The Potential of CALL and the Task-Based Approach to Prevent and Reverse Interlanguage Fossilisation

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Abstract

Purpose: This study reviews how different teaching approaches may effectively address interlanguage fossilisation with the techniques and characteristics of these approaches. To these aim a task-based approach and a computer-mediated approach to learning will be analysed to review how they address the following factors that are believed to cause interlanguage fossilisation. Research Method: This study will use a qualitative strategy to review how different teaching approaches may effectively address interlanguage fossilisation with the techniques and characteristics of these approaches. To these aim a task-based approach and a computer-mediated approach to learning will be analysed to review how they address the following factors that are believed to cause interlanguage fossilisation. Findings: It would seem that an approach that combines task-based learning together with the methods that CALL provides would not only not be incompatible, but it can also provide the learners with more opportunities to either avoid interlanguage fossilisation, or even reverse its effects. This paper has reviewed the advantages that both approaches have in tackling a variety of factors that affect interlanguage fossilisation. In this case, it is clear that both approaches provide opportunities for the learners to receive corrective feedback, as well as explicit instruction on those structures that are fossilised. It is worth noting that instructors need to work case by case on the students to tailor the approach to their needs. In addition, both a task-based learning approach as well as CALL require the provision of sufficient input that is rich and suitable for the learner in order to avoid or tackle fossilisation. One of the most challenging aspects of both teaching approaches towards fossilisation is the provision of instruction that caters for socio-emotional factors affecting the learners. It would appear that this is challenging for all approaches as it is hard to help students adapt to the TL culture and identify with the language within a classroom environment.

Keywords: *CALL , task-based approach , interlanguage fossilisation.*

Introduction

Interlanguage fossilisation is regarded as one of the most intricate issues in the process of foreign language learning by many. Particularly, Selinker (1972) argues that fossilisation is an unavoidable issue in interlanguage that may occur at any point during a second language learning journey. As such, the phenomenon of fossilisation has attracted the attention of linguists and educators. This phenomenon has multiple definitions, among these, it is defined as the process describing the permanent use of incorrect linguistic features of a learner's writing or speaking. That is, there are linguistic items, rules or subsystems that may become fossilised and will become part of the interlanguage of the learner. In other words, interlanguage and fossilisation are intimately linked; although fossilisation occurs when the learner stops changing their interlanguage to prevent them from acquiring the standard forms of the target language. To understand this, it is important to review the concept of interlanguage itself, which typically refers to the knowledge system formed at a particular point in learners' language learning process. Interlanguage may then be regarded as a transitional language system that changes and adjusts constantly as the learner increases their knowledge of the target language. Selinker coined the term interlanguage in 1972 to explain the interim grammars that second language (L2) learners construct as they build the target language (TL). This systematic knowledge of L2 does not depend on either the learner's first language (L1), nor the TL itself. That is, interlanguage falls between the system of the native language and the target language as a learner attempts to provide structure to the linguistic stimuli they receive when they are learning. This system is constructed through a gradual process of trial and error, where learners test hypotheses and slowly establish approximations to the system of the target language.

Selinker assumed that interlanguages are natural languages, and as such, they are systematic in their development. Thus, Selinker argues that interlanguage rules are permeable in the sense that they constitute

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the knowledge of the learner at one point in their learning journey, meaning that they are not fixed but open to change. In this way, interlanguages work like natural languages: they evolve over time. Additionally, interlanguages are dynamic as they are in constant change. For instance, as a new rule is introduced in the learner's journey, the rule spreads gradually to extend to a range of linguistic contexts. This entails that interlanguages exist in a continuum of overlapping grammars, where a new grammar shares some rules with the previous one and adds new revised rules upon it. These rules are not random, but systematic in the same way of natural languages grammars. However, there is systematic variability in interlanguage as learners acquire language and their competence develops. This target language competence, however, often fails to reach native-like levels as L2 learners stop learning, and the system fossilised with a set of rules and items that are different from the target language. This fossilisation appears to be resistant to instruction, and even though some of these fossilised forms disappear, they tend to reappear in productive language use in the phenomenon known as backsliding (Selinker, 1972; Ellis, 1985).

