

# Crosslinguistic influence of an L3 on an L2 in the productive language skills

## Influencia translingüística de una L3 a una L2 en las habilidades productivas del lenguaje

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### Abstract:

Multilingual speakers usually pass through a process of mixing the languages they are learning. For this reason, the purpose of this research was to detect the possible role of an L3 in the output of an L2. In order to find an answer, students who have English as L2 and were studying a third language (German and Korean) were asked to complete three different speaking and writing exercises, to facilitate the identification of any crosslinguistic syntactic and phonological influences from their respective L3s, due to typological closeness. The data was analysed with the help of an observation sheet and checklists; the data is presented in graphs and through descriptive paragraphs. At the end of the research, it was shown that close languages (typologically speaking) seem to create more conflicts in pronunciation for multilingual speakers than distant languages. The impact of this research lay in detecting how multilingual students perform a switching process in different languages and making them conscious of this phenomenon.

### Keywords:

*Crosslinguistic Influence, productive skills, pronunciation, typological closeness, word order.*

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### Resumen:

Las personas multilingües comúnmente pasan por un proceso en el cual mezclan los idiomas que aprenden. Por consiguiente, el propósito de la investigación fue detectar el rol de una L3 en la producción de una L2. Con el fin de encontrar el porqué, estudiantes que cuentan con el idioma inglés como su L2 y que se encontraban estudiando una tercera lengua (alemán y coreano), realizaron 3 distintas actividades de comunicación oral-escrita con el fin de identificar la influencia translingüística de la L3 en elementos sintácticos y fonológicos de la L2, siendo la cercanía lingüística la causa. Los resultados se obtuvieron a través de guiones de observación y listas de cotejo. La información se presenta en gráficas y párrafos descriptivos. Al finalizar la investigación, se pudo observar que, en cuanto a pronunciación, las lenguas geográficamente cercanas causaron mayor conflicto que las distantes. El impacto de dicho papel radica en detectar la manera en que los estudiantes multilingües se ven envueltos en un proceso de intercambio translingüístico en distintos idiomas y hacerlos conscientes de este fenómeno.

### Palabras Clave:

*Cercanía lingüística, habilidades productivas, influencia translingüística, orden sintáctico de las palabras, pronunciación.*

### Introduction

Multilingual learners usually tend to mix the languages they are learning during production. Most of the time, it is a consequence of learning more than one at the same time. In other words, they are in constant contact with both L2 and L3 and this opens a space for crosslinguistic influence. According to Angelis (2007, p.19), this phenomenon “seeks to explain how and under what conditions prior linguistic knowledge influences the production, comprehension and development of a target language”. This can lead to problems or, perhaps, L3 interference, in both the pronunciation and word order of learners’ thoughts, regardless the order of acquisition of these languages, and, more especially if they are typologically close. Griebhaber et al. (2006) state that if the last language which has been learnt shares some

similarities with the other acquired languages, the speaker can produce those characteristics in the base language (whether L2 or the mother tongue). As a result of this, it is important to make students aware of the transfer they are making, so that they can control it. The research reported in this paper is mainly focused on the crosslinguistic influence of an L3 on an L2, its role in the productive skills (speaking and writing) and the importance of language closeness in this interference.

### Purpose of the study

The purpose of this case study is to observe the crosslinguistic influence of an L3 on an L2 in the productive language skills of students who are learning English as an L2 and another third language (Korean and

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Fecha de recepción: 25 /01/2022, Fecha de aceptación: 25/02/2022, Fecha de publicación: 05/05/2022

German) at the Faculty of Languages and Faculty of Electronic Science at the *Benemérito Universidad Autónoma de Puebla*. At this stage in the research, the process of identifying L3 interferences with L2 will be generally described as a consequence of multilingual learning.

### Research Questions

1. Which productive skill is more influenced by the L3 on the L2?
2. Which area of language (syntax or phonology) is apparently more affected by the L3 in the productive skills?
3. Is typological language closeness a factor in this crosslinguistic phenomenon?

