

## **The Negative Role of Native Language (L1) on Second Language Acquisition A Comprehensive Comparison of Chinese and Shona Language.**

**Hamadziripi Etheldredah Vimbayi., Musona Muchinei,**

*Department of Psychology Renmin University of China ,59 Zhongguancun Street,Beijing,China  
Hebei University ,Hebei, China*

*Corresponding Author; Hamadziripi Etheldredah Vimbayi*

---

**ABSTRACT:** *Second language learning is affected by many factors and Native language is one of the most important factor affecting second language acquisition. The spread of Chinese as a second language globally has led to the need for researchers to pay attention to the process of its acquisition. The students at the University of Zimbabwe are also not an exception. They have been studying Chinese for several years Shona being the majority of the students' mother/native language. Researchers in the field of second language acquisition, have done various studies including the relationship between native language and the acquisition of second language, and have put forward many theories. Anyone who begins learning new knowledge or skills tend to make use of their original cognitive structure, including L1 knowledge and abstract thinking ability learned through L1, which constitute the original cognitive structure of SLA. Learners learning L2 will consciously or unconsciously make use of their former information to think, analyses, compare and comprehend, so they will use the experience gained in the process of acquiring L1 to direct them to master a new language. Therefore a clear understanding of the role of L1 in the acquisition of a second language is of great significance. Following this logic, this paper intends to use the theory of language transfer to make a comprehensive discussion of this issue, in order to explore the influence of native language on second language acquisition, and construct a theoretical framework to overcome the interference of L1.*

**KEY WORDS:** *native language ; second language acquisition ; transfer; comparative analysis; interference*

---

Date of Submission: 20-02-2019

Date of acceptance: 05-03-2019

---

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The process and of second language acquisition is influenced by many factors. According to (Wang, 2001) there are two main factors: one is emotion, and the other is native language. For the majority of Zimbabwean students studying Chinese, Shona is their native language and English is their formal language. These languages are different from Chinese in different aspects. Most students at the University of Zimbabwe regard the study of Chinese as a very difficult process since Chinese is viewed as one of the most difficult languages in the world. This is mainly due to the fact that Chinese language, unlike their mother language, is a tonal language which uses characters; which is a huge difference from the alphabet they are accustomed to. There are also many differences between the two languages. This makes learning Chinese difficult. Philosophers observed that "a literate Chinese student must spend half his life in acquiring a thorough knowledge of Chinese" (Rosenberg, 1971). Learning is a continuous process, and in this process any learning is based on the knowledge, experience and cognitive structure of learners, acquired action skills, acquired acquisition attitude and so on. The new learning process and the results will be influenced by the original knowledge and experience, skills, attitude and learning strategies of learners. This interaction between the old and new knowledge in learning is the transfer of learning.

There is interaction between the process of second language acquisition and the learners' mother language. If there are differences between the two languages there is bound to be transference or interference to the acquisition process. These differences influence the acquisition process through transfer which is both negative and positive transference and interference. According to (Rod, 1985:29): "It was assumed that where there are differences between the first language (thereafter L1) and the second language (thereafter L2), the learner's L1 knowledge would interfere with L2, and where the L1 and L2 were similar, the L1 would actively aid L2 learning. The process that was held responsible for this was called Language transfer. In the case of similarities between the L1 and L2 it functioned positively, while in the case of differences it functioned negatively."

Based on this interaction, this paper aims to base on the relationship between the native/mother language and the second language acquisition, to explore the influence of mother tongue on second language acquisition, in order to assist students reduce the transfer of native language onto second language learning and put forward practical strategies by constructing a theoretical framework to overcome the interference of the native language.

### **1.1 The concept of Native and Second language**

Native language and mother tongue are commonly referred to as the first language (L1). Mother tongue is the kind of language that children begin to acquire and master shortly after they are born. In most cases, the first language (L1) is the mother tongue, but there are also some people whose first language is not their mother tongue, such as the children of overseas Zimbabweans in English-speaking countries, whose first language may be English, but their mother language is Shona. Second Language refers to a kind of language which is learned after acquiring the first language. It can be divided into two parts: the first part, is when a second language is learned in the target language environment, for example Zimbabweans in China learning Chinese that is second language acquisition. When learnt in a non-target language environment it is called a foreign language. For example, Zimbabweans in Zimbabwe learning Chinese they acquire a foreign language. At present, in the field of second language acquisition, most researchers do not distinguish between foreign language and second language acquisition, it is generally referred to as second language.

