Language-use Mistakes and Interlanguage Development in ESL Learners: Generalizations and Learning Strategies

Errores de uso de Lenguage e Interlenguaje en estudiantes de un segundo idioma: generalizaciones y estrategias de aprendizaje

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Abstract

This article of scientific research brings together the results of a case study developed to identify factors that interfere during the development of interlanguage (IL) in the acquisition of a Second Language (SLA) at the higher education level. The research is carried out with a mixed approach that focuses on a descriptive –experimental type. First, the literature review addresses the generalities of IL and the description of previous experiences in IL development. The learning strategies analysis focuses on how to promote the SLA process through IL. Secondly, an experimental case study is implemented with 10 students enrolled in a written communication course at the Universidad de Costa Rica to identify factors that intervene during IL's development. To this end, the students were asked to write compositions that were evaluated to identify the learners' errors and analyze them in terms of learners' language misinformation to determine the aspects of IL that affect the learners' language acquisition process. In conclusion, the learners' language errors were influenced by the student's profile, creative constructions, overgeneralizations and simplification, transfer of training, and interlanguage level. Finally, it is advisable to execute actions to raise awareness of the IL impact on the SLA process. In the future, efforts will be made to propose the design of a set of learning strategies that aim to overcome the stages of interlanguage in the SLA process.
Keywords: interlanguage, second language acquisition, learning strategies, interlanguage development, higher education.

Resumen

Este artículo de investigación científica reúne resultados de un estudio de caso desarrollado para determinar factores que intervienen durante el desarrollo del interlenguaje (IL) en la Adquisición de una Segunda Lengua (SLA) en educación superior. La investigación se realiza con un enfoque mixto de tipo descriptiva-experimental. Primero, la revisión de literatura aborda las generalidades del interlenguaje y describe experiencias previas en el desarrollo del IL. Posteriormente, se analizan estrategias de aprendizaje que podrían intervenir en el proceso de SLA durante el IL. En segundo lugar, se implementa un estudio de caso experimental con 10 estudiantes mayores de edad inscritos en un curso de comunicación escrita en la Universidad de Costa Rica para identificar factores que intervienen durante el desarrollo del IL. Para ello, los estudiantes escriben unas composiciones las cuales son evaluadas para identificar errores relacionados a la desinformación del uso de idioma y determinar los aspectos de IL que podrían afectar el proceso de adquisición de lenguaje. Se concluye que, factores como el perfil del estudiantado, construcciones creativas, generalizaciones y simplificación, transferencia de capacitación y el nivel de interlenguaje, podrían influir en la desinformación de uso del idioma por parte de los estudiantes. Finalmente, es recomendable ejecutar acciones para sensibilizar sobre la importancia del impacto que tiene el IL en el proceso de SLA. A futuro se trabajará en la confección de una propuesta para diseñar estrategias de aprendizaje orientadas a superar las etapas del interlenguaje en el proceso de SLA.

Palabras clave: interlenguaje, adquisición de una segunda lengua, estrategias de aprendizaje, desarrollo del interlenguaje, educación superior.

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I. Introduction

It has been widely understood that acquiring a second language becomes quite challenging for learners. In this process, learners make different language mistakes during the time they study a second language. Consequently, before learners achieve advanced language competence, they tend to misuse words by making errors in the second language

In this process for achieving language competence, learners speak an interlanguage which is a learner's dialect created by translating forms of the first language and oversimplifying others in the target language (Chen & Xu, 2019; Sánchez, 2016). In this conception of learner's dialect, learners tend to make language mistakes that affect their second language use. According to Chen and Xu (2019, p. 1) the "Interlanguage is crucial for the understanding of human language acquisition and development". In understanding this, some aspects about interlanguage become relevant to clarify, especially because learners' interlanguage development may vary from one individual to another. In this sense, Gonzales, Gerken, and Gómez (2018) and Nycz (2013) refer to idiosyncratic factors as an individual's dialect. It means an idiosyncratic dialect. Even though this assumption is not far from the truth, learners might share some factors that directly influence interlanguage development; for example, learners share some common mistakes at certain levels of language proficiency.

