



Learner's L1 Language use during task-based peer interaction in SLA

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Introduction

As English language learning has flourished worldwide, especially in East Asian countries. There has been considerable debate about the use of L1 during peer interaction. Some L2 teachers promote immersion teaching and have significant concerns about learners' overuse of their L1 in peer interaction, while some teachers hold opposing views. This study examines the use of L1 language by learners in Korean and Chinese primary and university L2 classrooms in peer interaction to complete L2 tasks from a socio-cultural perspective. The comparison concluded that both primary and university students frequently switched their language codes during peer interaction. Moreover, the complexity of the interaction task had a significant effect on the use of the L1.

Methods

Table 1. Design of the study.

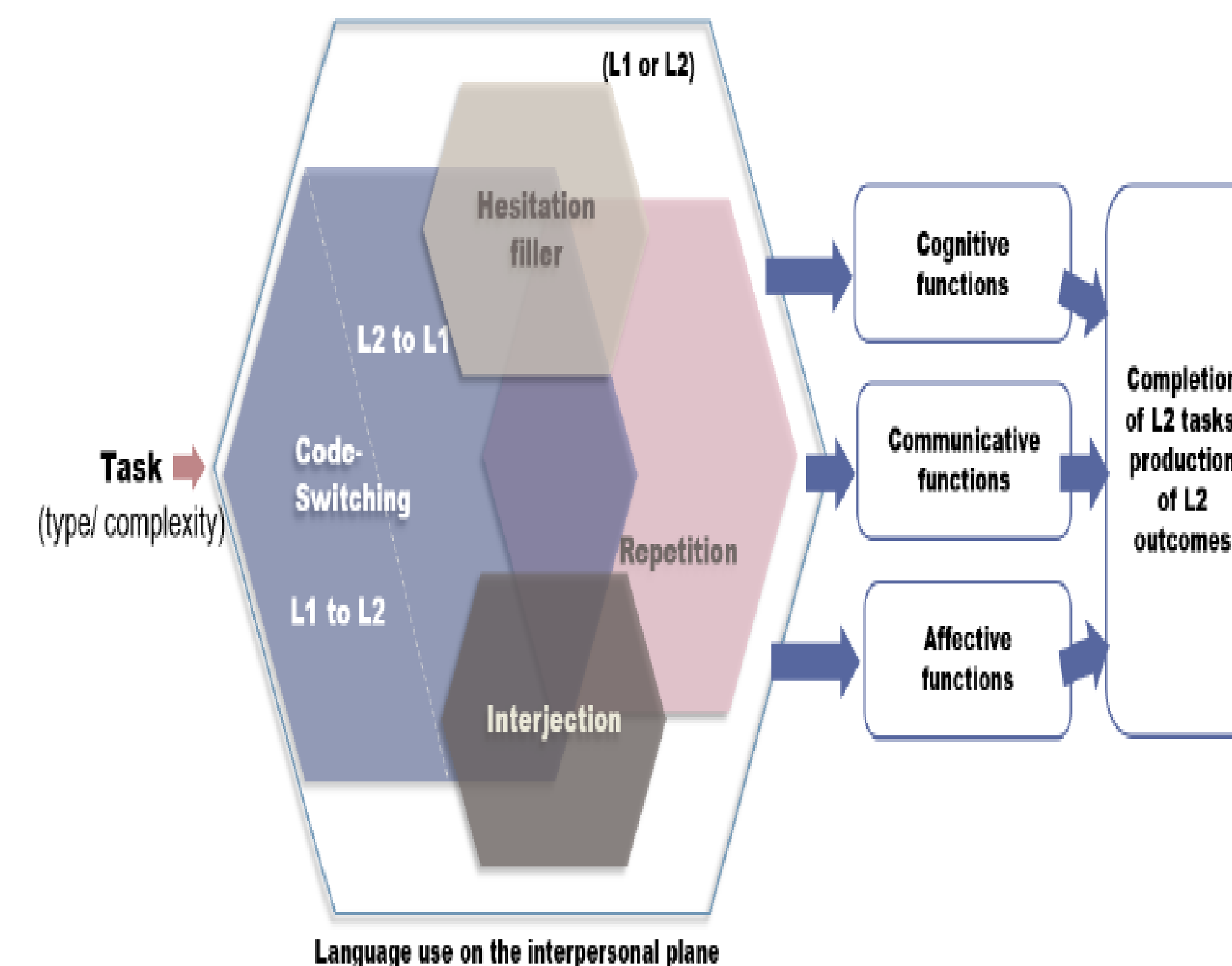
Group	Task 1: Mr Bean's test		Task 2: Mr Bean and the boy
Lower-proficiency group	1	simple	complex
	2	complex	simple
Higher-proficiency group	1	simple	complex
	2	complex	simple

