

Distinction Between Language Acquisition and Language Learning: A Comparative Study

Imran Hussain

Department of English Linguistics, University of Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

Abstract

The study aspires at to pencil in a disparity between two seemingly alike but distinctive apart phenomenon i.e. language learning (LL) and language acquisition (LA). LA is an intuitive route that transpires naturally devoid of any exertion or intention. During that process, the acquirer of the language is unaware of the grammatical conventions or the syntactic structure of the language involved. All through the expansion of LA the learner necessitates a source of natural communication. It puts down emphasis on the memo and not the form that is why it is entitled communicative. Its deep-seated objective is to pass on the message or converse with the people around the apprentice. Language learning is cognizant or intentional activity of erudition a language for one or the erstwhile drive. A learner must contrive a laborious and systematic exertion to become skilled at or master a language unlike LA which he gets hold off exclusive of any methodical or even conscious involvement. The shot is qualitative in approach keeping in view the stratagems and dynamics affecting LL and LA.

Keywords: Language learning, L acquisition, learning strategies, factors affecting learning

1. Introduction:

As a natural course in LA the learner anticipates at to grasp lingual dexterities intrinsically from the cradle of his or her mother without any premeditated and heedful labour. Being a cognitive progression, a learner gets hold of language spontaneously with other worldly toils and expertise's (Corder, 1982). Additionally, a child acquires his or her native tongue in practice by way of verbal interaction he or she comes across whereas interrelating and communicating initially with his parents and siblings and afterwards with the social circle. This innate push for and craze to be vocalized gives birth to the phenomenon phrased as language acquisition as per views of Foppoli (2007). On the other hand, learning a language is conscious and deliberate endeavor to be adept in any lingua franca for the specific and wished-for purpose. It is a predefined line of action of getting or being equipped with certain proficiencies. In views of Corder learning chain artefacts when the mechanic of language acquisition is objectively furnished. It entails full of zip, cognizant and concentrated intentions to infiltrate something specially a language. Even though it's a permanent transformation in behaviour but the subject to overlook, practice and reinforced drill.

LL ties the reception of related information, put on the air those into mental capacity, edification and comprehension by means of intellectual toil and storing by way of memorization while LA signifies to cultivate the art of the assortment with others to comprehend and negotiate with them in a fruitful and fecund manner. Language learning engrosses principal factors affecting learning i.e. age, aptitude, motivation, interest, attitude, personality, style, environment, cognitive behaviour; demeanour and strategies being inferred and implied by the instructors. On the contrary, language acquisition captivates numerous predominate stages which take account of *the early vocalization* in the form of crying, cooing and babbling, The Holophrastic Stage, which is idiosyncratic as "When a single word stands for a phrase in a sentence, it is referred to as a holophrase" and *the first sentence stage* thereafter the stage of juxtaposition of multiple utterances fleeting through mechanically from the 1st two phases.

1.1 Language Learning Strategies:

Language use strategies integrate definite major devices being exploited to gain knowledge of a specific language which consists of subsequent

- Retrieval strategies (To reclaim the subjunctive outline as and when requisite).
- Rehearsal strategies (*Form-focused practice*).
- Cover strategies (Activity to generate the notion of having language control which actually isn't).
- Communication strategies (To instil evocative information).
- Cognitive strategies (Recognition, retrieval and storage of lexemes).
- *Meta-cognitive strategies* (Pre-assessment, scheduling, appraisal and post-review).
- Affective strategies dole out to homogenize sentiments, stimulus and attitudes.
- Social strategies encompass course of action learners opt to interrelate.
- Compensatory strategies (To presume during contexts and clues).
- Memorization strategies.

1.2 Factors Affecting Language Learning:

- Language anxiety (Trepidation of utilizing new L).
- Language ego (Apprehension of committing mistakes).
- Motivation.
- Age, sex, context and input factors.
- Aptitude, attitude and cognitive style.
- Personality and instructional vista.

1.3 Stages of Language Acquisition:

- Early vocalizations (crying, cooing and babbling) from nativity till 11 months.
- *The Holophrastic Stage* (Single word) till the age of 1.5 year.
- Two-word stage (From about 2.5 year).
- The First Sentences or *telegraphic stage* (Accumulating words together).

