The "Input Hypothesis" and the Second Language Teacher

Hea-Young Yum

(Wonkwang University)

Yum, Hea-Young(1955). **The "Input Hypothesis" and the Second Language Teacher.** *Linguistics vol. 3.* Although there are many other factors which affect the language learner's proficiency such as personality, age and first language, the learner's input has been emphasized by many researchers (Krashen 1976, 1977; Dulay et al 1981). Especially, Krashen's "input hypothesis" emphasizes the comprehensible input to language learners. His thesis is that language learners must give an i+1 level of teaching to language learners. Thus, the second language teacher should know the current level of proficiency and develop an one-level higher teaching program.

In my paper, I will consider some factors which need to be considered to make a comprehensible input for language learners. Particularly, I will consider linguistic input for language learners. Phonological, Morphological, syntactic, Semantic, and Pragmatic considerations to make a good teaching plan will be discussed in this paper. As a conclusion, I will argue that the second language teacher needs to have Contrastive Analysis for inter-language influence, and Error Analysis for intra-linguistic influence to the students.

O. Introduction

The accuracy problem has been an everlasting concern for the second language teachers. Learning a second or foreign language usually occurs after the individual has acquired the main elements of his mother tongue. This very fact seems to be significant in that mastery of a language may either hinder or facilitate the second language learning.[1] Although there are many other factors which affect the proficiency of the L2 learners such as personality, intelligence, age, sociolinguistic environment,

and the first language(L1), the learners input has been emphasized increasingly by many researchers.[2] Krashen's "Input Hypothesis" strongly argues that language teachers give a comprehensible input to the language learners. Putting it another way, he claims that language teachers must give an i+1 level of teaching to their students. To do this, however, the language teachers should know the current level of proficiency of their students. I argue that it can be obtained by error analysis. It is necessary to have error analysis to diagnose the current level of proficiency of the students. The errors obtained in my research, however, further suggest that contrastive analysis is also obligated to know the source of the problems that the students are facing now. It can give the teachers a perspective of inter-language influences.

In order to facilitate the aim of this study, the following formats are used. Section 1 reveals various factors that may affect on language learning. The factors are classified into the following categories: Situational Factors, Input, Learner Differences, Learner processes and Linguistic Output. Section 2 introduces different views on Linguistic Input such as Behaviorist's view, Nativist's view and Interactionist's view and argues that interactionist's view is the best theory that reveals the psychological processes of the L2 learners. Section 3 describes a model for creative construction in L2 acquisition. Section 4 and 5 are shared for a case study for Korean students learning English. It is given as a sample of Error Analysis that a language teacher can utilize for his/her teaching plan. In this section, errors made by language learners are classified into some linguistic categories. Section 6 concludes that the second language teacher needs to have error analysis enhanced by contrastive analysis to give comprehensible input to the second language learners.

1. Factors on Language Learning

Ellis (1986) points out that there are five interrelated factors in second language acquisition research. This section will briefly sketch these factors as an excursion before our serious discussion on the issue of 'input'.

1.1. Situational Factors

Situational Factors include a host of micro situations such as who the interlocutors are, the context of interaction such as at a supermarket or in a crowded classroom, and the topic of communication. As for a normal Korean, the first factor seems to be very important because Korean uses a lot of discourse markers which indicate who the speaker is and who the listener

is. Thus, a Korean student may be reluctant to say 'you' refering his/her teacher if he/she is not accustomed to it. In Korean, some honorific markers are added at the end of the subject if it refers to someone superior to the speaker of the utterance. The second factor is somewhat related to the first factor in that if the context is changed the interlocutors also change. Normally Korean students are not hesitant in communicating with a salesperson, but may be hasitate in communicating in a crowded classroom. Finally, the topic of communication makes the difference of the proficiency level. If a person knows a lot about politics and political terms, he may speak better with the topic. But the same person may not show such a fluency if he needs to talk about something unfamiliar to him. In sum, situational factors influence both the nature of the linguistic input and the strategies used by the learners.

1.2. Linguistic Input
The central issue here is to what extent the input determines the process of second language acquisition. Does it merely activate the learning process or does it structure it?