There are various internal and external causes of fossilisation, and the list of the reasons is lengthy due to the amount of authors adding onto this. According to Han (2003), there are multiple and unrelated explanations that roughly fall into the following categories: environmental, cognitive, neurobiological, and socio-affective. Thus, the multiple dimensions of fossilisation makes it nearly impossible to explain, and consequently, address the phenomenon through a unitary approach. For instance, age is often perceived as an internal factor that affects L2 learners achieving a native-like competence of the L2, yet these biological maturational constraints do not explain different levels of success between learners (Pulvermuller and Schumann, 1994). This entails that age is not the sole universal factor that may account for fossilisation (Scovel, 2000). This multifaceted attribute of fossilisation means that research needs to focus on a variety of factors rather than merely one. Han and Selinker (2005) argue for longitudinal approaches as the most suitable to study fossilisation precisely because of the time and effort these involve. Additionally, to truly understand whether fossilisation persists, these studies need to consider whether the learner has had positive evidence, learners must have continued with high levels of motivation, and they must have had considerable chances to practice the L2 (Han and Selinker, 2005, 465).

Since fossilisation is variable, it would be important to question whether instruction could serve to prevent fossilisation, and if that were possible to which extent it may do so, and what kind of instruction would prevent fossilisation. Not all authors, including Wang (2011), agree that formal instruction would serve to prevent fossilisation, in fact, many argue that it can actually debilitate L2 development, and as such, it may be the cause of fossilisation. In principle, authors such as Long (2003) argue that instruction reduces the likelihood of fossilisation as instructors remind students about the TL. However, SLA literature contains examples of the lack of success of instruction. The revision of early studies on the instructional effects on the relative and absolute utility, concluding that instruction may be beneficial for both children and adults at all levels in both acquisition-rich and acquisition-poor environments. Thus, it was concluded that instruction was more beneficial at beginner levels in acquisition-poor environments. Long failed to account what kinds of instruction, whether implicit or explicit, were the most impactful. Other reviews include Lightbown (2000) and Norris and Ortega (2000). The latter study confirmed that instruction makes a positive difference for L2 acquisition. More importantly, the study found that focused L2 instruction results in large target-oriented improvement. Norris and Ortega (2000: 417) also concluded that explicit instruction is more effective than implicit instructional; and that focusing on form results in improvement that is durable. However, the author noted that these results may not be generalised since L2 type-of-instruction was not rigorous and empirically replicated. Thus, one may conclude that instruction may be useful to some extent, for some forms, some students and at certain points during the learning process (Larsen-Freeman, 2006). Han (2013) argues that research seems to point out to the fact that L2 learners, particularly adults, are not capable of acquiring the TL to a reasonable extent, if they are not subjected to formal instruction. Instruction can overcome the cognitive deficiencies of adult learners caused by neurobiological changes, L1 interference, and lack of a robust UG. Conversely, SLA literature also hints towards the claim that instruction may have negative effects on learning. Therefore, this paper seeks to find how different approaches may prevent or tackle fossilisation.

Methodology

This paper will use a qualitative strategy to review how different teaching approaches may effectively address interlanguage fossilisation with the techniques and characteristics of these approaches. To these aim a task-based approach and a computer-mediated approach to learning will be analysed to review how they address the following factors that are believed to cause interlanguage fossilisation. These factors include the lack of corrective feedback, lack of sufficiently rich input, lack of explicit instruction, as well as cognitive factors, including insensitivity to input, insensitivity to input-output discrepancy, lack of attention, influence of the L1, and lack of opportunities to use the target language. In addition, these approaches to teaching will also be reviewed to consider how they address socio-emotional factors, such as the satisfaction of communication needs, lack of cultural adaptation, and identity factors such as acculturation. The methodology employed includes an analysis of how these approaches address such issues by performing a search on the literature and the evidence presented. This would provide an informative summary of how these approaches can potentially tackle interlanguage fossilisation and thus inform practitioners on how they can use these approaches appropriately through different levels of proficiency of learners. This can inform practitioners on the application and combination of these approaches appropriately to either prevent fossilisation of certain structures, as well as the potential defossilisation of these structures. The teaching methodologies chosen for this research correspond to two popular teaching methods in the L2 classroom. This type of quantitative research is appropriate as this project intends to test objective theories by examining the variables that are comparable across these approaches (Creswell, 2013). The data will be presented according to the factors identified as causes of fossilisation and how these factors are addressed according to the literature published in prior research by those who test the utility and success of these approaches.