### Literature Review

#### 1. Crosslinguistic Influence (CLI)

If an individual is learning two or more languages at the same time, a mixture of both can occur at the moment of producing language in either the L2 or L3. Angelovska and Hahn (2012, p. 24) point out that Crosslinguistic Influence (CLI) is “about the roles of different languages coming into play during the [...] additional language acquisition process”. Moreover, Weinreich (1953, cited in Forysth, 2014) refers to this phenomenon as an event where the influenced language is branched off from its general rules and adapted to the ones of the language that is being learned. As a result of this, the phenomenon appears “when one language influences another, and the already influenced language in turn influences another language in the process of being acquired” (Angelis 2007, p. 21). All this confusion can be reflected in the way the student sequences some ideas in written or spoken language, the usage of the grammatical functions and the variation of pronunciation or the type of speech (formal or informal) that is produced.

#### 1.1 Crosslinguistic influence in pronunciation

When speech is produced, a certain system of sounds has to be followed according to the code used by the audience. Brown (2014, p.5) defines pronunciation as “the term usually given to the process of teaching learners to produce sounds of a language [...] to acquire acceptable, intelligible accent of the language”. For trilingual individuals, managing the pronunciation of three different systems can provoke the influence of any one in another. As stated in Cook (2016), the learning and transfer of pronunciation of another language implies the inclusion of some characteristics of the learner’s mother tongue, strategies to learn languages and linguistic elements (phonology, morphology, syntax, etc.) of the student’s

second language, being this visible during the crosslinguistic phenomenon. Even though two of the three languages studied by the learner may have similar pronunciation, they have to be conscious that there may be differences in the articulatory position for the production of those sounds or in the appropriate word stress. Bouchioua (2016, p. 273) explains that “the occurrence of this pronunciation error in [...] spontaneous speech shows that learners have not accurately perceived the difference between the [...] pronunciations of such segments and have consequently failed to produce them”.

#### 1.2 Crosslinguistic influence in word order

Every time that an idea is externalized, it has to follow a pattern of organization in the words that express it. In the area of language called syntax, the word order of a sentence is studied. Song (2012, p.1) states that word order is “the way words are arranged in a particular linear order in sentences”. Sometimes, multilingual learners become confused and fall into the mistake of collocating the noun, verb or adjective in a different position of the language that is being produced (L2 or L1) but the order might be correct in the L3. Jiang (2009, p.5) maintains that the “rearrangement of word order not only brings meaning change but also shows the skillful manipulation of the words in a sentence”, i.e. this type of transfer might show that the student is more competent in the language word order format of the L3 than the L2. However, Peukert (2015) establishes that these learners are conscious of this and can avoid the transfer in the word order area but they usually get blocked at the moment of producing any language in formal contexts.

#### 1.3 Productive skills

Being able to transmit a written or spoken message to a receptor in a second or third language correctly, is part of being competent in the code of that system. House (2011) considers speaking and writing to be productive skills, because they demonstrate the output of a language. Despite the fact that students can often assimilate written or oral texts in the L2 or L3 easily, they may still encounter problems in expressing what they have understood because, as Izumi (2003, cited in Piske & Young 2009) states, they need more time to process the word order (especially center embedding) of the foreign language in producing it than in comprehending it. As a result of this, writing and speaking tend to be more affected by certain crosslinguistic factors than listening and reading (receptive skills). Wahba, Taha & England (2006) establish that the transfer is more common in speaking, because students have less time to think about the ideas they wish to express, and, consequently, they may fail to use some grammatical rules and pronunciation

patterns accurately in speech, just as they may also produce inaccurate orthography and spelling in writing. However, they have more time to reflect on the structures to use in the language which is being learnt, in the process of writing.

### **1.4 Linguistic typological closeness**

One way to classify a language is according to the geographic area they come from. For example, German and English languages belong to the Indo-European language group. On the other hand, the Korean language belongs to the group of Altaic languages. Song (2014) defines the term “typological closeness” as the classification of the connections between certain languages, taking into account their historical background. If a learner is studying two or more languages that come from the same typological family, it is easier to transfer some patterns than it is in the case of a language which has no similarities with the ones which have been previously learned. Madlener (2015, p.322) explains that “cross linguistic influences may be due to overall typological closeness/distance of the languages involved and/or to their (dis-) similarity in the domain of specific constructions”. For this reason, German L3 learners that have English as L2 are more subject to crosslinguistic phenomena than the Korean L3 learners. Verschick (2008, p.90) points out that “Typological similarity between elements or entire subsystems increases the chances for copying”.

