

**Announcing the Final Examination of
Hunter Brakovec
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Second Language Studies
Friday, June 27th, at 10:00 am
Room 703 in Ballantine Hall**

Third Language Transfer and Development

In recent years, a large body of work has concentrated on the initial state of the third language (L3) grammar, i.e., transfer, though some work has begun to examine L3 acquisition beyond the initial state, i.e., development. In this dissertation, I address three broad research questions in a series of three experiments. First, which factors determine the source of transfer in L3 acquisition? Second, what is the timing of transfer? Third, which factors affect the rate of convergence on the target grammar following non-facilitative transfer?

In the first experiment, German-English bilinguals completed a Korean-based mini-language study. Participants were provided with either English-like or German-like input and subsequently produced and judged sentences containing properties not provided in the input. The results are argued to provide support for a ‘Grappling Period’, i.e., a decision-making period, preceding transfer. Additionally, the results suggest that morphosyntactic similarity played the primary role, and language use only a secondary role, in determining the source of transfer in the period following initial exposure to the new language.

In the second experiment, L2 (L1 English) and L3 (L1 English/L2 Spanish) learners of Mandarin (high-beginner proficiency) were tested on their knowledge of three properties on which English and Spanish diverge. The results were mixed, with some evidence for influence from the dominant language, some evidence of influence from both previously acquired languages, and some tentative evidence for a ‘Bilingual Advantage’.

Finally, in the third experiment, L2 and L3 learners of Russian (from beginner to advanced proficiencies) were tested on their knowledge of three properties and their interaction. There was no evidence of facilitation from having previously acquired a language with similar properties or of a general Bilingual Advantage. There was also no evidence to support a (facilitative) role for the amount of input accumulated in one’s already acquired languages.

Outline of Studies

Major: Second Language Studies
Minor: Linguistics

Educational Career

M.A.: Second Language Studies, Indiana University
B.A.: Russian, University of Pennsylvania

Committee in Charge

Dr. Rex Sprouse, Chair, Second Language Studies, rsprouse@iu.edu
Dr. Laurent Dekydtspotter, Second Language Studies, ldekydts@iu.edu
Dr. Mike Iverson, Second Language Studies, mikeiver@iu.edu
Dr. Tom Grano, Linguistics, tgrano@iu.edu

Faculty and students are encouraged to attend.

As a courtesy, please notify the Committee Chairperson in advance if you plan to attend.