1.3. Learner Differences
There is a whole range of learner factors that potentially influence the way in which a L2 is acquired. The key ones are age, aptitude and intelligence, motivation and needs, personality and cognitive style. Another type of difference lies in the learner's L1. The role that the L1 plays in second language acquisition was a donimant issue in much of the research that took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s and has been emphasized in recent researches in the form of the "Input Hypothesis".

1.4. Learner Processes
Learner processes may be either cognitive or linguistic. The cognitive learner processes are divided into three categories such as learning strategies, production strategies, and communication strategies. Learning strategies are used to internalize new L2 knowledge, production strategies are the means of utilizing his/her L2 knowledge internalized to the learner, and communication strategies are employed when the language learner lacks L2 resources to communicate a message in him/her.

Linguistic processes involve universal principles of grammar which the learner is innately endowed with. These principles provide the learner a starting point. The task of the learner is then to scan the input to discover

which rules of the target language are universal and which are not universal, i.e., language-specific.

1.5. The Linguistic Output

Learner's language is highly variable, but it is also systematic in its nature. Putting it in other way, the learner uses his or her knowledge of the L2 in predictable ways, but not in the same way in every context. The linguistic output is developmental in that it changes as the learner gains more experience of the language. The linguistic output is the main source of information about how a learner acquires a second language. Particularly the errors that learners make give clues concerning the strategies they employ to handle the joint tasks of learning and using a second language.

1.6. Concluding Remarks

In order to account for the complexity of second language acquisition, it seems to be necessary to consider all factors discussed above. There is a significant factor which constitutes the core element among the various factors. That is the role of 'input' and the first language. In the subsequent section, I will show how opinions on the linguistic input are different and how the different views are compromised.

2. Views on Linguistic Input

This section addresses an account of three different views on the role of input in language acquisition: the behaviorist, the nativist, and the interactionist views. Input is used to refer to the language that is addressed to the L2 learner either by a native speaker or by another L2 learner. Interaction consists of the discourse jointly constructed by the learner and his interlocutors. Therefore, input is a result of interaction. Notice that not all the available input is processed by the learner, either because some of it is not understood or because some of it is not attended to.[3]

The behaviorists consider a language learner as 'a language-producing machine' in that the linguistic environment is seen as the crucial determining factor. In this model of learning, input comprises the language available to the learner in the form of stimuli and also occurs as a feedback. Behaviorist theories emphasize the need to regulate the stimuli by grading the input into a series of steps, so that each step constitutes the right level of difficulty for the level that the learner has reached.

Nativists consider the learner as 'a grand initiator'. They maintain that exposure to language itself cannot account for acquisition satisfactorily.

Input is understood as a trigger which activates the internal mechanisms. As Chomsky(1965) argues, the imperfect nature of the mother's speech input in first language acquisition make it unlikely that any child could successfully internalize the rule system of a language if he works on his own. Comparing the two views, it can be said that the behaviorist view of language acquisition emphsizes too much on what happens outside the learner while the nativist view emphasizes learner-internal factors.

A third view, however, seems to be tenable. It considers the acquisition of language as the result of an interaction between the learner's mental abilities and the linguistic environment. The learner's processing mechanisms are determined by the nature of the input. At the same time, the quality of the input affects the internal mechanisms.

3. A Model for Creative Construction in L2 Acquisition

When a student is exposed to a new language, the first internal hudles are posed by the individual's emotional state and motivations. For example, a person who thinks American English is gauche will probably not learn as much English from Americans as a person who thinks American English is the best type of English to know in the world. Thus, the working model for creative learning of L2 needs to include the domain of 'Filter' which is sometimes called as 'Affective Filter'. The Filter acts to control entry to further mental processing. Other filtering sources are the individual's anxiety levels, peer identification, and general motivation to learn the target language.

Once incoming language has passed through the Filter, it reaches two other processors: the 'Organizer' and the 'Monitor'. The major function of the 'Organizer' is to take in some elements of the second language and organize them in a fashion which results in the common order in which grammatical structures are learned, in the systematic errors are made, and in the interim constructions learners use. This organization, however, does not necessarily reflect the organization of the teaching curriculum.

Monitoring, the third internal process, is a kind of self-editing process in which language learners who are very concerned about linguistic expressions use conscious rules to produce sentences. Language learners who have a high desire to communicate and who are not embarrassed by making mistakes use the monitor less than those who are more selfconscious.

