L2-FL Interference at the Lexical Retrieval Level as Triggered by Sociocultural Implications

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ABSTRACT:

This research paper investigates foreign language (FL) interference at the level of lexical retrieval within Second Language (L2) speech, with a particular focus on the phenomenon of tip-of-the-tongue (TOT) state that occurs when FL vocabulary is incorporated into L2 utterances. Sociocultural connections with the FL are likely to incur deeper psychological engagement, particularly in informal contexts, resulting in the unconscious integration of FL lexicon into L2 speech acts. A descriptive analytical method is adopted to prove the study's hypotheses by reviewing previous studies to investigate the sociocultural factors that influence the emergence of FL in L2 utterances characterized by TOT states. Adopting Lantolf's study, which incorporates Sociocultural Theory (SCT) into cognitive linguistics, the paper frames Lantolf's SCT within the context of FL rather than traditionally the Second Language (L2). The findings indicate that while the first language (L1) remains relatively stable, L2 is susceptible to FL interference due to sociocultural factors rather than purely linguistic ones. It is not the aim of this study to explore the causes of TOTs or the nature of their occurrence from a scientific perspective, as this would require conducting experimental and/or neuroimaging studies. Instead, the TOT phenomenon is utilized here to provide insights into lexical access and retrieval in L2, influenced by FL sociocultural connections.

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1. Introduction

The term "interference" comes from the Latin words "inter" (between) and "ferens"/"ferentis" (carrier, [transferring]) (Adamchik, 2006)", as cited in (Jafarova, 2020, p.393), further referring to the problem of interference -within the framework of language contacts, as, "…a violation by a bilingual (a person who speaks two languages) of the norms and rules of the relationship between two contacting languages (Alimov, 2005)." This paper refers to lexical interference as the misplacement of lexical items in a specific language utterance, where they are used as a fait accompli choice due to difficulties or delays in retrieving the targeted words from another language. During lexical interference, the vocabulary of one language temporarily overrides that of another within a particular speech situation. This phenomenon often occurs in relation to bi- or multilingual individuals, where words from one language may spontaneously be replaced by words in another, leading to errors in speech, writing, translation, or comprehension. Lugovets, as cited in (Jafarova, 2020, p.393), emphasizes the fact that, "in order to overcome the negative impact of inter-lingual lexical interference, it is necessary to periodically analyze the lexical units of the native and studied languages."

On the other hand, lexical retrieval can be defined as a person's ability to access the lexical and phonological representation of a concept in the respective language within an appropriate timeframe and manner. This concept is crucial in discussions regarding the challenges related to losing access to the lexical source when a bilingual or multilingual speaker urgently needs a word. For bilingual individuals, words from their first language (L1) are likely to emerge as

replacements for a second language (L2) utterance, manifesting as a Tip-of-the-Tongue (TOT) or serving as a temporary substitute until the appropriate L2 word is recalled. Considering the sociocultural influences on linguistic attitudes, this study explores the interference of foreign language (FL) in L2 speaking contexts. Consequently, this paper focuses on the sociocultural aspects of speech situations that integrate FL lexis into L2 utterances, particularly in instances of Tip-of-the-Tongue (TOT) experiences. Additionally, de Bot's (2012, 91) approach, based on Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), also addresses "the question of how the addition of another language impacts languages acquired earlier".

In the same respect, Manchon et. al (2007, p.150) state that, "Lexical retrieval is an essential process in fluent and efficient native language (L1) and second language (L2) oral and written productive language use", further referring to the lexical retrieval processes as, " (including both individual words and multiword items. Sinclair, 2004, p.281) needed to express one´s intended meaning in language production activity." The present study uses the findings of previous research that emphasize the presence of TOTs in bilinguals, to prove their occurrence in multilingual speech acts based on the fact that the sociocultural repercussions of the speech event are likely to influence the resulted utterance in a way or another. Lantolf's Sociocultural Theory that proves the impact of the sociocultural ties on L2 learning, is also adopted to prove the impact of the same ties on FL use and processing. Lantolf (2006, p.67), proposes that the study of how L2 learners internalize and develop the capacity to use conceptual and associated linguistic knowledge should move to the forefront of SCT L2 research and argues that a productive way of realizing this agenda is through the union of SCT and cognitive linguistics. To prove the same, a reference to the theories of complexity that address cognitive processes in human beings is deemed indispensable; therefore, de Bot's (2012) approach that is based on a Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) is also used to examine the ways in which the languages acquired later affect those learned, or otherwise acquired, earlier. In justifying the increasingly intensive extrapolation of such mathematical theories to cognitive domains, Ibanez (2007, p.53) proposes that, "the brain is the most complex organ that exists", further citing (Jirsa, Friedrich, & Haken, 1995), who postulate that, "Some parts of neurons, such as the Golgi complex (Check, 2002) as well as each neuron can be understood as a complex system".