Approaching these mistakes becomes crucial for language instructors because they have to help learners to overcome those mistakes. In terms of methodological strategies that exist to overcome IL stages in SLA, it is also crucial to highlight the role of error analysis (EA) in this aspect which is "developed and applied to uncover the systems underlying the mistakes" (Mcdowell & Liardét, 2020, p.18).

Even though EA is not a direct strategy to remediate the challenges identified during learners' IL, it provides language teachers with data to face the different language misuse found in ELT (Hasbún, 2008). In this context, the EA function may aim at allowing the design of different teaching and learning strategies to overcome IL. For example, Sykes and Cohen (2018) suggest a strategy for interlanguage pragmatics that concentrates on learners' pragmatic knowledge, pragmatic analysis, learner subjectivity, and learner awareness. In short, it is suggested that strategies used in ELT may respond to language knowledge and analysis. Also, feedback has an important role. Feedback and EA present strategies that are essential to provide learners with input to reconstruct their errors. For example, Ambridge, Pine, Rowland, and Young (2008) aim at the relevance of feedback for the learners' recovery of overgeneralization inaccuracies.

In response to the previous issue, this research presents an analysis linked to the factors that interfere during the learners' interlanguage in SLA. For this analysis, different factors and learning strategies are considered to identify how they may affect language use during the learners' IL development. The analysis aims at the understanding of some factors of IL in the process of SLA. Furthermore, the analysis also aims to identify how the factors identified influence the learners' language use. The identification of these factors may serve future research to implement a set of teaching strategies to minimize IL impact and favor the learners' SLA.

From now on, this article is organized as follows: section 2 discusses the concept of interlanguage. Besides, it identifies the result of previous experiences in which interlanguage has been the object of study. Section 3 describes the research methodology used. Section 4 analyzes and discusses the results of the different factors that intervene during IL development in SLA. This analysis includes the strategies used by language learners during interlanguage. Section 5 summarizes the main aspects of the conclusions and suggestions for future work.

II. Theoretical Background

This section offers different definitions for the term interlanguage. It also presents previous experiences in which IL has been the object of study due to its impact during SLA. Besides, it allows stating validated theory that

serves the research questions with answers to understand the factors that affect language use in the SLA process.

2.1. Interlanguage Definition

It is essential to mention the existence of varied definitions and concepts for the term interlanguage. However, those definitions and concepts are approached differently depending on the author or researcher's focus. For example, Alemi, Eslami, & Rezanejad (2014) define interlanguage as the study of non-native speakers' linguistic development and action. Also, Pereira (2021, p. 4) defines this concept "as a dynamic process or continuum that evolves as the learner is exposed to the L2 input".

The concept of interlanguage used for the purpose of this study responds to the authors' elaboration based on the definition presented by other researchers (Chao, 2013; Buyse, Fernández, & Verveckken, 2015; Sánchez, 2016; Chen & Xu, 2019; Jiang, Ouyang, & Liu, 2019) who define interlanguage as a dialect created by students who learn a second language in which they use forms of the first language (L1) and generalize forms of the second language (L2). Besides, it is crucial to highlight that this concept may vary in correspondence to the researchers and their expertise in the field.

2.2. Previous Experiences in Interlanguage Development during SLA

In the Netherlands, in the University College Utrecht, a study was conducted with 13 students whose average age was 18 who had a beginner Spanish level. The research focused on examining the experiences interrelated to language acquisition. For the study, learners were requested to write an essay. The essays were analyzed to identify and characterize the learners' use of Spanish language past forms. The results showed a list of students' common mistakes in the conjugation of Spanish verbs in the simple past. These results motivated the researcher (González, 2005) to design an innovative learning strategy that could allow learners to acquire second language competencies to conjugate verbs in the past tense.

