG.



According to Healy and Bourne (1998), a linguistic and a cognitive psychological perspective are both essential in order for additional insights into how second language learning takes place to be identified because the underlying processes are both complex and circuitous: “The linguistic facts help inform the psychological and vice versa. For example, an account of transfer phenomena requires both psychological and linguistic considerations. For the psychologist, transfer occurs because the speaker has incorrectly activated an automatic routine based on the first language. When this automated routine is inappropriate, errors occur because learners lack the necessary information in the second language or the

attentional capacity to activate the appropriate second language routine”. This version of what transpires during L1 transfer, though, does not account for why certain linguistic forms transfer and others do not. As a result, Healy and Bourne (1998) conclude, “Universal grammar may generate detailed predictions that are more specific than the psychological account, which does not make predictions that are explicit about when transfer occurs”.

Nevertheless, there remains a glaring need for additional research concerning the cognitive phenomena that take place during second language acquisition. While there remains a relative dearth of recent studies concerning these issues, the previous recapitulations provide some useful insights and empirical results that illustrate the current trends in thinking and what the implications are for educators in second language acquisition classrooms today.

Section 3: Methodology

This study used a triangulated methodology to address the above-stated study purpose. The first leg of the methodology consisted of a critical review of the relevant peer-reviewed and scholarly literature concerning L1 transfer and universal grammar. This leg of the methodology is highly congruent with recommendations from numerous social researchers. For example, according to Fraekel and Wallen (2001), “Both the opinions of experts in the field and other research studies are of interest. Such reading is referred to as a review of the literature”. Gratton and Jones (2003) emphasize that a critical reviewing of the timely literature is an essential task in all research. “No matter how original you think the research question may be, it is almost certain that your work will be building on the work of others. It is here that the review of such existing work is important. A literature review is the background to the research, where it is important to demonstrate a clear understanding of the relevant theories and concepts, the results of past research into the area, the types of methodologies and research designs employed in such research, and areas where the literature is deficient”. In this regard, Wood and Ellis (2003) identified the following as important outcomes of a well conducted literature review, as shown in (5).

- (5)
 - a. It helps describe a topic of interest and refine either research questions or directions in which to look.
 - b. It presents a clear description and evaluation of the theories and concepts that have informed research into the topic of interest.
 - c. It clarifies the relationship to previous research and highlights where

new research may contribute by identifying research possibilities which have been overlooked so far in the literature.

- d. It provides insights into the topic of interest that are both methodological and substantive.
- e. It demonstrates powers of critical analysis by, for instance, exposing taken for granted assumptions underpinning previous research and identifying the possibilities of replacing them with alternative assumptions.
- f. It justifies any new research through a coherent critique of what has gone before and demonstrates why new research is both timely and important.

Silverman (2005) advises that a well-conducted literature review should seek to answer the following questions as shown in (6).

- (6) a. What do we know about the topic?
- b. What do we have to say critically about what is already known?
- c. Has anyone else ever done anything exactly the same?
- d. Has anyone else done anything that is related?
- e. Where does your work fit in with what has gone before?
- f. Why is your research worth doing in the light of what has already been done?

The second leg of the triangulated methodology used in this research

project consisted of a recapitulation of relevant studies and findings concerning L1 transfer and universal grammar. This approach is also congruent with other social researchers who suggest that such recapitulations can provide new syntheses, insights and identify previously indiscernible trends Noblit and Hare (1988).

The final leg of the triangulated methodology consisted of a survey of a convenience sampling of Mexican-American SLA learners living in California who agreed to participate anonymously in the research project without compensation. Devaus (1996) reports that survey research is widely regarded as being inherently quantitative and positivistic and is contrasted to qualitative methods that involve participant observation, unstructured interviewing, case studies, focus groups etc.. According to Neuman (2003), survey research is quantitative social research in which one systematically asks many people the same questions, then records and analyzes their answers. For this purpose, a questionnaire was developed based on one used in a comparable study of L1 transfer among SLA students by Januleviiien and Kavaliauskien (2005).