2.   Limitations of the Study

The study investigates TOTs in average-aged multilingual groups with no diagnosed cases of any disorders that influence language use, since in individuals of older age, "…all connections throughout the lexical system are hypothesized to weaken (Burke et al., 1991), (cf. Gollan, & Acenas, 2004, p.247). Brown and McNeil (1966) define the "tip of the tongue" (TOT) phenomenon as, "a state in which one cannot quite recall a familiar word but can recall words of similar form and meaning." In the same respect, (Rogers & Monsell, 1995), suggest that older adults experience more frequent TOT states due to cognitive decline, but TOT experiences can also be influenced by anxiety or cognitive load. TOT states are, therefore, associated with certain types of memory retrieval tasks, showing that they're more frequent during tasks requiring access to specific names or uncommon words in one of the languages of a bi- or multilingual speaker.

2.2 Research Questions
(a) What makes the FL more influential over L2 system?
(b) What is the extent of the FL interference in L2 utterances?
(c) What is the nature of the TOT state in L2 utterances?

Based on these research questions, the study aims to relate the TOT cases to sociocultural factors that are identified by the language learning social or personal impulses; or the personal relationship in between the speech participants in given multilingual contexts.

3.   Literature Review

It's argued that, "lexical access (the retrieval of words from the mental lexicon) proceeds in two stages: we first retrieve the syntactic word or "lemma" (information about part of speech, gender, inflectional class, etc.), and only in a second step we retrieve the phonological word, the actual spoken phonetic content", according to (Levelt, Roelofs and Meyer, 1999, p.3), as cited in (Condret-Santi, 2013, p.314). Referring to complaints pertaining to the human memory's functioning, "the difficulty in finding words is particularly familiar", as emphasized by Condret-Santi (2013, p.314). Moreover, "Sometimes we cannot retrieve a word although we may know its syntactic category, grammatical gender, and syllable structure", as Behrens (2000, p.24) postulates.

In the same vein, Brown and McNeill (1966, p.325) emphasized that the TOT state "involves a failure to recall a word of which one has knowledge". Cases of TOT here, are associated with sociocultural, rather than merely psychological factors in multilingual situations. "Most TOT states are assumed to occur with low frequency words and words that have not been used recently (Brown & McNeill, 1966; Reason & Lucas, 1984), as cited in (Ecke & Garrett, 1998, p.158). Ecke & Garrett (1998, p.158), further emphasize that, "TOT states also frequently arise with FL words, and this fact has potential for both the study of FL vocabulary acquisition and for theories of lexical representation and retrieval." Moreover, Weltens & Grendel (1993), (cf. Ecke & Garrett,1998, p.159), propose that, "Failures of FL word recall are also frequently observed in cases of FL attrition after a longer period of non- or infrequent FL use". On the other hand, Gollan and Acenas (2004, p.246) state that, "The predicted effects of cognate status on bilingual TOTs depend on the locus of retrieval failure in models of the TOT state." Brown and McNeill (1966) first documented TOT, proposing that it results from incomplete activation of lexical entries in the mental lexicon. Conversely, the over activation of a language, particularly in a relatively intimate sociocultural context, is likely to project that particular language to dominate the speaker's utterances, though being in use of a different linguistic code.

4.   Discussion

4.1 Language Attrition and Lexical Retrieval

Ecke and Hall (2013) define 'language attrition' in their study as "the reduction or simplification of language systems and/or the impairment of access to them" (p.735). This phenomenon is considered a normal and often unavoidable aspect of language development throughout the lifespan of bilingual or multilingual individuals. According to De Bot (2007), as cited in Ecke and Hall (2013, p. 735), significant life events such as studying abroad or migration can profoundly influence how individuals develop and use their language skills. Additionally, major life events, such as close sociocultural connections with family members (like a spouse or parent), friends, or colleagues who are also bilingual or multilingual, may exert an even greater impact on language usage and attrition.