#### **1.1.2 Differences between "Acquisition" and "Learning"**

The first linguist to differentiate these terms is (Krashen, 1988) and gives them different meanings to explain the phenomenon of second language learning. In his opinion, a second language can also be acquired in the same way that children acquire their mother tongue. "Learning" refers to consciously learning language in a regular classroom and school environment, focusing on mastering the form of language, using time and often thinking of the rules learned. The acquired knowledge is mainly used to initiate the rational understanding of language and the production of language, while the learnt knowledge can only monitor the understanding and production. According to (Krashen, 1988) being fluent in second language is a result of using the "acquired" language system. Only language acquisition can directly promote the development of second language competence, and is the production mechanism when people use language. Consciously "learnt" language knowledge can only be used for monitoring, not as part of the language itself. His distinction between "acquisition" and "learning" is reasonable, but they are absolutely not two independent and irrelevant processes. In fact, the two processes will be intertwined and cannot be completely separated. There are also conscious activities in "acquisition" and unconscious actions in "learning". "After a period of time, "learning" knowledge can also be in the same position as "acquisition" in being in the "unconscious" state like the "acquired" knowledge, underestimating this knowledge is tantamount to denying the possibility of learning first language in a classroom situation. (Liu, 1996)

#### **1.1.3 Comparison between Native Language Acquisition and Second Language Acquisition.**

First language acquisition and Second language acquisition share many common characteristics. (1) All learners must have the physiological conditions for acquiring language, such as sound speech organs. (2) All learners must have an environment for language acquisition. That is to say Language acquisition depends on the environment in which it's being acquired. Generally, there are two environments: one is the social environment of the target language (learning in the target language country); the other is the classroom environment (learning in the non-target language country). Whether acquiring the mother tongue or the second language, there must be three major factors (phonics, vocabulary and grammar) in acquiring the language, as well as its language rules and culture. There are also obvious differences between language acquisition and second language acquisition:

- (1) The age of learners is different. Native language learners are usually young children and second language learners are adults.
- (2) The learning process is different: when learning native language, learners begin not with monosyllables but with phonetic combinations, while when adults learn a foreign language they start from monosyllables; when learning vocabulary, children first build a connection between "harmony" and "meaning" and then establish the relationship between sound, meaning and morphology when they start going to school. At the same time, they establish the connection of sound, form and meaning of new words. When learning grammar, without explanation or mechanical exercises, children automatically move from holophrasis to telegraphic sentences and then from complete sentences to complex sentences. When adults learn a second language they learn with explanations, exercises and knowingly progress, and they don't start from holophrasis but instead learn complete sentences from the beginning.
- (3) Different learning environments and learning methods: first language is acquired naturally from; family, the streets, the whole society is the environment in which children acquire their first language. In contrast, most second language learners are learning in non target language environment, the language environment is really pitiful,

learners get very little time to listen to the target language there's limited classroom time, and no time for real communication language activities, but for the practice in class which is "unreal communication". In terms of learning methods, there are usually no formal teachers in the first language acquisition, and parents never systematically teach their children and do not correct pronunciation or grammatical errors. Second language learning usually relies on formal classroom teaching, including textbooks, teachers, fixed learning time, homework, examinations, vocabulary and grammar, and learning content is arranged in order according to the syllabus. [ 3 ]

## **II. .THE DUAL ROLE OF NATIVE LANGUAGE IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

The influence of mother tongue on second language acquisition is mainly realized through language transfer, which mainly refers to the transfer of mother tongue habits onto the second language. This transfer of mother tongue habits may be positive or negative. When the language rules of the mother tongue are the same as the target language rules, transfer can be a positive; if there are differences between mother tongue and target language, transfer is mostly negative. According to (Osgood, 1949); cross- language transfer can be defined based on specific common elements. At the most fundamental level, the theory predicts that the learning of language A facilitates the learning of language B if: a) the two languages share a linguistic feature, such as a particular phoneme or a particular phonological structure, and b) that particular linguistic feature is more prominent or complicated in language A than in language B. Positive transfer is unlikely to occur if neither or only one of the conditions are met; instead, negative transfer would occur, especially in the assessment of the less- dominant language, when the dominant language has a simpler or less salient linguistic feature ( Bialystok, Majumder, & Martin, 2003; Dupoux, Kakehi, Hirose, Pallier, & Mehler, 1999). Positive transfer refers to the transfer of habits that are beneficial to learning, which occur when the mother tongue has the same form as the second language. The similarities between native and target language are easy for learners to master. Negative transfer is also called disturbance or interference , which is due to the negative effect of using mother tongue knowledge to learn a second language. It interferes with the learning of a new language. In short, positive transfer of language plays a positive role in learning foreign languages, while negative transfer plays a negative role.

