Looking at Interlanguage Processes

Looking at IL Processes

- The Monitor Model
- The Competition Model
- Modes of Knowledge Representation

The Competition Model

- What is your interpretation of these English sentences?
- What criteria do you use to interpret them?

The Competition Model

- The cows eat the grass.
- How do you know?

The Competition Model

- The grass eat the cows.
- How do you know?

The Competition Model

- The grass eats the cows.
- How do you know?
The Competition Model

- The pencil see the boys.
  
  **Who or what does the seeing?**

- How do you know?

The Competition Model

- The pencil sees the boys.
  
  **Who or what does the seeing?**

- How do you know?

The Competition Model

- Syntactic ambiguity is resolved by cue strengths. Consider:

- A asked B to go.
  - Jimmy asked his mother to go play.
    - Jimmy went to play.
  - The doctor asked Jeff to go see a specialist.
    - Jeff went to see a specialist.

The Competition Model

- The boy asked the girl to go.
  
  **Who went?**

- How do you know?

The Competition Model

- The dog asked the girl to go.
  
  **Who went?**

- How do you know?

The Competition Model

- The girl asked the chair to go.
  
  **Who went?**

- How do you know?
The Competition Model

- The chair asked the dog to go.  
  Who went?  
- How do you know?

The Competition Model

In processing meaning in sentences we use these cues:
- Syntax  
  - Word order (SVO)
- Morphology (Case of nouns, Agreement between subject and verb)
- Semantics  
  - ± Human  
  - ± Animate

The Competition Model

- In some cases the semantic and syntactic cues converge to give the same interpretation of a sentence.  
- In other cases the semantic and syntactic cues conflict.  
- The interpretation we choose is based on competition among the cues.

The Competition Model

Different languages assign different weights to syntactic and semantic cues.

- Learners of a second language tend to transfer the weights associated with the cues in their first language.

Italian Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Italian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allora = well</td>
<td>Le lasagne = lasagne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anche = also</td>
<td>Mangiare = to eat, take, have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consigliare = to recommend</td>
<td>Prendere = to have, take, eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gli spaghetti = spaghetti</td>
<td>Qui = here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Io = I</td>
<td>Sempre = always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La pastasciutta = pasta</td>
<td>Un primo = a first course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Competition Model
☐ Io mangerei un primo.

Who or what will eat what?

The Competition Model
☐ La pastasciutta Franco la prende sempre qui.

Who or what always eats what here?

The Competition Model
☐ Allora mangio anch’io la pastasciutta.

Who or what will eat what?

The Competition Model
☐ Ha consigliato le lasagne qui Franco, no?

Who or what recommended what here?

The Competition Model
☐ No, le lasagne le ha consigliate Elizabeth.

Who or what recommended what?

The Competition Model
☐ Allora, io gli spaghetti prendo.

Who or what will eat what?
The Competition Model

- Io mangerei un primo.
- La pastasciutta Franco la prende sempre qui.
- Allora mangio anch’io la pastasciutta.
- Ha consigliato le lasagne qui Franco, no?
- No, le lasagne le ha consigliate Elizabeth.
- Allora, io gli spaghetti prendo.

The Competition Model and SLA

- L2 learners are faced with conflicts between L1 and L2 cues and cue strengths.
- Learners first resort to their L1 interpretation strategies.
- When they recognize an incongruity between the L1 and L2 systems, they resort to a universal selection of meaning-based cues.
- Finally, learners gradually adopt the appropriate biases and their L2 proficiency increases.