

## The difficulty of second dialect acquisition E-Ching Ng · 3 Nov 2011 · Language contact reading group

- Jeff Siegel (2010). *Second dialect acquisition*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.  
Ch. 6: The difficulty of SDA [second dialect acquisition]. 134–156.

### (1) Is second dialect acquisition (SDA) harder than second language acquisition (SLA)?

- Native-like SLA is possible with age of acquisition (AoA) of 14 and 21.  
But native-like SDA does not seem possible for AoA over 13 (135).
- The starting point of SDA is closer to the target (137), affecting goals and motivation (138).  
SLA



SDA



- Phonology seems hardest in both SDA and SLA (137).
  - ▶ Phonology is also a ‘stable domain’ in language shift (Van Coetsem 1995).

### (2) Relevant hypotheses on similarity in SLA

- Noticing hypothesis (139) — but Japanese L1 speakers can produce English /l-r/ contrast better than they can perceive it (Sheldon & Strange 1982)
- Similarity facilitates transfer from L1 to L2 (140)
  - ▶ Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)
  - ▶ Equivalence (a.k.a. transfer to somewhere: Andersen 1983)
  - ▶ Typological similarity (or perception of similarity)
- Similar categories are hard to distinguish, e.g. AusEng ‘A’ [æɪ], AmEng ‘I’ [aɪ] (141ff)
  - ▶ False friends in morphosyntax and lexicon (143ff)
  - ▶ Child bilinguals distinguish similar categories by forcing them apart (Flege *et al.* 2003)
  - Flege’s Speech Learning Model (SLM) — It’s hard to treat an L2 vowel as a new category if it’s too similar to an L1 vowel, e.g. French /y/ vs. /u/ (141)
  - Best’s Perceptual Assimilation Model (PAM) — A non-native sound can be perceived as a good/bad fit for L1 categories, or non-speech (142–3)

### (3) Reactions to D2 speech

- Offence/insult, disbelief, resentment, revulsion, ridicule (146ff)
  - Implies listener’s inability to comprehend standard dialect
  - Difficult for talker to avoid caricature
  - Belief that there is one ‘true self’ tied to language, hence SDA is ‘phony’ or ‘pretentious’
  - Why use D2 if you can already be understood in your D1?
  - Property metaphor: identity theft (152ff)
- Acceptance in special cases
  - When D1 is non-standard (147)
  - Bidialectalism alongside dual identity (151)
  - Humorous use of D2 (147), cf. Benign Violation Theory (e.g. McGraw & Warren 2010)

#### (4) Relevance to sound change

- Koines display mixture, intermediate forms and simplification due to SDA
  - Transmission of New York City short-*a* pattern to New Jersey, Albany, Cincinnati and New Jersey (154ff, citing Labov 2007)

#### References

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- Andersen, Roger W. (1983). The transfer to somewhere principle. In *Language Transfer in Language Learning*, ed. by Susan Gass & Larry Selinker. Rowley, MA: Newbury House. 177–201.
- Flege, James Emil, Carlo Schirru & Ian R.A. MacKay (2003). Interaction between the native and second language phonetic subsystems. *Speech Communication* 40(4): 467–491.
- Labov, William (2007). Transmission and diffusion. *Language* 83(2): 344–387.
- McGraw, A. Peter & Caleb Warren (2010). Benign violations: Making immoral behavior funny. *Psychological Science* 21: 1141–9.
- Sheldon, Amy & Winifred Strange (1982). The acquisition of /r/ and /l/ by Japanese learners of English: Evidence that speech production can precede speech perception. *Applied Psycholinguistics* 3: 243–61.
- Van Coetsem, Frans (1995). Outlining a Model of the Transmission Phenomenon in Language Contact. *Leuvense Bijdragen* 84: 63–85.

#### What I'd like to read next

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- Garrett, Andrew & Keith Johnson (2011). Phonetic bias in sound change. *Annual Report of the UC Berkeley Phonology Lab*: 9–61.  
⇒ A dense review article.
- Bakker, Peter, Aymeric Daval-Markussen, Mikael Parkvall & Ingo Plag (2011). Creoles are typologically distinct from non-creoles. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 26(1): 5–42. Special issue: Creoles and typology.  
⇒ Uses phylogenetics.
- LaCharité, Darlene & Carole Paradis (2005). Category preservation and proximity versus phonetic approximation in loanword adaptation. *Linguistic Inquiry* 36(2): 223–258.  
⇒ Classic paper summing up two sides in the loanword phonetics/phonology wars.
- Haspelmath, Martin & Uri Tadmor (2009). *Loanwords in the world's languages: A comparative handbook*. Mouton de Gruyter. Chapter 2: Lexical borrowing: Concepts and issues (35–54). Chapter 3: Loanwords in the world's languages: Findings and results (55–75).  
⇒ Not urgent.