The Errors with “Errors:” Re-imagining Assessment in Second Language Education

• **Errors:** “[T]he learner is using a definite system of language at every point in his development, although it is not [the system] ... of the second language...The learner’s errors are evidence of this system and are themselves systematic” (Corder, 1967, p. 166).

• **Interlanguage (IL)** (Selinker, 1972): 5 processes by which intake becomes non-target like: L1 transfer, transfer of training, over-generalization, communication strategies, learning strategies

• **U-Shaped curve** of linguistic development

![U-Shaped curve](image)

• **Processability theory:** stages of acquisition
  1. Lexical
  2. Categorical (grammatical)
  3. Phrasal
  4. Sentential
  5. Subclausal

• **Social/contextual variation**
  o Interlocutor
  o Topic
  o Task
  o Language function

• **Implications for assessment (and instruction)**
  o Grammar vs. vocabulary
  o Speaking vs. writing
References


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