

The Role of Competence and performance in Bilingualism in Line with Communication Modes in A Bilingual Circumstance

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Received: 28 November 2017; **Accepted:** 8 January 2018; **Published:** 2 February 2018

Abstract:

Meticulously, this research aims to focus on a qualitative study in order to have a survey on the role of competence and performance in bilingualism in line with communication modes among Turkish and English bilinguals. The goal was to investigate the effectiveness of so many kinds of modes of communication with regards to the competence and performance background in order to reach a bird view in communication strategies used by the speakers of that society in a special circumstance to solve some minor misunderstandings. Findings manifest that competence of some modes and changing them to the positive performances may necessarily be the most effective mode of communication for bilingual speakers of that circumstance and society. In the context of bilingual society, translation and transferring may be regarded as a practical norm for negotiating mutual understandings.

Keywords:

Bilingualism, Turkish and English Bilinguals, Communication Modes, Competence and Performances, Bilingual Circumstance

1. Introduction

Generally speaking, language is an essential part of pretend play as children must communicate verbally in order to co-construct play episodes (Neuman, 2003). In spontaneous fantasy play children animate objects and verbally describe actions as they complete them. Since this play takes place within groups of children the verbal description serves as a cue for other participants (Corsaro, 2003). In socio-dramatic play children actually embody the characters they create and role play actions done by those characters. When children engage in role play they explore relationships

between context and behavior through language. An enhancement in the rate of bilinguals in a society leads to the development of technological progresses caused to reach an educational organization and to revise their language priorities.

Covering communication problems and barriers resulting from some competence and performances variety and the role of communication modes requires participants to use their knowledge of the linguistic situation from one side, and accordingly to select the most proper and beneficial communication modes. That positive and important modes play an essential role in every one's life is undeniable. The most eminent communication mode is highly dependent on contextual, situational and individual constraints. Individuals' encountering interactions between expats and local staff in a foreign subsidiary might be more effective when conducted in the local language. Yet another mode of communication may be used by colleagues whose receptive competences in each other's mother tongues enable them to successfully interact while communicating in their own mother tongues. In other words, in bilingual circumstances, there are at least two feasible modes of communication: adopting the native language of the addressee (an L2 language), or relying on receptive competences with all speakers communicating in their own language.

1.1. Communication Strategies

In communicative settings where participants are forced to communicate in a foreign language (e.g. Turkish and English), speakers are known to resort to communication strategies to achieve successful communication. Communication strategies have been the focus of many SLA studies, which have typically looked at learner interactions. The aim of these studies has been to unmask the strategies that learners should employ to attain a higher level of proficiency. SLA research has found in a heavily debated taxonomy of strategies. Although the number of distinct categories and labels may vary per author, there is sufficient overlap between the taxonomies to speak of a defined set of communication strategies. In this study, we use a taxonomy based on the work of Bialystok (1990), Dörnyei and Scott (1997), Faerch and Kasper (1980; 1983), Le Pichon et al. (2010), Poulisse (1989), and Tarone (1980).

Whereas in SLA research the focus has been on the use of strategies by language learners, in the present study, our aim is to inventory the strategies used by language users (as opposed to learners) in different communication modes (as opposed to one language variety). All strategies are communicative attempts at achieving mutual understanding between partners. Comprehension checks (Do I understand this correctly), self-corrections (Do you have a dook book?), appealing for assistance (What do you call it?), showing uncertainty (Next to the ... uh ... floppy? I'm afraid my English is not very good) are strategies that speakers use when they are aware of their possible communicative vulnerability. Offering help (four cherries, these red fruits) is a strategy that is initiated by the more proficient or confident speaker. Another group of strategies comprises those strategies that are used specifically to address lexical deficiencies. These are called compensatory strategies and can be divided into process-oriented strategies (when the speakers use descriptions or superordinate) and code-oriented strategies (when the speakers invent words or use literal translations of words in their native language, or simply switch codes) (Kellerman 1991). Process-oriented strategies are generally considered to be of a higher, conceptual order than code-oriented strategies (Kellerman 1991). Finally, meta-

discursive strategies are used when speakers try to solve a communicative problem by discussing task fulfilment.

Research Question:

Does the use of communication modes in bilingualism circumstances have a positive role in the competence and performances of bilinguals?