Discussion

This discussion centres around the task-based and computer-mediated approaches and how these address various factors that authors agree cause interlanguage fossilisation. The factors reviewed in this discussion contain how the approaches deal with the provision of corrective feedback, lack of sufficiently rich input, lack of explicit instruction, together with the way they approach cognitive factors such as insensitivity to input, insensitivity to input-output discrepancy, lack of attention, influence of the L1, and lack of opportunities to use the target language. Then, the section turns to discuss how these approaches consider socio-emotional factors, including the satisfaction of communication needs, lack of cultural adaptation, and identity factors such as acculturation. Finally, a reflection on how to determine the usefulness of such approaches is provided by establishing how these approaches may tackle the causes of interlanguage fossilisation.

Corrective feedback

The use of a Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) approach may tackle fossilisation in interlanguage. In that regard, a CALL approach could tackle the environmental factors that contribute to language fossilisation. For instance, the lack of corrective feedback can have a great effect (Han, 2004), and the use of it may prevent fossilisation in the cases where there is genuine interaction and communication between learners and feedback providers. This means that when providing corrective feedback, it is necessary to guarantee that learners understand both the content of the feedback, and the discrepancy between their structures and the corrective feedback received. For this purpose, Liying (2024) suggests the use of computer-assisted learning as CALL systems not only allows students to learn following their own pace and needs, while offering immediate feedback and correction thanks to its interactive and personalized characteristics. This interaction allows students to communicate with teachers and peers through online courses, audio-video sessions, and virtual practice to promote language competence. Current technology permits the use of virtual cognitive and emotional corrective feedback (Liying, 2024). Classroom FLT provides outstanding resources offering learners feedback with facial expressions, gestures, and intonation among other emotional features (Lochtman, 2002, 2005).

According to Han (2013), tasked-based language teaching may be employed to tackle fossilisation as it may address the issues that have been fossilised in the interlanguage grammar of the learners. However, Skehan and Foster (2001, 205) warn that unless a task-based approach is properly handled, it may over-emphasize the importance of "getting the job done," and not consider the improvement of the TL ability. This would have the effect of encouraging comfortable fossilisation rather than promoting the development of the interlanguage. That is, instruction may have both effects: stimulate and stall learning, but if done properly, instruction may destabilize persistent and resistant interlanguage structures (Han and Selinker, 1999). Authors such as Shariq (2020) confirm that the use of corrective feedback in a task-based language teaching environment helps improve the speaking fluency and accuracy of EFL learners in Saudi Arabia; thus, claiming that a task-based approach is effective in regards to both speech flow and grammatical correctness since corrective feedback may be used to improve learners' perceptions and attitudes towards L2 communication skills. This corroborates the view of Ellis (2014) and Ellis and Shintani (2013) who claim that this approach, which typically does not focus on grammar or form, does offer the sufficient level of corrective feedback while performing a task to direct the learners' attention to grammatical forms and, thus, facilitate acquisition, and potentially deal with interlanguage fossilisation.

Quality and quantity of input

Apart from the absence of effective corrective feedback, another cause for fossilisation is the provision of insufficient or poor input. While the input received by children when acquiring a first language is simple and accurate (Gass and Lakshmanan, 1991), the quality of input when learning an L2 varies vastly. Likewise, children acquiring their mother tongue are provided with sufficient and authentic input; on the other hand, L2 learning differs in its provision of input, whereby the learner often encounters ungrammatical and non-target-like input. This is an issue that may be tackled with the use of modern technology. For example, ChatGPT may be used to simulate the experience of conversing with a native speaker as its interactions rely on databases that provide rich authentic language input. In this manner, the input received by the learner is abundant and of high quality, and personalized for each learner (Barrot, 2023).