Section 4: Survey Results

The results of the administration of the questionnaire to the convenience sample of 25 Mexican-American SLA learners are provided in the tables and figures below; an analysis of the results is presented in the concluding chapter: out of the 25 participants, 3 were Advanced learners, 5 were upper intermediate learners, 10 were lower intermediate learners, and 7 were beginning learners.

The results of the survey of Mexican-American students also showed virtual unanimity in their opinion on the importance of the L1 for teaching and learning a foreign language. For example, in response to the first question, “Should Spanish be used in an English language class?,” almost all (23 or 92%) said “yes,” with just two subjects (or 8%) responding “no.” The two students who responded “no”, were extremely advanced students and felt that the use of their L1 hindered or slowed their learning process.

Table 2. Should Spanish be used in an English language class?

Yes	% Yes	No	% No
23	92%	2	8%

In response to the question, “How much time should be devoted to English grammar and the differences involved between L1 and L2 grammar?,” three

respondents (or 12%) stated “none”, five (or 20%) responded “A little”, 10 (or 40%) responded “some”, and seven (or 28%) responded “A lot”. This points out the need for different methods of teaching for the different levels of the students. Those students who responded “none” or “a little” were the advanced and upper intermediate students. These students would benefit the most by using the Direct Method or the UG approach in SLA. In using the Direct method no use of the mother tongue is permitted (i.e., the teacher does not need to know the students' native language). Lessons begin with dialogues and anecdotes in modern conversational style. Actions and pictures are used to make meanings clear. Grammar is learned inductively. Literary texts are read for pleasure and are not analyzed grammatically. The target culture is also taught inductively. The teacher must be a native speaker or have native-like proficiency in the target language. With language processing as represented in figure 3 of this paper.

The students who responded “some” or “a lot” were lower intermediate or beginning students. These students would benefit the most by using the Grammar-Translation method where transfer is considered a major factor in SLA. The Grammar-Translation Approach is an extension of the approach used to teach classical languages to the teaching of modern languages. Instruction is given in the native language of the students. There is little use of the target language for communication. Focus is on grammatical parsing, i.e., the form and inflection of words. There is early reading of difficult texts. A typical exercise is to translate sentences from the target language into the mother tongue (or vice versa). the result of this approach is usually an inability on the part of the student to use the language for communication. The teacher does not have to be able to speak the

target language. With language processing as represented in figure 2 in this paper.

Table 3. How much time should be devoted to English grammar and the differences involved between L1 & L2 grammar?

Responses	None	A little	Some	A lot
No.	3	5	10	7
%	12%	20%	40%	28%

In response to the question, “Under the usage of L1 in the classroom, how much do you think it would help learners learn English?”, four of the subjects (or 16%) responded “no”, seven (or 28%) responded “A little”, 11 (or 44%) responded “Somewhat”, and the remaining three subjects (or 12%) responded, “A lot”. Once again the advanced learners found that their L1 did not help them in their acquisition of English pointing to their need for the Direct Method. This supports the UG approach. The upper intermediate students found that the use of L1 in the classroom was of little use, so they also lean toward the Direct Method and the UG approach. The lower intermediate and the beginning students found much more need for the use of L1 in the classroom showing a need for Grammar-Translation and Audiolingualism. The Audiolingualism approach was a reaction to the Reading Approach and its lack of emphasis on oral-aural skills. The Audiolingual approach became dominant in the United States during the 1940, 1950s, and 1960s. Lessons begin with dialogues. Mimicry and memorization are used, based on the

assumption that language is habit formation. Grammatical structures are sequenced and rules are taught inductively. Skills are sequenced: listening, speaking are first and reading and writing are postponed. Pronunciation is stressed from the beginning. Vocabulary is severely limited in initial stages. A great effort is made to prevent learner errors. Language is often manipulated without regard to meaning or context. The teacher must be proficient only in the structures, vocabulary, etc. that he or she is teaching since learning activities and materials are carefully controlled. This supports the L1 Transfer approach.

