



UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA

FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Trabajo de Fin de Grado

The Effects of Bilingualism on Third Language Learning

Cross-linguistic influence of
Romanian and Italian on English L3/FL

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Abstract

The following paper is theoretically framed within the conceptual context of heritage bilingualism acquisition and its cross-linguistic effect on L3. Based on it, a case study was designed with the aim of analyzing the incidence of bilingualism on third language learning. The study was carried out with 6 Romanian-Italian bilinguals studying English L3. In this case, English was considered their third language or foreign language. In this way, a sociolinguistic questionnaire was created in order to understand the participants' perspectives on the three languages and to obtain data on their linguistic profile. The next step was the design of three language tasks: written production, translation and error identification. Their purpose was to examine the types of mistakes that usually occur when writing in English, and if the cross-linguistic transfer is produced more probably from one of their L1 (Romanian as the heritage language and Italian as the main one). For this reason, a qualitative approach was adopted to collect data on English L3 learning in bilingual speakers. Documentary evidence has been assembled from the speakers in order to contrast their performance in different types of languages tasks with the existing theoretical framework. The hypothesis of this study predicted that Italian would be the main source of cross-linguistic interferences in English L3, and the results of the case study will be used in order to corroborate it. However, due to the small number of participants we cannot state with certainty that the results obtained are always the same, as if the case study were applied to an entire society.

Key words: bilingualism, cross-linguistic influence, heritage language, first language, second language, third language.

Resumen

El siguiente trabajo se enmarca teóricamente en el contexto conceptual de la adquisición del bilingüismo de herencia y su efecto interlingüístico en la L3. A partir de ello, se diseñó un estudio con el objetivo de analizar la incidencia del bilingüismo en el aprendizaje de una tercera lengua. El estudio se llevó a cabo con 6 bilingües rumano-italianos que estudiaban inglés (L3). En este caso, el inglés fue considerado su tercera lengua o lengua extranjera. De este modo, se elaboró un cuestionario sociolingüístico para conocer las perspectivas de los participantes sobre las tres lenguas y obtener datos sobre su perfil lingüístico. El siguiente paso fue el diseño de tres tareas lingüísticas: expresión escrita, traducción e identificación de errores. Su objetivo era examinar los tipos de errores que suelen producirse al escribir en inglés, y si la transferencia lingüística se produce más probablemente desde una de sus L1 (el rumano como lengua de herencia y el italiano como lengua principal). Por esa razón, se adoptó un enfoque cualitativo para recoger datos sobre el aprendizaje del inglés como L3 en hablantes bilingües. Se reunieron pruebas documentales de los hablantes para contrastar su rendimiento en diferentes tipos de tareas lingüísticas, haciendo uso del marco teórico. La hipótesis de este estudio preveía que el italiano sería la principal fuente de interferencia interlingüística en inglés L3, y los resultados se utilizarán para corroborarlo. Sin embargo, debido al reducido número de participantes no podemos afirmar con certeza que los resultados obtenidos sean siempre los mismos, como si el estudio se aplicara a toda una sociedad.

Palabras clave: bilingüismo, influencia interlingüística, lengua de herencia, primera lengua, segunda lengua, tercera lengua.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, we live in a world where human beings are more and more in contact with each other, by working, traveling and sharing experiences. Thus, learning a language is the most direct way to achieve a reciprocal understanding and a fluent conversation. Studying a language involves more than acquiring merely its morphosyntactic, phonological or structural aspects; there is a whole culture behind each language that is learned. In the past, it was considered that it was only necessary to have a fluent knowledge of English in order to communicate effectively in the complex globalised world. This, indeed, remains as it is today, since English continues to be the *lingua franca* par excellence. However, many people find it necessary to learn more languages, a factor which gradually leads us to a more multilingual world. Alarcón (2002) points out that “in the last century the proportion between monolingual and bilingual individuals has been reversed” (124). In addition, the author underlines that at the beginning of this new century we are already talking about trilingualism, which is becoming a “third major category in the description of people who populate this globalised and interconnected world” (Alarcón, 2002, 124). This work seeks to enter into this particular process with the objective of understanding the peculiarities of third language (L3) learning in a group of native bilinguals.

