

Building synergies between SLA and LCR: the case of Gender

The present paper exploits a methodological convergence where the study of acquisition of gender in the second language (L2) is triangulated by corpus and experimental data. In particular, the findings of a previous experimental work on gender in Greek as L2 are complemented by data coming from Greek Learner Corpus II, a new resource for L2 learning investigation, which currently contains 300 thousand words of written and spoken learner production. This way second language acquisition (SLA) research is informed by learner corpus research (LCR) a synergy that is quite promising in the field of applied linguistics (Tracy-Ventura & Paquot 2021; Granger 2021; Lozano 2021 a.o.).

With respect to the feature that is explored, i.e. gender, we are interested in the role of lexical and syntactic congruency (Hopp & Lemmerth, 2016) when a partial overlap is instantiated between L1 and L2. To this end, Russian (L1) and Greek (L2) form an interesting pair since:

- a. both languages realize gender and classify nouns into one of three gender classes,
- b. nouns in the two languages do not necessarily share the same gender since gender marking is arbitrary in both languages,
- c. the two languages instantiate a partial overlap with regards to the syntactic means for gender realization. While Russian and Greek deploy postnominal suffixes to express gender in nouns (1a-b), Greek can additionally exploit prenominal determiners (1c). Finally, both languages mark gender on adjectival suffixes (2a-b).

- (1) a. kn'ig-a
book-FEM
- b. vivli-o
book-NEUT
- c. to vivli-o
the.NEUT book-NEUT
- (2) a. krasn-aja knig-a
red-FEM book-FEM
- b. kokin-o vivli-o
red-NEUT book-NEUT

Besides the findings that will be presented during the talk, a number of critical issues are raised when corpus data (i.e. the present study) are being contrasted to experimental data on the basis of the same structure. Precisely, we discuss the role of the nature of data (naturalistic vs. experimental), the sample size (corpus vs. experiment), the type of processing (off-line vs. on-line) and the task-type (production vs. comprehension).

References (indicative)

Granger, S. (2021). Have learner corpus research and second language acquisition finally met? In Le Bruyn, B. and Paquot, M. (eds) *Learner corpus research meets second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 243–57.

Tracy-Ventura, N. and Paquot, M. (2021). The future of corpora in SLA. In Tracy-Ventura N and Paquot M (eds) *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition and corpora*. Abingdon: Routledge.