## **2. Methodology**

In this paragraph, the main characteristics concerning the research participants, the context, the research method, the procedures and instruments of the research will be described.

The methodology for this study was based on a case study approach, because Gall et al. (2003, cited in Duff, 2008, p.22) refers to this method as “the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon”. In this research, one of the main goals was to observe how students unconsciously transfer features of the L3 in their L2 real language performance. Furthermore, Yin (2003, cited in Griffe, 2012, p.97) establishes five elements that every research focused on this method must follow: “questions, propositions, analysis, linking of data to propositions, and criteria for interpreting the findings”. The present investigation aimed to answer three research questions, which were supported by the yield to be obtained, i.e participants’ perception about crosslinguistic influence and evidence of the phenomenon itself while speaking in the L2 (English) but being influenced by the L3 (German)

## **2.1 Participants and context**

The research was carried out at the Faculty of Languages of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), which is located in the north of Puebla City, Mexico. This faculty offers three offers a BA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (in either face-to-face and online mode) and a BA in Teaching French as a Foreign Language. Moreover, language courses are also offered at two language centers: CEU (Cursos de Extensión Univesitaria) and CELE (Centro de Lenguas Extranjeras), the latter offering courses to BUAP students and employees, exclusively. The research participants were four University students, aged 21 and 22 years. Two of the four students study Teaching English at the Faculty of Languages at the BUAP and Korean is the third language they are learning by themselves. The other two participants are studying Mechatronics Engineering at the Faculty of Electronic Science, at the BUAP. English is a curricular subject in both of these BA programmes, but they have both been learning this language since secondary school and now they are also taking German classes in CELE BUAP, i.e. German is currently their third language. The first language of all four participants is Spanish, and English is their L2. All four also share the same level (B1) in the L3. The data was collected in the Faculty of Languages during the students’ free time, taking into account that, before the application of the instruments, they were recently exposed to their L3 (either German or Korean).

## **2.2 Instruments**

The data collection tools included: handouts (articles about the countries where their L3 is spoken, i.e Germany and South Korea respectively), checklists, an observation sheet and one essay written by each participant.

### **2.2.1 Description of the handouts**

These consist of two written input texts (one for the L3 Korean learners and another for the L3 German subjects) which talk about three cultural and social characteristics of the country in which their third language (German and Korean) is spoken. It was decided to write the article (written input) in English since the objective was to observe whether the L3 can play a role in the L2 while reading and discussing of the culture connected to their L3s. The first text is entitled: “Three important facts about Korean culture” and the second: “Three important facts about German culture”. Both were written by the researcher in order to use words which could provide the

required information related to the phonological aspects that, according to Wilson (2015, 2016), are commonly transferred from their L3 to English. Also, the handouts are useful for students because they included a source to enable them to complete the oral expression task that is mentioned in this instrument. This consisted of giving their opinion regarding the information provided in the L12 input text.

### 2.2.2 Description of the checklists

The purpose of using the checklist was to detect any crosslinguistic pronunciation of the students while reading aloud and speaking in the L3, more specifically, while they were completing the tasks on the handouts. The checklist included seven aspects related to confusion between false cognates, addition of sounds and sound replacement between English with Korean or German.

When it comes about Korean language, Wilson (2015) considers the following sounds more common to be mispronounced: “/i:/ and /ɪ/ , /əʊ/ , /ɜ:/ , /l/ and /r/ , /θ/ and /ð/ , /v/ and /f/ , adding extra vowels to words in the middle of /br/ , /pl/ or /bl/ sounds or at the end of consonants such as /s/ , /x/ , /z/”.

On the other hand, Wilson (2016) states the following features as common errors from German to English pronunciation: “/e/ and /æ/ , /ɔ:/ and /ɒ/ , /əʊ/ , /ɜ:/ , /θ/ and /ð/ , /v/ and /w/ , and /r/”.

