

Contrastive analysis: A valid concept in the 21st century?

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Abstract

Contrastive analysis (CA) has been used in the 1950's as an effective teaching material in second language learning (SLL) to compare pairs of languages, predict learning difficulties in order to address them. Yet, in the 1980's and 1990's the relevance of CA has been disputed. Many studies point out the limit of CA with respect to its weak and strong versions. Nevertheless, CA is still brought out today in SLA with regards to its traditional approach. This triggers the current study to overview the use of contrastive analysis from its early age to current with the aim of supporting or rejecting its relevance and benefit. With regards to current works conducted on CA that point out the relevance and necessity of the traditional approach of CA in predicting and solving learning difficulties, we contend that CA is relevant and valid, and therefore necessary, though it might be used with caution. This is further supported by the recurrent interferences between learners' first language and second/foreign when different linguistic features are observed. Therefore, CA should be reconsidered in second or foreign language teaching and learning for an effective and efficient learning.

Key words: Contrastive analysis, second language acquisition, foreign language, First language

Introduction

Contrastive analysis (CA) has been extensively used in the field of second language learning (SLL) for centuries. It was used in the 1960's as an effective tool to compare pairs of languages during which the aim was to identify similarities and differences among languages compared in order to address the differences for an efficient learning. For S. M. Gass and L. Selinker (2008, p. 96) "contrastive analysis is a way of comparing languages in order to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a second-language learning situation". The contrastive analysis of languages involves two levels: One language being the first language (L1) or mother tongue and the other the second language (L2). R. Lado (1957, p.1) demonstrates

the necessity for a systematic comparison of languages and cultures. He makes an assumption according to which "in the comparison between native and foreign language lies the key to ease or difficulty in foreign language learning". Comparing languages became relevant in foreign language teaching settings. Hence, the author urges language teachers to compare the foreign language with the native language of the learners to better notice the learning difficulties in order to effectively address them during teaching. Thus, contrastive analysis was a necessity in foreign language teaching in the 1960's.

However, CA by extension contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH), has been subject to many criticisms in the 1970's and considered to be irrelevant in second or foreign language teaching, J. W. Oller and S.M. Ziahosseiny (1970). Nevertheless, despite these

criticisms, CA is still used today in second and foreign language teaching. If so, there might be something relevant or valid about CA that is often ignored. Hence, the current article seeks to understand why CA is still at the center of investigations conducted by language teachers. In other words, why some researchers and language teachers still use CA with respect to its weak and strong versions to predict learning difficulties for pedagogical purposes? The reconsideration of CA in second or foreign language teaching as currently addressed by some language teachers, above mentioned, motivates the current research, and incites it to reexamine CA with respect to its historical background and use in the 1960's to its criticisms in the 1970's; then to its current use to either state and confirm its validity in SLA or reject it. In other words, the aim of this paper is to show the benefit and relevance of CA in the 21st century; and this necessitates an overview of CA with respect of its historical background to its criticisms and from the criticisms to its recurrent use in the 21st century. To better address the issue, the current article formulates the following research questions:

1. Why is contrastive analysis still used nowadays in second and foreign language teaching settings?
2. How can contrastive analysis be believed to be relevant and valid in the 21st century?

The research questions stated in the current study are hypothesized in the following terms:

1. Contrastive analysis is still used nowadays in second or foreign languages teaching settings.
2. Contrastive analysis may still be relevant and valid in the 21st century.

Following the research questions and hypotheses, the objectives of this article are

1. To review contrastive analysis in its early ages (1950's) to the era of its criticisms in the 1980's, and then to its current stance.
2. To show the necessity to reconsider the use of contrastive analysis in the 21st century towards foreign or second language teaching and learning.

Following the introduction, the body of the current work is structured in the following ways. The first section constitutes the theoretical overview of contrastive analysis made of two subsections: Historical backgrounds, use of contrastive analysis in the 1960's to 1990's. The second section is: criticisms towards CA followed by the third section, Current stage of Contrastive Analysis as well as the final section, discussion, and then the conclusion

Theoretical overview of contrastive analysis

Historical background

CA has been used in the field of SLA in the 1950's, as stated above. It is believed to have started in the structuralism era with L. Bloomfield (1933), and later by