These results correspond strongly with the results from figure 4 which suggest that advanced and upper intermediate students benefit from the use of the Direct Method.

Table 4. Under the usage of L1 in the classroom, how much do you think it would help learners learn English?

Answers	No. of Responses	% of Responses
No	4	16%
A little	7	28%
Somewhat	11	44%
A lot	3	12%

In response to the question, “If L1 is to be used in class, for which of the following two reasons do you think it is necessary?”, there was about a half-and-half split, with 11 of the subjects (or 44%) responding that it benefits

teaching/learning the L2 and the remaining 14 (or 56%) responding that it made them feel more comfortable. In this situation some of the advanced and upper intermediate students crossed over to accept more L1 use in class as it improved the general class atmosphere for all the students in the class. They disregarded their own needs in an attempt to improve class conditions for all students involved.

Table 5. If L1 is to be used in class, for which of the following two reasons do you think it is necessary?

No.	Answers	Number of Responses	% of Responses
1.	It benefits teaching/learning the L2	11	44%
2.	It makes me feel more confident	14	56%

In response to the final question, “If L1 is to be used in class, for which of the following reasons do you think it is necessary?”, the subjects were fairly consistent in their responses, with almost all of the subjects (24 or 96%) stating that it should be used to explain difficult concepts. I found that the students definition of, “difficult concepts” were quit different according to their level. Advanced and upper intermediate students were more interested in a higher level of more complex English usage while the lower intermediate and beginning students were more interested in grammatical explanations. A majority of the subjects agreed that L1 should be used to check comprehension (17 or 68%), Once again the advance and

upper intermediate students wanted the use of L1 only to check their comprehension of complex or technical English usage while the lower intermediate and beginning students wanted the use of their L1 to reinforce their understanding of English in general. To define new vocabulary (15 or 60%). While I felt that the advanced students preferred to have new vocabulary explained in the L2, they seemed to think of the class as a whole and selected L1 explanation of vocabulary to benefit the class as a unit. The advance and upper intermediate students showed and active knowledge of vocabulary while the lower intermediate and beginning students had more of a passive knowledge of vocabulary. To help students feel more comfortable (21 or 84%). Once again these results tend to suggest a need for comfortable class atmosphere and a feel of cultural unity. Students from all cultures should take pride in their heritage and the feeling of unity is comforting while taking on a difficult task.

Table 6. If L1 is to be used in class, for which of the following reasons do you think it is necessary?

	Yes	%	No	%
to explain difficult concepts	24	96.00%	1	4.00%
to check comprehension	17	68.00%	8	32.00%
to define new vocabulary	15	60.00%	10	40.00%
to help students to feel comfortable	21	84.00%	4	16.00%

The research was consistent in emphasizing the need for additional research in the area of L1 transfer and universal grammar issues, and many studies found some mixed results. Therefore, to more effectively address the needs of a multicultural learning population, educators today must recognize the wide range of reasons why SLA learners tend to produce certain grammatical errors. Intralingual errors are similar errors found in all L2 learners regardless of their L1. Interlingual errors are errors traced to L1 interference. It is clear to any teacher that errors make up a large part of the English output of the language learner. Some errors are of greater importance than others and some we recognize as something that an L1 learner would make, others can seem to be quite different from L1 learner errors. Errors of all types are an important part in the language learning process. Not only do errors provide feedback for the language learner, but by recognizing that such learners create some types of errors based on their constructions in their L1, SLA classroom teachers may be able to more effectively target their teaching techniques toward helping these learners avoid these types of errors.

