The Practice of Foreign Language Teaching

The Practice of Foreign Language Teaching:

Theories and Applications

Edited by

Azamat Akbarov

The Practice of Foreign Language Teaching: Theories and Applications

Edited by Azamat Akbarov

This book first published 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTRIBUTION OF TRUE COGNATES TO MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

ABDULKADIR ÇAKIR
MEVLANA UNIVERSITY / TURKEY

Abstract

After discovering that there were nearly 2,500 English cognates in the Turkish language and seeing the facilitating role of true cognates in teaching English to Turkish students, we designed some cognate-based teaching materials. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to illustrate how we can construct cognate-based teaching materials to teach English to Turkish learners. The use of cognate-based material in Turkish classes indicates that it not only increases the student motivation but also enhances performance. Briefly, cognate-based materials prove to have an extremely affective and facilitating role in teaching English.

Key Words: cognate, material development, contextualize, transfer

Introduction

Every language is open ended and changes constantly by coining new words or borrowing from other languages when needed. Turkish has borrowed a great number of words from other languages, and recently from English in particular due to technological improvement, innovations and close commercial, cultural, economic and educational relations besides tourism and sporting activities.

Levent Uzun and Umut Salihoğlu (2009) have demonstrated that there are nearly 2,500 English-Turkish cognates, and this increases day by day. Holmes (1905) defines cognates as vocabulary items in two different languages that are similar both orthographically and semantically. Haynes (1993) states that: "Cognate recognition is too useful to be abandoned." At this point, we should remark that cognates fall into two categories of true cognates or true-friends, and false cognates, false friends or deceptive cognates. In this chapter we will stick to the terms "true cognate" and

"false cognate" for the sake of clarity. True cognates are vocabulary items used in two languages in the same sense with similar pronunciation and identical or different spellings. For instance, "atom" is used in both Turkish and English in the same sense and its pronunciation and spelling are identical in both languages. Thus, it is a true cognate. The word "cake" has the same meaning in Turkish and English but its pronunciation and spelling are different, yet it is still regarded as a true cognate. On the other hand, the word "kayak" is used in both English and Turkish with the same pronunciation and spelling but it has different meanings in each. Thus, it is regarded as a false cognate. The word "pasta" is regarded as a false cognate by the same token. In this chapter, we will proceed with a focus on true cognates and exclude false cognates.

During the initial stages of language learning, second language learners are expected to link a new word to an existing one in the native language by searching for phonological or orthographic similarities. Hall (2002) states that clearly true cognates have a function of bridging the new vocabulary items with the known ones. Beginners especially feel motivated when they see similarities between mother tongue and target language.

If English teachers can create a comfortable environment for the students and remove the barriers in their minds then there is no doubt that their performance will increase (Krashen 1982). How can we achieve this? There are many answers to this question. In our opinion, one way of involving students in the learning process and enhancing their motivation is making use of cognates. Hall (2002) stresses that cognates cannot be ignored while teaching English to the native speakers of French and Spanish as there are so many true cognates in those languages. We share Hall's view and believe that the existence of nearly 2,500 English-Turkish cognates represents a great opportunity in teaching English to Turkish students, and Turkish to English students. Cognate awareness affects learners' motivation, attitudes and their beliefs about language learning positively (Çakır & Gülşeker Solak 2011). Dressler (2000) also points out that cognates facilitate students' comprehending of English texts. Mugfor (2008) agrees with Dresser, stating that cognates facilitate foreign language learning, building confidence, removing language barriers, and showing similarities between the students' native language and the target language. Holmes & Romes (1993) have a similar view, saying that cognates help students to "become better guessers" and improve vocabulary recognition and production strategies. If we look at the frequency of English cognates in the following list, it will help to explain why it is more difficult to learn English for Turkish learners than for French and Spanish learners.

20,000 English-Spanish Cognates (Montelongo et al. 2009)
23,500 English-French Cognates (Sequin & Treville 1992)
2,411 English-Turkish Cognates (Uzun & Salihoğlu 2009).