1.1 Theoretical Background

It is relevant to establish an explanation of the main theoretical concepts in order to understand the basis of language learning in bilingual people and its effects on the acquisition of L3.

In linguistics, first language (L1) is usually understood as the speaker's native language, through which he/she communicates competently, naturally and fluently,

since it is the one with which he/she is born and grows up (Lozano, 2012). Heritage language, as opposed to first language, is defined by Maria Polinski (2018) as the weakest language among those spoken by a bilingual speaker belonging to an ethnic minority or immigrant community. In other words, heritage speakers feel a cultural or a familial connection to their heritage language, but their dominant language is the one that is also prevailing in their community. In turn, second language (L2) is acquired after the mother tongue, whether in a natural or guided learning context (Lozano, 2012). It can be understood as a language spoken in the community where one lives or grows up without the need for it to be the mother tongue (Manga, 2008). Moreover, third Language (L3) may be regarded as the language that is learned after having assimilated L1 and L2, regardless of the person's level of proficiency. We may refer to it as the foreign language (FL), which is learned in a context in which it is not used regularly. While L2 is regarded as the language spoken in the community in which the person lives, even if it is not his/her native language, a foreign language is the one that is learned additionally and not present in that community.

The coexistence of languages in the same speaker or in the same community can result in different situations of language contact. On one hand, monolingualism is defined by Lozano (2012) as “the individual's knowledge of a single language” (34). On the other hand, bilingualism is, in general terms, “the ability of the subject to communicate both in L1 and in L2” (Lozano, 2012, 34). Ibrahim and Dinkha (2018) differentiate between two types of bilingual people. The first is the bilingual person who acquired both languages at the same time during an early age, thus becoming native in both of them. Hence, it is understood that the subject assimilated both languages naturally, by being exposed to a bilingual environment. The second is the bilingual person who learned the second language through

teaching in education institutions. Furthermore, Lozano (2012) expressed that a bilingual person employs this ability according to the communicative situation and the intention he/she has. Therefore, the individual can use it for academic, work or social purposes in an ideal way. Lozano also mentioned that the differences between a bilingual and a monolingual person are not found in the mere fact of knowing both languages. In fact, there are also qualitative and quantitative differences and even alterations in the skills needed to speak one or two languages respectively.

Additionally, according to Lozano, trilingualism is basically “the knowledge of three languages” (38). The author mentions that, as in the case of bilingualism, there are a number of factors that motivate it, including a multilingual family environment, schooling, travel, among other circumstances. It is also pointed out that the term multilingualism can be used in order to indicate the number of languages known by individuals without the need to specify a number.

Knowing more than one language does not always rely on the same learning process. For instance, L1 (or L1 bilingualism) is the result of natural language acquisition, through exposure to a bilingual environment where the target language is found (at school, at home or in a friendship circle). In addition, it could also be acquired through instruction, in a formal manner, in which someone teaches the language through classes or sessions of grammar rules and vocabulary.

Languages known by a speaker are not independent entities, but they rather interact in the speaker’s mind. The order of language acquisition is one of the key aspects explaining how languages co-operate in the speaker. Dominant languages (or primarily acquired languages) can determine how L2 and L3 are perceived and used. In the field of linguistic research on culture and language, code-switching is one of the most frequently discussed phenomena. This is the practice of switching

languages within the same conversation; therefore, code-switching is at first sight the form of intercultural communication par excellence and a bilingual type of interaction which presupposes an accurate dominance of both languages. What is more, cross-linguistic influence or linguistic transfer is the linguistic influence or transfer the knowledge of a language may produce on the individual's learning or use of another language (L2, L3, etc.). This interference involves different aspects of language: grammar, spelling, syntactic construction, pronunciation, each of which has its space in Phonology and Phonetics, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics.

1.2 The effects of L1 bilingualism on L3/FL learning

The learning of a third language is understood as the formal instruction or natural acquisition of an L3. According to a study undertaken by Cenoz (2012), learning a third language is less complicated because the learner has the previous experience of L2 learning: a series of learning tools and strategies that could be used when learning a third language. However, the acquisition of an L3 may offer a greater complexity, as it is conditioned both by the mother tongue and by previously acquired foreign languages (L2, for instance). As a consequence, those who learn a third language might have more experience in the process of language learning than those who learn only a second language; they are, in this way, influenced by the general effects of bilingualism and they are exposed to two linguistic systems.