These three processors are affected by the learner's personality and age, which inhibit or enhance their activities. For example, a learner with an outgoing personality may filter out less language than one who is less

confident. Or an adult may organize more of the language at once than a young. Although many researchers have learned that the first language has a smaller effect on second language acquisition than previously thought, 5% of the errors made by children and 20% of the errors made by adults are due to the first language interference.

4. The Reseach Design
4.1. Collection of Data
The corpus of data used for this analysis consists of English utterances produced by Koreans who have learned English in a normal classroom setting. Data were collected as means of an elicitation procedure which require direct translation from Korean to English. This technique gives us some advantages of the following. First, the translation technique provides data with which the researcher is concerned with by forcing the subjects to attempt to form a desired structure in the target language. If this kind of control were not employed, the subject may freely avoid using the structures that the researcher is aiming for analysis. Second, it assures that the subjects understand fully the meaning of the sentence that they are required to produce. Third, the researcher can obtain some insights into how the subjects organize new constructions to express the intended meaning. Fourth, it can give us facility for analyzing "covert errors" which may not be identified with other methods. Since the meaning is already given in the native language, Korean, the analyst can capture the semantic information on what the subjects intend to say.

4.2. Subjects
The subjects involved in this study are all native speakers of Korean who learned English as a foreign language in Korea and they are all living in Gainesville, Florida, U.S.A. For experimental purposes, only college graduates are selected as informants and they did not receive any formal instruction in English after graduation. They all learned English in a formal classroom setting with little or no contact with native speakers of English. Grammar-translation was the principal teaching method used and the school text books, which focus on forms rather than communicative functions, were the main source of linguistic input.

4.3. Testing Procedure
The testing was designed to reveal the role of native language interference in learners' interlanguage systems. The testing sentences were

given in written form, and the subjects were asked to respond in writing. The written response was preferred to an oral response because the former is easier to analyze than the later which might be complicated by false starts, hesitations, omissions, additions, and other performance variables. The subjects were instructed to attend to the semantic content of each sentence and write its translation in correct English during a period of thirty seconds. If the subjects had not had a complete control of the sytax of the construction, it was assumed that their responses would reflect either interlingual or intralingual transfer of syntactic rules.

4.4. Materials
The text consisting of 50 sentences was prepared to test the subjects, mastery of the major grammatical structures of English. These structures include i) those that are most common in speech and ii) those that are supposed to have been presented to the subjects in school

5. Error Analysis
5.1. Identification and description of errors
The data collected and analyzed for this study reveal several facts about the Korean learners' performance in English. Categories of errors and non-errors made by chance reflecting the influence of Korean are established as follows: i) Deletion, ii) Substitution, iii) Addition, iv) Repetition, v) Ordering, vi) Word choice, and vii) Direct Translation.

5.1.a. Deletion Errors
Errors in this category occurred when there are no corresponding elements in Korean or when the corresponding elements that exist in Korean are not clearly marked as compared with their counterparts in English.
(i) Deletion of Expletives: The expletives 'it' and 'there' do not have their counterparts in Korean. When the subjects were asked to make a sentence using 'it' or 'there', 'it' is either deleted or replaced by the "real" subject.

(1) a. ! No more coffee left. (There isn't any coffee left)
    b. ! Last winter was a little cold. (It was not very cold last winter)

(ii) Deletion of Infinitive Marker "to": The deletion of the filler 'it' is often accompanied by the deletion of the infinitive marker "to". Its deletion also occurs when the infinitive construction functions as the object of the main verb or as the modifier of the verb. An example of this kind is given in

(2):

    (2) Why is it so difficult __ learn English?

    (iii) Deletion of subject: In Korean, it is quite common to omit the subject, whereas such omission is very rare in English. Its deletion in Korean occurs when it is obvious from the sentential or discourse context.

    (3) ! Don't leave now. (Let's not start now)

    (iv) Deletion of Determiners: The deletion of determiners such as articles and personal pronouns in the genitive form is very common to Korean learners of English. It may be attributed to the nonexistence of articles and the convention of Korean which deletes personal possessive pronouns when they are obvious from the context.

    (4) ! I am listening to __ radio now.