1.2. Effective Communication

Obviously, the continuing globalization of markets has led to a rapid increase in the use of ELF, particularly in international business communication and in higher education. ELF research has shown that the use of ELF in multilingual contexts can facilitate communication, but that ELF may also cause linguistic, cultural and organizational problems for staff who are not native speakers of English. For multinational corporations (MNCs), a corporate lingua franca can be a valuable tool in streamlining intra-organizational communication with international and multi-locational workforces in particular. Furthermore, at the same time, a common corporate language may present barriers to effective communication if proficiency in the corporate language of those who are non-native speakers of the language is insufficient (Charles and Marschan-Piekkari 2002; Lønsmann 2014; Marschan-Piekkari et al. 1999). For many multinationals, however, language is often a forgotten factor, because they disregard the intangible costs and consequences of the implementation of a lingua franca (Welch et al. 2005). Worldwide, the most commonly adopted lingua franca is English, but the EF English Proficiency Index for companies (EF EPIc 2012), which benchmarked English proficiency across 18 industries and 24 countries, has indicated that in two-thirds of the countries in their study, the national workforce had lower English proficiency than the adult population in general. In addition, the study found that in most countries or industries for which English skills were investigated, the workforce lacked the high level of English proficiency required for efficient and effective workplace communication.

1.3. Code-Switching in Early Childhood Bilingualism

Studies of bilingual first language acquisition also support a direct correlation between degree of developmental proficiency in the two languages and the type of cross-linguistic interaction that is in evidence. (1989, 1994), maintains that language "mixing", broadly defined as the indiscriminate combination of elements from each of the component languages, is most frequent during a very early phase of language acquisition, owing to limited competence, but as the child acquires greater competence in the two languages, the language contact attested (if any at all) increasingly takes the form of code-switching. In other words, rule-governed codeswitching requires elaborate grammatical knowledge of two language systems, and as young children may lack such grammatical competence, their early language alternations cannot be classified as instances of code-switching (cf., Koèppe and Meisel, 1995). Meisel and his colleagues base their conclusions on the language development of two French±German bilingual children who demonstrate a high mixing rate at the beginning of the study, which decreased quickly as they acquired greater functional structure. Especially noteworthy is the linguistic development of one child, Ivar, which consisted of two stages: the first stage did not appear to be syntactically constrained and showed high rates of mixing of function words, but in the second phase, there was a shift from mixing to code-switching, and by the age of

2;5 (years; months), adult-like norms on code-switching were rarely violated. These findings are interpreted as suggesting that the acquisition of functional categories plays a crucial role in the development of sensitivity to grammatical constraints on code-switching, such that before the development of the system of functional categories in the two languages, code-switching will not be guided by syntactic principles at all.

This study will contribute to the current understanding of the process of bilingual language acquisition. Many studies of bilingual children have focused on the parent-child relationship for the purpose of determining effective strategies for raising bilingual children (Geissler, 1938; Romaine, 1995; Saunders, 1982). The children studied in the majority of case studies come from the upper middle class backgrounds and take place within the nuclear family environment (Caldas & Caron-Caldas, 2002). This study examines the language acquisition of a bilingual child in interaction with bilingual Hispanic children who are generally marginalized within the educational system in the United States due to cultural differences, the migratory nature of their stay in any one area, their socioeconomic status and lack of teachers who are trained to accommodate their language needs (Grubbs, 2003).

2. Materials and Methods

In addition to the different communication modes distinguished above, we are also interested in the comparison of these modes to mother tongue interaction (L1-L2). Interactions, a crucial difference for the speaker is whether he or she can speak his or her native language, or whether he or she has to adapt to the language of the interlocutor.

2.1. Design

This study was performed in 3 groups. The distribution of participants for the 3 periods of times is crystal clear. In the first time, 30 participants performed two fifteen-minute spot-the-differences tasks in Turkish as an L1 and English as an L2. All participants filled out a proficiency test for English (Oxford University Placement Test). In addition, all participants filled out self-assessment questionnaires. They were asked to assess their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, how comfortable they felt using the L1 and L2. The difference in English proficiency scores between participants was not significant. The first session enabled us to use of communication strategies and it also showed that participants enjoyed solving our tasks.

2.2. Participants

The classes included 30 bilingual students (boys and girls). The average age was 15-20 years old. All participants were students at International Language Institute, Tabriz, Iran, and were native speakers of Turkish. The students had some knowledge of English. To control for differences in the level of English competence between Turkish participants, participants in all sessions were asked to self-assess their English proficiency on 4-point scales ('I find communicating in English easy – difficult'; 'communicating in English makes me feel secure – insecure'). Self-assessment scores for Dutch and German participants did not differ significantly.