Research indicates that monolingual speakers experience TOT moments approximately once a week in natural contexts and in about 10% to 20% of attempts to retrieve low-frequency words in laboratory situations (R. Brown & McNeill, 1966; for reviews, see A. S. Brown, 1991; Schwartz, 1999, as cited in (Gollan & Acenas, 2004, p. 246). Individuals with stronger sociocultural bonds are likely to experience TOTs more frequently than those with typical connections. This notion is supported by Goral et al. (2006, p. 235), who note that when multilingual speakers struggle to produce a word they know during a conversation, they often manage to retrieve that word in an alternate language. This reliance on foreign language (FL) terms can act as a shortcut for lexical retrieval.

Utilizing words within sociocultural contexts enhances the strength of lexical connections associated with that context. Friedmann et al. (2013, p. 3) highlight that the phonological output lexicon is structured by word frequency, indicating that frequently used words are more easily accessed than those that are less common. Thus, incorporating frequency into sociocultural interactions with a foreign language is likely to facilitate quicker access to foreign language (FL) vocabulary compared to second language (L2) lexicon.

4.2 de Bot's Interconnected Nature of Language Proficiency and Cognition

In his exploration of language, de Bot (2012) argues that resources—both internal and external—form a dynamic and interconnected structure. Additionally, he highlights that languages function as part of an integrated cognitive system rather than as isolated entities; thus, alterations in one language can affect others, although the precise direction of these changes may be unpredictable (p. 91). Furthermore, de Bot emphasizes the need for examining multilingual development similarly, noting a significant gap in our understanding of how different languages influence one another over time (p. 90). He also contends that, "In a dynamic approach, the assumed invariance of representations is highly problematic because every use of a word, expression, or construction will have an impact on the way it is represented in the brain", according to de Bot (2012, p. 87), as each instance of using a word or expression can alter its neural representation.

It has been asserted by de Bot (2012, p. 91) that, "Knowing more languages implies having more, and more varied, cognitive routines that can be associated with the use of different languages", adding that, "Research on the development of multiple languages in multilinguals can shed light on how these languages interact over time and influence each other's development." In the same source, he further states that, "Languages do not act as independent entities in cognition but are part of an integrated system and change in one part of the system has an impact on other parts, though the direction of the development cannot be predicted completely."

4.3 First Language Interference

Interference in monolingual, bilingual or multilingual speech situations often tend to occur due to various reasons. Special psychological factors are not accounted for in this study, yet other Linguistic or sociocultural factors are sought to be investigated. Lado (1957), as cited in (Macau, 2003, p.29) indicates that the topic of first language interference "has had an unusual history in second language acquisition research and practice", since L1, and for so many years, was assumed to stand behind the occurrence of syntactic errors in L2. Many studies later, started to acquit L1 from such charges, particularly in cases of multilinguals, since other more

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influential language use is assumed to exist in such cases. Macau (2003, p.31), further emphasizing that, "...from Celaya's perspective...L1 is not necessarily a bad influence to acquire a foreign language", adding that, "It is valuable to put emphasis on transfers as students will have points of reference to develop their strategies." In this way, the influence of L1 on FL is positively perceived by Macau, as it enhances the learning strategies of that foreign language in question.

4.4 Second Language Interference

Influence of L2 on L1 is probably investigated in the cases of Code-switching and code-mixing, cases of inter-lingual interference that usually take place in speech events where bi- or multilinguals interact. In investigating the causes behind the occurrence of code-switching and/or code-mixing, it can be found- in a way or another- pertaining to the cases of TOTs, particularly when TOTs' occurrence is not incurred by any sort of mental or psychological disorder. Using L1, L2 and/or L3, in speech acts by bi- or multilinguals is naturally susceptible to TOTs, and, or any other type of languages' interference. Since a human brain processes languages using the same memory, then that memory is prone to be affected by a number of internal and/or external factors, one of them is the sociocultural context, as this study seeks to prove.