Jiang, Ouyang, and Liu (2019) conducted a research to analyze the typological structures of the interlanguage of 341 Chinese English language learners from two different secondary schools and a university in China. The study showed and confirmed that with the progress of second language skills, students' interlanguage system develops from the native language towards the target language in terms of linguistic typology.

In the Velayat University of Iran, Sajjad and Rahmani (2015) studied the pre-intermediate EF learners' interlanguage in a class of freshmen. This study aimed at coming up with a comprehension of the EL learners' interlanguage growth. This was a case study where the researchers observed and recorded students' language performance in different tasks. This study allowed researchers to evaluate interlanguage development in line with linguistic developments studied in the class. The authors concluded that the study benefitted language instructors by generating data on learners' oral production and its relation to interlanguage. They concluded that the study still requires further replications, but the data collected eased the understanding of interlanguage development.

The studies showed how learners' language production relates to their IL development. For understanding these learners' production, there is a need to study mistakes that they shared to obtain data about language use during the IL development. The different studies also made it evident that it is required to develop and implement pedagogical strategies that boost learners' cognitive skills through innovative teaching processes (Cruz-Sancho & Sandí-Delgado, 2014; Sandí-Delgado & Cruz-Alvarado, 2017; Sandí-Delgado, Hidalgo-Arias, & Cruz-Alvarado, 2015). In line with this, it becomes crucial to identify the IL development factors during the SLA process. In doing this, innovative strategies may be developed shortly to minimize the negative impact of IL factors that intervene in learners' language use during SLA.

III. Methodology

The study was developed through a descriptive-experimental mixed approach. In response to the study's purpose, the focus was to identify the factors influencing learners' language use during the IL development in SLA in higher education. The study was organized in two stages: the first one related to the collection of theoretical information associated with the concept of interlanguage and the result of previous experiences in which the IL role has been the object of study. The second stage focused on the development of the experimental case study with students. The study's main objective was to identify the factors that interfere during the development of IL in the acquisition of a second language at the higher education level. In this case study, students wrote a composition that helped the course's instructor to identify the mistakes made by the learners in the use of language. Then, the language instructor categorized the mistakes. As the final step, the mistakes identified were described by resorting to the information concerning IL.

In this regard, a systematic literature review was carried out in the first stage. It corresponded to what was indicated by Kitchenham, Brereton, Budgen, Turner, Bailey, and Linkman (2009) which consists of defining research questions, search strategies for information sources, keywords and search strings, and reference inclusion and exclusion criteria based on country of origin, language, and area of interest.

Concerning the importance of the analysis, some generalities of IL are considered. That is why, for conducting the analysis, the following research questions (RQs) were defined according to Kitchenham et al., (2009). RQ1. What is the role of interlanguage in SLA? RQ2. What factors interfere with learners' language use during the interlanguage development in the SLA? RQ3. What learners' strategies are mentioned in the literature oriented at the explanation of IL in SLA? RQ4. What methodological strategies exist in the literature oriented at overcoming language use errors during the development of IL in SLA?

Then, to find articles on the concept and previous experiences in interlanguage development during SLA, the research strategy consisted of querying various scientific and academic databases (Martínez, 2016), such as ScienceDirect, SCOPUS, IEEE Xplore Digital Library, EBSCO and, springer. These databases were chosen because they offered easy access to the required information; for example, articles published in national and international journals, and referee-evaluated publications in proceedings for congresses recognized by the international scientific community (Cruz-Alvarado & Sandí-Delgado, 2017; Sandí-Delgado & Sanz, 2020). Then, some keywords and search strings like interlanguage, error analysis, second language acquisition, learning strategies, and others were set in Spanish and English for the topics relevant for this research.