### **2.1 The interference of mother tongue on second language acquisition**

#### **2.1.1. Negative transfer of mother tongue at phonetic level**

Shona and Chinese belong to two different phyla, and the difference is greater than that of languages in the same family. According to contrastive analysis theories , this will lead to the negative transfer of mother tongue in learning.

When Zimbabwean learners learn Chinese, the negative transfer of Shona in the aspect of pronunciation is mainly in the following aspects. 1) the phoneme systems of Shona and Chinese are quite different. There are hardly any phonemes with exactly the same pronunciation in both languages. There are almost no phonemes with exactly the same pronunciation between the two languages. Although some phonemes are similar, their pronunciation positions are slightly different, which can easily lead to negative transfer. Because the number and combination of phonemes are not exactly the same it is difficult for Shona learners to master Chinese pronunciation completely.

For example, [b], [d] and [g] these three consonants in Shona are silent voiced consonants and can be anywhere in a word, but in Chinese they are voiceless consonants pronounced without breathing. Many students pronounce words ending with [b], [d] or [g] consonants poorly which is negative transfer.

Secondly, the differences in syllable structure between Shona and Chinese can easily lead to the negative transfer of Shona phonetics. Previous studies have found same results about negative transfer. (He, 1997) points out that the differences in syllable structure between English and Chinese are also prone to lead to the negative transfer of Chinese phonetics for Chinese students learning English. This is also relevant to Shona students. (1) There are no consonant clusters in Chinese and Shona has consonant clusters. There is always a vowel between the Chinese consonants. Therefore, when reading Chinese consonants with a vowel students tend to omit the vowel in the middle. (2) Consonants are often used as suffixes in Shona while Chinese except (n) (ng) vowels are used as suffix. This prompts students to habitually add a consonant after the Chinese vowel. (3) In Shona , it's common that phonemes can appear before a consonant but in Chinese that order doesn't exist, when pronouncing words in Chinese students tend to add phonemes where they are not required which alters the pronunciation of words. (4) nasal sounds are also where students face difficulties

Thirdly, it's not only the differences in phonemes and syllables between Shona and Chinese that will lead to negative transfer of Shona but also differences in language pronunciation may also lead to learning difficulties, because in daily life, people usually do not pronounce one syllable with one morpheme, but

communicate with each other in the form of phrases and sentences. The Chinese syllable is a unit (word) with a single syllable in the language flow, people often pronounce each word because Chinese syllables are less affected by language flow, and there are few phonological changes. Shona pronunciation flow has many forms, such as assimilation, dissimilation, shortening, ellipsis, reinforcement, continuity and so on. All syllables in Shona end in a vowel. Consonants belong to the next syllable. For example, mangwanani ("morning") is syllabified as ma.ngwa.na.ni; "Zimbabwe" is zi.mba.bwe. Each vowel is pronounced separately even if they fall in succession. For example, "Unoenda kupi?" (Where do you go?) is pronounced [u.no.e.nda.ku.pi].

The other challenge for Shona students is the continuous reading. Adjacent words in Shona can be read in conjunction if the first one ends with a supplementary vowel and the last one begins with a vowel but in Chinese that is not the case. This difference in the flow of words can easily lead to difficulties in speaking and listening abilities of Shona students of learning Chinese. When reading Chinese text this difference makes it difficult for students to understand the meaning of the text or to completely misunderstand the contextual meaning. This in turn affects their fluency when speaking Chinese.

Finally, many differences in prosodic features between Shona and Chinese can easily lead to negative transfer of Shona. These prosodic differences are mainly evident in accent, stress, tone, intonation, cadence and rhythm.

