

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ADOPTION AND LEARNING OBSERVED THROUGH NATIVIST THEORY

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Abstract:

This paper provides an overview of the theories of foreign language learning. It initially makes a distinction of the notions of acquisition and learning by presenting the attitudes of several linguists on the issue. It further offers commentary on the various interpretations of these notions. Psychological and linguistic approaches will be discussed in order to identify and define these interpretations, such as structuralism in linguistics, behaviorism in psychology, cognitive psychology and transformational- generative grammar.

The common theoretical approach of both structuralism and behaviorism resulted in a theory of learning, known as the audio-lingual habit theory. According to this theory, learning a foreign language, as any other form of learning, represents a process of acquiring and forming habits, while not making a distinction between the processes of acquisition of the mother tongue to the one of learning a second or foreign language.

The paper further discusses the attitudes of the nativists, which offer a contrasting description of the process of learning, i.e., acquisition of language. According to the Nativist Theory of Language or the transformational- generative grammar (or simply generative grammar), there is an innate ability to learn a language i.e., a Universal Grammar that is the base of language knowledge, common for all languages. The cognitive approach in psychology, on the other hand, gives advantage to the rationalistic approach before the empirical one, i.e., while comparing the language acquisition and language learning, it attends to the complexities of personality and emotions. This papers further focuses on Chomsky's attitudes in his criticism of behaviorism as well as his opposite view to the process of learning a language. According to him, each person owns a Universal Grammar consisting of absolute, universal laws that apply to all languages.

Lastly, the paper examines Brown's, River's and Ellis's conclusions and finalizes the discussion with the Krashen's theory of acquisition and learning a language. This is the first theory that made an attempt to establish a connection among various factors in the process of learning a foreign language, starting from the influence of the age of the learners up to the disputable role of the teaching process. Krashen's Monitor theory uses elements from the linguistic theory of foreign language acquisition, primarily Chomsky's attitudes regarding the innate knowledge of a language, but it additionally includes elements from the cognitive theory, since it points out the importance of the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge while determining the dichotomy of acquisition and learning.

Keywords: *learning, acquisition, foreign language, theories*

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning and / or adopting a foreign language is a topic that has always prompted discussions among linguists. When it comes to learning a foreign language there are many dilemmas about the correct use of terms and, of course, a unanimously acceptable solution is lacking. The process of learning the mother tongue, which by nature is considered a unique process, is defined as language acquisition. The acquisition of a foreign language, according to Krashen, is "an unconscious process, which in all its aspects is similar to the process of acquisition of the mother tongue and is the absorption of language through natural communication" (Krashen, 2005). In the pedagogical and psycholinguistic literature this term is often used interchangeably with the term teaching.

Learning in the broadest sense can be defined as "the acquisition or acquisition of knowledge in a subject or skill through learning, experience or teaching" (Brown, 2010, p. 7), i.e. learning is the acquisition of new information about to which man is exposed.

Krstic defines adoption as "a widely accepted term for the term teaching", which refers to "the general processes of acquiring school material, cultural modalities, practical skills, behavior, etc." (Krstić, 2008, p. 653).

Learning a foreign language is considered as conscious knowledge of language rules, which does not directly contribute to the improvement of communication, while learning a foreign language occurs unconsciously, spontaneously and directly affects the improvement of communication skills (Oxford, 2016, p. 4)

Learning a foreign language is initially done consciously, and later through practice the knowledge of the target language is improved and used unconsciously. The terms learning and mastering a foreign language do not mean two separate processes, but two processes that together lead to the improvement of general language knowledge. Both processes, learning and adopting a foreign language, are very important for improving communication skills, especially at higher language levels (Campbell & Wales, 2018; Canale & Swain, 2010; Ommagio, 2016)

Some linguists believe that there is no fundamental difference between learning and adopting a language. Stern (Stern, 2013, p. 19) considers that the term adoption is only a stylistic variant of the term learning, and Ellis has a similar view, using these terms as synonyms (Ellis, 2007, p. 6). But in professional terminology there is often a difference between adoption and teaching.

Different interpretations of the terms learning and language acquisition can best be seen through the psychological and linguistic directions that identify and define these terms, viz. through structuralism in linguistics, behaviorism in psychology, cognitive and transformative-general psychology.

