

walking under a ladder, stopping when a black cat crosses one's path, throwing a coin in a fountain to make a wish, etc. Each unit in the teacher's book is preceded by a vocabulary section. The unit also has the transcript of the recordings and suggestions for written work for the students.

Language Transfer: Cross-linguistic Influence in Language Learning

By Terence Odlin

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The idea of language transfer is of crucial importance in applied linguistics, second language acquisition and language teaching. Although it had waned in the 1960s (when learners' errors were seen not as evidence of language transfer but of 'creative construction process'), in recent years, the role of transfer has come to be acknowledged. Terry Odlin's *Language Transfer* provides an account of the nature of language transfer or cross-linguistic influence, and its role in second language acquisition. In the words of the Series Editors:

Odlin documents the historical development of the concept of language transfer, explores the role of transfer in discourse, semantics, syntax, phonology and writing systems, and examines the way language transfer interacts with linguistic as well as cultural, social and

personal factors in second language learning and use (p. ix).

The book is divided into ten chapters each of which deals with a different linguistic aspect of transfer. The first two chapters give an introduction and earlier views on the issue of transfer; the third chapter defines some fundamental problems in the study of transfer. Chapters four-eight form the theoretical base of the book and follow a somewhat top-down approach to the issue of transfer, starting with discourse (chapter 4), semantics (chapter 5), syntax (chapter 6), phonetics, phonology and writing systems (chapter 7), and moving on to non-structural factors in transfer (Chapter 8).

Chapter 1 provides a brief introduction of the issue of transfer; chapter 2 provides its background. With plenty of examples, this chapter introduces the differences between borrowing transfer and substratum transfer: the former refers to the influence a second language has on a previously acquired language, while the latter refers to a type of cross-linguistic influence (typically of the source language) on the acquisition of a target language. This chapter also has a few sections dealing with contrastive analysis and the universal processes in acquisition. Chapter 3 identifies some theoretical and practical problems associated with the study of transfer (mainly that it is *not* a consequence of habit formation; it is *not* interference or falling back on the native language, and is *not* always the 'influence of native language'). The problems of generalization arising from language universals and linguistic typologies are also addressed in this chapter. The next four chapters present detailed analyses: Chapter 4 begins by addressing what Odlin calls the most challenging areas in contrastive analysis—discourse. Phenomenon such as politeness (including requests, apologies, other speech acts, conversational style, etc.) and coherence are addressed (including narratives, indirection in

discourse) in this chapter. The next chapter on semantics addresses both propositional semantics (semantic universals and linguistic relativism, semantic case) and lexical semantics (cognate vocabulary; lexical universals and acquisition and lexicon and morphology). Chapter 6 is concerned with syntactic transfer (especially with regard to word order, relative clauses and negation). Chapter 7 examines phonetic and phonological transfer (phonetic and phonemic differences, segmental errors, suprasegmental patterns), pronunciation, language universal and typologies and writing systems. Chapter 8 deals with non-structural factors in transfer, i.e. individual variation (personality/aptitude/ literacy) and age of acquisition (foreign accents etc). From the point of view of language teachers, this chapter is important in that it deals with transfer from the point of view of social context: issues of multilingualism and learners' perceptions, semantic transfer and social context, linguistic focusing and transfer in relation to social prestige are deliberated upon. Chapters 9 and 10 ('Looking back and looking ahead' and 'Implications for teaching') are also chapters that teachers of language in a multicultural classroom (as is inevitable in a country such as India) will find immensely useful. Although the book does not address contemporary aspects of the issue of transfer (its fourth reprint came out almost twenty years ago in 1994), because of its easy readability, it can readily serve as an introductory text for students of linguistics and applied linguistics. In all, *Language Transfer* provides a comprehensive overview of the issue of cross-linguistic influence in second language acquisition, and its holistic viewpoint will be useful for language researchers, teachers and students of applied linguistics, teacher trainers and educational researchers.

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