Looking at the above, we can conclude that the more English cognates your native language has, the easier it will be to learn the target language. This explains why French and Spanish speakers can learn English more easily and in a shorter time than Turkish learners. It is a fact that students' beliefs can affect their learning of a foreign language positively or negatively. If they have a prejudice that learning a certain language is difficult, this inevitably affects them negatively. However, we can affect learners' beliefs and attitudes positively using cognate-based materials (Gülşeker & Çakır 2012). Hammer & Madeleine (1978) highlight the role of cognates in L2 learning and suggest that cognates are easy to pick up not only in reading but also in listening.

Method

We constructed our study through the three following stages:

- Identifying the English-Turkish cognates and recording them
- Analyzing the cognates and classifying them
- Constructing teaching materials such as dialogues, listening and reading passages to teach vocabulary and grammar and to improve the other language skills.

As our two previous studies, "Cognate Awareness and Beliefs on Language Learning" (Çakır & Gülşeker 2011) and "Cognate-based Language Teaching and Material Development" (Gülşeker & Çakır 2012), have already proved, cognate-based materials yield better results in teaching English to Turkish students than non-cognate based materials. Therefore, in this chapter we have focused on how to construct cognate-based teaching materials. First, we have recorded the English cognates used in written media, such as newspapers, magazines, periodicals and books, and the cognates used in radio and TV programs. Then, we scanned the *New Webster's Dictionary of English Language* and the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, analyzing a corpus of 183,500 words, concluding that it contains nearly 2,500 English-Turkish cognates. Now, we have a list of 2,500 English-Turkish cognates to utilize in constructing cognate-based teaching materials. Using this list of English-Turkish cognates, we classified the cognates in terms of different linguistic topics,

such as nouns, adjectives, verbs or other non-linguistic topics like sports, fruits, professions, food and drink, hometowns and nationalities, etc. After that, we contextualized the chosen topics to be used to teach English. For example, if you want to teach professions you can look at the list of the English cognates of professions and pick some cognates that you want to teach. Of course, you can add some other non-cognate words of professions to the chosen ones. In this way, you can both raise awareness about the existing cognates and motivate them to learn some other new words. Let's have a look at the following list of English cognates of professions and select some of them.

Cognate Words of Profession		None-cognate Words of Profession	
Academician	Decorator	Politician	Teacher
Actor	Doctor	Psychiatrist	Cook
Archaeologist	Director	Psychologist	Taxi
Astronaut	Economist	Reporter	Writer
Astronomer	Financer	Secretary	Architect
Ballet	Guardian	Stylist	Engineer
Body-guard	Illusionist	Technician	Nurse
Ballerina	Jockey	Vocalist	Lawyer
Banker	Journalist		Judge
Barman	Manager		Farmer
Biologist	Mechanic		Businessman
Dancer	Moderator		Shopkeeper
Cameraman	Model		Salesman
Cashier	Musician		Waiter
Chef	Operator		Waitress

Comedian	Pedagogue	Driver
Cardiologist	Photographer	Housewife
Commissioner	Pianist	
Critic	Pilot	
Captain	Policeman	

First, we decide which words to teach from the given list along with some non-cognate words. Then we construct a short dialogue using the chosen words and appropriate structural patterns as follows:

A.   What is your father's profession? Or, What is your father's job?
B.   He is a doctor. What does your father do?
A.   He is a teacher.

Naturally, cognates are given the priority while teaching vocabulary to motivate the students and involve them in the activities. We can apply the same procedure to teach vocabulary items about different topics and some grammatical structures. For instance, we can use the cognates about food and drink to teach the pattern "what would you like to eat?" or "what would you like to drink?" We can make use of cognates about hobbies to teach the structural patterns "what is your favourite hobby?" or "what are you interested in doing?"

We can construct cognate-based dialogues and passages to improve students' listening and comprehension skills as well as teaching vocabulary and grammar. Let's examine the following dialogue from this angle.