    (v) Deletion of preposition: The deletion of prepositions usually occurs when they are used with intransitive verbs to form prepositional verbs such as "look at", "listen to", "think of", "wait for", and so on. When an intransitive verb is used along with a preposition, the combined word function like a transitive verb. The Korean equivalents for these prepositional verbs are all singleword verbs, and the same form is used for both the transitive and the intransitive.

    (5) a. Adictionary is different ___ __ encyclopedia.
        (A dictionary is different from an encyclopedia.)
      b. ! I saw him when I was waiting __ the bus.

In example (5a), preposition from as well as an article an is deleted.
In example (5b), for is deleted because of the reason above.

    (vi) Deletion of plural marker: The deletion of the plural marker occurs with nouns when they are modified by numeratives indicating plurality, and with subject complements when the subject is plural in number.

    (6) a. ! My (older) brothers got medical doctor___.
      b. ! My (older) brothers became a doctor.

Since nouns modified by plural numeratives is enough to indicate the plurality of both subjects and subject complements, pluralization of the complements is not necessary in Korean. This linguistic fact instigates plural marker deletion for Korean learners of English in their speech.

In addition to the typical deletion errors discussed so far, there are some areas of difficulty with Korean learners of English: Deletion of auxiliary "do", Deletion of "tag questions", Deletion of copular "be" and Deletion of conjunctions.

5.1.b. Substitution Errors

Substitution refers to replacement of elements in a sentence. Two kinds of substitution are found: erroneous and non-erroneous. Erroneous substitution refers to a case when the substituted element consititutes an error in English. Non-erroneous substitution refers to a case where a substitution does not cause any error in English, but it is attributable to the influence of the native language structure. The current study only discusses erroneous substitutions.

(i) Lexical Substitution
(7) ! He is still young to go (to) school. (He is too young to go to school.)
(8) ! I saw him when I was waiting __ the bus.
  (I saw him while I was waiting for the bus.)
(9) ! don't like apples and he doesn't too.
  (I don't like apples and he doesn't either)

(ii) Tense substitution
(10) ! He had come here to take this book. (He came here to take this book.)
(11) ! Where do you want to go shopping with ?
  (Where will you go shopping with ?)
(12) ! Do I start now ? (Shall we begin now ?)
(13) ! Where have you been during the winter vacation ?
  (Where were you during the winter vacation ?)

(iii) Preposition Substitution
(14) ! Sometimes he is late to the class. (He is sometimes late for class.)
(15) ! I met him yesterday morning in the library. (for at)
(16) ! Will you add some sugar to the coffee. (for in your)

5.1.c. Addition Errors

Erroneous addition refers to the use of uncalled-for elements in a sentence. Three types of additions are found: addition of prepositions,

addition of content words and addition of articles.

(i) Addition of prepositions: The erroneous addition of presposition occurs when it is added to a verb that does not require it, i.e., the addition of "like" to the resultative verb "look" as in "look like eighteen years old." Note the following:

(17) ! He does not look like 18 years old.
(18) ! He lives in the next door.

(ii) Addition of content word: This type of addition occurs when elements in Korean, which are lexialized in English, are directly carried over into English, i.l., "next turn".

(19) ! Who is next turn ?

(iii) Addition of articles: This is in most cases attributable to such intralingual sources as overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restiction, and transfer of training. This intralingual predominance can be explained by the fact that the use of articles is null in Korean.

(20) ! How far is it from here to the school ?
(21) ! It looks like a rain.

Here are, however, some errors which seem to reflect interlingual causes. For, example, the use of "the" in "He lives in the next door" may be by-product to the use of the preposition 'in' which is typical of Korean structure where the locative case marker is always used.

5.1.d. Repetition
Repetition here refers to the repeated use of words that were used earlier in the sentence. Repetition errors have not been observed in this study.

5.1.e. Word Oder Errors
English word order poses one of the most difficult problems for Korean learners. The fact that there is a big difference in word order between the two languages causes a lot of production errors in English.

(i) Word Order Errors caused by Deletion/Substitution Process, As noted earlier, a deletion-substitution process is a very common phenomenon in Korean learners' English. In this process, there occurs a complex interaction of Korean and English elements. The result of this interaction is assumed to be the main cause of word order

errors.

