

Cross-linguistic influence in Cantonese-English bilingual children: the case of right-dislocation

Haoyan Ge, Stephen Matthews and Virginia Yip Poster 21-May

"The paper investigates the conditions on and directionality of cross-linguistic influence in bilingual acquisition by looking at the development of right-dislocation in Cantonese-English bilingual children. Hulk and Müller (2000) hypothesize two conditions on cross-linguistic influence in bilingual acquisition: (1) the structure involves the interface of two modules of grammar and (2) the structure in which cross-linguistic influence occurs is one where two languages overlap. If the hypothesis is correct, then one might expect cross-linguistic influence to occur in the bilingual acquisition of right-dislocation (RD) constructions, as RD is a phenomenon at the interface of syntax and pragmatics, and shows partial structural overlap at the surface level in the two target languages (Yip, 2013). However, Ge et al.'s (2013) study calls into questions whether these two conditions can adequately account for the quantitative and qualitative differences between Cantonese-English bilingual and English-speaking children in the acquisition of English RD.

The present corpus-based study extends previous findings on cross-linguistic influence by comparing the development of Cantonese RD in seven Cantonese-English bilingual children (Yip & Matthews, 2007) and eight age-matched Cantonese-speaking children. Cross-linguistic influence from English to Cantonese is observed in the distribution of three types of Cantonese RD (examples see (1) (2) and (3)): bilingual children have a significantly lower proportion of null-pronominal RD, and a higher proportion of copying RD and pronominal RD, in comparison to their Cantonese-speaking peers. With regard to the rate of development, Cantonese-speaking children tend to produce more Cantonese RD with increase in age; however, a similar pattern was not evident in bilingual children's development by the age of four. The results also show that the pronoun as dislocated element appears 6 months later in bilinguals than in Cantonese-speaking children. We attribute the delay in bilingual children's use of pronoun as dislocated elements (as in (2)) to the influence of English. Furthermore, bilingual children produce non-target forms that are not attested in Cantonese-speaking children, as shown in (4).

Moreover, language dominance and individual variation must be at work in interacting with the two conditions to explain the overall picture. Cantonese-dominant bilingual children produce Cantonese RD as frequently as their eight Cantonese-speaking counterparts, while the English-dominant child dislocates much less frequently than other bilingual peers. In addition, the English-dominant child produces pronominal RD before copying RD and null-pronominal RD in Cantonese, showing a pattern that contrasts with the other non-English-dominant bilingual children. Furthermore, bilingual children exhibit larger individual variation than Cantonese-speaking children in terms of the dislocated elements.

The findings are consistent with previous work (Ge et al. 2013) in suggesting that the extent and degree of cross-linguistic influence must be accounted for by the interaction of a number of factors. Along with the cross-linguistic influence from Cantonese to English found in the case of English RD, the present findings show that cross-linguistic influence can manifest itself quantitatively and qualitatively in two directions, a result not predicted by Hulk and Müller's (2000) hypothesis.

Examples:

Three types of Cantonese RD: null-pronominal RD, copying RD and pronominal RD, are shown in (1), (2) and (3) respectively (Cheung, 2009, 2012; Matthews & Yip, 2011):

(1) 好 叻 喎, 你.

hou2 lek1 wo3, nei5
very smart SP you
'You are so smart.'

(2) 佢 好 冇 耐 心 嘅, 佢.

keoi5 hou2 mou5 noi6sam1 gaa3, keoi5
he very have-not patience SP he
'He is not very patient (he isn't).'

(3) 佢 好 冇 耐 心 架, 阿明.

keoi5 hou2 mou5 noi6sam1 gaa3, Aa3Ming4

he very have-not patience SP AaMing

'He is not very patient, AaMing.'

Non-target form of Cantonese RD produced by bilingual children:

(4) 有 好 多 架, 我 有.

jau5 hou2 do1 gaa3 ngo5 jau5

have very many SP I have

'I have many (I have).' (Janet 3;06.16)

Bilingual Education in Spain: A Fulbright Senior Scholar Research Project

Linda Gerena and Maria Dolores Ramirez Paper Session 15

"In 2011 a Fulbright Senior Scholar Research grant, sponsored and supported by the United States State Department and the Government of Spain, was awarded to study bilingual program designs in Madrid Spain, and to investigate effective practices that lead to positive student outcomes in both language and content material.

Throughout Spain bilingual education is being promoted and developed in schools, with the objective of teaching a second language, overwhelmingly English (in communities that are officially bilingual, English is the third language) from pre-kindergarten through secondary levels. The main vehicle in Spain for bilingual teaching is known as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), based on the Council of Europe Framework (2005).

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Comunidad de Madrid, whose official order for bilingual education (Order 1672/2009, April 16, 2009, paragraph 1) begins by stating that 'the Comunidad de Madrid is convinced that bilingualism is imperative for their students to be effective and integrated participants in the European Union and that the Ministry of Education is demanding renewed efforts to achieve this goal' (Derecho.com, 2010, unofficial translation of original text). As a result, the pace and scope of bilingual program development and implementation in the Comunidad de Madrid have been rapid. In 2007, there were approximately 250 primary bilingual public schools, with over 2000 native English speaking teaching assistants and 880 officially trained and certified bilingual teachers. By 2015, the target is to prepare the students in the Comunidad de Madrid to become fully competent in English. To achieve this, the goal is to have over 3000 bilingual teachers. In addition, 100% of early childhood centers will be bilingual, 50 % of all primary schools will be bilingual centers, and 30% of secondary and high schools will be fully developed as bilingual centers.

The implementation of these programs has relied mainly on the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, which requires an important shift in terms of teaching methodology. Within this study, CLIL lessons were observed and analyzed to gauge the impact that CLIL may have in teaching and learning processes and pedagogy. Data was gathered from over 30 field observations of public primary and middle schools classes in educational centers located in the Northern area of Madrid during 2012. An observational protocol was developed and used to record field observations and an analysis tool was developed to assure consistency in subsequent data analysis. The observational protocol included detailed components describing major areas of interest such as language and content goals and objectives, lesson delivery strategies, student centered pedagogy, student feedback, and assessments, among others.

This session will present the results of two research questions, "What effective practices can be observed in bilingual classrooms?" and "Are these practices standard or typical in bilingual classrooms?" It will also discuss the participants, methodology, and data collection tools, including the observational protocol and the analysis tool. Findings will be described and explained to help construct an overview of effective practices in CLIL settings in bilingual programs in Spain."

Heaviness vs. newness in heritage speakers' judgments of Spanish word order patterns

Inmaculada Gómez Soler and Diego Pascual y Cabo Poster 23-May

"Background: Two central issues in heritage speaker (HS) acquisition research are (i) to ascertain which areas of language are acquired at a monolingual-like level and which are not, and (ii) to determine why they do/do not pose acquisitional challenges or delays. This study contributes to this line of research by examining HS's knowledge of the effect(s) of pragmatic and phonological factors on Spanish word order. Our research questions are: Do HSs comply with the End-Focus and End-Weight Principle (Quirk at al. 1985)? The former states that new information in the discourse