There were also two boxes headed “Yes” and “No”, in order to mark whether those features emerged or not and, plus the frequency of occurrence. Emergent features were included in the section of “observations”, at the end of the checklist.

### 2.2.3 Description of the observation sheet

This instrument aimed to detect any crosslinguistic word order that students may seem to produce during the process of speaking and writing, in other words, to detect a syntactic transfer of the L3 into the L2. The aspects that the observation sheet covered were the order of nouns, verbs and adjectives. In the first point, pronouns, demonstrative, common and proper nouns were checked. In the second point, types of verbs such as infinitive, auxiliary and main verbs of the sentence were examined and in the last point the way that adjectives were ordered. All of these considered aspects were backed up with Jung (2014) research about linguistic typology among different languages, included German and Korean. There was also a space to add comments regarding whether L3 syntactic patterns were visible in the written discourse and perceivable in speech, or not.

### 2.2.4 Description of the essay

Students were assigned an essay, in which they were asked to explain their own experiences of this phenomenon, i.e. L3 crosslinguistic influence in their English (L2) output and also input. The topics that the participants were asked to cover in the essay were any transfers in vocabulary, word order, grammar, the four main skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening), the factors which they thought might be the cause of these and how to avoid them. At the very beginning, students had to include their participant number, specified their third language, the date on which they wrote the essay and a title which, in their view, adequately described the phenomenon about which they were writing. The required length of this essay, which was written on the L2 to observe whether there was L3 syntax influence, was one page (250 words), and it was asked to be written on a computer. This sort of written reflection was chosen since, in words of Elbow (2000), writing is a safer source for students to portray their feelings, opinions and thoughts, being those reasons totally needed for this instrument.

## 3. Analysis of data

In the following section, the results obtained from the analysis of data collected using each of the instruments are presented.

### 3.1 Analysis of the use of the handouts

The purpose of the handouts was to provide students with a written input text that included cultural information regarding the countries where their L3 is spoken (South Korea and Germany). The L3 Korean learners were asked to read aloud (in order to have recorded evidence of the L3 crosslinguistic influence) a handout called “Three important facts concerning Korean culture” and L3 German learners read aloud a handout called “Three important facts concerning German culture”. Furthermore, they were tricky texts because they included words that native Korean and German speakers tend to pronounce incorrectly in English. Before they started the exercises, some instructions were given so that participants would know what they had to do after reading the text aloud. Before doing the first task, they were not allowed to skim or scan the text, so their speech could be uncontrolled and L3 influences could come spontaneously. While reading, they were requested not to stop nor correct any word which was mispronounced. Then, they were asked to say what they had understood from that text, taking into account the same rules established during the reading aloud process. The main reason for doing this was to check any differences in crosslinguistic pronunciation when the students just read aloud something already created as compared with their spontaneous spoken production.

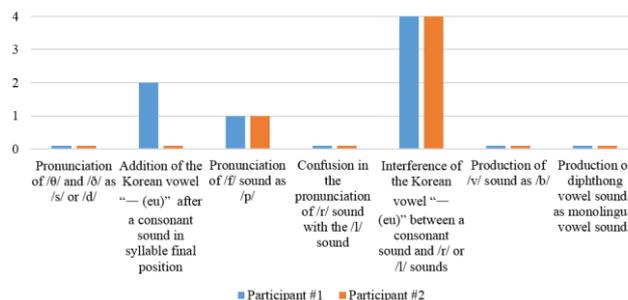
### 3.1.1 Evaluation of the handouts

In order to find out if learners created a conscious connection between the L3 and L2 phonological aspects (pronunciation), language production during the activities included in the handout (a reading aloud exercise and an oral expression exercise) were assessed using a checklist that took into account seven phonological aspects (all of these were different for the L3 Korean and L3 German students, respectively) recording any non-standard pronunciation any feature as well as the number of times which they were inaccurately produced. Also, the second exercise on the handout was used to detect possible influences of the L3 at the syntactic level, more specifically, in the word order.