C. Fries (1945) during which the main goal was to apply the ideas of structural linguistics to language (P. Lennon 2008). Structuralist linguists viewed language as a rule-governed system that can be separated hierarchically into sub-systems of which each has its own internal structure and pattern (P. Lennon 2008). After the Second World War, there was a great interest in language learning and teaching in the United States. With the advent of immigrations to the USA, children of immigrants needed to be taught the foreign language, English. Hence, comparing learners native and their foreign languages is believed to facilitate acquisition. For instance, (C. Fries, 1945, p.9) stresses that "the most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner." Thus, contrastive teaching based on contrastive analysis of the linguistic features of learners' first language (L1) and their foreign language (FL) becomes crucial and relevant for a successful learning. Although it started in the works of L. Bloomfield (Op. cit.) and C. Fries (Op. cit.), Contrastive analysis has been for the first time thoroughly elaborated in the work of R. Lado (1957). In *Linguistics across Cultures*, R. Lado (Op. cit. p.2) insists on the necessity for a systematic comparison of learners' languages and cultures for effective language teaching. His claim is made clear in the following assumption:

We assume that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult.

Lado continues that what is crucial in textbooks and teaching materials is "the comparison of native and foreign language and culture in order to find the hurdles that really has to be surmounted in the teaching", and therefore, textbooks and teaching materials that do not respect the comparative approach will be considered irrelevant (p. 3).

In the same vein, prior to 1960s, contrastive analysis became associated with behaviorist psychology which was another influence on language teaching. Behaviorists argue that language learning is a habit formation. Learning a second language is therefore, learning new habits to replace the habits of the first language (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Hence, "under this framework for learning and teaching, the first language (L1) was seen to interfere with the acquisition of the second language," that is the habits of the L1 impinge upon those of the L2 (p. 9). Contrastive analysis became prominent in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s and its primary purpose was pedagogical. From behaviorist and structuralist perspectives, the theory behind this approach is that "the principal barrier to second language acquisition is the interference of the first language system with the second language system ..." and "... that second language learning basically involved the overcoming of the differences between the

two linguistic systems – the native and target languages” (H. D. Brown, 1980, p.148). Therefore, contrastive analysis was extensively used in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in the 1960s and early 1970s, as a method of explaining why some features of a target language were more difficult to acquire than others.

Under the umbrella of contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) three versions are distinguished, namely the strong version, the weak version, and the moderate version. The strong and weak versions of contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) have been elaborated in the works of R. Wardhaugh (1970), H. D. Brown (1987) and S. M. Gass and L. Selinker (2008).

R. Wardhaugh refers to the strong version of CAH as the version that claims to predict the difficulties of second language (L2) learning via contrastive analysis. For Wardhaugh, (1992, p.136) the weak version of CAH consists in using “the best linguistic knowledge available [in both learners L1 and L2] ... in order to account for observed difficulties in second language learning”. Here, the emphasis is shifted from the predictive task of the difficulties encountered by L2 learners to the explanation of observable errors.

S. M. Gass and L. Selinker (2008, p.8) contend that the strong version is an a priori version and the weak version an a posteriori version in the following terms: “the a priori versus the a posteriori view, the strong versus the weak view, and the predictive versus the explanatory view.” The strong view claims that by comparing two or more languages one can make “prediction about learning and hence about the success of language-teaching material” whereas the weak view “starts with an analysis of learners’ recurrent errors” that is, it “begins with what learners do and then attempts to account for those errors on the basis of NL- (native language) TL (target language differences)” (S. M. Gass and L. Selinker, 2008, p. 97). The moderate version stipulates that “wherever patterns are minimally distinct in form or meaning in one or more systems, confusion may result” (J.W. Oller & S. M. Ziahosseiny, 1970, p. 186). This simply means that when two linguistic systems somehow differ, learners may have difficulties to move from one system to the other.

Use of contrastive analysis in the 1960’s to 1990’s

In the 1960’s many linguists and language teachers proved the necessity to use CA and its approach to design their teaching material in second or foreign language teaching settings R. Lado (1957), W. Lehn and W. R. Slager (1959), V. J. By-Sturm (1965), H. D. Brown (1987), and F. Devos et al. (1993).

W. Lehn and W. R. Slager (1959) find the significance of CAH when they compare the Egyptian Arabic phonemes to those of American English. They notice that some learning difficulties of Arabic L1 speakers learning English as L2 include English /b/ and /v/ contrast as well as the absence of the phoneme / ð/ in Arabic that learners substitute by /z/ and /s/. By-Sturm considers the contrastive analysis of some phonological, morphological, and syntactical differences that exist in English and French. According to the author,

the building blocks of French are different from those of English, and practically all mistakes made by a learner of a foreign language are due to his natural inclination to equate the grammatical elements of the native language with those of the foreign language” (V.J. By-Sturm 1965, p. 66).

