Differences and Similarities between the Fields of Bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition

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Bilingualism

According to Liddicoat (1991, p. 1), bilingualism is "the ability to use two (or even more) languages". Yet, to this author, in order to assess a bilingual's language competence, the four skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing need to be taken into account regarding each language spoken by the individual. Moreover, Grosjean (2008, p. 10), concerning bilingualism, states that it "is the regular use of two or more languages (or dialects), and bilinguals are those people who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives". Besides that, with respect to the evaluation of bilinguals' competence in language, Grosjean defends that it should encompass the languages spoken by the bilingual as in the same way these languages are used by him or her on his/her daily basis. The author also presents two views of the bilingual person such as the monolingual, which consists of two distinct language systems as if this individual is, actually, the junction of two monolinguals and as consequence, this concept of bilingualism led to the notion of a "real" bilingual with well-balanced language skills regarding the languages this person speaks. Also, as it consists of two separate language competencies, if one accidentally gets in touch with the other it is the result of "borrowings" and "code switches". (op. cit., p. 12). Consequently, Grosjean states his opinion about how he disagrees with this view and in addition to that, the author brings up the "wholistic" view of bilingualism that consists of a single and unique language setting in which the languages spoken by the bilingual interact, forming one language system. Therefore, according to the author, the "bilingual is a fully competent speaker-hearer" and besides developing competences in both languages the speaker can also develop another one combining those two in order to meet his/her needs.

Yet, Myers-Scotton (2006) claims that what stimulates bilingualism is the contact among those who do not share the same first language (L1). Besides, the author draws attention to the fact that "bilingualism is a natural outcome of the socio-political forces that create groups and their language flourish" (p. 9). In addition, Baker (2011, p. 12), when regarding bilingualism affirmed that "language is not produced in a vacuum", to this extent, the people involved as well as the environment need to be taken into consideration. Additionally, the bilinguals' use of language varies according to their contexts and purposes (GROSJEAN, 1997). In this regard, there are different ways of referring to bilingual individuals and, as claimed by Butler and Hakuta (2004, p. 115), the classification of them into categories based

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on "linguistic, cognitive, developmental and social dimensions" consists of the field's preferred activity, that is, the authors emphasize that when classifying the bilinguals, the relationship between the proficiency of both the L1 and the L2, the age, and the status of a language in society need to be considered. Therefore, in order to present a few of them, Moradi (2014) puts together some of the bilinguals' classifications such as the early/late; simultaneous/successive; balanced/dominant; compound/coordinate/subordinate; folk/ elite as well as additive/subtractive. Hence, according to BaetensBeardsmore (1986, p. 28 *apud* MORADI, 2014, p. 108), the early bilingual acquires languages "in the preadolescent phase of life", whereas the late bilingual acquires one language before and the other after this period of preadolescence when the L1 experiences can reflect into the learning of the L2 (MORADI, 2014). As a consequence, the early bilinguals tend to have a "native-like linguistic competence" in regard to the languages they acquire in this stage. Also, early bilingualism can be divided into two categories: simultaneous and successive. The first corresponds to the acquisition of two languages concurrently under the age of eight and the latter occurs when the early bilingual has in part acquired the L1 and then begins to learn L2.

Peal and Lambert (1962 *apud* MORADI, 2014, p. 108) explain the difference between a balanced and a dominant (unbalanced) bilingual. The balanced bilingual is the one whose "proficiency and mastery" of the languages acquired are equal. While the unbalanced one tends to develop more in one of the languages acquired.

In respect to compound, coordinate and subordinate bilinguals, Weinreich (1953 *apud* MORADI, 2014) claims that they concern the bilinguals' linguistic codes and the meaning units. Thus, whereas a compound bilingual has only one meaning unit to more than one linguistic code (language acquired), the coordinate has different meaning units according to the linguistic codes the person possesses, that is, for each language, there is a specific meaning unit. Yet, the subordinate bilinguals have different linguistic codes, however, they only have one meaning unit that needs the L1 to be accessed.

Fishman (1997 *apud* MORADI, 2014, p. 109) points out that the social, as well as cultural aspects, are also involved when classifying types of bilinguals, thus, the author presents the folk and the elite terms. Therefore, the folk label is used in regard to those who speak a non-dominant language from a minority group when compared to the "predominant language" of a certain society, while elite bilinguals are the ones who speak languages that are considered relevant and beneficial inside a given community.

Finally, when it comes to additive and subtractive bilinguals, Lambert (1994 *apud* MORADI, 2014) states that the former relates to the person who learns an L2 and does not stop using the L1, therefore, both languages keep developing. On the other hand, the subtractive term concerns the bilingual whose L1 tends to be lost in the process of learning an L2.

In addition, another point that has been studied in this field is the linguistic mode, that according to Grosjean (2008), it is the condition in which the bilinguals activate or, consequently, deactivate a given language regarding the bilingual needs. Yet, what has also been researched is how a chosen linguistic mode can affect a bilingual's language behavior.

Second Language Acquisition

Prior to the establishment of the second language acquisition (SLA) as theory, the concerns regarding how other languages than the first one were acquired used to be linked to pedagogical issues as well as the theory that has originated from "a practical orientation to language teaching" (VANPATTEN; WILLIAMS, 2014, p. 17). In addition to that, the authors state that before the 1990s the SLA theory explanation relied on both behaviorism and structural linguistics, thus the research at that time was "essentially descriptive" (LARSEN FREE-MAN, 1991, p. 315). Therefore, since its beginning, this theory has been receiving theoretical influence from many varied fields in order to discuss how people acquire nonprimary languages and, more specifically, why not everyone succeeds to do so (LARSEN FREEMAN, 2000).