#### 3.1.1.1 CLI in pronunciation during the reading aloud and oral expression exercises for L3 Korean students

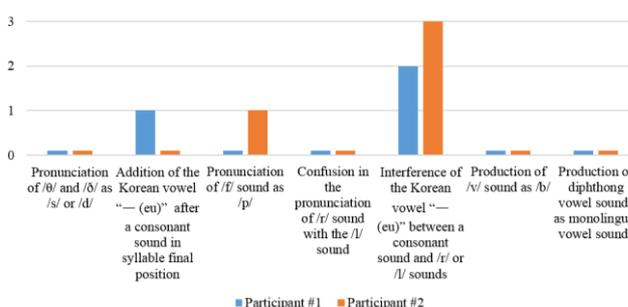
As can be seen in Graphs 1 and 2, the most remarkable Korean phonological aspect to emerge in both exercises was the interference of the Korean vowel “— (eu)” between a consonant sound and /r/ or /l/ sounds (example: the word “produce” is written as “peurodyuseu” (프로듀스). It can be noticed that this vocal is between the letter “p” and “r”). The words that students mispronounced were: dream, country, crossing, free, important, train, people, streets and burns. The second aspect that was most frequently transferred is the addition of the same vowel but at the end of a consonant sound. The following words were produced incorrectly by the students: palaces, consider and differences. And lastly, the mispronunciation of the /f/ sound with the /p/ sound. “Phones” and “free” are the two mistakes that subjects made. Another clear transfer (not included in the checklist) was the pronunciation of the Korean double consonant “ㅃ” (jj) instead of /j/ sound (example: “machines” as the Korean translation of “right!” (majji = 맞지) and the word “dishes”). In addition, both students wrote in their essays that words with the letter “c” usually confuses them because this letter sounds like /j/ in Korean.

**KOREAN PHONETIC TRANSFER IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION: READING ALOUD EXERCISE**



Graph 1. Students’ crosslinguistic pronunciation between Korean and English in the Reading aloud exercise.

**KOREAN PHONETIC TRANSFER IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION: ORAL EXPRESSION EXERCISE**



Graph 2. Students’ crosslinguistic pronunciation between Korean and English in the Oral expression exercise.

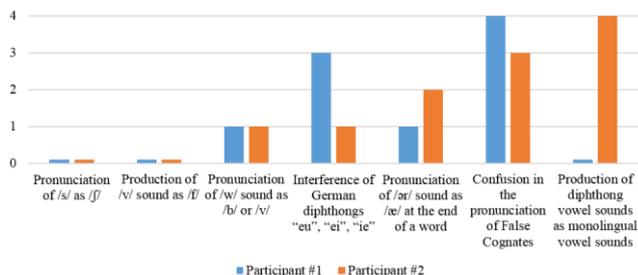
As a result of this, the Crosslinguistic Influence of pronunciation in this case can be related to the way that Koreans write some English words in their own alphabetic system. As a consequence of this, L3 Korean learners seem to have unconsciously copied that pronunciation. Moreover, these learners produced more errors in the reading aloud exercise because of the intentional inclusion of tricky words and they chose their own vocabulary in the speaking exercise, but some words such as “free”, “important” and “people” were pronounced incorrectly (in the same way as in Korean language) in both exercises.

#### 3.1.1.2 CLI in pronunciation during the reading aloud and oral expression exercises for L3 German students

As illustrated in Graph 3, the subjects committed mistakes in almost all the aspects, but there were fewer pronunciation transfers in oral production, (as opposed to reading aloud), because students did not use certain tricky words spontaneously. However, this last exercise was the one in which they got more confused because they also started mixing German vocabulary in their speech. One subject used three words in German (“der”, “you hast” and “the Kleidung”) and a whole expression in

this language (“Das ist alles” which means “That is all”, and the learner immediately self-corrected and changed it into “that is everything”); the other student just transferred two words (“ich“ and “must”).