Here, second language learners’ mistakes are due to negative transfer that is the erroneous transfer of the rules of the L1 into the L2. The author predicted that English speakers who are learning French as foreign language will likely have difficulties producing these two new sounds, /ɲ/, /y/ as in *agneau* and *rue*, respectively, since they lack these sounds in their native language. He continued that English and French differ in the system of supra-segmental phonemes: pitch, stress, and intonation for French lack phonemic stress as compared to English where stress is of great importance. Hence, the author suggested a systematic teaching material to solve the problems.

In the same vein, the author’s syntactic analysis of French and English shows that there is a difference in the placement of the direct object pronoun in basic sentence structure. In English, the direct object is placed after the verb whereas in French it is placed before the verb as follows: *I see him* (in English) as opposed to its French counterpart: *Je le vois*. Because of the influence of the English structure and patterns, second language learners of French are likely to form ungrammatical sentences, such as: *Je vois le* or *Je vois il*, and therefore, learners must be taught to reason according to the French syntax (V. J. By-Sturm 1965).

F. Devos et al. (1993) also use contrastive analysis to resolve the object problems between English, French, and Dutch. The study is carried at the University of Ghent. its goal was to efficiently organize foreign language teaching at secondary school level with a focus on the two main foreign languages: French and English. The author cleared “delineation of possible problem areas in foreign language teaching and an extensive pragmatic description of the differences between the native language and the foreign languages” (p. 21-22), during which, he noticed that the objects’ structure in the three languages differ considerably.

In Dutch and English, there are three main objects, including direct object, indirect objects, and prepositional objects whereas in French there are two main objects including, “*le complément d’objet direct*” and “*complément d’objet indirect.*” (p.22). His analysis made it obvious that French grammar, unlike Dutch and English, refers to all objects introduced by prepositions “*complément d’objet indirect*” and therefore, in French there is no distinction between indirect objects and prepositional objects. These differences are also noticed in the use of transitive verbs (verbs that require direct objects) and intransitive ones (verbs that do not require direct objects). The authors insist that this analysis is made available for language teachers to use in foreign language teaching settings, case of English and French taught at the University of Ghent.

Criticisms towards CA

Some studies demonstrate the limit of CAH based on its strong and weak versions because what was predicted to be easy for learners was actually not and what was predicted to be difficult was not (J.W. Oller and S.M. Ziahosseiny, 1970), (R. Wardhaugh, 1970) and (R. Whitman and K. Jackson, 1972). Other studies find unrealistic the predictive view and observatory view of CAH since many factors, including psychological, social, and socio-economic factors could affect acquisition (R. Wardhaugh, 1970, and (S.M. Gass and L. Selinker, 2008). Also, tracing L2 learners' errors back to their L1 remained irrelevant since, most of the time learners' errors are not traceable back to their L1. This means that L2 or FL learners' errors are not necessarily due to their L1. This is supported by learners' interlanguage errors where the features and rules (grammar and vocabulary) produced by the learners are deviant from their L1 and L2 (W. Nemser, 1971a), (L. Selinker, 1992). Worse, FL or L2 learners may fail to acquire the linguistic features of their L2 despite recurrent exposure of their L2 items, thus, leading to fossilization (Brown, 1980), (S.M. Gass and L. Selinker, 2008).

J. W. Oller and S.M. Ziahosseiny (1970) reject CA that they consider invalid, and incorrect. They argue that the strong version of CAH is too strong and the weak version too weak to account for learners' errors for CAH did not consider the extra-linguistic factors of learners. Some psychological factors may affect learners differently. For the authors, another flaw of the two versions of contrastive analysis hypothesis is that even students with a similar L1 background would not receive the same grades during their learning processes. To overcome such difficulty, the authors propose a moderate version, as discussed above, though it was also rejected later.

A. Hughes (1980, Cited in B. Yang, 1992, p. 139-140) demonstrate the limit of CAH due to its failure in predicting learning difficulty as he criticizes the fact that CAH cannot predict errors that the learner would have avoided had he followed the pattern of the L1. For the author, CA lacks explicit and mechanical procedures since:

(1) We do not have the descriptions of the languages that we need. (2) If we had the right descriptions, it will not still be obvious as to what we should compare them with what. (3) If we did have a satisfactory objective measure of similarity or difference. (4) If we did have a satisfactory measure of difference, it is unclear how we would predict degrees of difficulty with any accuracy.