In 1998, Hufeisen established his model in which he described the factors that control or influence the process of language learning:

1. Neuropsychological factors which provide the basis and general preconditions for language learning, production and receptive capacity.

2. External factors such as socio-cultural and socio-economic variables, including the learning traditions of the specific culture as well as the type and the amount of linguistic stimuli to which language learners are exposed.
3. Emotional factors such as anxiety, motivation or acceptance of a new target language.
4. Cognitive factors such as linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge, learning awareness and style and the ability to employ strategies and techniques previously acquired in L1 and L2.
5. Linguistic factors included in the learners' L1 and L2.

Jessner (2008) states that there are two types of routes for second language acquisition: learning a second language in parallel with the first language from birth (as in the case of childhood bilingualism), or learning a second language after the first one. In the case of a third language, as mentioned by Cenoz (2000), there are four types of order acquisition, namely:

1. Simultaneous acquisition of L1, L2, L3.
2. Consecutive acquisition of L1, L2, L3.
3. Simultaneous acquisition of L2 and L3, after having learned L1.
4. Simultaneous acquisition of L1 and L2, before learning an L3.

This categorization leads us to the conclusion that, indeed, in order to reach a third language, the individual must have followed a linguistic path that is likely to have an influence on the learning process of the latter.

In this whole process, linguistic transfer, which can be positive or negative, occurs from mother tongue to a second language, but it also takes place in multilingual acquisition, becoming a more complex procedure. The question is, hence, which of the previous two languages have more impact on L3 in the processes of language learning and linguistic transfer? According to Bardel and

Falk (2010) the second language is the one that is most likely to have an impact on the process of third language acquisition.

Starting from the theoretical background, this work includes a case study that will examine to what extent the heritage language (L1) and the second language (L2) affect the learning of a third language in bilingual people and which of the two most directly and linguistically influences L3.

2. Methodology

In order to address the main objective of the research, it is necessary to specify the type of paradigm that suits the characteristics of this study. For this reason, we adopted a qualitative approach to collect data on English L3 learning in bilingual speakers. The purpose of the study was to assemble documentary evidence from the speakers in order to contrast their performance in different types of languages tasks with the existing theoretical framework. Thus, three languages were addressed: Romanian as the heritage language, Italian as the second language and English as the third one. The aim of this study was to identify which of the two main languages of bilingual speakers, Romanian (LH) and Italian (L2), affects most the learning process of English (L3/FL). In other words, through a series of tasks and their results it is possible to notice whether the linguistic transfer into English comes from L1/LH or L2. Therefore, 6 informants participated in the case study, two men and four women, between the ages of 17 and 27. All participants are Romanian-Italian bilinguals, most of whom were born in Italy or moved to Italy at early childhood. As such, they represent a prototypical profile of heritage bilingual speakers, that is, speakers who learn and use their HL in family settings but are exposed to the predominant use of L2 in all other domains. This information was summarized in Table 1, which can be found below.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics.

Participants	Gender	Age	Country of birth	Years in Romania	Years in Italy
Informant 1	F	24	Romania	7	17
Informant 2	F	23	Other: Moldova	3	20
Informant 3	M	21	Romania	12	9
Informant 4	M	27	Other: Moldova	10	17
Informant 5	F	21	Italy	0	20
Informant 6	F	17	Italy	0	17

Participants	Native language	Age at which they began to study English
Informant 1	Romanian and Italian	3
Informant 2	Romanian, Italian and Russian	6
Informant 3	Romanian	6
Informant 4	Other: Moldavian	11
Informant 5	Romanian and Italian	7
Informant 6	Romanian and Italian	6

In order to collect all necessary data, two sociolinguistic questionnaires have been designed ad hoc, both in Italian and in Romanian, by letting the informants choose in which language to complete it. The questionnaire consists of 42 multiple choice questions or statements with the possibility of selecting one or many answers and writing short or long answers. Generally, the data that have been collected determine the informants' linguistic background and their perceptions in relationship to L1, L2 and L3.