**GERMAN PHONETIC TRANSFER IN ENGLISH  
PRONUNCIATION: READING ALOUD EXERCISE**

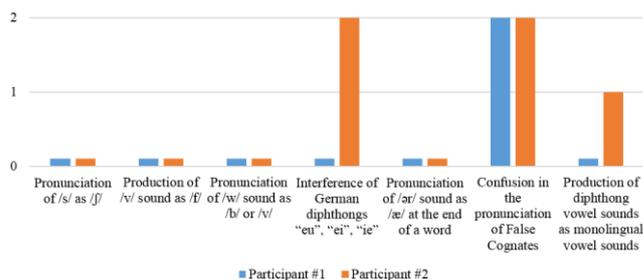


*Graph 3. Students’ crosslinguistic pronunciation between German and English in the Reading aloud exercise*

Coming back to crosslinguistic influence, Graphs 3 and 4 show that the aspect that seems most to have triggered this phenomenon in both participants was the confusion of the false cognates (words which are similar in both languages but which are pronounced differently and have different meanings). Some examples produced by students were: Euro, European, super, seven and north. Furthermore, the subjects had problems in pronouncing words which include the German diphthongs “eu, ie, ei” because their pronunciation is completely different from in the L2. Words like Euro, European, society and seven (the German translation of this is “sieben”, but the number was written as “7” in the text) are examples of this interference.

Both students seem to have made the same transfer in the third point, because they pronounced the letter “w” as /v/ sound instead of /əʊ/ in the word “snow”. Another audible transfer was in the pronunciation of /ər/ sound when it is located at the end of a word. This is clearly marked when the subjects said the words “super” and “ever”. Related to the last point in both graphs, Participant #2 committed this mistake in the following words: going, clothes, those and loud. Even though this point was not included in the original criteria of the checklist, students pronounced the /θ/ and /ð/ sounds as /d/ or /t/ where they were located in the middle (e.g. clothes) or the end of the word (e.g. north. The translation in German for this word is Nord).

**GERMAN PHONETIC TRANSFER IN ENGLISH  
PRONUNCIATION: ORAL EXPRESSION EXERCISE**



*Graph 4. Students’ crosslinguistic pronunciation between German and English in the Oral expression exercise*

It could be concluded that these participants were more affected by this phenomenon, because the two languages are more closely related in terms of pronunciation than is Korean language. Also, as one participant stated in their essay (another instrument used for the research, as mentioned above), their roots or language family, namely, the Indo-European group, is a factor which could incite this, due to similarities in both the vocabulary and alphabet. In addition, the numbers created a confusion in learners because they seemed to want to pronounce them following the German word order (starting with the units and then the dozens) and one participant also produced the word “tausend” instead of thousand, which are similar in German and English.

This manifestation of the L3 in the L2 was equally expressed in their essays. The crosslinguistic influence was more visible in the first exercise because it included vocabulary that German people tend to mispronounce in English, but the second exercise seems to have caused more crosslinguistic influence in the use of their lexicon, and, consequently, the pronunciation was affected by this.

### 3.1.1.3 CLI in word order during the oral expression exercise for L3 Korean students

The L3 Korean students also shared their opinion about the text written in the handout orally. The length of each of their speeches was around one minute and a half. The data recorded on the the observation sheet showed that these subjects did not seem to experience much interference in relation to the structure of their sentences. Even though the order of the adverbs was not originally a point of focus of this study, most of the learners’ mistakes were related to these. Consequently, the main verbs of the sentences were located in places other than those that the norm would dictate. In the Korean language, the adverb comes after the noun and before the main verb and one student sent the verb to be (“is”) to the 3rd place of the sentence, as in the L3: “It sometimes is spicy”. In the L2, most of the adverbs must be in the 2nd place of

the sentence if the person uses present simple tense or simple past tense, but that is not the case with the word “sometimes”. Another student produced the following phrase: “And also it’s important the culture that the Koreans are very respectful to old people”. The error might be connected with the L3, due to the order of the adverbial phrases, which are commonly placed before of the verbal phrases. Some interferences of the L1 were also observable.

Furthermore, learners committed some conjugation mistakes and one of the students said “There’s a lot of cultural differences”. In Korean, the plural markers are often omitted, so the conjugation of the verb is equal in singular and plural, rather than in English, where the verb should be conjugated as “are” in the previous example. Notwithstanding, this was not related to word order. Both students made noticeable use of adverbs (“really” and “very”) to emphasize the majority of the adjectives they employed. Korean people often use words like 진짜 (jinjja=really), 정말 (jeongmal=truly/really) and 너무 (neomu=very) in their daily conversations.