Similarly, R. Wardhaugh (1970, p. 125) believes that the strong version of CAH was "unrealistic and impracticable" for, at the very least, "this version demands of linguists that they have available a set of linguistic universals formulated within a comprehensive linguistic theory which deals adequately with syntax, semantics, and phonology".

R. Whitman and K. Jackson (1972, p. 40) also perceived the flaws of CAH. They tested

2500 Japanese learners of English to assess predicted levels of difficulty on grammar, which correlated negatively with actual levels of difficulty as measured by performance on a language test. What was predicted to be easier was harder, and vice versa. They conclude that contrastive analysis, as represented by the four analyses tested in the project, is inadequate, theoretically and practically, to predict the interference problems of a language learner.

Current stage of contrastive analysis

Despite many criticisms towards CA, it is still used today in second or foreign language teaching settings. Many linguists and language teachers still state the relevance of CA in SLA.

Additionally, V. Gast (2012) stressed that contrastive analysis, in its narrow definition, investigates the differences and similarities between pairs of languages with the aim of providing input to the applied disciplines, including foreign language teaching and translation studies. The former that is, providing input to applied disciplines such as foreign language teaching, is the concern of the current study.

M. K. Kambou (2001) shows that when many languages come into contact, they necessarily influence each other. Yet, he depicted that research on contrastive analysis has been done mainly in monolingual context which may not be appropriate in multilingual societies to properly address the degree of interference since in multilingual context there are intermediate languages that could influence acquisition. The author adds that in monolingual contrastive analysis (CA) there is one comparison that is, the native language is being compared with the second or foreign language. In multilingual contexts, however, there are two comparisons which are the comparison of learners' native language (L1) to their intermediate language (L_{int}) first, and then to their foreign language (FL) as the author named it third language (L3).

Following this assertion, he compares the noun phrases of Mooré to those of French and English as well as the noun phrases of Twi to those of English and French. The contexts of Burkina Faso where Mooré is considered as first language (L1), French as intermediate language (L_{int}) and English as third language (L3); and Ghana, where Twi is the L1, English the L_{int} and French the L3 were used. The author exemplified that in Mooré, "págá wǎ" is translated in French as "*Femme la*" and in English "*women the*" which respectively means "la femme" and "the women". For more examples see (M. K. Kambou, 2001, p. 119-121). This is also the case for Twi speakers learning French as foreign language.

The author continues that in a multilingual context, the first prediction will be that learners of English as foreign language are likely to form correct noun phrases in

English due to the influence of French that they acquire previously and which as a similar noun phrase structure like English. The second prediction would be that Mooré students are likely to form incorrect noun phrase structure in English due to the influence of their L1 that has a different structure. This shows to what extent the predictive view of CA, though criticized previously, cannot be ignored in foreign or second language teaching nowadays.

B. Ruzhekova-Rogozherova (2007, p.2) develops the importance of contrastive analysis, by extension contrastive teaching and contrastive linguistics. For him, contrastive teaching is worth applying in L2 acquisition setting because "Research has proven that there is positive and negative transfer (negative one is also called "interference") on different levels of language including pronunciation, lexis, grammar, [and] structures...". He supports the views of the early precursor of CA including R. Lado (1957), S.P. Corder (1971), and T. Odlin (1989), and according to whom similar structures in both L1 and L2 will be easy for L2 learners to acquire whereas different structures in both languages will be difficult to acquire. The author also posits that positive transfer vs. negative transfer of similar and dissimilar items respectively, is common among L2 learners. The author used CA to contrast English preterit and perfect to those of French for effective learning; and concluded that CT based on CA turns out to be not the only one, but a relevant prerequisite of successful learning, a powerful means for avoidance of negative transfer" (p.3).