Helen and Tom are on honeymoon in Dubai. Before they set out, they made a list of things they wanted to do there. Read the list below:

Things to do in Dubai
find a *hotel* in *the centre* of the city
take a city *tour*
see the *dances* of the fountains
go to the biggest *supermarket* in *Asia*
buy a *camera* for Robert
visit the Burj Al Arab *hotel*
take a *boat tour*
go on a *safari*

Listen to the following dialogue between Jack and Tom to see what Helen and Tom have done in Dubai:

Tom: We're having a great time!
Robert: Tell me about it. What have you done so far?
Tom: Well, we have seen so many *fantastic* things. *First,* we went to our *hotel.* It is in the *centre* of Dubai. We *checked* in and then went to our rooms. Then we went to the *lobby* and drank *coffee* at the *cafeteria.* Then we took a city *tour.*
Robert: Really? What have you seen on the *tour?*
Tom: We have seen the *dances* of the fountains near Burch Tower. It was a *fantastic show.* But we haven't been to Burch Tower yet. There were a lot of *tourists* and we couldn't get the tickets. We're going tomorrow morning.
Robert: Have you done any *shopping*?
Tom: Yes, we have. *Shopping* was my *favourite* part. We have been to the biggest *supermarket* in *Asia.* It was in the *centre* of the city. It was *super.* But I haven't bought your *camera* yet. I am *planning* to buy it tomorrow.
Robert: Oh, thank you! Have you visited Burj Al Arab?
Tom: Yes, we have seen Burj Al Arab. We had a *romantic* tea *party* there. The *menu* was *fantastic.* They served *non-alcoholic champagne* and a *mini sandwich first.* Later, they brought a *chocolate cake.* There was a big *hall* and a man was playing the *piano.* We haven't been to the *restaurant section* yet but I wanna do it another time if we have the *chance.*
Robert: So, you haven't *finished* yet?
Tom: No, we haven't. We have a lot more to do. We haven't taken a *boat tour* of the biggest *aquarium* in *Asia* and we haven't gone on *safari* yet.
Robert: *Wow*, that is *super.* Have a lovely time. See you later.
Tom: *Yeah*, bye Robert.

The teacher has the students answer some general questions about the points mentioned at the beginning of the activity, such as where their hotel is, what they saw on the city tour, why they haven't been to Burch Tower, and where they had a romantic tea party to test their comprehension after practicing the dialogue through roleplay.

Now, let's look at the following reading *passage* just to get an *idea* about how cognate-based reading *material* can be composed.

Hobbies

Psychologists say that having *hobbies* helps you in the modern world. Living in large cities, we can easily be *melancholic, materialist, egoist* and *negative*, but our *hobbies* can become our *motivations. Hobbies* help us become more *interactive, intellectual, humanitarian* and *positive.*

Hobbies have many *advantages* for Michael Dew. Michael has worked as an *archeologist* for 20 years, so he has been to many countries like Italy, Holland and Japan. He says "I have a *fantastic* job. I feel like a *detective.* I

have a *chance* to work at *fantastic* places such as *pyramids* and I work with different *materials* such as *magnesium*, *mercury* or *magma*."

Michael's favourite *sport* is *football*. He has never played in a *team professionally*, but he once *controlled* a *team* as a *coach*. Every weekend he goes to the *stadium* with his friends and watches a *football match*. After the *match starts* they shout *slogans* to support their *team* until it *finishes*. He has never been *interested* in the other *sports* like *basketball*, *handball* or *tennis*. He has always been a *football fan*.

Michael has other *hobbies* as well. He loves *music* and *dance*. Whenever he hears a *romantic rhythm* he *starts dancing*. He has always wanted to be a *prestigious pianist*. He has been to the *performances* of *popular pianists* many times and has taken lots of *photos*. He has a collection of *pianist photos*.

Michael is *planning* to have more *hobbies*. What about you?

The above reading passage can be used for different purposes, such as to improve students' comprehension skills, to teach vocabulary or to teach grammar.

Discussion and Conclusion

When exposed to new English vocabulary items in the cognate-based materials, learners resort to making a connection between their native language and the target language. The learner's levels of reading proficiency, cognitive flexibility and metalinguistic awareness determine the degree of cognate transfer. However, it is an undeniable fact that the use of a cognate strategy, including the use of cognate-based materials, helps the learners link the new, unknown linguistic items with the old, known ones. As a result, they feel more comfortable, more confident and more enthusiastic to learn the new language.

