L1 Interference Related Errors in Advanced Czech Students of English

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´FLUENT BUT NOT ACCURATE´

- **advanced learners´ language** often

  complex and fluent but not accurate

- **errors** frequently **caused** by:
  - mother tongue **interference**
  - **fossilization**

OUTLINE

1) Introduction
2) Research aims
3) Theoretical frame
4) Methodology
    a) Participants
    b) Tasks and Procedure
5) Results and Discussion
6) Concluding Remarks

RESEARCH AIMS

- to assess how advanced learners´ language can be influenced by a focused **intervention**
- a **13-week course → aim:**
  - to increase accuracy of language
  - to raise awareness of typically problematic features

"Language learning has two sides to it: knowing and doing"

Widdowson, 1990, p.150 in Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, p.222

- knowing
- conscious learning
- **competence**
- explicit declarative knowledge → awareness + metalanguage
- **impossible to analyse directly**

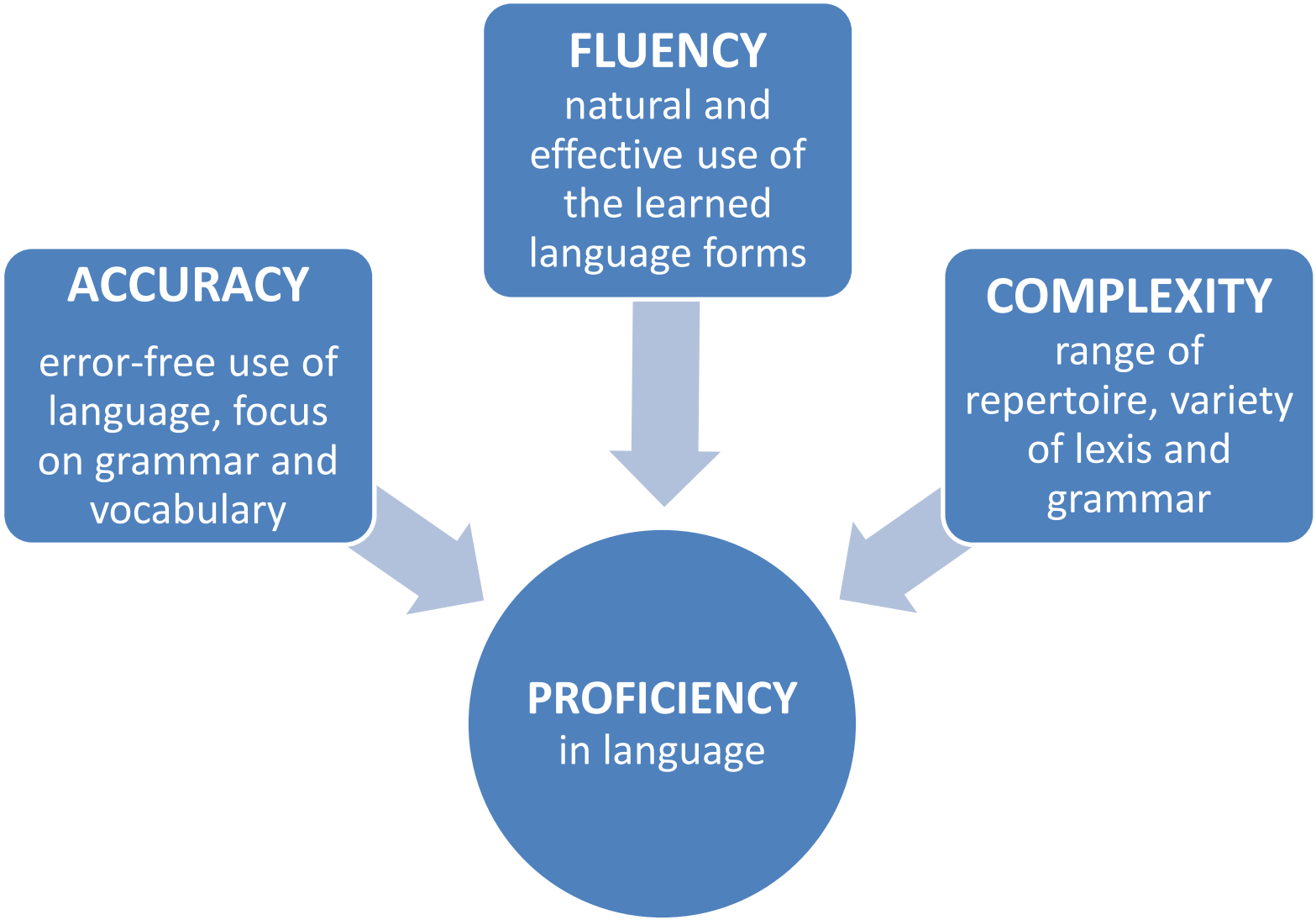
*" Researchers are forced to infer **competence …***