2. LEARNING THROUGH AUDIOLINGUAL THEORY OF EXPERIENCE BENEFIT

Structuralists, who are contemporaries of behaviorists, describe language as a whole that can be broken down into smaller units that can be described and then merged into a whole. The basic element of linguistic theory that considers the organization of a sentence into syntagmas is the term structure. A characteristic of structuralism is the interest in exploring linguistic structure, namely form, not meaning. Structuralism is related to the behavioral concept of learning, ie the object of study is linguistic behavior, because it is the only aspect of language that can be directly observed. According to behaviorists, language learning, like any other form of learning, develops as a consistent response to certain stimuli that do not depend on the internal needs of the organism, but on the environment. Behaviorists argue that human behavior can be fully explained, that is, predicted based on the situation in which it occurs, and therefore speech can be explained through external factors that influence its occurrence. Behavior theory is considered to be fully empirical because it emphasizes that experience plays a crucial role in the acquisition of speech and language and does not give any importance to reason (Dikro & Todorov, 2017, p. 122).

Empiricism and the same theoretical view of structuralism and behaviorism lead to the theory of learning known as the audio-linguistic theory of habit acquisition. According to this theory, language learning, like any other learning, is the acquisition or formation of habits and there is no distinction between learning a mother tongue and learning a second or foreign language. Behaviorists believe that language is a set of patterns that are learned through multiple repetitions and exercises, and that speech is defined as a set of learned responses, i.e. a set of stimulated responses. Language acquisition is explained as the induction of reactions arising from the external environment (Carroll, 2016, p. 14).

Learning a second or foreign language is simply suppressing the habit of speaking the mother tongue with the habit of speaking the target language, whereas the habits acquired initially can only hinder or influence the adoption of new habits. Alternatively, both processes are based on the repetition of linguistic units, practice, association, and analogy without explanation. The child is born as a *tabula rasa* (lat. *Tabula rasa*), without prior knowledge of the language and the world around him and learns on the basis of personal experience gained in the principle of conditioning (Kitic, 2000, p. 16.).

The application of the audio-linguistic theory of the acquisition of teaching habits leads to the following conclusion: "language is a habit that can be learned only if the student refers to that language, that is, if he uses that language" (Politzer, 2016. p. 2, cited by: Kitic, 2000, p. 16).

3. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ADOPTION AND LEARNING OBSERVED THROUGH NATIVIST THEORY

Because the previous schools could not explain the essence of the problem, because they only emphasized what is visible and what is manifested, and refused to think, there is a change in the view of language in the form of a new rationalist approach, i.e. . nativist theory or generative grammar of transformation (or simply generative grammar) into linguistics and cognitive approaches to psychology. These two new theories have caused controversy among scholars, both in linguistics and psychology, as well as in the methodology of teaching foreign languages (Kitic, 2000, p. 17).

The basic idea of nativists is that language ability is innate and that there is a so-called universal grammar that forms the basis of linguistic knowledge and is the same for all languages. Nativists assume that there is an abstract device for language acquisition that allows the child to adopt any natural language (McNeil, 2017, p. 63). Language is considered to be a complex, specialized skill that develops spontaneously in children, without conscious effort and without formal instructions, despite the remaining cognitive skills. Language is understood as a cognitive process that is not the result of external stimuli, but is the result of the innate ability of the human mind. The speed with which children discover the rules that govern the language system and the ability to use them creatively, that is, to form sentences they have not heard before, leads to the assumption that man was born with knowledge of the rules that govern the system linguistic.

Cognitive learning theory includes Ozbil's cognitive theory (Ausubel, 2018) and Rogers humanistic psychology (Rogers, 2015). Ozbil's cognitivism, emphasizing the meaning and meaningful context of linguistic communication, directly influenced theoretical and practical approaches to language teaching and learning. Rogers's humanistic psychology sees man as a complete person, with a physical, cognitive, and emotional identity, and emphasizes, unlike Ozbil, the emotional side of the person, which has been empirically crucial to human behavior and learning.

Humanistic psychology, when comparing language acquisition and learning, highlights the complexity of personality and emotions. The process of language learning and acquisition is seen as a set of variables that can not be controlled, such as empathy, extroversion, restraint, imitation, anxiety, fear, etc. Understanding emotions is crucial if learning a foreign language is understood as the acquisition of another linguistic ego, that is, another identity (Guiora, 1972, p. 55; cited in: Kitic, 2000, p. 22).

Like cognitive psychology, transformative-generative grammar favors the rationalist over the empirical approach to analogy-based analysis. Generative grammar, unlike structuralism, does not deal with languages, but with language in general, with the essential, not the visible, with the deep, not with the superficial linguistic structure, insisting on the differences between the visible, the visible, the essential and the thella. Within the generative

theory are placed two basic properties of language, i.e. language is an innate ability and language learning is, above all, a cognitive process with conditioning (Kitic, 2000, p. 17).