Table 5. Functions of L1 turns by task complexity.

	Simple task (n = 12 pairs)		Complex task (n = 12 pairs)	
	M	SD	M	SD
Metacognitive talk	0.65	0.31	0.62	0.63
	$Z = -1.890, p = 0.056$			
Grammar talk	0.04	0.08	0.13	0.37
	$Z = -2.676, p = 0.007$			
Vocabulary	0.26	0.31	0.20	0.30
	$Z = -.557, p = .577$			
Phatics	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.07
	$Z = -1.178, p = 0.239$			
Off-task talk	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.05
	$Z = -1.055, p = 0.291$			

Discussion 1

L2 learners' language use on the interpersonal plane during task-based peer interaction in primary L2 class



Discussion 2

Functions of L1 turns of the two groups.

	Low-proficiency group (n = 12 pairs)				High-proficiency group (n = 12 pairs)			
	Simple		Complex		Simple		Complex	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Metacognitive talk	0.68	0.15	0.65	0.19	0.44	0.24	0.54	0.20
	$Z = -.628, p = .530$		$Z = -2.824, p = .005$					
Grammar talk	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.09	0.16	0.09
	$Z = -.663, p = .508$		$Z = -3.059, p = .002$					
Vocabulary	0.23	0.12	0.28	0.17	0.45	0.40	0.25	0.15
	$Z = -1.020, p = .308$		$Z = -1.883, p = .060$					
Phatics	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.05
	$Z = -1.183, p = .2370$		$Z = -2.240, p = .0250$					
Off-task talk	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.04
	$Z = -.314, p = .753$		$Z = -1.782, p = .075$					

Results 1(codeswitched)

The internal hexagons on the left refer to the language use features of learners observed at this level. The size of each hexagon placed in the outer hexagon indicates the relative frequency of each feature. The findings show that primary L2 learners frequently switch their language codes between L1 and L2, followed by repetition, hesitation fillers, and interjection in that order. The combination of cognitive, communicative, and affective functions contributes to the completion of L2 tasks/production of L2 outcomes.

Results 2 (task complexity)

The group recorded and transcribed the behavior of the learners who participated in the study and found, through SPSS 20.0 statistical analysis, that the complexity of the task had a significant effect on the amount of L1 use. The complexity of the task showed a positive proportional relationship with the amount of L1 use. This also triggered more attention to the factors influencing task complexity, and our study found that proficiency was decisive for task complexity, as significant differences were restricted to participants with high proficiency. When higher-level participants completed cognitively more complex tasks, they used their L1 more frequently, whereas a similar trend did not occur in the lower-level group.

Conclusions

This poster presents the results of recent research on L1 in task-based peer interaction in a second foreign language. By comparing data from two sets of studies, it was revealed that learners' L1 mediated the completion of L2 tasks and served communicative, cognitive, and socio-emotional functions among primary and university students in China and Korea.

This study can contribute to the changing of stereotypes about L1 in SLA and provide reliable empirical data for further research. At the same time, there is sufficient complementarity between the two studies. Through in-depth research, it has been discovered that the link between task complexity and L1 use is more complex than initially assumed. Considering the role of the L1 as a cognitive tool to facilitate task completion and the L2, the study could provide an important reference for teachers' task design.

Bibliography

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