- doing
- unconscious acquiring
- **performance**
- implicit procedural knowledge→ automatic use → spontaneous production
- **provides data for analysis**

*… from some kind of **performance."***

Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, pp. 5-7

DIMENSIONS OF L2 PROFICIENCY



ERROR ANALYSIS

- analysing learner language: **error analysis (EA)**

  → traditionally important in SLA research

- original EA largely disproved
- **computer-aided error analysis (CEA)** – large corpora of learner language →

→ renewed interest in EA

L1 INTERFERENCE and FOSSILIZATION

applying CEA in the study of learner language produced interesting results:

- many errors seem to be related to the influence of **L1 interference**
- tendency to cease to develop, a feature called **fossilization**
- L1 interference and fossilization **closely related**

L1 INTERFERENCE and FOSSILIZATION

- **Fossilization** Hypothesis
- Selinker, 1972
- **affecting the whole** system of learner language
- controversial → rejected

- **Selective Fossilization** Hypothesis
- Han, 2009
- affecting **only certain features** of learner language

"Native language influence is the major shaping force in fossilizable speech behaviour"

Han, 2013, p. 137

- samples of learner language, both oral and written
- students´ intuitions about language:
  - **Grammaticality judgement test (GJ)**

    focused scrutiny on specific linguistic features
  - **Certainty-based marking (CBM)**

    helps to produce reliable results

RESEARCH DESIGN

- **pilot study** (II + VI/2016) → research tools
  - **the one-group pre-test-post-test design**
  - a quasi-experimental design
- **suggested changes**
  - control group
  - samples of students´ written and spoken language
- **main study** (IX/2016- I/2017)
  - **pre-test-post-test non-equivalent group design**
  - 2 groups: experimental + control

PARTICIPANTS

- **non-probability convenience sampling**
- **pilot study**

  pre-test – 29 students + post-test – **26 students**
- **main study**
  - pre-test – 32 (experimental) + 16 (control)
  - post-test – **26 + 14**
  - the **equivalence of the groups → to enable comparisons**, a number of **criteria** adopted:
    - majoring in English
    - 3rd term
    - language proficiency
    - mother tongue

PROCEDURE

all groups, pilot, control and experimental:

- **Grammaticality judgement test (GJ)**

  30 sentences→ both correct and incorrect with errors typical of Czech learners of English → intuitions about their grammaticality → if incorrect → correct them