Conversely, the task-based approach has often been criticised by not providing sufficient rich input to learners, as it tends to be focused on the production of output (Ellis, 2009). Task-based learning stresses the importance of interaction to promote acquisition and as such allow the interlanguage of the learners to develop (Nicholson, 2014). However, this approach may lead to conditions to promote fossilisation if not sufficient rich and comprehensible input is provided. However, the issue with the approach is that it does not guarantee that interaction between learners can provide this kind of input to allow the interlanguage systems of the learner to progress. Additionally, classroom pidgins, minimalisation or other forms of impoverished interactions arising from pair and group work further add to the danger of fossilisation (Nicholson, 2014). Impoverished communication is not the only issue here, as there is also the risk of the reliance of learners on lexicalized communication when they encounter difficult tasks. As Skehan (1996) argues, time pressures and the wish to communicate may be a further danger towards fossilisation, making this approach ineffectual (Nicholson, 2014). However, Ellis (2009) notes that this is just a misunderstanding as the approach does contain reading tasks that may expose learners sufficiently to rich input. That is, the approach considers extensive reading as a task that may result in incidental vocabulary acquisition (Dupuy and Krashen, 1993). Additionally, authors such as Norris (2009) argue for the use of technology within the approach to provide students with the sufficient rich input they would require. Therefore, in this manner, the approach, if using sufficient input, could be used to tackle interlanguage fossilisation.

Explicit Instruction

A further environmental factor that leads to fossilisation includes a lack of explicit instruction. This essential method allows learners to acquire language via their cognitive abilities. The lack of metalinguistic explanations accompanying input and output of the TL is linked to fossilisation (Spada & Tomita, 2010).

Computed-mediated teaching may aid in this regard as the online classroom provides clear objectives, together with metalinguistic descriptions and explanations of TL structures; thus, learners attention is directed to language form. On the other hand, metalinguistic information may prove to be un-motivating, and cause learners to avoid communicating in the TL (Taylor, 2023). Hence, metalinguistic teaching can facilitate the mastery of the TL, although it needs a well-designed plan to keep the learners motivated. The online classroom, with the use of corpora, can facilitate foreign language learning with a provision of large amounts of authentic data. The learners may analyse the data and identify patterns and rules, as well as understand the frequency of occurrence, collocation of words, as well as the meanings of structures and pragmatic information to improve their communication skills (Boulton & Cobb, 2017). In fact, Poole (2022) argues that corpus learning methods may be integrated into the online classroom to benefit the learners through the provision of planned, targeted, and communicative classroom teaching, alongside access to vast amounts of authentic input.

Explicit instruction may also be incorporated into task-based learning, as the study of Li, Ellis and Zhu (2016) show. In this study, a group of students received explicit instruction in the form of a 15-minute mini-lesson on the past passive in regards to its meaning, form, and use. During this session, the instructor explained the formation of the passive voice and the context where it is used after asking the learners whether they could identify the agent and receiver of the action in active and passive sentences. The task consisted in judging the grammaticality of ten passive sentences and writing the correct version of those sentences which were incorrect. Li, Ellis and Zhu (2016) compared the effects of this type of task with others, and found that the greater the instruction, the greater the success of performance. While this is focused exclusively on the acquisition of a structure, it could be argued that explicit instruction may be easily incorporated into a task-based learning approach that can then help prevent fossilisation and potentially help towards defossilisation.

