

Crosslinguistic Influences in the Acquisition of Spanish L3
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This paper is based on my doctoral dissertation where I examined written production in L3 Spanish in learners with a typologically similar L2 (French) and a typologically more distant L1 (English). The corpus of the study consisted of un-aided compositions produced by participants who have English as a first language and French as a second language. The innovative methodology focused on the statistical analysis of the combination of two tools: a linguistic profile and an error database. The linguistic profile provided data regarding the language acquisition history of the subjects as well as a self-assessment of their level of exposure to the second and third languages. The error database was compiled through the analysis of error of the subjects' compositions, while considering only the crosslinguistic influences amongst the participants' linguistic repertoire. It was found that there is a number of strong links between the characteristics of the written production and the level of exposure to the L2 that the learners declare to have had. In other words we were able to establish a series of correlations between the amount of exposure to the L2 and the number of CLI in the L3 (Bayona, 2006).

The findings of the study confirm that learners of foreign languages are simultaneously activating their previously learned languages lexicon at the moment of producing a written text in an L3 (See also Cenoz et al, 2003), and that their social and academic background are influential factors in the production of crosslinguistic influences.

References

- Bayona, P.** "Crosslinguistic Influence in the Acquisition of Spanish as a Third Language." Doctoral Dissertation. The University of Western Ontario, 2009.
- Cenoz, Jasone, Britta Hufeissen and Ulrike Jessner, ed.** *Cross-Linguistic Influence in Third Language Acquisition: Psycholinguistic Perspectives*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2003