### **3.1.1.4 CLI in word order during the oral expression exercise for L3 German students**

In order to complete the tasks in the handouts, the participants gave their opinions concerning the text “Three important facts regarding German culture” orally. The length of each of their speeches was around one minute and twenty seconds, but one of them was not able to finish it. This student seemed to experience strong L3 crosslinguistic influence in relation to the lexicon, because a mixture between German and English vocabulary came out, despite these words being produced following the correct word order in the L2. Learner #1 also produced two German words during the exercise but placed them in the correct word order. The interferences which emerged were: ich (I), das (definite article for neuter nouns), groß (big), Das ist alles (that is all), die Kleidung (the clothes), hast (conjugation of “have” for the 2nd person in singular in present simple), der (definite article for masculine nouns). These students did not present a lot of mistakes in the word order, but one of them presented crosslinguistic influences in main verbs: “The Sunday in Germany is the relax or rest day”. The student sent the verb to be (is) to third position in the sentence instead of the second. In German, the verb must be in second place in a sentence which starts with a noun, preposition phrase or time expression, but the learner took this part “The Sunday in German” as a complete noun phrase and immediately put in the conjugated verb.

Interference related to other issues than word order was: the excessive use of articles (most of the nouns should be

placed after their article and declined according to the case in the L3) and verbs conjugated as in the L3. The verb “talk” in the sentence “This text talk” was conjugated as “talkt”. In German, verbs in the third person singular are conjugated with a “t” at the end while speaking in present tense. The verb “have” was conjugated as “hast” in the phrase “you hast”, because one German language rule states that the conjugation of the verbs in the second person in singular is with a “st” at the end, in the present tense.

## **3.2 Checklists**

Checklists were used for the recording and analysis of language production during the activities (reading a text aloud and expressing opinions orally) included in the handouts. To achieve a complete analysis of these, the seven aspects incorporated in the instrument designated to L3 Korean and L3 German students was related to those sounds that native speakers of those languages usually produce when they speak in the students’ L2, i.e. English. The checklist did not originally include a section for observations, nevertheless, the researcher made some notes to indicate the mispronounced words and other phonological aspects which had not been taken into account in the original criteria of these instruments.

## **3.3 Observation sheet**

This instrument enabled the documentation of how subjects ordered their ideas (sentences) when completing the oral expression exercise and writing the essay about their contact with the phenomenon that is being studied. Not all the parts of a sentence were evaluated, because those which were selected (nouns, verbs and adjectives) can be written in more than one way in both Korean and German, and foreign students of these languages often place them where they should not be. Aside from the L3 interference observed in student production in these speeches, other mistakes, such as incorrect conjugation, punctuation and spelling were also noted in the “comments” section of the observation sheet.

## **3.4 Essay**

The reason for assigning this type of task was to detect possible examples of L3 crosslinguistic influence in L2 syntax, with a focus on the word order of sentences, but also to find out more about the participants’ point of view and background of this phenomenon in participants’ oral and written production. The essay was delivered electronically, the required length was 250 words approximately and it had to include an original title related to the research topic, as well as the number of participant, L3 and date, at the top of the page. The text was then analysed using the observation sheet and following the same criteria for both sets of participants.

### **3.4.1 CLI in the word order of the L3 Korean learners' essays**

As registered on the observation sheets, one student did not evidence any kind of L3 crosslinguistic influence in the word order of the sentences, but some samples of L1 word order were visible. Nevertheless, the student made some wrong conjugations of the verbs, though these did not seem to be related to L3 patterns. On other hand, the other participant only evidenced possible interference in the use of main verbs and pronouns due to one L3 position of an adverb: "I first started learning Korean three years ago". The last sentence follows the order of Subject-Adverb-Verb of the L3 because adverbs are always placed before the verb and after the noun in all the tenses. This student also seemed to experience some confusion between possessive adjectives and personal pronouns but this does not seem to be associated with either the L3 or the L1. Moreover, another case of excessive use of adverbs ("really") was clearly noted in the essay of this learner, who used it to make an adjective stronger. As mentioned above, Korean people commonly use those words in their colloquial language.