Numerous researches in the framework of generative theory, which are based on the assumption that the acquisition of the mother tongue is systematic, ie carried out in a certain order, explain the process of learning the mother tongue. This process, in essence, remains unexplained with the theory of behavior due to the limitations of the theory itself, because it is mathematically impossible and can not be explained logically, how children, according to the stimulus and reaction model, can understand and produce expressions in this way. large and for such a short period. Behaviorists do not explain, interpret, or cite the principle of linguistic creativity (McNeill, 1998, p. 412; cited in: Kitic, 2000, p. 19).

Renowned linguist Noam Chomsky rejects structuralism and criticizes behaviorism in explaining language learning differently. According to him, in every person there is a kind of universal grammar which consists of absolute principles, ie universal laws that apply to all languages and variable parameters that explain the differences of languages and that are gradually "discovered" at the beginning. years of life. The child learns the mother tongue, but not by imitating adults and adopting habits, but he has in himself a kind of internal mechanism for the acquisition of the native language through which he is able to formulate rules for the language and based on them to generate any construction (Chomsky, 1996).

The creator of the idea of the device for language acquisition (hereinafter LAD), Chomsky, believes that LAD is only one component of the whole system of intellectual structures, ie. in other words, the ability to speak a language is only one of the skills of the mind (Chomsky, 1996: 26). It is a hypothetical mechanism created to explain the adoption of a language, the characteristics of which are represented through an acquired linguistic system called universal grammar. Chomsky speaks his native language, but according to some scholars, access to universal grammar is to some extent achieved even by one who learns a foreign language (Chini, 2005, p. 30).

4. BROWN, RIVERS AND ELISE ATTITUDES ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LEARNING

Many authors do not emphasize the difference between language acquisition and learning, but even when they do, they start from different assumptions and different criteria and therefore reach relatively different conclusions.

Brown, driven by the fact that mother tongue is easily and successfully acquired, and foreign language, especially in school, is difficult, sometimes even unsuccessful, is interpreted by these processes taking into account physical, cognitive, emotional and linguistic factors. Brown uses the terms teaching and adoption for both mother tongue and foreign language, but the detailed analysis he makes of the process of mother tongue and foreign language adoption, as well as the conclusions reached, show that the lack of terminological difference is more

many terminological tendencies in contemporary American methodology, rather than ignoring the distinction between adoption and learning (Brown, 1990, p. 58; cited in: Kitic, 2000, p. 21).

Numerous studies prove that mother tongue acquisition and foreign language learning are similar processes, and the emergence of interventions is what makes the process of learning a foreign language a specific process. Brown says that "adults have a systematic approach to mastering a foreign language and tend to formulate language rules based on whether linguistic information is available to them in their mother tongue or in a foreign language" (Brown, 1990), p. 57; cited in: Kitic, 2000, p. 21). Rivers criticizes the audio-linguistic methods accepted and evaluated so far and presents his counter-arguments, both against this method and against all those who do not distinguish between learning and adoption. She believes that the difference between learning a mother tongue and learning a foreign language is not enough, so she sees learning a foreign language as a variable process that depends on the age factor, so she argues that "learning a language Foreign language is a similar process. to learn a mother tongue at a young age, but a completely different process when it comes to adult learners "(Rivers, 1993, p. 235; quoted in: Kitic, 2000, p. 22).

Mother tongue acquisition is an innate skill that is closely related to the development of cognitive skills so that the child learns to speak and learn (Rivers, 1993, p. 233). What is also important and crucial for the adoption of the mother tongue is the high level of motivation, because for the child the mother tongue is necessary and indispensable for communication. But when an adult begins to learn a foreign language, he or she already controls the speech organs and may have difficulty acquiring new speaking habits.

Because of this, according to Rivers, in 90-95% of cases the emphasis is held by the mother tongue, but precisely this emphasis on the linguistic expression of another language is a sign, ie linguistic and cultural privilege (Rivers, 1993. p. 236). What makes an additional difference in the adoption of the mother tongue and the foreign one is the timely exposure of the language as well as the stages of the process of the adoption of the mother tongue. Namely, unlike the mother tongue, the student is exposed to the foreign language for several hours a day or a week. Children master their mother tongue in stages, while learning a foreign language requires the student to master the use of sentences, complex grammatical structures, etc. from the beginning. (Rivers, 1993, p. 20).