(22) ! Last winter was a little cold.(It wasn't very cold last winter.)
(23) ! They bought several cars made in U.S.A.
(They bought several new American cars.)

(ii) Question Formation: English question transformation requires subject-verb inversion while Korean does not. Formation errors of this type abound in the present data. Here are some examples from the data.

(24) ! Who has these <u>books</u>? (Whose book are these?)
(25) ! It is so hard to learning English? (Why is it s hard to learn English?)
(26) Is she your mother who sitting in the chair?
(Is the woman sitting on the bench your mother?)

(iii) Modification of noun phrases: In Korean, all modifiers of nouns precede the modified nouns. The carryover of this characteristics into English causes a serious error like the positioning of a relative clause before the noun phrase it modifies. Another common source of these kinds of errors is a structure in which a seriese of modifiers precedes a noun. The ordering of these modifiers is a source of great difficulty for Korean learners because of the differences in this respect between the two languages.

(23) ! They bought several cars made in U.S.A.
(They bought several new American cars.)

(iv) Modification of verb phrases: Modifiers of verbs in Korean come before the verbs. The carryover of this structural behavior is manifested in a number of word-order errors. As in the case of substitution, non-errors should be considered also. Non-errors are those that are consistent with the target language rule but attributable to native language influence. There is a tendency of Korean learners to place the subordinate adverbial clause before the main clause may be said to reflect the carryover of the Korean word order.

(24) ! How livg does it take from here to home by bus?
(How long does it take to get by bus from here to your house?)

5.1.f. Wrong Choice of words

Vocablary choice is one of the most difficult problems for foreign language learners. Lexical errors occur on syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions. These errors may be categorized as follows:

(i) When Korean words have more than one English equivalent: In this case, learners often find it difficult to distinguish one English equivalent from another. They tend to associate the most common of the equivalents with the Korean word in question.

(25) ! They have not come yet, have they?
(They haven't arrived yet, have they?)
(26) How long is it from here to__ school?(How far is it from here..)

(ii) When Korean words have polysemic English equivalents: When one Korean word has an English equivalent with more than one meaning, Korean learnes tend to take only the meaning that is the same as the meaning of the Korean word in question. For example, /chip/ in Korean refers both 'house' and 'home' and this linguistic fact causes some errors as follows:

(27) ! How long does it take by bus to home?
(How long does it take to get by bus from here to your house?)

(iii) When there are differences in practical usage: Errors in large numbers on a pragmatic dimension of usage. These errors often derive from language specific expressions. For example, "go to the hospital" i the sense of "see a doctor" and " our wife" meaning "my wife" are typical of Korean way of speaking.

5.1.g. Errors Caused by Direct Translation
Direct or literal translation of native language expressions seems to be universal phenomenon that takes place in the productive use of a foreign language. This seems to be inevitable because attempting to express his thought in the target language, a foreign language learner converts it into his own language and then express it in the target language. In this process, wrong semantic and syntactic associations are made between the two languages.

5.2. Implication of Error Analysis
The findings from the analysis of learner-produced errors in this section tend to confirm the followings. First, it is obvious that a learner's interlanguage system is different from both the native and target language systems, i.e., it consists of elements from both languages interacting each other. Second, the influence of the native language is evident on all major structures in the target language. Third, interference errors do not occur randomly, but reveal the systematic nature of their own. Fourth, the results tend to confirm that native language intherference is ascribable to the three

categories: i) Non-existence of target language features in the native language, interlingual differences, and interlingual similarities.

6. Conclusion

To make comprehensible input to the second language learners, it seems to be necessary that we need to know the influece of the native language of the language learners. The current study have nly shown that there are some areas that need to be focused on for a particular group of learners. A further research, however, needs to be done for the efficiency of this analysis forewarding a good teaching manual for the second language learners.

Notes

1. Lado(1957, 58) argues that negative transfer or interference of the native language, or simply L1, will occur if the target language is quite different from the first language.
2. See Krashen (1976 and 1977) and Dulay et al. (1982) for more details.
3. Ellis(1986) further argues that the notion of intake is important to refer to the part of input that is processed by the language learner.

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Hea-Young Yum
Audio-visual center
Wonkwang University
344-2 Shinyong-dong
Iksan, chonbuk