S. Johansson (2008) states that the goal of CA has been to provide language learners with a better description of the teaching material because when languages are compared, learners can better attend to them. He insists on the relevance of CA by quoting J. Firbas (1992) in the following terms: "The contrastive method proves to be a useful heuristic tool capable of throwing valuable light on the characteristic features of the languages contrasted; [...]. (J. Firbas 1992, cited in S. Johansson 2009, p.9). The author adds that the native language influences the acquisition of the second language since foreign languages' speakers are recognized via their accents (case of an American speaking Norwegian as compared to a Frenchman or a German) (S. Johansson, 2008, p.10). He compares Norwegian and English lexical characteristics and grammar during which he pointed out the mistakes that Norwegian students are likely to make while learning English. These common mistakes include nouns and noun phrases, pronouns, verbs and verb phrases, adjectives and adverbs.

In addition, the following studies still prove the relevance of the weak and strong versions of CAH. These studies, including G. Lord (2008), M. A. Fatemi et al. (2012), and K. Karim and H. Nassaji (2013), have proven that learners' first language necessary influences the acquisition of their Second language. For instance, Karim and Nassaji (2013) examined the case of first language (L1) transfer in second language (L2) writing. The findings prove that learners' L1 influences L2 learners' writings.

M. A. Fatemi et al. (2012), in a similar vein, investigate the consonant clusters in oral production from speakers of Persian as First language and English as

second language. What they notice is that when consonant clusters in their L2 is absent in their L1, learners' have difficulties producing these sounds. This finding supports R. Lado's (1957, p. 2) assumption according to which: "those elements that are similar to his [learner's] native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult."

A. Derakhshan and E. Karim's (2015) review demonstrate the inherent influence of the L1 into the L2 during the L2 learning process. Their review summarizes the difficulties that L1 learners may face while learning English. Here, learners' L1 is believed to interfere in their L2 acquisition. The authors, then concluded that their review was carried on to depict the influence of first language in second language due to many factors, such as "the similarities and differences in the structures of two languages, background knowledge of the learner, proficiency of learners on second languages, and the structures of consonant clusters in L1 and L2" (Derakhshan and Karim, 2015, p.2115), therefore,

If there are similarities in L1 and L2 the learners have less problems in acquisition of L2 and fewer errors may occur in L2, but if there are no or little similarities of the structure of first language and second language, learner is faced with a lot of problems in L2 acquisition and it is not easy for them to learn (p.2115-2016).

This work is supported by former studies including, M.A. Fatima et al. and Karim and Nassaji (2013). K. Kadaruddin (2015), in the same way, uses contrastive analysis in foreign language acquisition research. The author compares the Mekongga syntax to the English one, a syntax being a part of grammar that study structure of sentences. The Mekongga language is one of the local languages spoken in Indonesia. The purpose of this contrastive approach is to identify and overcome learning problems faced by the native speakers of Mekongga who are studying English in Wundulako sub-district Kolaka city of Indonesia.

To prove the relevance of CA, E. NamazianDost (2017) discusses the differences and similarities in the phonology and syntax of Persian and English to find areas of possible difficulty for L2 learners of English in order to address them. The syntactic features involve Subject -verb disagreement Noun-number disagreement, and misuse of determiners (p.169). The author states all these three syntactic errors exist among Persians learners of English as non-native language because: "(a) the difference between the mother tongue and the target language, and (b) mother tongue interference (MTI) (p. 171).

Discussion

It is clear that the predictive (strong version) and explanatory (weak version) approaches of contrastive analysis are still current. The articles above mentioned support the hypothesis of the current investigation according to which: (1) Contrastive analysis is still used nowadays in second or foreign languages teaching

settings. To illustrate, K. Kadaruddin (Op.cit.) used CA to predict, identify and overcome learning problems faced by the native speakers of Mekongga who are studying English. Similarly, E. NamazianDost (Op.cit.) discusses the differences and similarities in the phonology and syntax of Persian and English to find areas of possible difficulty for L2 learners of English in order to address them.

Additionally, these articles, (G. Lord, 2008), (M.A. Fatemi et al., 2012), (K. Karim and H. Nassaji, 2013), (A. Derakhshan and E. Karim, 2015), and (A. K. Kadaruddin, 2015), which are written in the 21st century still refers to the weak version according to which the learners' errors derive from their native language and to the strong version (which predicts learning difficulty by comparing the two language) of contrastive analysis to point out learning difficulty and invite language teachers to emphasize on differences with more practice exercises. This confirms the current article's hypothesis 2: Contrastive analysis may still be relevant and valid in the 21st century.