Giving priority to true cognates and composing teaching materials with them is also compatible with some general principles of teaching and learning, such as going from known to unknown, from concrete to abstract, and from easy to more difficult. We are of the opinion that the use of cognate-based materials in teaching a foreign language will motivate students better and facilitate their learning as a practical technique and function as a bridge to teaching English, particularly to beginners. There is no doubt that the use of true cognates in contextualized topics will raise consciousness in the learners and enable them to gain confidence. As a result, the highly motivated students will be more successful and gain more confidence and vice versa.

All in all, using cognate-based teaching materials can offer learners lots of advantages. As it kills many birds with one stone, constructing

cognate-based teaching materials, including using cognate-based course books, is worth thinking about.

References

Cakır, A. & Gülşeker, H. 2011. "Cognate Awareness and Beliefs about Language Learning." Paper presented at the 17th International TESOL ARABIA Conference Dubai, U.A.E.

Garcia, G. E. 1996. "Improving the English reading of Mexican American bilingual students through the use of cognate recognition strategies." Paper presented at the National Reading Conference, Charleston, South Carolina, USA.

Gülşeker, H. & Cakır, A. 2012. "Cognate-based Language Teaching and Material Development Procedia." *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 46: 431–434.

Hammer, P. & Madeleine, M. 1978. "The Role of English-French Cognates in Listening Comprehension." *Audio-Visual Language Journal* 16 (1): 29–32.

Harmet, J. 1991. *The Practice of Language Teaching.* London: Longman

Haynes, M. 1993. "Patterns and Perils of Guessing in Second Language Reading." In *Second Language Reading and Vocabulary Learning*, edited by Huckin, T., M. Haynesor & J. Coady, 46–64. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.

Heinick, R. Molenda, M. Russel, J. & Smaldino, S. 2002. *Instructional Media and Technologies for Learning.* New Jersey, Ohio: Prentice Hall.

New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language. 1974. New York: Consolidated Book Publishers.

Holmes, J. & R. Guerra Ramos. 1995. "False Friends and Reckless Guessers: Observing Cognate Recognition Strategies." In *Second Language Reading and Vocabulary Learning*, edited by T. Hauskin, M. Haures & J. Cody. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Hornby, A. S. 2009. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of the English Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Krashen, S. 1985. *The Input Hypothesis*. London: Longman.

Nagy, W., G. Garcia, A. Durgunoglu & B. Hancın- Bhatt. 1993. "Spanish English Bilingual Students' Use of Cognates in English Reading." *Journal of Reading Behaviour* 25: 241–259.

Richards, J. 2005. "Materials Development and Research Making the Connection." TESOL Convention, San Antonio, Texas, USA.

Tomlinson, B. 2011. *Materials Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Uzun, L. & M. Salihoğlu. 2009. "English-Turkish Cognate and False Cognates: Compiling a Corpus and Testing How they are Translated by Computer Programs." *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguisticis* 45 (4): 569–593.

How Bosnian and Turkish Students Acquire English Language: Negative Transfer in Foreign Language Learning

Alma Jeftić
International University of Sarajevo

Abstract

According to the language transfer theory, it is assumed that the learner's native language (NL) will positively or negatively affect their learning a foreign language (FL) in second language acquisition (SLA). Therefore, when there are differences between NL and FL, the native language will actively aggravate foreign language learning. Where there are similarities between the native language and target language, the transfer functions positively, while in the case of differences it functions negatively.

On the basis of the theories of transfer analysis and cognitive theories of second language acquisition, this chapter investigates the phenomenon of native language negative transfer in English learning, in both Turkish-English and Bosnian-English translations, showing how both Turkish and Bosnian English learners are negatively influenced by their native language knowledge.

Our hypothesis is that negative language transfer in acquiring a foreign language is inevitable, and the differences between the learners' NL and FL will interfere with target language learning.

Seventy-five Bosnian and 174 Turkish students of the International University of Sarajevo completed questionnaires designed to measure negative transfer from both languages, depending on major differences between Turkish and English, and Bosnian and English languages in terms of grammar, reading, writing and sentence structure. The data of Bosnian-English and Turkish-English translations were collected from English Language School students (preparation school) at freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior levels, and the major mistakes were analyzed. We

concluded that most mistakes were due to the negative transfer from native languages, and correlate with previously identified differences. Finally, we made suggestions for improvements for teachers and learners according to the mistakes.