In the second stage, an experimental case study was developed with ten students of legal age averaging from 18 to 27 in a written communication course of the English Teaching major at the Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR). The course corresponds to a pre-intermediate level where students are expected to develop their communicative functions in the five linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. The course has a particular focus on writing paragraphs. The students come from public high schools where they first entered into contact with English during their teenage years. The students were instructed to write a free topic descriptive paragraph of ten lines to diagnose their language use in the writing skill.

The language instructor evaluated the different paragraphs written by the learners. In this stage, the instructor followed the steps suggested by González (2005), which identify and characterize the learners' most common language errors into groups and categories for analysis. Then, students' language mistakes were identified and characterized in terms of language use (lexical complexity) and word choice. For making the characterization clearer, the most common mistakes made by the learners were grouped into the following categories: (1) verbs with –ed inflectional wrongly used, (2) -ing form of verb misplaced in context, and (3) word choice.

The learners' characterization and categorization of mistakes serve the qualitative analysis to explain the errors in terms of IL factors; for example, creative constructions, overgeneralizations and simplification, transfer of training, age, and interlanguage level.

IV. Results and Discussion

This section focuses on presenting the results and the discussion of errors identified and characterized in the learners' compositions in a pre-intermediate course of writing. The results are presented in two main groups of language use (1) lexical complexity (-ing and –ed use) and (2) word choice. The analysis considers interlanguage factors such as creative constructions, transfer of training, level of interlanguage, learners' pre-intermediate level, learning strategies, overgeneralization, and age.

In carrying out this analysis, it is crucial to keep in mind that the concept learners' linguistic systems result in a combination of two different systems, most of the time the learners' first and second languages (Sajjad & Rahmani, 2015). It indicates the complexity of this type of analysis since it addresses the factors of interlanguage.

After having gone over the learners' compositions, the results showed that learners had the following language errors in their paragraphs. These language errors were selected for the analysis in response to the repetitive times of occurrence and the characterization. The error categories were identified in the use of -ed, the use of -ing, and word choice. In this view, out of the ten compositions written by the students, two learners made evident their trouble to use verbs in the simple past appropriately, five learners showed wrong use of the -ing form of verbs, and one learner struggled with word choice. The errors made by the eight students are presented and analyzed in the categories mentioned previously.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 show and describe the mistakes made by the students in the categories learners' errors on the use of –ed, learners' errors on the use of -ing, and learners' mistakes in word choice (these mistakes are approached and interpreted in detail further). Table 1

shows errors made by learners in their compositions using verbs conjugated with the –ed inflectional marker.

Table 1. Learners' Mistakes on the Use of –ed

Number	Learner's Mistakes
1	Surgeons were allowed to *removed* it from her.
2	Parents could not *exchanged* kids habits.

Source: Authors' own elaboration, 2021.

As shown, even though two learners might know the rules of regular verb conjugation in terms of the –ed inflectional because it is one content studied in a written communication course before, they had trouble using the verbs correctly. For example, one learner correctly conjugated the sentence's main verb in the simple past, but by error, the non-finite verb is conjugated in the past. A second learner used the verb in the past, which is wrong because an auxiliary for the past is already used.

Then, table 2 makes evident learners' errors in using the –ing form of the verb.

Table 2. Learners' Mistakes on the Use of -ing

Number	Learner's Mistakes
1	Students refused constant *supporting to* their classmates.
2	When they *leading* a cause for problems.
3	Parents can **carrying** their kids for walks.
4	In this way, obesity can show a **reducing**.
5	Furthermore, it might lead to **conflictings**.

Source: Authors' own elaboration, 2021.

In this aspect, three learners used the –ing form to create nouns, but they misused them. For example, they used *supporting* instead of *support*, r*educing* instead of *reduce*, and *conflicting* instead of *conflict*. Two learners also used two verbs in the –ing form to substitute simple forms of the verbs. The previous issue is observable in examples number 2 and 3.

Table 3 shows learners' language use errors in their choices of words.

Table 3. Learners' Mistakes in Word Choice

Number	Learner's Mistakes
1	The leisure time **maybe** relaxing.
2	They **breath** in the machine to know the alcohol level in their blood.