Secondly, while the participants were completing the questionnaire, three tasks in English were created. The first language task dealt with the writing of a short text (between 8 and 10 lines) with regard to the most memorable birthday they had so far. Its objective was to analyse whether they produced written mistakes or not, and, after that, an analysis was done in order to classify each error under a category (word order, grammar, spelling, etc.). One of the main purposes was to determine

which of the two languages, RHL or IL2, was more responsible for cross-linguistic mistakes. The second language task was composed of 6 statements, 3 in Romanian and other 3 in Italian with the aim of translating them into English. Since each sentence was characterised by a false friend, the objective of the task was to analyse its translation: if the informants used the correct form of the word or if they kept the main false friend in the sentence. Ultimately, in the third language task people were given a written text and if they found any mistake, each of which was a cross-linguistic transfer from either RHL or IL2, they were supposed to correct it. The purpose of this task was to understand whether they detected any error and how they corrected it. Each mistake, as in the first task, was categorised under a linguistic label. In general, one week has been set between each assignment.

Generally speaking, the main objective of this case study, composed by a questionnaire and 3 language tasks, was to identify the origin of errors produced in L3 (English), whether they were transmitted from L1/LH (Romanian) or L2 (Italian)

With regard to the hypothesis of this study case, the results that will be obtained at the end would be an understanding of how the second language may mostly influence the learning of L3. It is important to comprehend that, due to the small number of participants on whom the study has been conducted, we cannot assume that the results obtained are identical for an entire society. In fact, the case study determines a specific outcome, by indicating what happened in the case of some participants who were selected in order to explore the effects of L1 bilingualism on L3/FL learning.

3. Qualitative analysis of the results

This part will be dedicated to a qualitative analysis of the results both of the sociolinguistic questionnaire and the language tasks.

3.1 Sociolinguistic questionnaire: speakers' identity and attitudes towards languages

As a first point of analysis it is interesting to notice that all 6 participants preferred to complete the questionnaire in Italian, probably because they felt more confident to use this language instead of Romanian. As it was specified in the previous section, this survey dealt with sociolinguistic issues with regard to the participants' abilities and perspectives towards the use of the three languages. 33,3% of the informants were born in Romania and the other 33,3% of them were born in Italy. The remaining 33,4% represents Moldavian provenience. Therefore, only 2 of the 6 candidates did not live in Romania at all, while the others stayed there between 3 and 12 years and they have been living in Italy for 17 or 20 years. Only one of the 6 participants pointed to Romanian as his/her native language, while 3 of them selected both Romanian and Italian and 16% of them chose Romanian, Italian and another language (Russian or Moldavian). However, half of them speak more Romanian than Italian at home while 33,3% of the participants use more Italian than Romanian. In general, they communicate in Romanian mostly with their relatives who live both in Italy and in Romania, and they speak Italian above all with their parents, brothers/sisters and friends who live in Italy. The majority of them affirmed they have learnt Romanian from their parents, and all of them sustained that they have learnt Italian in a school in Italy.

Moreover, when they had to indicate with which definition they better identify, 66,7% of them stated that they speak better Italian than Romanian and 33,3% of them speak both Italian and Romanian equally well. After that, a series of self-evaluating questions were addressed in order that they analysed their linguistic level both in L1 and in L2 in relation to speaking, writing, reading and understanding. Here, some of the informants wrote that they would like to enrich

their vocabulary in speaking and others claimed that they want to improve their writing skills in Romanian. The majority of them asserted that they would like to develop their speaking skills and lexicon in Italian. Some of the candidates agreed on the fact that Romanian may enhance their knowledge, it would give them the possibility to make relationships in society and they want to speak it fluently since it is part of their identity and cultural context. The same happens in the case of Italian, but it is interesting to notice that for some of them Romanian may be more useful in order to find a job and for others, on the contrary, Italian would help them to have a good economic situation. When their parents speak to them in Romanian, half of them answer both in Romanian and in Italian, by using in this way code-switching and 33,3% of them reply in Romanian.

