

Selective Transfer

The following data are from native speakers of Czech learning English and Czech speakers learning Russian (L. Dušková. 1984. Similarity-An aid or hindrance in foreign language learning? *Folia Linguistica*, 18, 103-115). Column 1 (L2 English) represents unattested forms (indicated by *). In other words, Czech learners never produce plurals or past tense forms, as given in column 1

<i>L2 English</i>	<i>NS Czech and English Gloss</i>	<i>L2 Russian</i>	<i>NS Russian</i>
<i>Plural Forms</i>			
*teacher-ele	učitelé = 'teachers'	učitele	učitelja
*workwoman-ice	dělnice = 'workwomen'	rabotnice	rabotnicy
<i>Past Tense</i>			
*arise-nul	vznikl, vzniknul = 'arose'	vozniknul	voznik
*he die-el	umřel = 'he died'	on umrel	on umer

As can be noted there is widespread transfer of endings from Czech to Russian, but not from Czech to English. Why do you think this is so? Why should these facts be troublesome for an NL-based theory of second language acquisition?