Source: Authors' own elaboration, 2021.

In this respect, one learner used *maybe* instead of *may be*. Also, a second learner chose the noun *breath* instead of the verb *breathe*. These are clear errors of word choice.

In the extracted excerpts, the errors may be identified as word choice and use (lexical complexity). These mistakes focus on (a) verbs with –ed inflectional wrongly used, (b) -ing form of verb misplaced in context, and (c) the wrong choice of words. These language issues are the result of IL in lexical use. Even though Chen and Xu (2019, p.2) hold that "most L2 studies in linguistic complexity, and lexical complexity, in particular, are concerned with word types and tokens", they also say "how words are used in context has not received the attention it warrants" (p.19). The latter might be the result and explanation of why these errors took place in a class of a pre-intermediate level. It may be inferred that former high school-instructors probably had not given the right treatment to this issue. However, more information about instruction will be addressed in the next lines. At this point, it is clear that the learner's specific language performance corresponds to the general linguistic system of the language. In this particular case, these language mistakes lead students to make wrong assumptions to correct language use just because they have studied those constructions before, but they do not know how to use them according to verb tense and sentence context This language issue also connects to what different authors (AlHammadi, 2016; Long, 1990; Newport, 1990) call psycholinguistics of second language equivalents of idiolects. It refers to how an individual speaks or writes within the whole system of a particular language.

In line with the information above, if once students read the word *supporting* and they understood that *supporting* works as a noun in the context they read it, there would be a high chance for learners to misuse it in a new context. This appreciation might respond to the factor called creative construction, which can be understood as a subconscious process through which the student gradually organizes the language they hear, according to the rules they have built to enhance the understanding and generation of sentences (Chen & Xu, 2019; Chung, Chen, & Geva, 2019; Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982). These same authors (Dulay et al., 1982) add that some of the errors identified in the student results were committed because of this process of creative construction, the tendency to use regular forms where possible, and secondly, to simplify elements and structures. These mistakes may also serve to explain by considering the overgeneralization features, regularization, and simplification. In supporting this, it can be said that (Chung, Chen, & Geva, 2019):

> The previous information refers to the L2 learner's evolving system of rules regarding the L2. It develops from various processes that take place as individuals learn the L2. These include transfer from the L1, as well as contrastive interference from the L2, and overgeneralization of newly encountered rules (p.150).

In this view, language transfer, contrastive interference, and overgeneralization are the first explanations in an attempt to justify why the errors could have happened.

Transfer of training is another explanation for the errors identified in the learners' compositions. What teachers teach and how they teach it may positively or negatively impact learners' learning (Cruz-Alvarado, Sandí-Delgado, & Víquez-Barrantes, 2017; Sandí-Delgado & Cruz-Alvarado, 2016). Therefore, the continuous training process could be considered a relevant aspect during second language acquisition and interlanguage development (Chen & Xu, 2019). The mistakes identified in the learners' compositions might also respond to poor training. In line with this, Bowles and Healy (2017, p. 256) add that "difficult training can slow acquisition of information". In this view, learners may retain

information that is not accurate, and they can transfer that information in other contexts of language use.

This position holds that if instructors in the early stages of learning carried out proper training, the possibilities for excellent transfer of training would come up with better results in the learners' language use. For example, learners could have had better language use in their compositions for diagnosis. This clearly shows how the lack of sufficient training may end in adverse instruction. That is why instructors must provide input and ensure effective learners' intake of the contents.

The possible level of interlanguage is another aspect to consider in the explanation for these learners' errors. A related study carried out by Sajjad and Rahmani (2015) draw to the conclusion that:

> Students with intermediate communicative proficiency are at "Before native-like stages" and they gain, nearly, a full access of their innate systems. In that level, through the stages, students had certain linguistic problems although they were proficient enough to communicate. This was because their interlanguage needed time to be exactly functional like Target language (p. 416).