We also face the issue of how much L1 is to be used for the different levels of SLA learners. An advanced learner may need very little instruction in L1 and would acquire the L2 at a much faster rate without it. Whereas upper intermediate and lower intermediate learners may benefit from a moderate use of L1 in the classroom. SLA beginner learners may require a more substantial amount of L1 used in the classroom. This also brings up the issue of a class that has a large mix of different levels of learners. How does the teacher satisfy the needs of the whole

class when different levels of L1 are required? If it is not possible to organize different classes for the different levels then one possible alternative is to place the students into groups and then move around the classroom from group to group to attempt to satisfy the different needs of the different levels of students.

Another problem that teachers face is the fact that different teaching methods are more effective for different levels of learners. For advanced learners the Direct Method is more effective. For intermediate learners Audiolingualism may be the best approach and for beginner learners Grammar-Translation may be the most useful. Once again this poses a problem for the mixed level class. A talented teacher may be able to once again place the students into groups of different levels and change his method of teaching for each group, but what if the class is multi cultural? It would be possible for the teacher to tackle a class of advanced and possibly upper intermediate students just using the Direct Method and Audiolingualism, but it would be virtually impossible to teach a multi cultural class using Grammar-Translation as the teacher would have to have knowledge of every language the students use, and even if this were possible it would be way too time consuming.

Section 5: Conclusions

Notwithstanding the universality of human language and its various constructs, the research suggested that the knowledge of grammar in one language does not necessarily translate into an efficient use of grammar in another language. The types of errors typically experienced during the L1 transfer process include some predictable ones (cultural and social hierarchical differences, for example) wherein grammatical construction depends on factors that might be unknown or little studied by the L2 learner. There were also some less predictable outcomes identified as well that related to the underlying cognitive processes involved between speakers of different languages that remain better described in the scientific literature than they are understood. Finally, it is reasonable to conclude that based on the profound demographic shifts experienced in the United States in recent years, the need for additional studies of this type will continue to grow, and future research should seek to include a wider representative sampling of Spanish-speaking SLA learners to help identify more effective teaching techniques that can be applied in a wide range of classroom settings.

Obviously neither Universal Grammar nor L1 Transfer is all in itself the answer to teaching a second language. There must be a proper mix of approach and method from both theories. How much L1 should be used in the classroom may even vary culturally. Some cultures may need more positive reinforcement from their own language to preserve their self esteem or self identity, while others need no such reinforcement. Some L1 languages that are closer to the target L2 may need very little instruction in L1 and would learn more quickly that way.

Undoubtedly a good teacher will experiment with different approaches to language teaching. Every class is different, so it will take a different mix of Grammar-Translation, Direct Method, or Audiolingualism to reach your students.

There are many approaches available for the teacher to choose from. Some additional methods are the Reading Approach which was a reaction to the problems experienced in implementing the Direct Approach because few teachers could use their foreign language well enough to use a direct approach effectively in class. The Oral-Situational Approach which was a reaction to the Reading Approach and its lack of emphasis on oral-aural skills. The Cognitive Approach which was a reaction to the behaviorist features of the Audiolingual Approach. The Affective-Humanistic Approach which was a reaction to the general lack of affective considerations in both Audiolingualism and the Cognitive Approach. The Comprehension-Based Approach which was an outgrowth of research in first language acquisition that led some language methodologists to assume that second or foreign language learning is very similar to first language acquisition, and the Communicative Approach which was an outgrowth of the work of anthropological linguists.

From my own experience I have found it best to play it by ear using the students L1 to different extents in class and go with what has the best effect on the majority of my students. Then it is possible to draw from different approaches to match the students needs for L1 in their L2 studies. In general I have found that for advanced students the Direct Method is the most effective way for expedient knowledge of English. For intermediate students a mixture of Grammar-Translation and Audiolingualism seems to be the answer. Beginning

students seem to do best using Grammar-Translation, but all students seem to feel more comfortable hearing at least some of their L1 used in the classroom.

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