Furthermore, second and foreign language learning it is still at the center of many investigation nowadays; and it is equally obvious that in second and foreign language learning settings, interferences are still recurrent with interference being defined as "the use of the first language (or other languages known) in a second language context when the resulting second language form is incorrect S.M. Gass and L. Selinker (Op.cit. p.518). In most of the cases, the different items in both languages are believed to interfere in the learning process A. Derakhshan and E. Karim's (Op.cit). By saying so, if the two languages do not share the same structural elements, negative transfer, also called interference, can occur. Yet, if the two languages share the same linguistic features, then positive transfer may occur that is, no learning difficulty will happen B. Ruzhekova-Rogozherova (Op. cit) and A. K. Kadaruddin (Op. cit.). That is why the strong version of contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) which is based on a predictive approach of learning problems remains crucial to thoroughly investigate the two languages in order to identify the differences to focus on for an effective and efficient learning, and in order to prevent interferences.

In phonology for instance, let us consider the consonant phonemes of French and English. The two languages obviously share common and different phonemes. The similar phonemes include: /p/, /b/, /d/, /t/, /n/, /m/, /f/, /k/, /v/, /l/, /w/, /s/, /z/, /g/, and /ʃ/. Yet, each language has phonemes proper to the language that the other does not have. Phonemes that are only proper to French that English does not have are: /ɲ/, /ʀ/, and /y/ and phonemes proper to English are: /dʒ/, /ɹ/, /θ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ð/, /ŋ/, /l/, /ʒ/, /r/, /l/, and /h/. French speakers of English as foreign language will necessarily have difficulties producing the sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue (MT). They may attempt to erroneously produce these sounds or transfer the wrong ones from their MT. To better teach the English phonemes to French students who are learning English as foreign language it is necessary to systematically compared the phonemes of the two languages to identify the differences and similarities in order to focus more on differences although similarities should not be completely

discarded. In the same way native speakers of English who are learning French as foreign language could also have difficulties producing, /ɲ/, /ʀ/, and /y/. It becomes necessary and relevant to make a systematic comparison between learners L1 and L2 for better learning results.

Hence, the research questions of the current study are answered. It is apparent that language teachers still use contrastive analysis with respect to its traditional view today because it appears to be relevant in predicting and identifying learning difficulties to ultimately addressing them. Also, to answer how CA can still be believed to be relevant in the 21st century relies on language teaching and learning factors. The recurrent interferences between learners first language and foreign language is one factor that supports the strong version of CAH according to which different items in the two languages being constitute learning difficulties. Here, CA is still necessary in identifying areas of difficulties in order to solve them. Another factor is to trace learners' errors that are likely to derive from their L1. Here too, the weak version of CAH, the explanatory view, is accountable. This is supported by E. Namazian Dost (Ibid) when traces L2 learners from their L1 by arguing that syntactic errors exist among Persians learners of English as non-native language due to "(a) the difference between the mother tongue and the target language, and (b) mother tongue interference".

Therefore, the relevance of CA should not be ignored; and E. Namazian Dost (2017) to support that although previous studied showed the limitation of CAH with regards its inadequacy in predicting transfer errors that learners will make, it cannot be easily denied for such interference are recurrent and can explain difficulties. Also, More investigations on the current use of CA in studies could help us better support its relevance in the 21st century and if need be reconsider it in second and foreign language teaching.

Conclusion

To conclude, contrastive analysis has been used in the 1960's for pedagogical purposes. It is believed to be necessary in second or foreign language teaching (Lado, 1957). However, in the 1970's many linguists and language teachers have proven the irrelevance of CA in SLA (J. W. Oller and S. M. Ziahosseiny 1970), A. Hughes (1980), R. Wardhaugh (1970), and R. Whitman and K. Jackson (1072). Despite these criticisms towards CA, it has still been used nowadays in second or foreign language teaching environment (M. K. Kambou 2001), (A. K. Kadaruddin, 2015). If CA is still used today, there might be something relevant about it that we should not ignore. M. J. Tajareh (2015) supports that despite the ongoing criticism, "contrastive analysis still remains a useful tool in the search for potential sources of trouble in foreign language learning" (p.1112). He adds that "CA cannot be overlooked in syllabus design and it is a valuable source of information for the purposes of translation and interpretation" (p. 1112). This is further supported by foreign language learning interferences that can be predicted and prevented via the traditional approach of contrastive analysis.

Therefore, CA is and remains a valid concept in second or foreign language teaching and acquisition. Although it may have some shortcomings as critics have pointed it out, it should not be rejected completely. Some new orientations could be done to improve CA or it could be used with different approaches.

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