In accordance with Gass (2013), SLA is a discipline which "refers to the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned" and when it comes to L2, it means "the acquisition of a second language both in a classroom situation, as well as in more 'natural' exposure situations" (2013, n.p.).

Moreover, to Rod Ellis (1994), "the term 'second' is generally used to refer to any language other than the first language". In respect to SLA perspectives, the author also distinguishes the *naturalistic* ("when the language is learnt through communication that takes place in naturally occurring situations") and the *instructed* ("through study, with the help of 'guidance' from reference books or classroom instructions"), highlighting that both are being considered based on the sociolinguistic view, that is, taking into account the environment and activities one is engaged with. The author also differentiates *second* and *foreign language acquisition*. The second corresponds to a language, other than the mother tongue, which is spoken in a given community, while the *foreign* "takes place in settings where the language plays no major role in the community and is primarily learnt only in the classroom" (p. 12). It is important to point out that acquisition and learning are terms used interchangeably by the author.

Additionally, in order to understand what SLA's aim is, it is necessary to master some of the Chomsky concepts such as *competence* and *performance*. The former refers to the innate capacity humans have to develop language and the latter is about how this language is used (ELLIS, 1994). Second language acquisition's goal, thus, is to describe and explain the "learners' linguistic or communicative competence" (p. 15). As stated by Ellis, that only can be done when the learner's performance is scrutinized. Hence, SLA focuses on the analysis of the language produced by the speaker in order to comprehend his/her competence. To do so, one of the first methods was the analysis of the learners' errors and by errors, the author means "a deviation from the norms of the target language" (p. 51).

To better understand how this field of research works, Ellis (1994, p. 18) presents "a framework for investigating L2 acquisition" consisting of four areas of the SLA theory that have specific aspects in each one to be approached by the researcher according to his/her aims. That being said, the areas are *the characteristics description of the language learners* in which four aspects can be analyzed considering the learner performance: the errors, acquisition orders and developmental sequences, variability, and pragmatic features. The second area is the *learner's external-external factors* which corresponds to the learner's social

context, input, and interaction. The third: *the learner-internal mechanisms* involving the L1 transfer, learning processes, communication strategies, and linguistic universals. Finally, the fourth: *the language learner* that consists of general factors such as motivation, and the learner strategies.

Furthermore, another author that has also been contributing to the field of SLA is Krashen, whose Monitor Theory regarding second language acquisition has its foundation based on five hypotheses as to *the acquisition-learning distinction, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis,* and *the affective filter hypothesis.* The first corresponds to acquiring ("pick up" a language", a "subconscious process") and learning (the "conscious knowledge about a language"), which are the two mechanisms adults have to develop competence in a given language (KRASHEN, 1982, p. 10). The second refers to the existence of an acquisition order of grammar structures. The third, on one hand, refers to the acquisition and learning of a second language, however, it specifies that acquisition happens in the first stage when the sentences are starting to be produced as well as it is related to fluency. On the other hand, learning plays a role in correcting the utterances that are about to be or are already made, as a monitor. Nevertheless, in order to use this monitor, it is necessary to consider three conditions such as *time, focus on form,* and also, it is of fundamental importance that the "performers" *know the rule* of a language; it is said, however, that even when all these conditions are met, the monitor may not work fully.

Krashen also claims that there are three types of performers considering the Monitor Hypothesis: the *over-users* who think there is the obligation of knowing all the rules and tend to show they are afraid to make mistakes; the *under-users* who do not care about making mistakes and do not correct themselves, only if they feel something is not right, and the *optimal* who knows how to balance the conscious knowledge and uses it in a way it does not interrupt the performance. The fourth hypothesis with the aim of answering one of the most relevant questions of the field: "*how do we acquire language*", is based on the idea that acquisition happens when an amount of input, extra than what is already acquired by the performer, is given and can be understood by taking into consideration the context "which includes extra-linguistic information, our knowledge of the world, and previously acquired linguistic competence" (KRASHEN, 1985, p. 80). The last consists of the affective filter hypothesis that defends how emotional aspects such as *motivation, self-confidence,* and *anxiety* can affect the second language acquisition process. Therefore, when the affective filter is high it means that the performer is probably unmotivated, not confident, or even anxious, which consequently leads to the blocking of the input, preventing it from accessing the language acquisition brain area. On the contrary, when there is motivation, confidence and the environment does not lead to anxiety, the affective filter lowers and the input is able to get in (*ibid.*, p. 81).

It is possible to identify some of the characteristics of both fields in the table below.

Bilingualism	Second language acquisition
The discipline that studies the ability to use two or more languages or dialects on a daily basis.	A discipline that studies the process of acquiring/learning another language after the native one has already been acquired/learned.
Classify types of bilinguals according to linguistic, developmental and social dimensions; evaluate the competence in language considering the languages as they are used in everyday life.	Describe and explain the learners' linguistic or communicative competence focusing on specific aspects of their performance.
Analysis of linguistic mode and its consequence on the bilingual language behavior.	Hypotheses aiming to answer how another than the first language is acquired.

SLA theory at its beginning sought to describe and explain the learners' language considering their performance, as well as their errors, whereas bilingualism focused on the comparison between the bilingual and the monolingual and how the languages one speaks (or not) interfere in his/her intelligence.

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Authors' bio

The co-author of the same paper, **Anna Kellen Ribeiro Weng**, has presently been working as an EFL teacher in Brazil since 2017. She is primarily interested in Bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition. As an English teacher, her main focus has been on the teacher identity formation during the process of initial teaching education. She is graduated in English language and literature from the Mid Western State University, Brazil. Her central areas of concern comprise written diary, reports regarding her teaching experience.

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