- **Certainty-based marking (CBM)**

  to prevent taking unnecessary risks and guessing

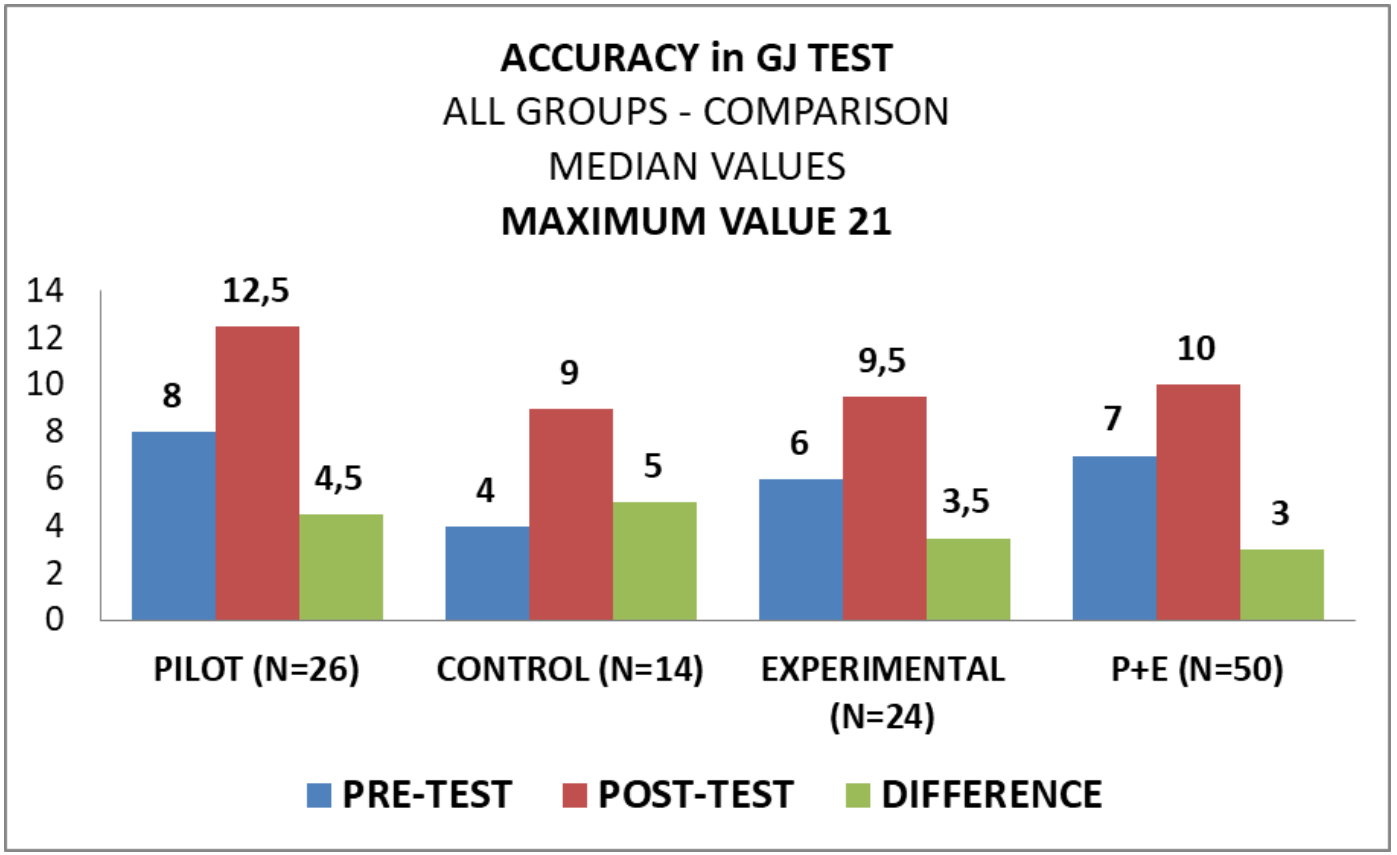
RESULTS – GJ TEST

- **pre-tests and post-tests** by all groups analysed
- **binary distinction**, correct – incorrect, used in GJ test analysis
- participants with 1 test excluded
- **pilot and experimental groups** - intervention, results assessed both separately and as one whole **contrasted with the control group**
- **mean values** were used in the analysis

RESULTS – GJ TEST

group	test type	n	mean	median	min	max	sd
pilot	pre-test	26	7,80	8,0	5	14	2,53
	post-test	26	12,76	12,5	5	21	4,54
control	**pre-test**	**14**	**5,21**	**4,0**	**0**	**13**	**3,80**
	post-test	**14**	**8,35**	**9,0**	**0**	**14**	**4,23**
experimental	pre-test	24	6,41	6,0	0	14	3,67
	post-test	24	8,41	9,5	2	13	3,13
experimental and pilot	**pre-test**	**50**	**7,14**	**7,0**	**0**	**14**	**3,17**
	post-test	**50**	**10,68**	**10,0**	**2**	**21**	**4,46**

