

Second language self-monitoring behavior

What this research was about and why it is important

The purpose of this study was to investigate how well second language (L2) speakers can monitor their own speech when they perform two different types of tasks. Sixty-six female L2 learners of English took part in the study, and they performed two speaking tasks under two different task conditions. In the first task condition, they were asked to narrate a story based on a picture, while in the second task condition, they had to do the same while also doing another task. The researchers used several different methods to analyze the data and found that the more proficient the learners were in English, the better they were at monitoring their speech. The results also showed that the learners made more mistakes when they were doing two tasks at once, which suggests that it is more difficult to monitor your speech when you are doing multiple tasks. These findings are important for understanding how people learn and use a second language, and they provide insights into the cognitive processes involved in monitoring speech.

What the researchers did:

- The researchers investigated the language skills of 66 female university students from Saudi Arabia who were learning English as a second language.
- They looked at the effects of different tasks and the level of the students' English proficiency on their ability to self-monitor (i.e., checking utterances before and after production) their own language use.
- They used an Elicited Imitation Test (i.e., repeating sentences with increasing number of syllables) to measure the students' language proficiency and oral narrative picture prompts to elicit language samples.
- The prompts were designed to have similar cognitive demands, and participants were randomly assigned to complete either a single-task or dual-task condition.
- The dual-task condition involved participants responding to bubbles with nouns that appeared on the computer screen while they were narrating a story.

What the researchers found:

- The researchers found that learners who were more proficient in their second language produced fewer mistakes and disfluencies than those who were less proficient.
- The more proficient learners were also better at identifying and correcting their mistakes.
- They did not find evidence to support the idea that disfluencies in speech are necessarily linked to self-monitoring.

Things to consider:

- The researchers suggest that more research is needed to better understand the different processes involved in second language speech production.
- The researchers suggest that future studies should include more diverse participants and investigate different types of errors and how they relate to self-monitoring.
- They also suggest examining how the timing and execution of secondary tasks affect self-monitoring.

Material, data, open access article: N/A

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