Insensitivity to Input

It is important for a method to address the cognitive factors affecting fossilisation, including insensitivity to input, insensitivity to input-output discrepancy, lack of attention, influence of the L1, and lack of output opportunities. In this regard, Wuff and Ellis (2020, 82) highlight that L2 learners are *"already tuned and committed"* to their L1, and as such, they may be insensitive to the order of acquisition of an L2 mainly due to how different structures are presented to the students, and how this presentation may affect the natural order of acquisition (Han, 2013). In that regard, teaching plans can take into consideration the learners' lack of sensitivity to certain language structures. It would be the responsibility of the instructors to select materials and teaching content considering the acquisition order; it would also be necessary to adjust teaching plans to adapt to individual learners (McDonough, Shaw & Masuhara, 2013). However, the disadvantage of online instruction is that face to face communication and correction is not possible to address sensitivity to input-output discrepancies (Liying, 2024). Thus, as the learners would choose their input in CALL instruction, it would not be possible to guarantee its learnability. That is, AI would respond to the prompts of the learners, and would not be able to guarantee the suitability of the materials created. Additionally, in task-based learning, Long (2015, 60) suggests that the approach may be useful in tackling sensitivity to input as the approach allows for the perceptual saliency of linguistic structures that may respond to the learners' sensitivity to this input, and therefore having an effect on either the success or failure of acquisition of individual structures. In other words, it is necessary for the design of the course in a task-based approach to select the linguistic structures appropriately and present them in a salient manner in order to have an effect on the sensitivity of the learners to the input. This would entail that the design itself of a task-based learning course could potentially have an effect towards the fossilisation or lack thereof of the interlanguage of the learners. In any case, authors such as Han (2011) and Han and Lew (2012) warn against the assumption that L2 input is equal to TL. Instead, Han (2013 suggests that there needs to be a clear difference between TL and L2, when in fact the kind of input that learners receive should be better explored to discern the influence this input may have on the learner's production of the L2.

The influence of the L1

The influence of the L1 as potential cause for fossilisation, the role of the instructors is highly important, as those who share the same L1 with the students can easily identify potential sources of difficulty for their students, and therefore offer learners more effective, individualized instruction (Hassane, 2023). The awareness of L1 language transfer may help in directing the learners' lack of attention to certain structures. This may be done by increasing the frequency of the occurrence of these structures to potentially avoid fossilisation, or even achieve defossilisation. The role of the instructor, in this sense, is paramount, and AI may, at present, have difficulties with addressing this issue as the system lacks the awareness of this potential issue, and may not provide sufficient input to address the issue.

Alonso (2016) suggests that a task-based approach may be employed to tackle issues caused by language transfer from the L1. Departing from this point of view, Achard (2008) combines a task-based approach with cognitive linguistics tenets focusing on the teaching of grammar, where instructors teach grammatical constructions and lexical items through a task-based approach. By using this approach, the learner takes the centre stage of the communicative act as they are exposed to actual real examples of language use with the aim of learning to use specific structures. In this approach, it is paramount for the learner to view the situation they conceptualise using different perspectives (Tyler, 2008). For instance, the study by Alonso, Cadierno and Jarvis (2016) demonstrates that the L1 does intervene in the results of acquisition, as groups of L1 Danish and Spanish students differ on their results when using the same methods to learn L2 English. The authors argue that the spatial construals of Danish and Spanish differ; and as such, these have an impact on the acquisition of spatial construals in English. Alonso, Cadierno and Jarvis (2016) noted that the acquisition of the prepositions in, on and at are used similarly in Danish, but differently in Spanish. This may lead to fossilisation of incorrect spatial construals in these students. In order to address this issue, Alonso, Cadierno and Jarvis (2016) suggest that teaching spatial configurations to students of different L1s should be adapted to their own needs as they would require further explanations and the various meanings of a particular preposition. That is, students should be taught that prepositions are connected in systematic ways, as well as in terms of related meaning networks. In other words, specific instruction would have a role in addressing L1 influence to prevent and overcome fossilisation.

Lack of opportunities

The lack of opportunities to produce output may be a further factor leading to fossilisation (Han, 2013). In that regard, modern technology, including ChatGPT, may allow learners with opportunities to use the TL. In this case, intelligent speech recognition technology would permit students the chance to practice dialogue with AI using voice input. This would allow learners to improve their oral communication skills and increase their opportunities to produce output in the TL (Conole, 2008). Admittedly, human-computer dialogue could have authenticity issues; however, it would help by providing opportunities to use the TL.