Table 1. *Characteristics of the participants.*

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Number of the participants | 30 |
| Age range | 15-20 |
| General English proficiency level | Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced |
| Gender | Males and Females |

2.3. Procedure

In all sessions we used three different spot-the-differences tasks. For each task, we manipulated four versions of a photos and images, containing a variety of objects; the names of which we predicted participants would be unfamiliar with in the foreign language. The photos used for the different tasks included different objects, such as bathroom items (e.g. towel, shampoo, soap), or stationery items (e.g. pencil, markers). The objective of this manipulation was to elicit negotiation of meaningful among participants while they were trying to find the differences between the two versions of the picture. Participants were instructed to find 8 differences between the pictures using instant messaging within a 10-minute time limit. Before each task, participants were instructed as to which communication mode to use in chatting about the task.

3. Results and Discussion

The main goal of this research was to find the usefulness of different communication modes. For the analysis, the results of the participants were aggregated in terms of differences between the pictures found by participants, word count and number of turns. One-way analyses of variance showed that there was an effect of communication mode on differences between the pictures found ($F(1, 30)$, $p > 0.005$). This study investigated ways in which a simultaneously bilingual child with English dominance was able to expand communicative competence in Turkish through interaction with other children in pretend play. The study was framed in Vygotskian sociocultural theory with the assumption that development occurs first on a social plane and then is internalized. Vygotsky (1966) claims that play is the main source of development in the preschool years as while children engage in play they are able to accomplish things that are beyond the realm of their current abilities. This study focused on identifying ways in which one child developed her abilities to engage in extended dialogue, his/her ability to participate in conversations, and her ability to create narratives or monologues through play with peers who were more proficient in Turkish. Strategies this child used in order to participate were identified as well.

Table 2. *Means and standard deviations for communication mode.*

| Communication mode | n | Differences | M (SD) |
|--------------------|----|-------------|---------|
| L1-L2 | 10 | 5.95 | (2.05) |
| L2-L1 | 10 | 5.60 | (1.95) |
| EFL | 10 | 5.85 | (2.02) |
| Total | 30 | 5.8 | (2.006) |

Table 2 illustrates the percentage of utterances and communication modes of the total conversation that made in each session over the time. The increase in the number of utterances made in each session from the first session to the last session. During the three sessions the percentage of utterances and communication modes applied by the

bilinguals, showed an enhancement of bilinguals' use of new words and communication modes.

Table 3. Ratios of linguistically participation of bilinguals.

| Session Number | Words over Turns | Utterances over Turns | Words over Utterances |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 3.2 | 1.2 | 2.8 |
| 2 | 3.2 | 1.2 | 2.6 |
| 3 | 4.1 | 1.6 | 2.9 |
| 4 | 4.2 | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| 5 | 4.3 | 1.9 | 1.6 |

Table 3 manifests the use of Turkish vs. English an analysis of the number of turns involving Turkish, English, or a combination of both was also conducted. This analysis was conducted by hand due to the 10 deficiencies of the children program to distinguish whether some words were phonetically realized in Turkish or English. In this case the researcher reviewed each transcript classifying each of turns as Turkish, English, or mixed.

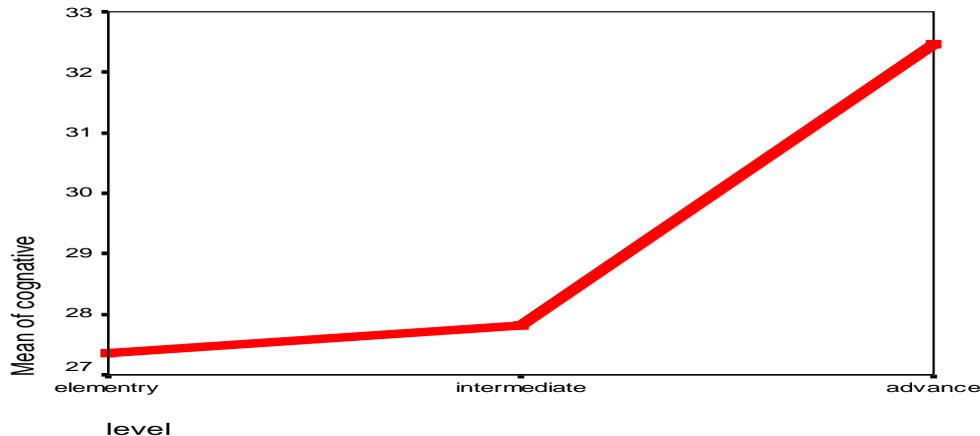


Figure 1. Means plots of competence and performance of Turkish and English bilinguals in line with communication strategies modes in different levels.