Shona is an "intonation language" that mainly relies on intonation to distinguish sentence meanings. Chinese is a "tone language" which distinguishes the meaning of words by tone. It can be divided into rising tone, flat tone, curving tone, falling tone and neutral tone. Tone is an important part of Chinese pronunciation and is pivotal in distinguishing meanings. See Table 1. Shona is an intonation language with two intonations the falling tone and rising which are important in understanding the sentences. The same word sequence is pronounced in different intonations to reflect different meanings. Pronouncing words in flat or rising tone doesn't change the meanings of the words. In addition to the consonants and vowels, each word in Chinese has a tone attached to it that can distinguish or change the meaning of a word. This habit of pronunciation migrates to Chinese, resulting in errors by Shona students when pronouncing the tones in the Chinese language for example, the second tone is very difficult for students. Students end up finding an approximate sound in Shona language to assist them to pronounce. This results in many pronunciation errors. For examples of approximate refer to Table 2. To sum up, the negative transfer from the Shona language leads to difficulties in listening, speaking and fluency to students learning Chinese in Zimbabwe. Only when teachers recognize this the existence of Shona interference can they guide students to avoid negative transfer of Shona and help students master and speak Chinese fluently.

**Table 1.** A summary of Chinese tones.

Tone number	Tone value	Tone pattern	Tone mark
First tone	55	High level tone	ˉ
Second tone	35	rising tone	/
Third tone	214	low-falling-rising tone	ˇ
Fourth tone	51	Falling tone	ˋ

**Table 2.** Approximate of phonics commonly used by Shona students.

CH phonic	Similar or approximate SH phonic
C 词ci 错cuo 参can	Ts -tsika "step on" - tsenga "chew" -tsmaba "letter"
Zh 之zhi 长zhang 住zhu	J - jirs "clothe" jazi "coat" - jeko "sickle"
Z 子zi 租zi 走zou	Dz- dzima "erase" -dzika "get down" -dzika "return"
X 西xi 需xu 学xue	The sound somewhere between "sh" and "s", but closer to "sh" than "s" sh>x<<s
Q 七qi 前qian 去qu	The sound is somewhere between "ch" and "sh" but closer to "ch" than "tz". Ch>q<<ts

Adopted from: Shona-Chinese—Chinese-Shona Dictionary (p xiii)

### 2.1.2 Negative Transfer of Native Language at Lexical Level

Differences in conceptual, connotative and collocational meanings between Shona and Chinese vocabulary may also lead to negative transfer of Shona. Vocabulary is the basic unit of language and communication and it has a rich cultural significance. According to the Lexical Morphological Characteristics of Language Chinese is close to solitary language. Each word is usually composed of a set of morphemes, with a lot of compound words. Shona is more inclined to synthesizers which are characterized by abundant affixes. New words can be generated from inflection and derivation. During inflection in Shona additional affixes represent various grammatical relationships for example numbers, people, physique, etc. Chinese language doesn't have inflections and derivations. Therefore, Chinese beginners, have difficulties with singular and plural, third-person singular, and various verb tense variations.

The collocation habits and the scope of collocation in Chinese and Shona are different. Language collocation habits and scope are influenced by different linguistic features and cultural factors, they both have their own idiomatic expressions. Nida (1969) proposed the theory of equivalent translation. what he referred as "equivalent" included vocabulary equivalence; syntactic equivalence; discourse equivalence and literary style equivalence (Sun Xin:2014). Which he concludes is complicated and leads to negative transfer. For example, in Chinese, "看" "watch" can be matched with "TV, movies, books and magazines, blackboard". In Shona, the verbs "ona", "verenga" and "tarisa" are used respectively. Shona Chinese learners often mistakenly transfer the collocation habits of Shona words to the collocation of Chinese phrases. For example, because of the influence of Shona thinking, they often say inappropriate words such as "kuona munhu" visiting someone they translate it to "看人" in Chinese which changes the meaning. Even though some words may have the same conceptual meaning, its connotation, associative meaning, and cultural meaning may be different. The connotations and meanings of some words given by different ethnic groups are quite different. (Yu, 1994:104) supports this logic by comparing Chinese and English, they state that For example, dogs are usually the negative images of human beings in Chinese, with words such as dog legs (狗腿子), dog battles (狗仗人势), dog and so on whereas in English, dog can have a derogatory meaning for example, lucky dog, to be a top dog, every dog has its day. Shona and Chinese has some phrases like that. To avoid the misunderstanding and errors in communication, when learning Chinese, students should not only learn the basic conceptual meaning of vocabulary, but also understand its cultural meaning. Students should not understand it from their own native language and culture for it results in errors and negative transfer of native language.