On the other hand, authors such as Swan (2005) claim that task-based language teaching is not suitable in 'acquisition-poor' environments. That is, it would not be productive for learners in contexts where they are dependent on the classroom environment exclusively to learn the language due to the lack of opportunities these learners would have to practice the L2. In these cases where learners cannot practice the TL outside the classroom, Swann (2005) suggests that a more structured approach would be necessary to guarantee that structures are learnt properly, thus suggesting that a task-based learning approach would not be suitable to tackle fossilisation of the learners' interlanguage. Conversely, Ellis (2014) advocates for the use of this approach since grammar instruction is not essential to communicate. In fact, the author notes that grammar arises from the need to express complex ideas requiring complex language forms. This would be possible, according to Ellis (2014), when a task-based learning approach is used alongside a complete language teaching curriculum rather than as a replacement of the latter. However, this does not solve the issue of the lack of opportunities to practice the target language, which is one of the factors known to cause fossilisation. Additionally, task-based approaches do not focus on particular pre-determined grammatical features, thus, it would be less likely that the learners would encounter sufficient opportunities to practice certain structures in the classroom by using a task-based approach. This is due to the fact that this approach does not focus on the design of tasks that render a structure or grammatical feature as essential, rather these features are regarded as useful (Loschky & Bley-Vroman, 1993). Therefore, such an approach does not

provide the necessary resources to ensure that learners have more opportunities to practice a structure, sound, or word that has become fossilised.

Socio-emotional Factors

Skehan (1998) also suggested that fossilisation may be caused by socio-emotional factors, including satisfaction of communication needs, lack of cultural adaptation, and identity factors such as acculturation, As adults use social context to prioritise communication over language form, this may cause fossilisation. In this regard, AI can provide immediate feedback and correction to L2 learners (Ai, 2017); although the interaction still prioritises communication over accuracy. It would be up to the learners to request corrections; otherwise, the AI infers meaning from the production of l2 learners, and neglects to remind students of any potential errors in their production. Thus, their errors would remain uncorrected and fossilisation would persevere. On the other hand, technology in L2 may be helpful by providing learners with a personalized learning experience which is more conducive to cultural adaptation (Liu, Gao & Ji, 2023). This capability facilitates the chances for learners to integrate into virtual communication relationships, consequently reducing social and psychological distances. Conversely, AI has its limitations in the fact that it is incapable of providing paralinguistic emotional feedback, emotional support and encouragement. That is, AI cannot establish relationships of trust with the learners, nor is it possible for AI to stimulate enthusiasm and motivation in the same way as instructors may do in the classroom.

On the other hand, a task-based approach assumes elements of socio-cultural theory. Ellis (2000) argues that when learners perform a task, they co-construct the 'activity' considering their own socio-history and goals. Consequently, it is not possible to reliably predict the language use and opportunities arising from the task. In that regard, socio-cultural theory puts an emphasis on the dialogic processes arising when performing a task, and their influence on language use and learning. Therefore, a task-based approach asks instructors and learners to engage in improvisation in order to promote communicative efficiency as well as L2 acquisition. In this sense, intercultural communication may be easily incorporated within a task-based learning approach. The literature investigating the relationship between language learning and culture do not all point towards the same direction, although some empirical studies found that intercultural education has a positive impact on L2 acquisition. In this regard, Ishii (2009) investigated the effects of integrating task-based language teaching and intercultural education by focusing on its potential learning outcomes. Ishii (2009) offered two groups of students with task-based learning, and either intercultural education, or no intercultural education, and concluded that those who received intercultural education were more successful in oral communication than those who did not receive this component. The relevance of use of culture in the classroom is also emphasised in Rani (2017), who found that the use of idioms and proverbs in a task-based learning approach to allow learners to further understand the TL culture, and further spark their motivation towards learning the language. Thus, the approach does lend itself to incorporate the space for learners to interact and share viewpoints. To this aim, task-based approaches may combine with web tools or online classrooms to replicate the effect of study abroad experiences (Pérez-Vidal, 2015). Authors such as Juan-Garau and Jacob (2015) propose enhancing L2 learners' communicative competence while engaging in content- and task-based activities such as blog writing to promote the transcultural skills of the learners. However, these approaches encourage intercultural communication that is not necessarily based on the native-language cultures, but rather on a globalised culture.