### **3.4.2 CLI in the word order of the L3 German learners' essays**

The data collected with the observation sheets seemed to show that the language of these participants was not greatly influenced by L3, because just one student evidenced a possible case of interference in this aspect: "for example are the words". The learner followed the L3 structure of placing the noun in third place, if the sentence does not start with that noun. A German sentence can start with the noun or an indirect complement but the verb must be in the second place. In this case, "for example" cannot be placed before a verb in the L2 but it is possible in the L3. Consequently, L3 interference in the order of the common nouns and main verbs were detected with this task. Learner #2's language did not evidence any type of crosslinguistic influence in this syntactic aspect, although one example of pluralization in adjectives (e.g. "differents") as occurs in the L3 and the L1, was detected. Moreover, this subject evidenced many slips and overused the articles: "the english has helped me to understand better...". The last example is probably an example of L3 transfer because nouns are always placed after an article (definite or indefinite) in German. In both cases, incorrect conjugations of some verbs were evidenced in the essays.

## **Conclusions**

In this last section are presented all the final remarks surrounding this research project. Thanks to all the information that was gathered, it was possible to observe how the third language can play a role in L2 output in L3

intermediate learners (B1 level). In this research project, two handouts were provided for participants, with the purpose of detecting L3 interference in speaking (pronunciation and word order) and writing (word order) skills performed by the L2 participants, who are students aged from 21 to 22 years and who are learning two foreign languages at the same time.

To begin with the questions, it was expected to know what productive skill is more influenced by the L3 (either German or Korean) on the L2 (English). During the process, the oral production (speaking) of the L2 seemed to evidence more Korean or German influences in the speech of these learners than in their written production (writing), because even though the learners were not allowed to correct either text, they had more time to think about them when putting their words down on a page rather than expressing them orally. Also, for the L3 Korean learners this interference was minor, probably because the L3 alphabet is completely different to the L2 one though it was greater in L3 German participants, probably due to the similarity of both vocabulary and pronunciation with English language.

The second puzzle to solve was to detect the area of language (syntax or phonology) that seems to be most affected by the L3 in the productive skills. All the participants evidenced more transfers during the activities that involved L2 pronunciation rather than the written exercise, probably because their basis related with the L2 and L3 Grammar are well-established. Also, as they expressed in their own essays, they have a different view of the grammar and word order rules of both languages, but words such as cognates seem to make them (L3 German subjects) commit mistakes. On the other hand, L3 Korean learners evidenced problems with English pronunciation in phrases that the Korean language has taken as loans and adapted to their pronunciation system. L3 crosslinguistic influence in syntax was detected in patterns related to main verbs and some nouns, due to the different order which they follow in the third languages which were studied.

As a third point, the researcher wanted to investigate if typological language closeness is a factor in this crosslinguistic phenomenon. Both L3 German students wrote that English and German have equal linguistic roots, consequently, there are more opportunities to transfer vocabulary, grammar rules, word stress and pronunciation. On the other hand, L3 Korean students disagreed. Both students evidenced interference when producing output in the L2, but there were more in the subjects that study an Indo-European language, the family to which English belongs.

To sum up, crosslinguistic influence of an L3 on an L2 in the productive language skills is a phenomenon that affects speakers at different language levels, but, the

more conscious a multilingual learner is, the less interferences they are likely to produce. Students have to create a barrier between these two communication systems and set up a context and ask themselves what type of language code must be used at the moment to produce their L1, L2 and L3. Consequently, it is recommended to language teachers to be aware of their students' L1 and make some space from their classes to contrast or analyze languages similarities and differences, making students aware of the most common errors and control them better as they improve in both languages. Even when there are big differences in the alphabet or writing system between the second and third language, the crosslinguistic phenomenon can appear in both. Also, these subjects showed more interference in vocabulary than word order transfers, so this could be explored in greater depth in further research.

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