Figure 1 specifically presents the percentage of Turkish and English word use in each of the levels over time. As illustrated in Figure 1, increases the percentage of the number of word use as the bilinguals employ new words.

4. Conclusions

Our findings show that participants were most verbose in their mother tongue. Contrary to our expectations on the basis of Edmondson and House (1991), who claim that in the absence of a native speaker, participants feel less reserved in expressing their thoughts; On the contrary, in the L1-L1 communication mode and in the L1-L2

mode, more words were used than in any of the other modes. Against the backdrop of an ever-increasing influence of English and also Turkish equivalents, the aim of this research was to find the usefulness of some positive competences which we change to the performances by employing some special communication modes as a facilitator and transferor of different communication modes. L1-L2, L2-L1 were compared and mother tongue interactions served as a baseline in order to reach a better exchange between the two languages (Turkish and English). Our achievements show that participants were most dependent to their mother tongue (Turkish). Contrary to our expectations on the basis of Edmondson and House (1991), who claim that in the absence of a native speaker, participants feel less reserved in expressing their thoughts, we did not find that participants using target language more than speakers in L1-L2 interactions or in L1-L1 interactions. On the contrary, in the L1-L1 communication mode and in the L1-L2 mode, more words were used than in any of the other modes. Whereas in our studies participants were instructed to carry out a concrete task with a time constraint.

The aim of this research is to unmask the importance of competence and performance in line with communication strategies modes which learners should apply to attain a higher level of proficiency. EFL study has led to in strongly argued modes of strategies. Furthermore, the number of especial modes might differ per learner; there are enough reasons among the modes to chat about a determined set of communication modes. Finally, using a categories according to the work of Bialystok (1990), Dörnyei and Scott (1997), Faerch and Kasper (1980; 1983), Le Pichon et al. (2010), Poulisse (1989), and Tarone (1980).

With regard to the distribution of communication strategies, it seems that each communication mode can be characterized by a preference for particular strategies. To be able to use process oriented strategies, a speaker must be relatively proficient (Kellerman 1991). Hence, we might infer that the level of English of our participants was on average higher than their knowledge of their L2. In their native language, speakers were apparently less focused on resolving lexical deficiencies and consequently felt free to decorate their interaction with evaluative cues. These paralinguistic strategies seem to do more than just resolve communicative problems. The paralinguistic strategies were included in our coding table on the basis of Smith (2003).

5. Further Analysis

The findings of the present study cast doubt on previous works whose results have been construed as indicative of a general inaccessibility of Universal Grammar in second language learning. Moreover, as cogently argued in Dekydtspotter et al. (1997, 299), the question of whether or not adult learners have access to universal principles is now moot: the tenets of the Minimalist Program entail that "access to the computational principles deriving the L1 is indistinguishable from access to UG". Couching our findings within the Minimalist framework, we interpret our learners' judgments as verifying that a universal computational system is available in second language acquisition, and the interlanguage variability that is manifested in these judgments is explained by reference to the articulation of the lexicon, as suggested in Toribio and Rubin (1996a).

This study provided support for theories suggesting that play situations create contexts for cultural and linguistic learning, exploration and socialization (Goodwin,

1990; Paugh, 2005). Noemí's playmates, who were more proficient in Spanish, created 207 opportunities for her to produce language and structured interactions in such a way that she was able to incorporate their vocabulary, linguistic structures and even interactional patterns into her own productive language. Kyrantis (2000, as cited in Paugh, 2005) states that during socio-dramatic play children simultaneously (1) use, refine and expand a wide range of communicative skills; (2) collectively participate in and extend peer cultures and (3) appropriate features of and develop and orientation to wider adult cultures. Noemí's linguistic skills were developed through shared activity as her peers provided guided assistance to aid in her participation in dialogues, conversation, games and storytelling.

Conflicts of Interest

Conspicuously, this research aimed to show the importance and privileges of communication modes and their relevancies to the bilinguals' competence and performances; additionally, the authors here declare and certify that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Acknowledgments

This study could not have completed without the encouragement, guidance, and care from a core group of people. First and foremost, the beloved parents and family who have provided tremendous support throughout the graduation. Words do little to convey how thankful and owe to all of them. Such great professors have consistently warmed by heart in order to appreciate the little things. Deeply indebted to those great professor, Dr. Farahman Farrokhi for giving the positive energy and hope to study and do the research. Apparently, he is the best supervisor a student could ever ask for. Finally, especial thank goes to Dr. Zohrabi and Dr. Ghafoori, for their encouragements and continued assistances and giving us the opportunity to become aware of the infinite ignorance.

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