Mushangwe (2015) did a comparative study of Chinese and Shona vocabulary and indicated that vocabulary of equivalence of the two languages is complicated. The equivalence can be divided into: equivalent; partially equivalent which leads to a lot of confusion for students. An example of lexicon equivalence problem for discussion. see Table 3.

**Table 3.** Problems of equivalence of nouns

Shona nouns	Chinese nouns
Musha (rural home)	家乡 jiaxiang (home town)

The Shona noun "musha" basically has 3 meanings. Here we will only discuss the meaning of "rural home", which corresponds to "jiaxiang" in Chinese. In the contest of Shona or African Societies at large a "rural home" can not be a "home town". Precisely, it is the present of the word "town" that that makes these two words unequal. This leads to Shona students struggling to understand such words. Problems of equivalence of verbs. Musona & Tahwa (2018), analyzed the phrases of "kama+obj" structure ('kana mombe' and 'kama mukaka') and their literal meaning in Chinese, and found that they don't translate to the intended Chinese meanings. On the same point another example is the following:

Shona nouns	Chinese nouns
Sakura	除草 chuzao

**Table 4.** Problems of equivalence of verbs

"Sakura" is a simple verb meaning "to weed". It is specifically used to describe the "removal of weeds". "Chu" means to "remove/eliminate", "cao" is "grass".

We argue that the Shona verb "sakura" is not exactly equivalent to Chinese compound verb "chucao" (eliminate grass). We think that removing or eliminating grass may not always be weeding. So there



are several problems that can be analyzed: (1) remove/eliminate are very broad terms, and the action is not limited to “grass” only as its object; (2) “cao”(grass) is a broad term only but also other grasses which are. Its actual name is “za cao” (miscellaneous grass), which has not appeared fully because the noun part(cao) was used to form a new compound verb with “chu” in “chucuo”. All these complexities suffice to explain that Chinese and Shona word for “weeding” have equivalence problems.

### 2.1.3 Negative Transfer of Native Language at Grammatical Level

grammatical differences can also lead to negative transfer of mother tongue. Chinese and Shona grammar have distinct differences, and a considerable part of it lead to negative transfer of Shona. The following are the several aspects (1) Comprehensive/synthetic language vs Analytical Language Chinese is an analytic language with no strict morphological changes. It mainly expresses grammatical relations through word order and function words.

Modern Shona, developed from ancient Shona, retains some characteristics of a synthesized language. Compared to Chinese, language order is more flexible and morphological changes are more frequent. This poses some challenges for students learning Chinese, because of the native language influence students often forget the change of form. For example, there is a compulsory relationship between subject and predicate in Shona sentences (subject and predicate must be preserved in people and numbers) and there are specific grammatical means to express this relationship. There is no compulsory relationship between subject and predicate in Chinese sentences. For example, in the Chinese sentence “I”wo”/He”ta”//You”ni”/We”women”/They”tamen” , the predicate verb is”shi” no changes are made. In Shona the equivalent predicate changes. Chinese beginners often make mistakes with these verbs.

(2) Hypotaxis vs Parataxis; According to (Lian, 1993) Chinese emphasizes parataxis, and there is usually no connection between words or clauses. The grammatical meaning and logical relationship are expressed by the meaning of words or clauses. Shona has hypotaxis. The grammatical meaning and logical relationship between words or clauses in sentences are often expressed by linguistic forms such as conjunctions. In Chinese conjunctions in some sentences are not necessary. For instance in a sentence like (i) “我没发牢骚,人们就认为我心满意足了”; which means “Just because I don’t complain people think I’m satisfied”. The conjunction isn’t used in Chinese. In colloquial or informal situations, Chinese usually does not use conjunctions. In colloquial or informal sentences, Chinese usually expresses grammatical meaning and logical relationship through sentence order and meaning of clauses rather than conjunctions. Chinese is not as strict as Shona in the use of conjunctions, Shona learners often learn Chinese according to Shona habits, using conjunctions all the time which doesn’t conform to Chinese norms. The following are more examples of grammatical differences.

