

Abstract

The terms typology and psychotypology are undifferentiated in studies of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in additional language acquisition. This paper explores typological effects in L3 vocabulary acquisition by hypothesizing that three forms of typology, historical language typology (E-typ), the individual learner's language typology (I-typ), and psychotypology (P-typ), are important in the study of second language acquisition (SLA). This hypothesis was tested using Spanish, English and German as focus languages. Etymological sources of vocabulary for these languages (E-typ) are given before testing the hypothesis on 41 Spanish L1, English L2, and German L3 Mexican university students. Students in the study were given English and German vocabulary tests to determine I-typ and a psychotypological survey to establish P-typ. Results were compared for E-typ, I-typ, and P-typ to verify if correlations exist. Results show correlations between E-typ, I-typ, and P-typ, but not absolute correlations since the languages involved are considerably similar at the lexical level and there exists some disparity between subjects' I-typ and P-typ. The findings indicate that further research is necessary to differentiate the subconscious processes involved in word processing from more conscious, strategy-related processes involved in psychotypologically based lexical decision-making.

1. Typology effects in L3 vocabulary development

This chapter serves to introduce the reader to research developments in the area of the mental lexicon, the acquisition of additional language vocabulary, and crosslinguistic influence. Additionally, it defines the problem associated with claims that psychotypology plays an active role in crosslinguistic influence and presents examples of this problem. It concludes with a synopsis and explanation of the purpose of the present study.