Testing the Approaches

It is apparent that both approaches may be able to address factors that cause fossilisation; however, the research up to date on how effective these would be to overcome fossilisation issues is still needed. The importance lies in performing research on the persistent concern of fossilisation with a longitudinal study. However, the main issue here would be determining the length of such study in order to truly establish whether these approaches have been successful. Some researchers, such as Long (1997) advocate for five years, yet this appears to be an arbitrary length based on the popular assumption that residing 5 years in an environment where the TL is spoken provides an indication of the capabilities of an L2 learner. Han (2004) argues that establishing this term is a vacuous decision, arguing that the L1 of the learner in itself has an impact on the interlanguages of the learner, as the L1 presents unique challenges, and learners come from

different cultural backgrounds. In addition, the reasons or motivations for L2 learning also have an effect on the process of developing interlanguages (Han, 2004). As Hulstijn (2002) argues, *'not all language phenomena are equal in terms of how they are processed and acquired.'* Consequently, there are individual differences on the length of time of acquisition of an L2, as well as individuals may acquire different features at different points of their learning journey. Therefore, the time in which a longitudinal study should take would depend on the linguistic differences between the L1 and the L2, the cultural background of the learners, and their motivations for learning. Han (2004) adds further variables, including the quality and quantity of exposure to the TL, the opportunities to use the TL, the complexity of the features of the TL, etc.

Therefore, Han (2004) suggests adapting the length of longitudinal studies of fossilisation depending on the TL feature investigated, as well as the level of the learner. In other words, the length of the study would have to be determined case by case. This makes the studies at large scale impossible to complete to help determine which approaches would be more suitable to target fossilisation. In addition, it is clear that to understand interlanguage fossilisation requires a nuanced understanding of the interaction between the target construction, L2 input, and L1 influence. For this reason, Han (2013) emphasises that research needs to consider using extensive language samples from learners as these offer a contextualized and natural discourse sample. Moreover, SLA research should abandon fragmentary approaches to take an inclusive viewpoint to transcend theoretical paradigms and prejudices. Thus, it would appear that combining approaches would most likely be to the benefit of the learners.

Conclusion

Interlanguage fossilisation is selective and more apparent in spontaneous production when learners try to produce language spontaneously. This makes it necessary for instructors to employ teaching approaches that may either prevent or reverse such a process that affects the acquisition of the TL structures. As interlanguage fossilisation occurs in different forms for different learners due to the L1 and its differences from the L2, it is even more important to utilize an approach that may help the learners towards full competence in the L2. In any case, it is clear that interlanguage fossilisation cannot be viewed as independent from a myriad of factors that all need to be considered in language instruction since fossilisation needs to be understood in conjunction with acquisition. In this way, the influence of the L1 and the input of the L2 are two variables that do not account only for fossilisation, but also for acquisition, and as such, it is necessary that any teaching approach utilises the best resources for the acquisition and the prevention of the fossilisation. While CALL approaches can potentially produce endless input that the students can request on command from AI, this does not guarantee that the input will always be of the highest quality. In a similar way, a task-based approach uses input to help learners, but this needs to be sufficient to guarantee the successful acquisition of the TL. In other words, the quality of input is something that needs to be considered regardless of the approach employed. Teachers should truly understand the nature of L2 learning to provide learners more effective practices to achieve better outcomes, and for this, a combination of approaches may prove to benefit the students. It would seem that an approach that combines task-based learning together with the methods that CALL provides would not only not be incompatible, but it can also provide the learners with more opportunities to either avoid interlanguage fossilisation, or even reverse its effects. This paper has reviewed the advantages that both approaches have in tackling a variety of factors that affect interlanguage fossilisation. In this case, it is clear that both approaches provide opportunities for the learners to receive corrective feedback, as well as explicit instruction on those structures that are fossilised. It is worth noting that instructors need to work case by case on the students to tailor the approach to their needs. In addition, both a task-based learning approach as well as CALL require the provision of sufficient input that is rich and suitable for the learner in order to avoid or tackle fossilisation. One of the most challenging aspects of both teaching approaches towards fossilisation is the provision of instruction that caters for socio-emotional factors affecting the learners. It would appear that this is challenging for all approaches as it is hard to help students adapt to the TL culture and identify with the language within a classroom environment.

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