

Learning08: Methodologies and Practices for Approaching Learning as a Social Phenomenon Inside and Outside of School

Susanne J. Jekat, Zurich University of Applied Sciences

Factors supporting L2 acquisition in a multilingual environment

There are different factors that may support L2 acquisition of adult speakers, e.g. duration of stay in L2 country, frequency and quality of input etc., but at present the discussion is to be continued whether one of them or a combination of different factors supports or hinders the acquisition of a certain competence in L2. In our paper, L2 acquisition of German in a multilingual environment is analysed in relation to the biography and the actual situation of the speakers in question.

On the basis of transcribed interviews in Standard German with different L1 speakers (English, Spanish, French) who live in the German speaking part of Switzerland, the influence of duration of stay, everyday life, working life as well as the influence of the multilingual environment (Swiss German Dialects, Standard German, L1 of the speakers, their family and friends, French and Italian) is correlated with the speakers performance in Standard German. Within their Standard German speech samples, subjects show transfer mainly stemming from Swiss German Dialects and their respective L1, in correlation to the amount of input, whereas duration of stay does not seem to play an important role in supporting L2 acquisition.

References:

Flury, Dominik, 2006, Interferenzen zwischen L1 und L2 Deutsch. Eine empirische Untersuchung in der Schweiz, Diploma Thesis, Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Institute for Translation and Interpreting.

Jekat, Susanne J., to appear, Sprachverarbeitung bei Mehrsprachigkeit: Gesprächsdolmetschen, Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Institute for Translation and Interpreting.