Likewise, the majority of the participants learnt English in a school in Italy and they usually use it in their studies, private life and cultural products (cinema, music and books). Also, 4 of them would like to improve their accent, vocabulary and speaking skills in English. More than a half of them believe that this language expands their knowledge and it will provide them with good work opportunities. Ultimately, 66,7% of the informants consider themselves bilingual, mastering two languages equally well but better than a third language, and 33,3% of them are trilingual.

3.2 Written production

The first language task was a written production in English, through which it is possible to analyse the categories of mistakes the informants made and their transmission either from L1 or L2 into L3. After a deep examination of the results, it is challenging sometimes to determine if the error which is produced may be transferred from Italian or Romanian. The two languages share the same linguistic basis from Latin and, as a consequence, they may have some aspects in common.

Some information with regard to the written production's results was collected in the tables down below, each of which corresponds to different participants. For instance, grammatical mistakes such as "who's tasks was" (Table 2c) and "we was doing" (Table 2d) could be an influence from both languages since it is difficult to confirm if the absence of subject-verb agreement comes from Romanian or Italian. A typical fault diffused from both languages in EL3 (English L3) is word order. While Romanian and Italian tend to be characterised by an unrestricted word order, in English it is fixed. Thus, writing "birthday memorable" (Table 2d) instead of "a memorable birthday" is a mistake in English, as well as "the birthday for my 13 years" instead of simplifying it with "my 13th birthday" (Table 2d). A mistake produced from Romanian might be the lack of indefinite article, as in the case of "had great time" (Table 2c) of which the correct form would be "had a great time". The use of inappropriate prepositions may be an influence more from Italian than Romanian. In fact, "to return at home" (Table 2d) is incorrect since it is not necessary to use a preposition before home, which acts like an adverb. Moreover, it is possible to say in English "in the middle of the night" but not "until at the middle of the night" (Table 2d). A more regular form would be "until midnight".

Table 2a. Written production's results.

Participants	Total number of words	Total number of mistakes	Total number of mistakes	Examples	Type of mistake
Informant 1	166	2	From Italian: 2	<p>Since the moment I visited the French capital for the first time I fell in love immediately so she knew I would enjoy her gift.</p> <p>Fondation</p>	<p>Conjunctions (Grammar).</p> <p>Spelling.</p>

Table 2b.

Participants	Total number of words	Total number of mistakes	Total number of mistakes	Examples	Type of mistake
Informant 3	144	1	From Italian: 1	My most memorable birthday was in fact a fake birthday	Discourse Marker

Table 2c.

Participants	Total number of words	Total number of mistakes	Total number of mistakes	Examples	Type of mistake
Informant 4	148	4	From Italian: 3	My most memorable birthday party was the one for my 8 years old. who's tasks was. I was seated in a sort of a throne.	
			From Romanian: 1	Had great time.	

Table 2d.

Participants	Total number of words	Total number of mistakes	Total number of mistakes	Type of mistake
Informant 6	84	10	From Italian: 10	Word Order. Word Order. Grammar. Grammar. Preposition. Grammar. Preposition - Noun. Word order + article or determiner

3.3 Translation

In the second language task candidates had to translate 6 sentences from Romanian and Italian into English and, again, it was about searching for the interferences between L1 and L3 as well as L2 and L3. The sentences contained some false friends, which may cause those linguistic interferences between languages, in order to analyse if the participants translated literally by using the false friend or not. The translation's results from Italian into English were assembled in Table 3a. For instance, the Italian adjective "attualmente" means "currently" or "at the moment", and its false friend in English would be "actually" which, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, can be translated as "in fact". Therefore, 70% of the informants translated it, by avoiding the false friend, as "currently" or "nowadays". The same result was obtained in the case of the adjectives "sensible" and "sensibile", the first one in English indicating, according to the Cambridge dictionary, "a person of good sense or reason" and the second one in Italian standing for "a sensitive person": 70% of them translated "sensibile" as "sensitive" without using the false friend. However, the Italian adjective "conveniente" was translated into English through the false friend "convenient" by 60% of the informants and only 2 people used "possible" or "good". While "conveniente" means good value, "convenient" stands for "appropriate" and, in this case, the term was associated to the rising price of oil (Table 3a).