1. (wo gei yeye ?nainai mai yifu)  
Ndotengera sekuru **nambuya** hembe
2. N1+prepN2 +adj (Wo **bi** ta gao)  
N1+Adj+prep (ndakareba kumupfura)
3. Ndareba kwazvo kumupfuura  
(wo bi ta ~~hen~~-gao\*)
4. Mwana ane tsika  
(ta **shi** you limao **de** haizi )
5. Ndadya chikafu (I have eaten food)  
(wo **ba** fan chi le) (I **ba** good eaten)

(3) Static vs dynamic Chinese sentences makes use of a lot of verbs and its narrative is dynamic whereas Shona tends to have more nouns and the narrative is static. Su(2000) Students are accustomed to different rules resulting in errors when they are learning Chinese. Therefore, if they are aware of these differences, they can consciously exchange between dynamic and static when they are learning. This is also helpful when writing and translating text in Chinese.

### 2.1.4 Negative Transfer of Native Language at Textual Level

Learner-oriented ideas and thinking patterns are also reflected in the learners’ use of second language to express their thoughts. Shona native speakers often follow a logical way of thinking and reasoning. Text organization patterns are often open-ended and direct. At the beginning of an article, chapter or text they put forward arguments to explain their own views or writing intentions, and have a clear attitude towards themselves. Chinese text writing is more inclined to the Chinese writing mode. They have the habit of circuitous thinking. This difference is also reflected in the organizational structure of the text. Chinese texts are circular and Shona texts are more linear and direct. The beginning of texts are usually from related peripheral events. Writers use euphemisms to express their views. Li (2008) asserts that: the Chinese process of writing

follows a number of turns and the whole discourse develops following a "S" kind of pattern. When reading text written by Shona students learning Chinese the influence of their native language is easily transferred which doesn't conform to the Chinese text writing rules.

#### 2.1.5 The Negative Transfer of Native Language in pragmatics

The lifestyle of a nation always reflects its cultural characteristics. Chinese and Shona societies have major differences in cultural values, customs, communication principles, communication modes, courtesy norms, and so on.

Due to these differences, intercultural communication often encounters difficulties. Shona-Chinese learners often subconsciously apply the cultural rules of their native culture, resulting in the conflict when communication, or greetings, thanks, invitations, taboos and so on. In cross cultural communication if native speakers of Shona are asked questions without scruple it can easily lead to pragmatic problems.

For example, in China, neighbors can greet them each other by saying ; 您买菜去了?"Ni mai cai chu le",in shona "Uri kuenda kunotenga muriwo?" You're going to buy vegetables? Or " 出去了啊?" "Chu qu le ya?" In Shona "Urikuenda kupi?"You're going out?" these are all greetings, not real questions. When Shona students hear these questions they might seem too personal as invasion of privacy because of their native culture influence which might lead to communication problems. These issues are mainly due to negative transfer of native language.

### **III. HOW NATIVE LANGUAGE ADVANCES SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Native language doesn't not only negatively impact on second language learning, but also may enhance through positive transfer. Positive transfer refers to the positive influence of mother tongue on second language learning. Huang (1996) found that similarities between English and Chinese in some grammatical concepts help Chinese students grasp the concepts easily. There are similarities and coincidences between the two languages, which enable learners to use their mother tongue knowledge to advance their second language skills. This does not mean that students do not make mistakes at all. The similarity between Chinese and Shona makes it possible for students to grasp certain concepts easily. There are a few examples of these similarities between Shona and Chinese:

S + V (amai vaenda= mama zou le ) mum has gone  
S+ Vi + Predicate (Ini ndiri mudzizisi=Wo shi yi wei laoshi I am a teacher.  
S + Vi ( + adverbial) Isu tinoshanda nesimba=women nuli gongzuo We work hard.

In short students can benefit from positive transfer, by reducing errors and enhance the learning process. Previous linguistics research in second language acquisition focus on understanding the phenomenon of "native language interference". Selinker(1972)believe that the influence of mother language on the acquisition of second language should not be regarded as interference, but as a cognitive process, a strategy or an intercession. Lu (2002, p.13) suggests ;for learners, their main task is not to overcome the "interference" or "negative transfer" of their mother tongue, but to adopt effective "strategies" or "mediation" means in the cognitive process, so as to grasp the language knowledge and language skills of the target language as soon as possible.

### **IV. COUNTERMEASURES TO ADDRESS THE INFLUENCE OF NATIVE LANGUAGE IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

The hindrance of learner's L1 impedes L2 learning and this interference is a factor which both students and teachers need to address to reduce the negative transfer of L1 and promote positive transfer.