Key words: native language, foreign language, negative transfer, transfer analysis theory, cognitive theories.

Introduction

Language transfer has been a central issue in applied linguistics, second language acquisition and language learning (Odlin 2001, 11) since its appearance in the 1960s, and with changes in the major theory of second language acquisition the theory of language transfer has also experienced both positive and negative criticisms.

The relationship between the two languages is crucial because it defines the very nature of second language acquisition. Also, the dominant characteristic of the second language community is the use of languages additional to the first language. The unique problem for second language learning research is identifying how this pre-existing language affects the second language user's mind and community.

On the basis of the theories of transfer analysis and cognitive theories of second language acquisition, this chapter investigates the phenomenon of native language negative transfer in English through Turkish-English and Bosnian-English translations, showing how both Turkish and Bosnian English learners are negatively influenced by their native language knowledge.

We hypothesise that negative language transfer in acquiring a foreign language is inevitable, and the differences between native language and foreign language will interfere with target language learning.

Material and Method

Seventy-five Bosnian and 174 Turkish students of the International University of Sarajevo completed a questionnaire designed to measure negative transfer from both languages, depending on the major differences between Turkish and English, and Bosnian and English in terms of grammar, reading, writing and sentence structure. The data of Bosnian-English and Turkish-English translations were collected from English Language School students (preparation school) at Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior and Senior levels, and the major mistakes analyzed. The first part of the Negative Transfer Questionnaire (NTQ) consists of nine questions

related to demographic characteristics and the total duration of English language learning before enrolment to the International University of Sarajevo, as well as experience of learning foreign languages other than English. The second part consists of 15 questions in Bosnian (for Bosnian students), and 18 questions in Turkish (for Turkish students), to be translated into English. The third part consists of four questions related to the major obstacles students faced while learning English as a second language, and one question related to their own estimation of their current knowledge of English. All questions designed for Bosnian students are in Bosnian, while those for Turkish students are in Turkish. The data were collected during the Spring and Fall semester 2013.

Results

A total of 249 students of the International University of Sarajevo participated in this research. The data on the participants—Turkish and Bosnian students, respectively—are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Participants

TURKISH PARTICIPANTS	Male	Female
Total number	110	64
ELS	31	16
Freshman	15	10
Sophomore	22	4
Junior	22	14
Senior	19	20

BOSNIAN PARTICIPANTS	Male	Female
Total number	30	45
ELS	1	0
Freshman	16	24
Sophomore	2	6
Junior	3	9
Senior	8	6

During the period when research was conducted, there was only one Bosnian student in the English language school. However, he did not answer the majority of questions and his data were therefore not taken into consideration. Also, not all students provided answers to all questions, so the data were analyzed based on the total number of answers provided.

The majority of the Bosnian students had learned English language for more than five years before IUS enrolment, while the Turkish students had little foreign language learning experience. The detailed data are given in Table 2 below.

Also, the majority of Bosnian students learned other foreign languages, such as: German (f=47), Turkish (f=31), French (f=18), Arabian (f=15), Latin (f=6), Italian (f=4), Spanish (f=3), Japanese (f=1), and Albanian (f=1). It is important to note that the frequencies reflect the number of times one language was mentioned, since in the majority of cases one student learned more than one foreign language other than English.

When it comes to Turkish students the situation is as follows: Bosnian (f=52), German (f=35), Arabian (f=22), French (f=8), Spanish (f=8), Persian (f=1), Italian (f=1), Bulgarian (f=1), Russian (f=1), Macedonian (f=1), and Azerbaijani (f=1).

Three Bosnian students came from bilingual families (Bosnian-English, Bosnian-German and Bosnian-Slovenian), while 21 Turkish students were from bilingual families (Turkish-Kurdish, Turkish-Arabian, Turkish-German, Turkish-French, Turkish-Bulgarian and Turkish-Russian). The data of these bilingual students (both Turkish and Bosnian) were analyzed with special attention paid to the way both languages can interfere with English language learning. Also, the data of a Bosnian-English bilingual student were not taken into consideration since English was one of their native languages.