1.4 Factors Affecting Language Acquisition:

- Age and sex.
 - Context (Mass media and socialization).
 - Intelligence, concentration and curiosity.
 - Outlook and aptitude.
 - Home and social environ.
 - Persona and lifestyle.
 - Companionship.
 - Experiences and exposure.
 - Cognition abilities.
 - Culture and status
- Nativity (Access to native speaker)
- LAD (Language acquisition device)
- Motivation (intrinsic & extrinsic) (Effendi, R. 2005)
- Learner's traits and situational factors.
- Prior L enlargement and know-how.
- Age and brain maturity (Janet Mulroney Clark)

2. Review of Related Literature:

Maslo (2007) demonstrated the conception of LA as an acquisitioned phenomenon which is primarily footed on the essentials of what he termed as “neuro-psychological processes” (p. 41). It is somewhat contradictory to the course of action of LL which is involuntary and unpremeditated, quite familiar to the fragment by means of what children become heir to and get hold of their mother tongue without any deliberate exertion at a very initial stage of their infancy (Kramina, 2000, p. 27). Robbins (2007) unveiled the evidence of the notion that LA is of the essence and the indispensable fraction of all the lingua franca of the globe being acquired in one or the other way (p. 49). Distinctively enough LL is a course which is the intentional, deliberate and pre-planned product predestined either through formal elucidating situation or self-laborious exertion to become skilled at specific language (Kramina, 2000, p. 27). Hence, LA is integrated opus of the universal languages being learnt as insinuating out by Robbins earlier on.

Leaver et al., (2005) envisaged the perception that the know-how of language learning will be at variance reliant on whether the first (L1), second (L2) or 3rd language (L3) is being acquired, but still the concept lies around indistinct which modules of language attainment are instinctive or extrinsic. Lightbown and Spada (2001) perused that acquisition transpires all through the formative epoch of acquirer's life - typically initiating in premature childhood before the age of three - and the process is urbanized as the composition of growing up amongst people who verbalize it fluently. Quite contrary, learning is set apart as a supplementary conscious and overtly sequenced guiding the principle of “accumulating knowledge of linguistic features such as vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar, typically in an institutional setting” (Yule, 1985, p. 163). Candlin and Mercer (2001) endorsed that the former acquaintance of how lingo exerts in social context and the skin tones of the L1 will conclusively be transported and worn on as constituent of the brass tacks for culturing other languages.

Ghani (2003) expansively scrutinized the approaches with respect to LL and hinted out the ways and means the learners go in for with the intention to be adept in LL skills. It has additionally been illustrated that these skills and tones acquired essentially smooth the steps forward in accomplishing the acquaintance with that novel language. Andrew (2006) too agreed with Ghani's findings and further recommended that learners consumed

diverse LL strategies during the learning which persuade the learners to discover more prolifically and befittingly. Maurat (2002) hypothesized the recent trends in language research in which learning evolves around learners and the specified context in which the actual process takes place. Larsen and Long (2000) whispered that during the process of the 1st language acquisition female surpass male at the initial stage at least. While Saville-Troike (2006) reminisced the assumption that there is a specific talent and flair in LL held since long.

3. Theoretical Underpinning:

Theoretical outline for the current study has been outlined by the researcher from the hypothesis of Stephen Krashen. He is of the view that language can be assimilated, grasped and operated through two modules i.e. language acquisition that is unconscious and LL that is the cognizant process. To him, in LA we are least concerned and even are unaware of the grammatical rubrics, syntactical patterns and other correlated facets. But on the contrary, we have a natural urge for correctness (Stephen Krashen, 1982, p. 10). While with respect to LL, he seized the notion that contrastingly, we are well versed and conscious of the rules involved in that specific language being learnt for predefined objectives. It's all "knows about" the language which is the rules or grammar (Stephen Krashen, 1982, p. 10). By ways of attainment the contextual comprehension of the language is expanded and via learning, knowledge 'about' the language: "knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them" (Krashen 1982, p. 10).

Concerning LL, he set forth a "Monitor Hypothesis" (1981) which comprised of the *acquisition system, learned grammar and output*. He further expounded that comprehension of rules, ample time fixated on precision is imperative for *the monitor hypothesis*. He has also classified three types of users for this distinctive hypothesis, i.e. *monitor over users, under users and optimal monitor users*. Furthermore, it also tracks "The natural Order Hypothesis" which is about the natural drift or sequence of language defined by Krashen (1985) as "We acquire the rules of language in a predictable order". LA is destined through another hypothesis phrased as "Input Hypothesis" which Krashen himself demarcated as "Humans acquire language in only one way—by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input" (Stephen Krashen, 1985). In addition, input drives beyond users' knowledge of language and in LA, language conception is much more vital. The upshot of input of LA is measured by *The active Filter Hypothesis* crofting non-linguistics dynamics, i.e. fretfulness, inspiration and self-confidence.

4. Result and Discussion:

There is a chief dissimilarity marked by linguists between LA and LL. To them, these are divergent entities though seem to be identical. Acquisition of language is natural, subconscious, mandatory and innate faculty while LL is entirely conscious, optional and a process that necessitates intentional exertions to crop up. The difference can be chatted on the subsequent domains.

