

INTERFERENCE OR BRIDGE- MOTHER TONGUE ON OTHER TONGUE

Learning Objectives

After completion of this unit students will be able to:

- Develop knowledge about characteristics and features of language.
- Develop knowledge about significance of mother tongue.
- Develop understanding about the interference of mother tongue in learning foreign languages.
- Develop understanding on second language and other languages.
- Differentiate between mother tongue and second language.
- List out factors affecting acquisition of second language.

Introduction

Language is so familiar a feature of our daily life that we tend to regard it as both natural and simple language is an essential element in the culture of a society, in fact the basis of cultural activities of a social organism without language a human society would be unthinkable, without it human life would exist , but there shall be no standard and no transmission of all that is best in human tradition an civilization one generation to another.

It is the ability to acquire and use complex systems of communication particularly the human ability to so and a language is any specific example of such a system. The scientific study of language is called linguistics. Estimates of the number f languages in the world vary between 5,000 and 7,000. However, any precise estimate depends on a partly arbitrary distinction between languages and dialects. Natural languages are spoken or signed but any language can ne encoded into secondary media using auditory, visual or tactile stimuli. Depending on philosophical perspectives regarding the definition of language and meaning when used as a general concept “language” may refer to the cognitive ability to learn and use systems of complex communication.

Early History

The formal study of the language is often considered to have started in India with Panini, the 5th century BC grammarian who formulated 3959 rules of Sanskrit morphology. However, Sumerian scribes already studied the difference between Sumerian and Akkadian grammar around 1,900 BC. Subsequent grammatical traditions developed in all the ancient cultures that adopted writing in the 17th century AD, the French Port Royal Grammarians develop the idea that the grammars of all the languages were a reflection of the universal basis of thought, and therefore that grammar was universal.

Characteristics and features of Language

A careful probe into the nature of language reveals that language is not merely “a means of communication”. It is much more than that. It is not merely “the expression of thought” by means speech sound. Language is learned arbitrary system of vocal symbols through which human beings interact in terms of their common cultural expression and “language habits are more than motor skills of tongue and lip; they are units of sound and units of thought established in physical form within the brain.” Based on this description of the nature of language, we arrive at a few important but very basic, linguistic principles. Some of the characteristics are:

- *Language is Arbitrary:*

Language is arbitrary in the sense that there is no inherent relation between the words of the language and their meanings. There is no inevitable relationship. There is no scientific explanation for the word “book” or “table” to mean a certain definite object. The roots of all words the rules of sentence structure to give meanings are all arbitrary.

- *Language is social:*

Language is a set of conventional communicative signals used by humans for communication in a society. Language in this sense is a possession of a social group, comprising and indispensable

set of rules which permits its members to relate to each other, to interact with each other, to cooperate with each other. It is a social institution.

- *Language is symbolic:*

Language consists of various sound, symbols and their graph logical counterparts that are employed to denote some objects, occurrence, and meaning. Words in or language are not mere signs or figures, but symbols of meaning.

- *Language changes:*

Language is related to time; it is subjected to change as long it's spoken. This is true of a living language with is being spoken, a language which is dynamic.

Mother tongue or Mother language:

At first language L1 is the language or are the languages a person has learned from birth or within the critical period in some countries, the term native language or mother tongue refer to the language of one's ethnic group rather than one's first language. Sometimes the term mother tongue is used for the language that a person learned as a child at home. They are an authority on their given language due to their natural acquisition process regarding the language.

Significance of MotherTongue.

The first language of a child is a part of their personal, social, cultural identity. It is basically responsible for differentiating the linguistic competence of acting. Another impact of first language is that it brings about the reflection and learning of successful social patterns of acting and speaking.

Interference of Mother tongue

Interference from the mother tongue is likely to find its way into the following areas of learning a foreign language, especially English.

- *The area of sounds.*

It is a matter of common observation that English pronunciation of the students at those schools where the language is taught as a foreign speech is hopelessly bad. The child's ears have been attuned to the sounds of his mother tongue and he cannot distinguish between the sound of his mother tongue and similar or nearly similar sounds of English. He pronounces English words the way he taught to have pronounced in his mother tongue.

- *Spelling pronunciation*

Most of the Indian scripts are phonetic in nature, that is, they are read as they are written. Each sound is only one fixed symbol but the difficulty with the English is that it is not a phonetic language. Some sound may have different spelling and some spelling may have different sound. Example: -Some spelling "ough" in the words though, rough, ought to have different sounds in each case. Spelling pronunciation is nothing but carrying over of the mother-tongue habit to learning English.