When asked about the major difficulties they faced while learning English, students provided the answers as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 2. Duration of English language learning before IUS enrolment

	Bosnian students					Turkish students				
	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f
I did not learn English language before IUS enrolment.	0	0	0	0	0	24	15	11	16	18
Less than 1 year	0	1	0	0	0	7	3	3	10	7
1–3 years	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	8	6	5
3–5 years	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	2	3
More than 5 years	0	38	8	12	14	6	3	3	3	7

Table 3. Major difficulties in English language acquisition

	Bosnian students					Turkish students				
	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f
Alphabet	-	2	0	0	0	10	6	9	9	11
Grammar	-	5	2	4	6	1	1	1	0	0
Sentence structure	-	3	1	0	3	13	8	4	15	10
Phrases	-	17	3	2	2	6	5	6	6	6
Formal and informal speech	-	4	0	1	1	4	3	0	2	8
Other	-	5	2	4	2	8	1	5	1	4

While describing aspects of grammar that were the most difficult for them, both groups of students provided different answers, as shown in Tables 4a and 4b below.

Table 4a. The major obstacles for Bosnian students in acquiring English language grammar

	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f
Prepositions	-	13	3	2	3
Plural of nouns	-	2	0	1	0
Negation	-	1	0	0	1
Future tense	-	3	0	2	2
Other	-	8	5	7	7

Table 4b. The major obstacles for Turkish students in acquiring English language grammar

	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f
Plural of nouns	2	0	2	0	0
Future tense	1	0	1	2	1
Past tense	2	1	2	1	1
Negation	2	2	1	1	2
Prepositions	9	6	7	10	16
Indefinite/definite article	16	7	8	11	8
Other	10	9	3	6	7

Both groups mentioned prepositions as creating many difficulties while learning and comprehending English language, and this can also be explained through negative transfer theory since prepositions in Bosnian and English, as well as Turkish and English, differ in terms of usage. Also, Turkish students mentioned definite and indefinite articles as an obstacle, which can also be explained through negative transfer theory (there is no "a," "an" or "the" in Turkish).

While describing the "other" part, Bosnian students mentioned the following: differentiation between past tenses (f=8), "no problems" (f=7), definite/indefinite articles (f=6), conditional (f=1), passive (f=1). Turkish students wrote the following: perfect (f=6), "no problems" (f=5), vocabulary (f=3), conversation (f=3), gender (f=1), WH questions (f=1), passive (f=1).

When asked what was easiest while learning English, Turkish students provided the following answers: present simple (f=23), tenses (f=23), past simple (f=14), grammar (f=11), conversation (f=10), future tense (f=7), past continuous (f=3). Bosnian students gave the following answers: vocabulary (f=12), grammar (f=8), "everything was easy" (f=8), plural of nouns (f=4), present simple (f=3).

When describing their current level of English language fluency, Bosnian students were least likely to choose elementary level (which can be described by their previous learning experiences), while most Turkish students, especially ELS students, chose that category. However, the majority of students of both groups described their knowledge as "upper-intermediate."

Table 5. Level of English language fluency as described by students

	Bosnian students					Turkish students				
	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f	ELS f	Freshman f	Sophomore f	Junior f	Senior f
Elementary level	-	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	1	3
Intermediate level	-	8	4	2	0	15	3	0	3	1
Upper-intermediate level	-	18	2	3	6	18	21	21	24	16
Advanced	-	12	2	7	8	6	1	3	8	16

Discussion

When the relevant unit or structure of both languages are the same, linguistic interference can result in correct language production called positive transfer that describes "correct" meaning in line with most native speakers' notions of acceptability. However, negative transfer occurs when speakers and writers transfer items and structures that are not the same in both languages. This research proves that negative transfer from Turkish creates many problems for Turkish learners of English, while Bosnian learners have fewer problems due to fewer differences between Bosnian and English.