Conscious vs. Subconscious: LA marks its emergence subliminally in quite a natural order where the acquirer is in tangled in either manner. It is a progression in which the utterer is more concerned with communication rather than the precise usage of syntactical patterns. LL conversely is a premeditated or cognizant activity in which a learner's emphasis is on the form, rules and is mindful of the procedure taking place. Errors rectification, practice and imitation are the prime features of language learning.

Aptitude vs. Attitude: LL is dependent on the attitude of the learner as it is a going-on that very much reliant on the learner intentional frame of mind. If a learner has the attitude and commitment to cram a language with a positive mental state and temperamentally enthusiastic and ardent enough only then it might transpire with the passage of time otherwise it will be curtailed and obstructed. But contrastingly LA hinges on the aptitude of the speaker. His talent and capacity of acquisition is prominent during the process. It doesn't evoke any specific attempt to be at hand.

Motivation vs. Natural System: Motivation is a critical factor involved in culturing a language. It regulates how much devoutness, concentration and dynamism is being embarked by the learner to acquire and practice a language and how far he can preserve it in societal and conversational environ correspondingly. While acquiring a language is a natural agenda and innate system that a child or acquirer accomplishes as the time worn on through the interface and socializing quite mechanically. He doesn't prerequisite to have any sort of motivation or labour involved in LA.

Theory vs. Practice: LA is associated with utilization of etymological configurations consistent with the perception to equip primarily to interconnect or negotiate with the social order, henceforth the hub of consideration is the practice or the genuine practice of the language within the prearranged set of circumstances. Alternatively, LL is a bustle which is very much at the mercy of rules and regulation of the language being learnt and nourished so the focal point of this spectacle is on the theory of the language. Practice and rehearsal drills of the language learnt turn up later.

Focus on Written vs. Spoken: The ultimate objective of LA is to interrelate and communicate hence it resistances foremost precedence on vocalized facet of utterances. Supplementary, as it is assimilated and

espoused by dint of interface so it's customary to lay prominence on the spoken or oral facade of the language being involved all through accomplishment. But LL encompasses systematic line of action which lays eminence on the inscribed aspects of the language and that is why the structure and syntax is assumed primary significance in LL. LL yields the knowledge while LA generates ability.

Deductive vs. Inductive: The fundamental imperativeness of LL is for the student to comprehend and appreciate the structure and rules of the language, whose fragments are dissected and analyzed. The chore entails intellectual and rational exertion and inferential cognitive perspective. This sequence occupies in the rules driven while in LA is founded on the perception of inductive reasoning. In this course of action certain specimens are consumed to influence the intended result which is communication. Instances are social activities going on in and around the learner.

Personal vs. Technical: LA enthused methodology, teaching and learning are entrusted as actions that turn out to be ostensible on a personal and psychological level. The acquisitioned approach and panorama esteem the communicative act and outspread self-confidence in the learner and its foremost attentiveness is on communication and its interconnective dynamics. Contrastingly, the approach cast-off in LL is quite methodological as well as systematic and technical. It twists and whirls through numerous procedural and mechanical measures.

Translation vs. Non- Translation Approach: In learning a specified language, the role of translation is imperative. Deprived of translation, the learning activity perhaps may not proceed at initial stage at least. It stereotypically ties to the norm that embraces memorization of vocabulary. It inspires at to transmit the pupil's acquaintance about linguistic comprehension, its functioning and grammatical structures. Hence it places prodigious emphasis on L1 but in LA there is no prerequisite of translation and L1. It is the apprentice centered around with a relentless room for betterment, which with the passage of time manufactures the practical skills of understanding and speaking the lingua franca.

Internal vs. External Action: LA is the practice of internalizing a language deprived of any cautious and deliberated memorization of lexemes and their semantics values in pragmatic context. In this attempt the learner necessitates not to be mindful and heedful of the process. While in LL the table is turned the other way around which is externalized action taken place outside the native language or L1 of the learner. Likewise, in this hustle and bustle the learner is fully mindful and conscious of the process taken place. Here coming across words in context boosts the retention rate.

Social vs. Cultural Transmission: To learn a language means to absorb the style, dialect along with the syntactic and semantic structure of that specific language and it can't be learnt without being in contact or in line with the culture where that specific language is being spoken or flourished. Cultural diversity and variations can also be kept in view while culturing a language because certain words may have different connotations in diverse cultures while acquirer of language initiates interacting with his or her parents earlier on and later with siblings. That springs vent to his or her socialization which primes towards the acquisition of language.

Imitation vs. Correction: Language is assimilated by dint of imitating or reproducing what the learner catches from siblings and parents. He attempts to crop the utterances that he or she hears though not with accuracy at the initial stage. In contrast, it is substantial to note that during the process of LL children commit errors that is natural and to some linguists essential. It is mainly because if a child doesn't attempt for fear of being wrong or incorrect he will surely miss the process of correction which will create a huge barrier or hindrance in LL.