Furthermore, the translation's results from Romanian into English can be seen in Table 3b. The Romanian adjective "mizerabil" has been translated by 60% of the participants as "miserable", while 2 of them used the terms "poor" and "precarious". In fact, the Romanian term "mizerabil" means "dirty, precarious" and, on contrary,

the English word “miserable” stands for “unfortunate, unhappy”. Here, the term has been associated with living conditions (dirty, precarious living conditions). While the Romanian noun “advertisment” means “warning”, the meaning of the English word “advertisement” would be “the promotion of a product, brand or service”. As a consequence, only one person translated by using the false friend, while 70% of people wrote “news, communication, warning, alert”. Ultimately, the meanings of the Romanian noun “prospect” are “brochure, leaflet”, differently from the English word “prospect” which means “outlook, perspective”. One person translated by using the false friend, while 57% of the participants wrote “leaflet” and 54% of them translated it as “chart” or “report”. In this case, “leaflet” was the correct form since it referred to a medical brochure (Table 3b).

Table 3a. Translation’s results from Italian into English

Participants	1st false friend in italian (attualmente)	Translation	2nd false friend in Italian (sensibile)	Translation	3rd false friend in Italian (conveniente)	Translation
	Do they translate by using the false friend?	How do they translate?	Do they translate by using the false friend?	How do they translate?	Do they translate by using the false friend?	How do they translate?
Informant 1	No	Currently	No	Sensitive	Yes	Convenient
Informant 2	No	Currently	No	Sensitive	No	Possible
Informant 3	No	Currently	No	Sensitive	Yes	Convenient
Informant 4	No	Nowadays	No	Sensitive	Yes	Convenient
Informant 5	No	Currently	No	Sensitive	Yes	Convenient
Informant 6	Yes	Actually	Yes	Sensible	No	Good

Table 3b. Translation's results from Romanian into English

Participants	1st false friend in Romanian (mizerabil)	Translation	2nd false friend in Romanian (advertisement)	Translation	3rd false friend in Romanian (prospect)	Translation
	Do they translate by using the false friend?	How do they translate?	Do they translate by using the false friend?	How do they translate?	Do they translate by using the false friend?	How do they translate?
Informant 1	No	Poor	No	News	No	Leaflet
Informant 2	No	Precarious	No	Notice	Other	Chart
Informant 3	Yes	Miserable	No	Warning	No	Leaflet
Informant 4	Yes	Miserable	No	Communications	Yes	Prospect
Informant 5	Yes	Miserable	No	Alert	Other	Report
Informant 6	Yes	Miserable	Yes	Advertisement	No	Leaflet

3.4 Identification

In the last language task, a text entitled “Learning English in the Modern World” has been specifically designed. Grammatical and lexical mistakes have been intentionally included in it, and all of them make interferences from either Romanian or Italian. As a consequence, the participants were asked to correct its mistakes, if they believed there was any. This part was especially interesting in that it focused on the analysis on linguistic interferences between Romanian-English and Italian-English, by categorising each type of error. Thus, we may find categories such as definite article, impersonal -s, avoidance of impersonal pronoun, the addition of final -s to adjectives, the inversion between noun and adjective (word order) and syntactic interference, some of which are portrayed in the tables down below. When talking about the definite article with plural nouns, more than half of the participants corrected “languages” and “people” by eliminating “the” at the beginning of these words (Table 5a). The same thing happened in the case of writing the article when it