- *The area of word-order (syntax)*

English has a characteristic structure and word-order. In this language the word-order is of supreme importance. If you change the word-order, you change the meaning of an expression. Example: - 'Bring me oil lamp' and 'Bring me lamp oil'. The student is apt to confuse this, word order by copying the word-order from his mother tongue. When he speaks English or expresses himself in written English, he unconsciously follows the mother tongue ways of expression. He is to be checked time and again from indulging into word for word translation into English and thus spoil the beauty of his expression.

- *The areas of grammar*

The grammatical forms which the child learns during the first five years of his learning the mother tongue are most likely to interfere with the grammatical forms of the new language that he is required to learn. There are other grammatical forms in which the mother tongue interferes with English and the pupil's achievement in English is hampered by his falling back to his mother tongue habit.

Other tongue or other language

A person second language or L2 is a language that is not the native language of the speaker, but that is used in the locale of that person. In contrast, a foreign language is a language that is learned in an area where that language is not generally spoken. More informally, a second language can be said to be any languages learned in addition to one's native language, especially in context of second language acquisition. A person's first language is not necessarily a dominant language, the one they use most or are comfortable with.

Other Tongue Acquisition

The distinction between acquiring and learning was made by Stephen Krashen (1982) as part of his Monitor theory. According to him, the acquisition of a language is a natural process, whereas learning a language is a conscious one. Other tongue or second language has been influenced by both linguistic and psychological theories, one of the dominate linguistic theories hypothesis that a device or amodule sort in the brain contains innate knowledge. Many psychological theories, on the other hand, hypothesis that cognitive mechanism, responsible for much of human learning, process language. Other dominant theories and points of research include second language acquisition studies, verbal behavior, morphing studies, behaviorism, error analysis and other acquisitions.

- *Effect of age*

The defining difference between a first language L1 and a second language L2 is the age the person learned the language. In most cases people never achieve the same level of fluency and comprehension in their second languages as in their first language. As far as the relation between age and attainment of second language acquisition is concerned, people who encounter foreign language in early age, begin natural exposure to second languages and obtain better proficiency than those who learn the second language as an adult.

- *Speed*

Acquiring a second language can be a lifelong learning process for many despite persistent efforts, most learners of a second language will never become fully native. Like in it, although with practice considerable fluency can be achieved.

- *Correction*

Error correction does not seem to have a direct influence on learning a second language. Instruction may affect the rate of learning, but the stages remain the same. Adolescents and adults who know the rule are faster than those who do not.

Similarities and Differences between L1 and L2:

	L1	L2
SPEED	Acquisition is rapid	NA
STAGES	Systematic stages of development	Systematic stages of development
SUCCESS (L1)	Inevitable	Not Inevitable
SUCCESS(L2)	Successful	Rarely fully successful

The factors that influence the acquisition of a second language:

(a) Internal Factors:

- *Personality:* introverted learners usually make slower progress, particularly in the development of oral skills. They are less likely to take advantage of opportunities to speak or to seek out opportunities.
- *Cognition:* In general, it seems that students with greater cognitive abilities will make the faster progress. Some linguists believe that there is a specific, innate language learning ability that is stronger in some students.
- *Native language:* Students who are learning a second language which is from the same language family as their first language have, in general, a much easier task than those who aren't.

(b) External factors:

- *Curriculum:* Language learning is less likely to place if students are fully submersed into the mainstream program without any extra assistance.
- *Instruction:* Clearly, some language teachers are better than others at providing appropriate and effective learning experiences for the students in their classroom. These students will make faster progress.
- *Culture and Status:* There is some evidence that students in situations where their own culture has a lower status than that of the culture in which they are learning the language make slower progress.
- *Access to native speakers:* The opportunity to interact with native speakers both within and outside of the classroom is a significant advantage. Native speakers are linguistic models and can provide appropriate feedback. Clearly, second language learners who have no extensive access to native speakers are likely to make slower progress, particularly in the oral aspects of the language acquisition.

Conclusion

Being successful in learning a second language can seem like a daunting take. And though the first language or the mother tongue influences across all parts of language learning, from vocabulary and grammar to function and pronunciation, a good language learner uses positive learning strategies. He or she is an active learner who is constantly searching for meaning. Also, a learner demonstrates or willingness to practice and use the language in real communication. He also monitors himself and his learning has a strong drive to communicate and has a good ear and good listening skills.

Check your understanding

- What are the characteristic features of language?
- What is the significance of mother tongue in one's life ?
- Differentiate between mother tongue and second language.
- Discuss the interference of mother tongue in learning foreign languages.
- What are the factors affecting learning of foreign language