Ellis argues that the adoption of a mother tongue and a foreign language are not identical processes, because the differences exist and are confirmed by the very fact that the mother tongue affects the acquisition of a foreign language. Native language adoption is characterized by statements that adult speakers would never use as such and that are lacking in foreign language learning (Ellis, 2007).

5. KRASHEN'S THEORY OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LEARNING

Krashen, the founder of the much-appreciated and then severely criticized theory of the monitor or monitor model, as a proponent of the natural approach to language learning, despite the differences between language learning and language acquisition, believes that mother tongue and language foreign can be adopted. According to him, one can talk about the adoption of a foreign language and this is supported by numerous empirical studies, only if the message of the target language is understood. This is the first and basic condition, but still not sufficient for language to be acquired (Krashen & Terrell, 1994, p. 19; cited in: Kitic, 2000, p. 24).

According to Krashen, we learn language in two ways. The first way is acquisition, ie the unconscious and intuitive process of creating language knowledge, a process that is identical to the natural process of language acquisition by children and as such focuses on content, not form. The other way is learning, ie the conscious process in which students pay attention to forms, while language learning is "knowing the rules", ie conscious knowledge of grammar (Krashen & Terrell, 1994: 18).

Unlike Krashen, Chomsky believes that the acquisition of a foreign language is a different process from the acquisition of the mother tongue. Considering Chomsky's attitude important, Krashen argues that the difference in adoption / learning is very similar, even identical, to Chomsky's difference between acquaintances (Krashen, 1995: 24).

Krashen's theory, originally called the model monitor, then the input hypothesis, and finally the meaning hypothesis, remains essentially the same. This is the first theory that attempts to link several different factors in language learning, from the influence of age to the controversial role of teaching (VanPatten & Williams, 2007, p. 25).

The research conducted within a discipline called "*Second Language Acquisition*" in English is based on two theories of foreign language acquisition. According to cognitive theory, language knowledge is not different from other types of knowledge, while according to the opposite view, ie according to language theory, language knowledge is unique, separate from other knowledge systems and therefore language acquisition is guided by mechanisms that nature is linguistic (Ellis, 2013, p. 347)

Krashen's monitoring theory refers to elements of linguistic theory of foreign language acquisition, mainly Chomsky's views on innate knowledge of language, but also includes elements of cognitive theory because it emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between implicit knowledge. and explicit, in defining the dichotomy of adoption and learning

The original theory called the model monitor is presented in ten hypotheses, and is then modified and termed as monitoring theory by which the author explains the language acquisition process in five hypotheses: the language acquisition and learning hypothesis; natural order hypothesis; monitor the hypothesis; the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. Based on the above hypotheses, Krashen establishes the principles of foreign language acquisition. The essential difference between mastering and learning a language is

the difference between conscious learning, that is, remembering the rules, and unconscious language acquisition that occurs only as a result of exposure to language. Krashen argues that there is no possibility of interaction between intuitive, implicit and unconscious knowledge. acquisition of formal, conscious and explicit knowledge, i. Learning. Krashen is one of the most well-known supporters of the assertion that learning does not turn into appropriation, hence the so-called. The "non-interfacial position" according to which language learning and acquisition are different processes and there is no connection between them. According to him, there is no need for conscious prior knowledge of a rule, but language acquisition occurs only in one way, when the person understands the input contained in structures that are at level $1 + 1$ where he represents the level of student competence, and $1 + 1$ is the first consecutive level in natural order.

Krashen explains his view that conscious learning does not become unconscious acquisition through the following statements: first, he says that sometimes there is acquisition without learning, so some students have considerable competence in non-native language, but consciously do not know much rules; second, argues that there are times when learning never becomes acquisition, i.e. the learner can know the rule and continue to break it; third, he emphasizes that no one can be expected to know all the rules (Krashen, 1992, pp. 83-87).

Regarding the Krashen dichotomy of the self-sufficient and the learned, Pallotti says that enlightenment occurs "accidentally" when students focus on understanding and transmitting communicative content, while learning occurs "on purpose" and is based on the fact that the student sets himself as aim at acquiring language skills. structures in themselves (Pallotti, 2011, p. 243).

6. CONCLUSION

The distinction between acquiring and learning a foreign language is in some ways accepted by many scholars, but it is still difficult to find evidence to support such a distinction. In this paper, we presented the different interpretations of the terms language learning and acquisition through the psychological and linguistic directions that identify and define these terms.

By presenting different theories about learning and / or mastering a foreign language, we can conclude that many linguists do not emphasize the difference between learning and mastering a language, but even when they do, they start from assumptions and criteria of different and consequently come to relatively different conclusions.

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