4.5 Foreign Language Interference

In ordinary (non-learning) speech situations where the interference of any language over the other at the level of lexical retrieval occurs, the influence of the language with a more dominant sociocultural connection is likely to supersede that of the other/s. FL influence is perceived here as the strongest for a number of reasons, including the facts that the FL is newly learnt (following L1 and L2); learnt based on an emerging purpose of desire, used within new and more sophisticated sociocultural connections. L1 interference in L2 or other FLs can take on various forms starting from phonological, into syntactic and lexical. In between, cultural nuances are likely to erupt creating a case of inter-linguality. L1 remains as a steady lexifier in L2 learning settings, since learners solve L2 lexical delay with L1 vocabulary, adopting a strategy of direct translation in order to help in conveying the targeted message. Such interlingualism is not always positively looked at, as it represents a learning deficiency of L2 or the FL.

4.6 Instances of possible FL Effects on L2 Speech Situations

Indeed, sociocultural factors can significantly impact which language dominates in various speech contexts, potentially leading to instances of code-switching, code-mixing, or tip-of-the-tongue (TOT) states. To further illustrate the possible effects of FL interference on L2 speech, this section presents a few examples observed in multilingual speakers, highlighting the diverse ways in which social, individual, and cultural associations can manifest in language production. The 'lexical interference' instances (as shown in Table 1.) were taken from three of my multilingual colleagues, and from myself, indicating various social, individual and cultural associations that embark FL's impact on L2 processing and use. The TOT states were classified according to the text type or lexical category, such as:

4.6.1 Free (lexical) morphemes

Which refer to the smallest units of meaning in a language that can stand alone in a sentence, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs (e.g. tree, go, tall, easily, …etc.)

4.6.2 Free (functional) morphemes

Which refer to words that solely have a grammatical role or function to perform in a sentence rather than conveying an independent meaning, including conjunctions (e.g. but,

and), prepositions (e.g. at, to), articles (a, an, the), personal pronouns (e.g. I, we), in addition to auxiliary verbs to be, to do and to have, indicating intra-sentential relationships.

4.6.3 Phatic expressions

Which refer to utterances that are primarily used for their communicative value which serves to maintain intact social relationships, rather than embarking a particular semantic denotation. Phaticism includes greetings (e.g. Hello!), expressing care or understanding (e.g. I see, you are right), …etc. Such phatic expressions often serve to foster rapport and maintain continuity of speech flow despite very low or null significance of content.

4.6.4 Exclamatory expressions

Which refer to expressions that are used to communicate emotions or feelings such as surprise and excitement (e.g. Wow! Unbelievable!,…etc.) Exclamatory expressions are often associated with the speaker's emotional response, that is, indeed, influenced by other sociocultural factors, indeed, at the level of the spoken more than in written verbal utterances.

Table 1. Examples of possible L3 Effects on L2 Speech Situations

Utterance type	Scheme 1	Scheme 2
Free lexical morphemes	Ship	Gemi (Turkish)
	Lift	Ascenseur (French)
	Bread	Ekmek (Turkish)- Roti (Malay)
	Ticket	Bilet (Turkish)- Billet (French)
	Grapes	Üzüm (Turkish)
	Fig	Incir (Turkish)
Free functional morphemes	This	Bu (Turkish)
	Very	Çok (Turkish)
Phatic expressions	How are you?	Ca va? (French)
Exclamatory expressions	There it is!	Voila! (French)
	No way!	Yok artik! (Turkish)
	Unbelievable!	Yapma ya! (Turkish)
	Impossible!	Öyle bir dünya yok! (Turkish)

4.7 Foreign Language Interference in Translation

"Psycholinguistic research into language production—the process of translating thoughts into speech—has long been associated with connectionist models", according to Dell et. al (1999, p. 517), who additionally assert that, "Spreading activation models of lexical access in production represent some of the earliest applications of connectionist ideas to psycholinguistic data (e.g., Dell & Reich, 1977; Harley, 1984; MacKay, 1982; Stemberger, 1985)." In fact, cross-linguistic effect in bi- and multilingual speech acts is likely to occur due to the complicated process of processing multiple languages in a single human brain. Individuals, with myriads of social experiences and various cultural backgrounds and diverse lifespans, are prone to encounter temporary delay, or worse, that a particular lexical item, in a particular speech situation, remains out of reach.