Turkish language belongs to *agglutinating languages* whose primary means of building new words are by adding affixes. There are agglutinating languages where prefixation predominates (Quileute), while others prefer suffixation (Hungarian *haz-ak-ban*—"in the houses"; Turkic languages: Kazakh *it-ter-in*—"of the dogs") (Fr++++++++++++++omklin, Rodman & Hyams 2013). The basic features of agglutinating languages are:

1.   Rigid word stems (radicals)
2.   Rich in inflectional endings
3.   Suffixes (or prefixes) lined one after the other
4.   Each suffix has one grammatical function
5.   Vowel harmony
6.   Fewer gender differentiations.

Contrastive analysis is an approach to the study of second language acquisition which involves predicting and explaining learner problems based on a comparison of first and second languages to determine the similarities and differences. The main assumptions of this theory are: learners respond to the stimulus (linguistic input), reinforcement strengthens the response, and there is transfer in learning (transfer of elements acquired in the first language to the target language) (Saville-Troike 2010, 35).

The transfer is positive when the same structure is appropriate in both languages. The transfer is negative (or interference occurs) when the first language structure is used inappropriately in the second language. According to Robert Lado (1957), the easiest second language structures are those existing in the first language with the same form, meaning and distribution and thus available for positive transfer, while any structure in second language which has a form not occurring in first language needs to be learned. However, the most difficult are the structures where there is

partial overlap but not equivalence in form, meaning and/or distribution, and these are most likely to cause interference.

The evidence of negative transfer was very obvious during the qualitative analysis of translations done by both group of students. Even though both groups translated from their native languages to English language, negative transfer was very evident.

Turkish students (Junior and Senior level):

Ahmet and Ali will come to study our home (preposition is omitted)
Ahmet and Ali are going to come to study to us (wrong application of "going to," wrong preposition)

Turkish student (Sophomore level)

Ahmet and Ali will come to study at us (wrong preposition)

Turkish student (Freshman level)

Ahmet and Ali will come us to study (structure of the sentence)

Turkish student (ELS level)

Ahmet and Ai came to study us (structure of the sentence)

In the majority of translations, Turkish students made mistakes that were related to their native language influence, such as indefinite/definite articles being omitted, wrong passive structures, wrong prepositions used, and incorrect sentence structures.

Bosnian students made fewer mistakes which can be ascribed to their previous English language learning experience, but some negative transfer influences were presented:

If I won on the lottery … (Student translated using a Bosnian sentence structure, and therefore added the preposition "on")
I am going to go in Paris ... (Student translated using a Bosnian sentence structure, and therefore added the preposition "in")

The majority of mistakes in translations by Bosnian students reflected negative transfer from Bosnian in terms of the translation of Bosnian sentence structure rather than the English, wrong prepositions, wrong application of "going to," and errors related to the pluralisation of nouns.

However, social variables should be taken into account while analyzing these data. It is evident that Bosnian students usually start

learning foreign languages early in life (at kindergarten and primary school levels), and their culture is somehow forcing them to learn more than one (and sometimes even two) foreign languages. However, Turkish students do not experience that type of pressure, and the majority of them did not have English language experience before IUS enrolment. Also, Segalowitz (2010) discovered that ethnolinguistic identity plays a crucial roles in describing learner motivations to acquire a foreign language. Therefore, the results of this study should take the cultural aspects of those who participated in this study into consideration.

Conclusion

Our results prove the main hypothesis of this research—negative language transfer in acquiring a foreign language is inevitable, and the differences between the learners' native and foreign languages will interfere with the target language learning.

Bosnian students experience fewer problems related to negative transfer, since there are more similarities between English and Bosnian, and because their early exposure to foreign languages and culture forces them to learn as many languages as possible.

The implications for language teaching require both professors and students to be aware of the effects of positive and negative transfer of native languages on foreign languages. To take a more neutral position, one should at least say that teachers should be wary of accepting advice about language teaching goals and methods based on the comparison of first language and second language learning.

References

Fromklin, V., R. Rodman & W. Hyams. 2013. *An Introduction to Language*. London: Wadsworth Publishing.

Lado, R. 1957. *Linguistics Across Cultures*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press.

Odlin, T. 2001. *Language Transfer: Cross-Linguistic Influence in Language Learning*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Languages Education Press.

Saville-Troike, M. 2006. *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Segalowitz, N. 2010. *Cognitive Basis of Second Language Fluency*. New York and London: Routledge.