This aspect of IL might be the case of the said learners and why they still make these language errors. They are in the process of input and intake. It means that even though the learners might be exposed to correct input, their intake is what prevails. Sometimes the intake does not necessarily respond to the input received. In regards to this topic, Lee, Plonsky, and Saito (2020) have addressed how learners transform input into intake by internalizing data and restructuring interlanguage to produce meaning. In reading the former and the latter, it is possible to understand the vital role a language teacher has in devising learning activities that ensure the learners' proper intake. These activities may also bring opportunities for learners to produce comprehensible output (Shehadeh, 2003). In doing this, language instructors could minimize learners' mistakes.

Furthermore, reinforcing the fact above, Sykes and Cohen (2018) identify that in IL strategies, the primary purpose for learners' confidence relies on providing them with the proficiency required to be competent speakers in multilingual speech. For achieving this, language teachers must also be confident in language use so that learners can use the new language correctly in response to appropriate exposure. An appropriate language exposure may move learners to immediate creativity. Through immediate creativity, learners try to use what they have just learned to make sentences of their own in response to good modeling. As aimed by the authors, this strategy may be one of the possible answers here. Lower-level teachers should probably have only provided incomprehensible input, so learners' intake was not necessarily appropriate. Consequently, their use of words is not correct and mistakes are identified.

Now, it is also crucial to recall that these learners were diagnosed at the beginning of the pre-intermediate level. The diagnosis' results showed that they were at the early stages of the pre-intermediate level, and they still faced problems of their previous language level. In this view, learners are expected to not fully master the topics studied and it may set a chance for learners to make mistakes.

As Sajjad and Rahmani (2015, p. 416) define "pre-intermediate students based on the features presented are in Middle Stages of IL Access. It should be mentioned that in these stages the cognitive processes are more complex and burdensome". The type of mistakes identified clearly made this fact evident.

Consequently, the learners' level is an aspect to be considered in the given analysis. As the authors mentioned, it is essential to understand that even though "levels are somehow describable, the stages are not clear-cut. It means students have different capabilities and rates of development in language use which are based on their participation, motivation, personal factors like hesitation, and intelligence" (Sajjad & Rahmani, 2015, p. 416). Therefore, beyond what the interlanguage level may allow learners to do in language competence, individual factors might also be considered.

These mistakes should respond to how learners use them to facilitate their language learning in terms of learning strategies. As mentioned earlier, the causes that drive these errors as consequences might vary from one learner to another. However, the input is validated because learners acknowledged words such as *supporting, removed, leading, maybe, carrying, reducing, breath, conflicting,* and *exchanged.* Even though their intake demonstrates to be wrong, learners may resort to (i) cognitive strategies, (ii) metacognitive strategies, and even (iii) social/affective strategies. In this view, the different mistakes identified might result from a process where learners transformed material by recombining known elements to construct a meaningful sentence, but they failed. However, the learner should be able to use the word correctly through corrective feedback and more learning activities that ensure their intake. The learners might also resort to selective attention once corrective feedback is given. This corrective feedback may be provided when learners make language errors to carefully plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning next time. That is why input enhancement is vital for learners to implement their learning strategies. In this sense, Ghasemi and Muhammad (2014) add:

> Input enhancement can vary depending on whether it is achieved internally or externally. Internal enhancement occurs when the learner notices the form himself or herself through the outcome of internal cognitive processes or learning strategies, and external enhancement occurs when the form is noticed through external agents, such as the teacher or external operations carried out on the input (p.565).