Sociocultural contexts influence not only the mental or the psychological wellbeing of an individual, but they also affect the linguistic behavior and patterns of speech. Some resort to code switching in severe cases of language delay, others intermittently stumble in a few words that lag behind. The use of the recently learnt language, if a particular sociocultural factor initiated that learning, it is expected to have a more lasting linguistic effect over an individual's

utterances. Multilingual translators, are also prone to such a state of lexical retrieval delay or TOTs. In the same vein, Ecke (2001, p.90), states that,

> "A word translation task served to elicit L3 word productions. Of particular interest for analysis were the failures of lexical retrieval, including incomplete and incorrect word recall. Fragmentary target word knowledge, associations, and non-target recall responses were analysed with respect to their similarity to the target word and their source language. It was expected that associates and partially recalled attributes, found to be similar to the target, would point to parameters potentially relevant to lexical organisation, storage and retrieval."

The use of L3 morphemes is assumed here to be more expressive, particularly modifiers, when a speaker is assumed to have a sociocultural connection with L3. The language of your family and friends are likely to be more psychologically influential in the stage of word retrieval.

4.7.1 Cognate Effect in translation: sociocultural effects during convergence into L2 in multilingual contexts

The cognate effect refers to the unintentional substitution of a lexical item from a third language (L3) for one from a second language (L2) due to phonological or morphological similarities. This phenomenon may occur during moments of familiarity or in tip-of-the-tongue (TOT) situations, influenced by sociocultural motivations behind the speaker's learning and use of the L3. Stronger sociocultural ties with L3 can increase its influence in L2 speech contexts. Highlighting TOT cases by translators, Gollan, & Acenas (2004, p.247) explain that, "Understanding this prediction first requires an account of cognate effects in bilingual language production". Costa et al. (2000), cf(Gollan, & Acenas, 2004), provide the most explicit account of cognate effects in language production." In the same source, Gollan, & Acenas further refer to the same study in which it's demonstrated that, "…bilinguals name pictures with cognate names more quickly relative to pictures with non-cognate names…".

In this way, cognates are assumed to be a reason behind the occurrence of TOT cases because of the similarity in phonological forms between that of the delayed word and of the one used in its place. Cognate effect is likely to arise in translation between languages of similar, i.e. not identical, lexical and/or phonological forms. The cognate effect in translation, then, refers to the phenomenon where a multilingual translator encounters difficulty in recognizing or retrieving words of dissimilar phonological and/or orthographical form and meaning, i.e. 'cognates', from L1 into L2. Similarity or dissimilarity between the translator's L2 and L3 assumes the presence of cognate and non-cognate effect. Cognates often share a common origin, that's why they are more easily retrieved in various inter-lingual settings. In contrast, non-cognates, such as the Turkish word "gemi" and the English word "ship," do not share form or meaning, and thus do not benefit from this effect. Because they do not have similar orthographic, phonetic, or semantic features, non-cognates generally require more cognitive effort to process compared to cognates. Thus, the cognate effect highlights the advantage in processing speed and accuracy for words that are similar across languages.

4.8 Sociocultural Associations in Language Acquisition (LA)

Lantolf (2006, p.68) explains that in his Sociocultural theory and L2, he concentrated on two areas that he believed important - especially with regard to future research, i.e. "L2 mediation and the internalization of L2s." In identifying these particular two areas, Lantolf stated that

they are not, indeed, the "only fruitful areas of research in SCT", drawing the attention to the promising SCT research that builds upon the principles of the theory and extends them to L2 instruction, listing: "Ferreira, 2005; Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Negueruela, 2003; Negueruela & Lantolf, in press; Poehner, 2005; Poehner & Lantolf, 2005)."

The use of FL words and expressions in L2 context is assumed to have sociocultural associations that are incurred by the relationship between the speaker and the other speech participants or the factors that lie behind learning and/or using that particular L3. Research indicates that the second language (L2), specifically English, serves as a significant source of cross-lexical influence (Davila, G., 2016, p. 57). While cross-linguistic influence (CLI) has traditionally focused on lexical transfer between languages, it is noted that few studies have investigated how learners select specific words in the target language (TL) and the degree to which their choices are affected by previously learned languages (see Jarvis, 2000; Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008), according to Lindqvist (2012, p. 255).

