Handling error correction in cross-language transfer utterances

On - site GEIA Seminar - October 02 to 05, 2023

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Contextualizing...

- **9th GEIA Seminar**: <u>cross-language influence in second language acquisition</u>, by exploring <u>authentic communication errors</u> that <u>Brazilian ATCOs</u> usually make when using AE.

- **The Interlanguage Hypothesis** (Selinker) - Foreign speakers' mother tongue affects the way some structural misuses of English are detected in training and assessment practices (e.g. *Happened an accident*).

- **Raise language awareness** to enable meaningful AE teaching and learning processes.
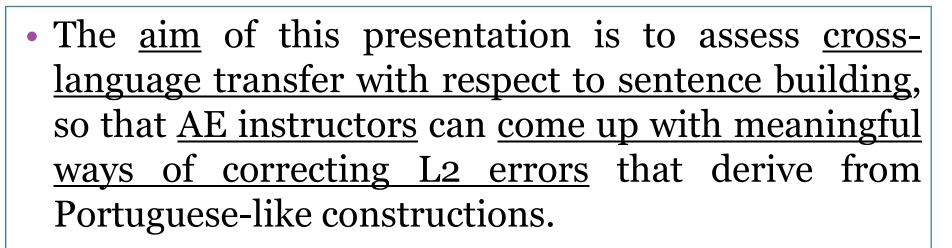
Contextualizing...

- <u>Recognizing the nature of the mistakes</u> the learners actually make is quite important to <u>address error correction</u> in a more effective way;

- <u>Brazilian learners of AE produce similar mistakes</u> in terms of syntax, as they tend to <u>transfer the system of their (L1) to the target language (L2)</u>.

Theoretical framework

- The <u>influence of the L1</u> in the process of learning a L2 results in <u>language blending</u> or <u>language transfer</u> also known as <u>cross-language influence</u> (Odlin, 1989: 134); it is a key factor to promote the formation of language learners' inter-language;

- To look deeper into the *interlanguage* <u>hypothesis</u> some <u>communication errors made by Brazilian learners while attending AE online courses</u> were explored. These courses have been designed for controllers who haven't reached the operational level yet (PL 3);

- The <u>aim</u> of this presentation is to assess <u>cross-language transfer with respect to sentence building</u>, so that <u>AE instructors</u> can <u>come up with meaningful ways of correcting L2 errors</u> that derive from Portuguese-like constructions.

- <u>CTP- 011</u> "<u>Pedagogical practice course</u> for the <u>instruction of Aeronautical English</u>" / two-week on-site course / Target audience: PL5 (6: V, S) and PL6;
- <u>Admission process</u>: 2 steps (Interview + <u>Practical activity</u> - correction);

The research material

- <u>Practical activity</u>: the applicants were supposed to <u>correct a short text</u> that had been <u>written by genuine students</u> while participating in different online *forums* of the AE courses;

- The <u>instructions</u> given were:

- Considering that the text below has been sent to you by one of your students:
  1) Make the necessary corrections in English;
  2)Justify your corrections by offering further explanations and/or examples.

ATCO's Job and Routine

I work at XXX International Airport, as an air traffic controler, and we need to organize the aircraft that comes to land and to take off...We divide our work in three positions: Tower, Ground and Clearance. The position Clearance gets the authorization for departures; the ground position gives instructions to the pilots during your taxi to runway and gives instructions to the pilots who have just landed, and the position tower controls the aircraft that intends to use the runway. In other words, the aircraft that comes to land and the aircraft that wants to take off. We call the aircraft using its names, I mean, your tail number or call sing. For example, you flew last month on TAM 3665, its your call sign, whose tail number is "PTMAX". In aviation, we use the phonetic alphabet, each letter has a "name". For example, we call "PTMAX" as PAPA TANGO MIKE ALFA X-RAY. When we need to use numbers, we say each one separately, like TAM THREE-SIX-SIX-FIVE, and not TAM THREE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED SIXTY FIVE. We use some expressions, like AFFIRM when the pilot got properly the information that the ATCo sends him, and if the pilot got an wrong instruction, we need to say NEGATIVE, I'LL SAY AGAIN, and send the correct instruction.
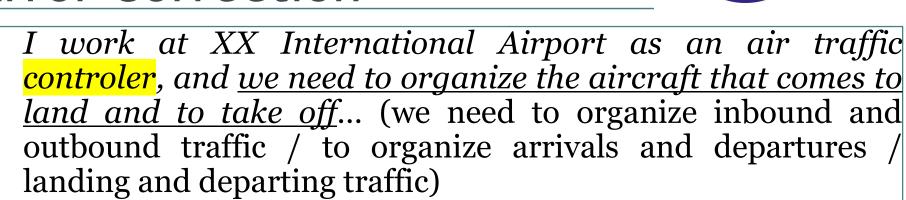
a) "Controller" is misspelled in the text, it has two L.