was necessary. For example, they wrote “the” in front of words and expressions such as “the modern world, the chance, for the unification, sharing the same language” (Table 5b). The suppression of a definite or an indefinite article in front of a word in English is an interference from Romanian, in which an enclitic article *-ul* may be added at the end of a word. Nevertheless, it was attention-grabbing the lack of the correct form of some verbs using an impersonal *-s* for the majority of the candidates. In fact, instead of writing “English gives” or “communication becomes easier”, they left them as they were in the text without the final *-s* (Table 5a). This is a grammatic interference transmitted both from Romanian and Italian, since these two languages do not use impersonal *-s* for the 3rd person singular. Another mistake diffused from L1 and L2 is the avoidance of the personal pronoun, since once the subject has been mentioned it is not necessary to repeat it neither in Italian nor in Romanian. As a consequence, 5 people out of 6 corrected each fault of the personal pronoun, by adding the main subject to its verb: “languages play an important role, since they are..., it is significant, it provides, it offers” (Table 5a). Most of the participants paid attention to the inversion between noun and adjective, by writing “a key element, an international language, a guided tour”, instead of “an element key” for example (Table 5b). In addition, word order is not good for English and as it was mentioned in the first language task, this error is an interference transferred from both languages L1 and L2. Writing “there are not explained the reasons of...” instead of “the reasons of...are not explained” is incorrect, because the verb-predicate is in pre-position (Table 5c). The addition of final *-s* at the end of an adjective creates another issue in English. If in Romanian and in Italian there is noun and adjective agreement, whether it is singular/plural or feminine/masculine, in English it does not happen. 4 people out of 6 modified “obstacles culturals and ethnics” with “cultural and ethnic obstacles” and the same thing happened with “in

other words” instead of “in others words” (Table 5b). Mistakes connected with the use of future tense in the English conditional may occur, usually affected by Romanian. Therefore, the sentence “if people will implement more English in their everyday life, it will become...” has been corrected only by 2 informants by removing the first “will” since they followed the rule of the first conditional (if + present simple – will + infinitive) (Table 5c).

Table 5a. Some categories of Italian and Romanian mistakes in English.

1st Italian mistake (Definite article+plural)	2nd Italian and 1st Romanian mistake (Impersonal "s")	3rd Italian and 2nd Romanian Mistake (Avoidance of the personal pronoun)
The languages, the people	(English) give (final "s") Communication become easier...(final s)	They (langauges play..since <u>they</u>), it (provides), it (is significant), it (helps..), it (will become), it (is extremely...), it (facilitates), it (offers), it (is an international language)

Table 5b.

4th Romanian Mistake (No definite article)	5th Italian and 4th Romanian mistake (adding final -s to an adjective)	6th Italian and 5th Romanian mistake (inversion between noun and adjective)
(in) <u>the</u> (modern world), (in) <u>the</u> (whole world) sharing) <u>the</u> (same language) <u>The</u> (chance) For <u>the</u> unification <u>The</u> base of knowledge	culturals and ethnics (obstacles), (In) others (words)	An element key Obstacles cultural and ethnic A language international A tour guided

Table 5c.

8th Italian and 8th Romanian mistake (word order)	9th Romanian mistake (syntactic interference)
there are not explained the reasons of the importance of this language	If people will implement more English in their evryday life, it will become...

4. Conclusion – Discussion

After this qualitative analysis of the results the real question is: does L2, indeed, have more impact on the learning of L3 than L1 as it was established in the main hypothesis of this study? Since the number of informants was limited and the majority of mistakes represent interferences from both Romanian and Italian, it is challenging to give a precise answer to the previous question. It is interesting to notice that all participants in the survey have positive thoughts with regard to their native language and its importance has not been diminished by their second language, which they use more frequently. English occupies an important role in their linguistic context, since they consider it useful for their working future and education. However, almost all of them consider themselves bilingual rather than trilingual, probably because they are more exposed to L1 and L2 than to L3. When it comes to linguistic mistakes whether transmitted from Romanian or Italian into English, this study specifies that the majority of them are grammatical and syntactic. We may assume that, since many of them affirmed that they are more fluent in Italian than in Romanian, the linguistic interferences in English are projected from L2. However, even if according to previous studies in bilingual people L2 seems to have a more direct influence on the learning process of L3 than their native language, this cannot be always certainly proved.

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Appendices

In this section, a link to the sociolinguistic questionnaire will be included. Additionally, the excel tables are added in order to have a better understanding of the results obtained in the three language tasks. As a consequence, the three language tasks completed by the six participants are integrated in this part.

Sociolinguistic questionnaire:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X70TqTY62npBALVJM2noMFJw-IsfdLlo?usp=sharing>

Data analysis:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SKn8zN7ZUPA871W56yNsbTqh73gUMj3Y?usp=sharing>

Three language tasks:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11zihYe_uwmBw2g01yj6h1aMyzKS1KnL5?usp=sharing