Besides all this, overgeneralization might be a possible response to the different problems identified in students' compositions. Overgeneralization is part of students' IL since they learn a structure, and then this is overgeneralized in a context where the term learned does not match. In this case, overgeneralization can perfectly match as an explanation for the problem due to its close relation with the characteristics it has. Having learned and dealt with a stock of vocabulary, but having wrongly used it, clearly suggests a problem of

overgeneralization. The main issue about this does not rely on the problem, but the treatment given to it. In line with this, Ambridge, Pine, Rowland, and Young (2008, p.88), suggest that "many overgeneralization mistakes, for example, past-tense overregularization (e.g., runned) are relatively non-problematic". For these problems, the authors argue "corrective feedback in the form of recasts, requests for clarification and misunderstandings. Whilst it seems likely that such feedback aids the recovery from overgeneralization mistakes" (Ambridge et al., 2008, p. 88). Then again, this corrective feedback is essential. If language instructors provide learners with effective feedback, they will have a better opportunity to notice, reformulate, and reconstruct their interlanguage.

Age is also a very salient factor when analyzing learners' IL. As shown in some studies, age determines and may help to anticipate specific issues when learning a second language. In this respect, Bonfieni, Branigan, Pickering, and Sorace (2019, p.160) roundly state that "L2 age of acquisition predicts overall latencies in accessing the L2". In the case study, age perfectly matches the learners' case because all of them started learning English in their teenage years, where the exposure to the language in public high schools did not include all linguistic skills. As claimed by the learners, their instruction corresponded to reading comprehension exercises explained in their first language mainly. This late exposure and the lack of efficient language instruction may explain why the learners do not master language properly and make the mistakes identified. Learner's motivation toward language, articulatory problems, retention issues, commitment, and even the idiosyncratic use of language are elements requested to have a better understanding to try to explain the reasons why the learners came up with the mistakes mentioned. Al-jarrah (2016) refers to the idiosyncratic use, where learners, despite the structure rule-based, tend to create forms based on their idiosyncrasy. The author means that learners build an approximate system by taking from the L1 and L2 set of rules; they build their own specific grammar. This factor is commonly identified at certain levels, but it is necessary to know the individuals' profile to determine whether their characteristics end or not in language use –issues. Lastly, the method used in previous stages of learning

may drive learners to the IL identified. Most students responded to a process of learning through presentation, practice, and production. In regards to this, different authors (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011; Najjari, 2014) claim that investigations have shown that most students who had excellent knowledge in the practice phase did not transfer this skill to the production phase. Even though they manage to have successful results in the production phase, it is difficult for them to transfer that skill outside the classroom. That is why learners' errors may also respond to this fact.

V. Conclusions and future work

In line with the discussion, it can be showed that the inferences made through the learners' production, review of literature, analysis of previous experiences, and in response to the RQs, the following conclusions derive. First, the article in its purpose of identifying the distinctive generalities of IL and in response to the first and second RQs showed how the generalization identified in the learners' work aims at a problem of lexical complexity explained by IL problems with a) creative constructions, b) overgeneralization and simplification, c) transfer of training, d) learners' level of interlanguage, and e) age. Besides, in response to the third RQ, it is shown that learners adopt strategies for these language errors to happen. Among the learners' strategies, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, social-affective strategies, selective attention, input enhancement (learners' intake), and overgeneralization were related to different learners' language errors. Moreover, concerning RQ4, it is evident that three findings are highlighted. First, EA stands to provide language teachers with enough data to act and face learners' language problems. Second, an approach to interlanguage pragmatics is suggested. This approach suggests that learners' IL issues should be faced by implementing ELT strategies that respond to language knowledge and analysis. In addition to these two findings, the role of effective feedback has a crucial impact by providing learners with the opportunity to notice, reformulate, and reconstruct or restructure their interlanguage. These results are in line with the insights presented by Chen and Xu (2019) who state that lexical mistakes take place due to IL complexity, and they require attention warrants for learners' language improvement.

Finally, the investigation concludes that the set of learners' language errors analyzed brings light in terms of analyzing the distinctive IL generalities. Besides, the opportunity to take action to raise awareness of the IL impact on the SLA process. As future work, it may be considered to design a set of strategies to guide language teachers' practice in minimizing language errors due to IL during SLA.

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