5. L2-FL Cognition Conflict Hypothesis

Assuming the L3 dominance over languages acquired earlier due to stronger sociocultural factors such as identity construction, social integration, cultural exposure, and linguistic attitudes, this paper proposes that language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a crucial marker of cultural affiliation and personal identity. In this way, it is likely to interfere linguistically in a language or languages acquired earlier, since it's assumed to have a stronger psychological and sociocultural associations with the speaker. It is also proposed here that for many multilinguals, the choice of a foreign language often reflects their social and cultural impulses and realities, as influenced by the family background, and/or communal connotations. Social integration significantly shapes language preference, as individuals may gravitate toward a language that facilitates interaction within their social networks. This process is particularly evident among youth, who may adopt an FL that resonates with their peers, enabling them to forge social ties and reinforce their group identity. The present study further emphasizes that in multilingual hybrid identities' context, the choice of a third language embodies individual decisions, social or academic inclinations, and linguistic aspirations of the overall family and community needs. Highlighting the increasing exposure to L3, this, indeed, is proposed here to heighten its dominance amidst increasing interaction in various sociocultural virtual and/or real platforms, leading to what this paper terms as *L2-FL Cognition Conflict Hypothesis.*

6. Conclusion

Accessing L3s through media—such as television, the internet, and varied social platforms, is more widespread than ever. Films, music, literary genres produced in any L3, foster an individual's emotional connections and relevance, thereby increasing its appeal. Economically-motivated, individuals may also tend to prioritize learning a third language as long as it opens wider professional opportunities in relevant domains of knowledge or industry. Some maintains an L3 just as a prestigious social portrait and personal image. Afterall, L3s are likely to override L2s, particularly in contexts where sociocultural connections are more vivid, leading to spontaneous language preferences in varied speech situations. L3 interference in L3 utterances is likely to take place in hybrid speech settings often leading to TOT occurrence. The TOT phenomenon represents a complex research area bridging linguistics, psychology, and neuroscience. Continued investigation is essential to unravel the mechanisms

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behind TOT and to identify and record its volume of frequency, linguistic impact and cultural communicativeness. Insights into TOT triggers further studies on the co-effects of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistic theories that describe what how particular phenomena occurs in multilingual speech types. Vocabulary teaching strategies and the role of practicing word retrieval in fill-in the blank exercises can also be traced by investigating the effect of each language on the other in the user's mind, a matter that alleviates word retrieval challenges.

تداخل اللغة الثانية مع اللغة الأجنبية على مستوى الاسترجاع المعجمي كما هو ناشئ عن التأثيرات الاجتماعية والثقافية

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ملخص البحث:

تتناول هذه الدراسة ظاهرة تداخل اللغة الأجنبية على مستوى الاسترجاع المعجمي في خطاب اللغة الثانية، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على ظاهرة حالة طرف اللسان التي تحدث عندما يتم إدماج مفردات اللغة الأجنبية في عبارات اللغة الثانية. تفترض الدراسة أن الروابط الاجتماعية الثقافية مع اللغة الأجنبية تؤدي إلى مشاركة نفسية أعمق، خاصة في السياقات غير الرسمية، مما يؤدي إلى التكامل اللاواعي لمفردات اللغة الأجنبية في أفعال الكلام في اللغة الثانية. لدعم هذه الفرضية، تم استخدام نهج مختلط الأساليب، والذي تضمن مراجعة للدراسات السابقة التي توضح العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية التي تؤثر على بروز ألفاظ وعبارات اللغة الأجنبية في سياقات الحديث باللغة الثانية، الأمر الذي يعرف بحالات طرف اللسان. بناءً على دراسة لانتولف، التي تدمج النظرية الاجتماعية والثقافية في اللغويات المعرفية، تضع الورقة إطارًا لنظرية طرف اللسان الخاصة بلانتولف في سياق اللغة الأجنبية وليس اللغة الثانية تقليديًا. تشير النتائج إلى أنه في حين تظل اللغة الأولى (L1) مستقرة نسبيًا، فإن اللغة الثانية عرضة لتداخل اللغة الأجنبية بسبب العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية وليس العوامل اللغوية البحتة. ليس الهدف من هذه الدراسة استكشاف أسباب اضطرابات اللغة الأجنبية أو طبيعة حدوثها من منظور علمي، لأن هذا يتطلب إجراء دراسات تجريبية و/أو تصوير عصبي. بدلاً من ذلك، يتم استخدام ظاهرة اضطرابات اللغة الأجنبية هنا لتوفير رؤى حول الوصول المعجمي والاسترجاع في اللغة الثانية، المتأثرة باللغة الأجنبية، بناءً على الروابط الاجتماعية والثقافية.