b) Instead of "gets", you should use "gives", like you used in all other examples.

c) "Your" – I would use "their", when plural, or "his",when singular, instead.

The first two errors I would just point out, because based on the text, the student knows enough to understand his mistake.
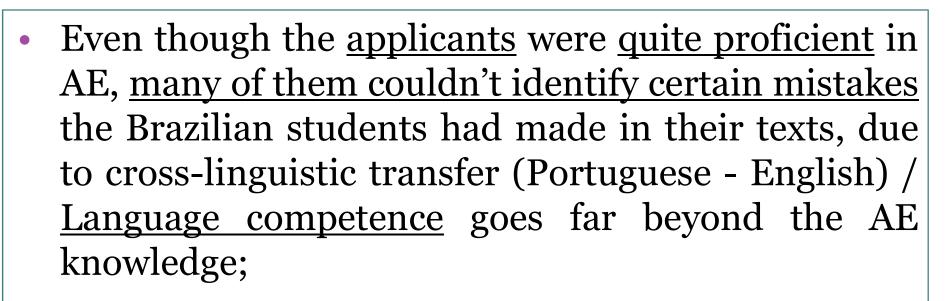
Error Correction

- *I work at XX International Airport as an air traffic controler, and we need to organize the aircraft that comes to land and to take off...* (we need to organize inbound and outbound traffic / to organize arrivals and departures / landing and departing traffic)

- *In other words, the aircraft that comes to land and the aircraft that wants to take off.*
(all incoming and outgoing traffic)

- *The position Clearance gets the authorization for departures.*
(The clearance position authorizes departures)

- *For example, you flew last month on TAM 3665, its your call sign...*
(...which is its call sign...)

- Even though the <u>applicants</u> were <u>quite proficient</u> in AE, <u>many of them couldn't identify certain mistakes</u> the Brazilian students had made in their texts, due to cross-linguistic transfer (Portuguese - English) / <u>Language competence</u> goes far beyond the AE knowledge;

- <u>Brazilian speakers</u> - including the most competent ones - tend to <u>transfer the structural system</u> of their own language to the target language. As a result, they can hardly tell the TL utterances carry a mistake that might affect intelligibility.

- Most of <u>the errors derive from cross-language transfer</u>. <u>Reflections on</u> how language <u>form, meaning and use</u> (Larsen-Freeman, 2007) relate to one another ought to be encouraged to ensure that students who share the same L1 can form accurate, meaningful and appropriate utterances in the TL;

- Just by showing the learners the approrpiate way to say the intended sentences in English doesn't seem to be very effective, as <u>they tend to keep on making the same mistakes</u>;

Conclusions...

- Recognizing <u>the nature of the mistakes</u> and how close they are to the L1 form, meaning and use can <u>help learners 'cross the interlanguage bridge'</u> to get closer to the TL and its dimensions;

- <u>Brazilian students</u> tend to make <u>similar mistakes that resemble the syntax and form of the Portuguese language</u>, such as <u>word order inversion</u> (S/V/O) and <u>word-for-word translation</u>. Once these errors are anticipated, they can be addressed more deeply (<u>contrastive analysis</u> - some structural differences and similarities need to be taught explicitly).

References

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