5. Research Findings:

- LA incomes to determine or opt a language for communication or interaction while LL means to study a language to operate it in everyday substances.
- The focus of LA is on the empirical entitlement of language whereas LL rivetted on the theoretical comprehension of a language.
- LA implied an unconscious and implicit medium while LL exploits conscious and explicit mode of language learning.
- The situation involves in LA is formal, but in case of LL it is informal and casual.
- LA doesn't make use of any grammatical rules while LL determinedly and for mostly stick to the rules of grammar.
- LA is the heavenly contingent on the attitude of its learners, but on the contrary LL hangs on the aptitude of its learners.
- LA encompasses the stable and sequential order of attaining a specific language while LL trails the pattern of "Simple to complex".
- In LA context, emotional attachment, the situation, environs, phonetic patterns, vocabulary and the grammatical edifice play a vivacious role.
- LA essences on the attainment of norms while LL appendages rules.

- LA enthralled on oral whereas LL is on written dynamic.
- In LA social structure while in case of LL grammatical structure plays a vital role.
- In LA environment and observation is imperative while in LL output is essential.
- LL entails an evocative interaction in target language where reciter is concerned with the connotations and not the form of utterances (Noam, C. 1994).
- Quite the opposite, LA is a natural and intrinsic process which can't be prevented or barred. (Stephen Krashen)

6. Conclusion:

There is a chief dissimilarity marked by linguists between LA and LL. In this regard, they enticement a distinctive variance between LL and LA. To them these are divergent entities though seem to be identical. To them, these are like chalk and cheese entities. Acquisition of language is natural, subconscious, mandatory and innate faculty negligent of grammatical rules and syntactic structure while LL is entirely conscious, voluntary and a progression that necessitates intentional exertions to have effect. It is the upshot of direct instruction in the rules of language. A learner must make a laborious and systematic exertion to swot or master a language unlike LA which he gets hold off shorn of any systematic or even conscious involvement. Dissimilar to LA in LL grammar and syntax is presumed copious worth. It is all about the rules how language functions in a context. LA is opting a language even though LL is cramming a language. LA is natural interface with a lingua franca while LL is footed on conformist approach of artificial sequence of learning. LA enthralled on oral whereas LL is on written dynamic.

Bibliography

- Candlin, C. N., and Mercer, N. (2001). *English Language Teaching In Its Social Context: a reader*. London: Routledge.
- Corder, S. P. (1982) *Introducing Applied Linguistics*. Penguin Books.
- Effendi, R. (2005) *To be an Effective English Teacher within Two Days*. Jakarta: Yayasan Bina Edukasi dan Konsultasi
- Foppoli, J. (2007) *An article of Language Acquisition vs. Language Learning*.
- Ghani, M. (2003). Language Learning Strategies Employed By L2 Learners. *Journal of Research*. Vol. 4.
- Janet, M. C. *The Factors that Influence the Acquisition of a Second Language*. Frankfurt International School.
- Kramaņa, I. (2000) *Lingo Didactic Theories Underlying Multi Purpose Language Acquisition*. University of Latvia
- Krashen, Stephen D. (1987). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Prentice Hall International.
- Krashen, S.D. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Krashen, S.D. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*, New York: Longman
- Larsen, F. D., & Long, M. H. (2000). *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition & Research*. London: Longman.
- Leaver, B. L., Ehrman, M., and Shekhtman, B. (2005). *Achieving Success in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lightbown, P. M., and Spada, N. (2001). Factors Affecting Second Language Learning. In Candlin, C. N., and Mercer, N. (Ed.), *English Language Teaching In Its Social Context: a reader*. London: Routledge.
- Macaro, E. (2010). *Continuum Companion to Second Language Acquisition*. London: Continuum
- Maslo, E. (2007) *Transformative Learning Space for Life-Long Foreign Languages Learning*. International Nordic-Baltic Region Conference of FIPLV Innovations in Language Teaching and Learning in the Multicultural Context 15-16th June, 2007, Riga, Latvia.
- Maurat, M. (2002). Language Learning Strategies in Foreign Language Learning & Teaching. *TESL Journal*. Vol. 8.
- Noam Chomsky (1994) *The Human Language*. Series 2
- Robbins, D. (2007) *Vygotsky's and Leontiev's Non-classical Psychology Related to Second Language Acquisition*. International Nordic-Baltic Region Conference of FIPLV Innovations in Language Teaching and Learning in the Multicultural Context 15-16th June, 2007, Riga, Latvia.
- Saville, T. M. (2006). *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yule, G. (1985). *The Study of Language: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.