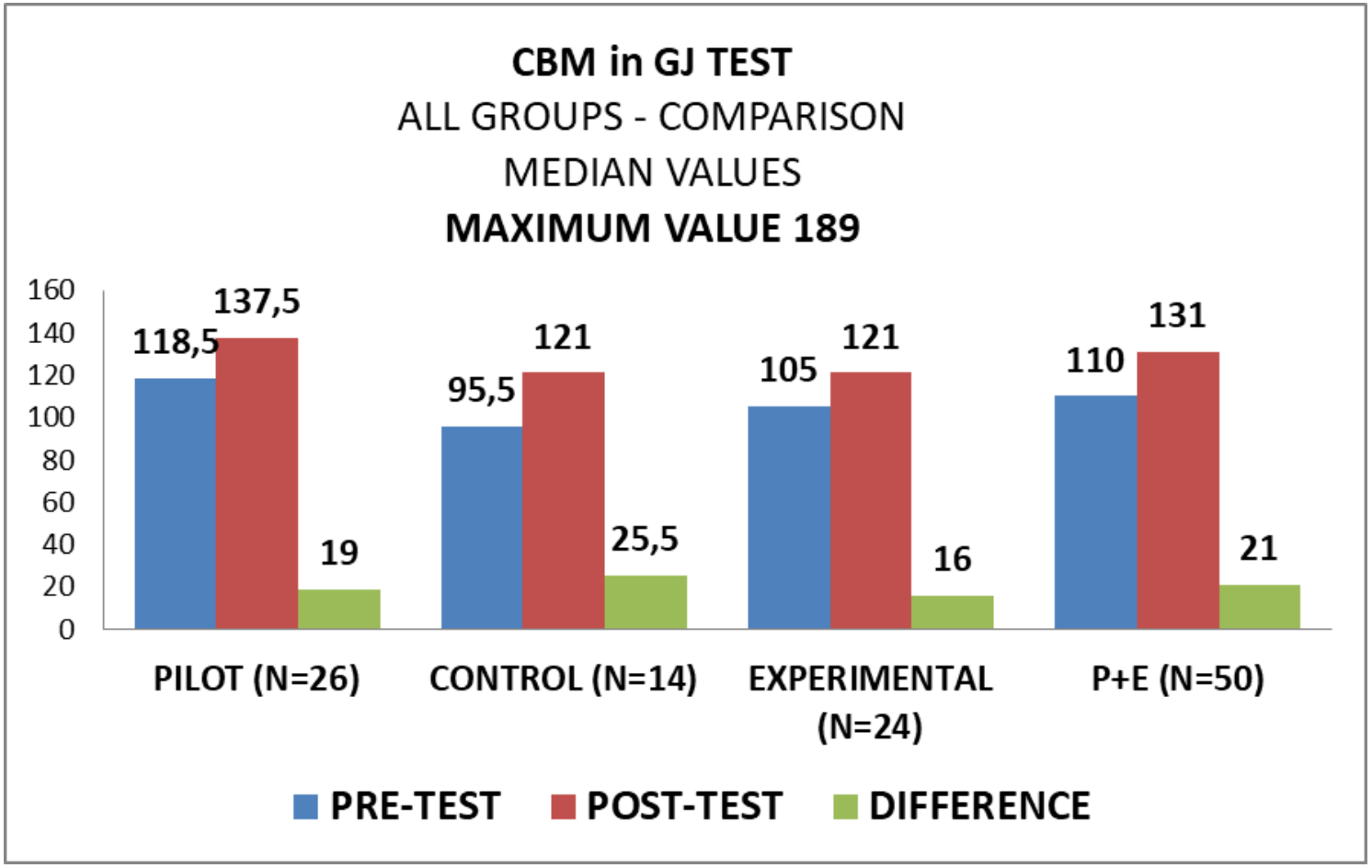
RESULTS – GJ TEST



RESULTS – CBM TEST

group	test type	n	mean	median	difference	min	max	sd
pilot	pre-test	26	114,00	118,5	19	70	137	16,37
	post-test	26	140,35	137,5		78	178	22,81
control	**pre-test**	**14**	**98,71**	**95,5**	25,5	**67**	**144**	**20,83**
	post-test	**14**	**113,21**	**121,0**		**67**	**150**	**26,71**
experimental	pre-test	24	100,04	105,0	16	27	146	29,75
	post-test	24	118,66	121,0		72	150	21,41
experimental and pilot	**pre-test**	**50**	**107,304**	**110,0**	21	**27**	**146**	**24,53**
	post-test	**50**	**129,94**	**131,0**		**72**	**178**	**24,50**

RESULTS – CBM


CBM in GJ TEST
ALL GROUPS - COMPARISON
MEDIAN VALUES
MAXIMUM VALUE 189
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
118,5
137,5
19
95,5
121
25,5
105
121
16
110
131
21
PILOT (N=26)
CONTROL (N=14)
EXPERIMENTAL (N=24)
P+E (N=50)
PRE-TEST
POST-TEST
DIFFERENCE

DISCUSSION

- unexpected outcome →**improvement in all groups**
- ***causes?***
- a relatively **small sample size**, especially the control group → the results must be interpreted with caution
- **further research required**

CLOSING REMARKS

The present study in advanced Czech students of English → the effects of a focused intervention on

- increasing **accuracy of L2**
- **raising awareness of L1-induced + fossilized errors**

Results → somewhat **counterintuitive**

Suggestions for further research

- a **bigger control** group
- **GJ** tests and **CBM not enough**
- **samples of free spoken and written production** → **deeper insights** into the efficiency of intervention

Advanced learners´ language

´FLUENT BUT NOT ACCURATE´

What should be done to make it

´FLUENT AND ACCURATE´

?

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