

INTRODUCTION

The current issue includes a selection of papers on language acquisition, L2 and L3 learning, presented at various conferences held at the University of Bucharest in 2021-2022, and covering a wide range of topics: the acquisition of phonology in monolingual child Greek, the acceptability of extraction in L2 English by L1 Romanian speakers, the acquisition of subjects in L2 English by monolingual Romanians, the interpretation of anaphora in L2 Hungarian, in an L1 Romanian – L2 Hungarian context, and the source of linguistic transfer in the L3 Japanese of L1 Romanian speakers learning English as a second language.

In “Cluster repair strategies in child Greek: An Optimality Theoretic account”, Eirini Ploumidi examines the simplification strategies attested in the longitudinal corpus of a monolingual Greek child. The analysis focuses on the strategies of reduction to the more sonorous member of the cluster and cluster deletion in [OBSTRUENT + LIQUID] clusters, strategies which appear in complementary distribution. Cluster deletion is claimed to be an epiphenomenon of the grammar’s restrictions on onsets.

In “Extraction in L2 English: Are factive verbs all alike?”, Irina Stoica investigates the acceptability of extraction out of the postverbal clause of factive verbs by intermediate and advanced learners of English, monolingual speakers of Romanian. Whereas the advanced learners no longer accept extraction irrespective of predicate type, the intermediate group allows long-distance movement in the case of cognitive factives, possibly under the influence of their L1, since Romanian is more permissive with respect to extraction. The study also brings further evidence that the distinction between cognitive and emotive factives is relevant with respect to the availability of extraction (Karttunen 1971, Hooper & Thompson 1973, Djarv 2019).

Anca Sevcenco, in “Diary null subjects in L2 English: A study on grammatical acceptability”, tests whether intermediate and advanced Romanian learners of English have acquired, alongside the core non-pro-drop grammar, the peripheral grammar of pro-drop in restricted and exceptional contexts. The findings show that the majority of respondents exhibit the conservatism typical of language learners (Snyder 2007, Amaral & Roeper 2014) and reject the peripheral option. However, a few respondents appear to have acquired both the core non-pro-drop grammar of English and the non-core restricted grammar of omission.

Andreea Dogaru, in “Are postverbal subjects difficult to eliminate from the L2 English of L1 speakers of Romanian?”, finds that advanced and proficient learners of English have fully acquired the cluster of properties associated with the pro-drop parameter for English and no longer accept postverbal subjects, while intermediate learners still do. Her results are in line with the Full Transfer/Full Access Model (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996).

In “Anaphora resolution in L2 Hungarian”, Veronica Tomescu and Réka Pupp test the antecedent preferences for null and overt pronominal subjects in L2 Hungarian, on a group of Romanian learners, with a control group of Hungarian-Romanian bilinguals. In the personal pronoun condition, the authors identify possible transfer from Romanian, where the personal pronoun is dispreferred with topic continuity interpretation (Pagurschi

2010, etc.). The L2 learners in the study give at chance responses in the case of the overt personal pronoun, while the group of bilingual Hungarian-Romanian have a strong preference to coindex it with the subject of the previous clause, as predicted in previous research (Tolcsvai 2000).

Finally, Sorana Iliescu, in “On the source of linguistic transfer in the learning of *-te i-* in L3 Japanese”, investigates the source of linguistic transfer in L3 Japanese in the learning of the *-te i-* aspect marker, with learners whose L1 is Romanian and L2 English. It is concluded that the source of transfer is L1 Romanian, rather than L2 English. The L3 learners favoured the habitual rather than the progressive interpretation of the aspectual marker, even though Romanian, unlike English, does not have an overt aspectual marker. The study shows that transfer can occur from L1 instead of L2 even when the existence of certain similarities between L3 and L2 might be expected to favour transfer from the latter.

References

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