1. According to the theory of second language acquisition, educators should aim to construct an ideal foreign language learning environment; that is to create as natural and and authentic language teaching and learning environment as possible. A real and natural environment, helps learners to transfer their attention from the linguistic form of the language to communication. By providing and creating a lot of material for students to understand the target language, encourage students to not only need read the language materials extensively, but also to participate and communication directly in the second language. The materials can be illustrative, corroborative new and so on to transform the learning experience.

2. Another effective way to overcome interference is by increasing contact hours of language instruction especially in a non target environment. This provides learners with ample time to practice reducing negative transfer interference and errors. to improve the efficiency of students' acquisition of a second language, teachers should provide students with more opportunities to communicate in Chinese, including teachers' making Chinese the language of instruction, teaching and communication in class; teachers' and students' interaction should be in Chinese; encourage students' and peers to communicate in Chinese. Students' communication in the

target language; use of extensive reading and listening material that is in the target language including watching Chinese movies, listening to Chinese music, and so on. Frequent input of target language influences students' cognition as regular use of the 'correct rules of the target language occupy the brain, this suppresses the automated interference of the mother tongue. Through participation and interaction in Chinese students get accustomed to the different rules of the target language, which reduces negative transfer and promotes second language acquisition.

3. Emphasis and focus should be placed on developing and training learners' thinking ability in the foreign language and overcoming the influence of thinking stereotypes on learning. Learning is directly related to thinking, but in the process of learning a second language, it is unavoidable to be influenced by native language mindset. Therefore, teachers should fully understand the difference between L1 and L2 thinking modes and cultivate the ability to think in L2.

When learning a second language students, should learn important factors of the language as they are and remember the points as accurately as possible, to get rid of the influence of native language mindset.

4. Excessively correcting students' mistakes is inadequate. Instead we suggest moderately assisting students to understand the error and correct errors is a more effective teaching method. For adult learners, learning a foreign language is not like learning a new skill or acquiring knowledge from scratch. They have already learnt their native language. Their native language has been deeply ingrained and rooted in their brain. It is a tool for them to communicate. It is a kind of an oriental language, which is impossible and unnecessary to eradicate. Teachers need to understand the errors that emanate from students' mother tongue and moderately help students to reduce these errors. If they excessively over-correct errors it frustrates students' affecting their enthusiasm of learning the second language.

5. The differences between the two languages is a very important factor. On the aspect of language, teachers should teach both cultural and grammatical differences such as connotation and function of greetings, taboos and so on, background of both cultures, understand the characteristics and features, eliminate the negative transfer of native language to second language, and increase the communication competence in second language. For example, when teaching vocabulary to not only instruct students to grasp the conceptual meaning of words, but also require them to understand the cultural meaning of words. The different cultural meaning of vocabulary is difficult for language learners to grasp. When teaching, we should compare the similarities and differences between the two cultures, so that students can understand and master the similarities and differences in the process of using the two languages. Fostering the positive transfer of language acquisition and learning to reduce negative transfer.

## V. CONCLUSION

In a word, in the process of second language acquisition, native language influence is a very common phenomenon. It not only hinders but promotes second language learning. Native language is an important learning foundation. It can help learners sort out the language they have acquired, and make learners' acquisition of second language skills to continue to improve, but its negative impact can not be ignored. The purpose of studying native language and second language acquisition is to understand the differences and connections between mother tongue acquisition and second language acquisition, and to offer suggestions that can assist foreign language teaching and learning.

## REFERENCES:

- [1]. Bialystok, E. (2003). Developing phonological awareness: Is there a bilingual advantage? *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 24 (pp. 27–44).
- [2]. Dupoux, E., Kakehi, K., Hirose, Y., Pallier, C. & Mehler, J. (1999) Epenthetic vowels in Japanese: A perceptual illusion? *Journal of Experimental Psychology: human perception and performance* .25(6)1568-1578
- [3]. He S. (1997) Syllable structure pairs between English and Chinese . *Foreign Language Studies*, 2, 48.7
- [4]. Huang Q. (1996) *Chinese-English Comparative English Learning Method* [M], China International Broadcasting Publishing House, Beijing
- [5]. Krashen, S.D. (1988). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Prentice-Hall International.
- [6]. Liu R. (1995). *Second Language Language Acquisition Model (1)* . *Foreign Language Teaching Materials News*, 1995 4, 1 - 4.
- [7]. Liu R. (1996). *Second Language Language Acquisition Model (2)*. *Foreign Language Teaching Materials News*, 1, 1 - 4.
- [8]. Lu X. (2002) On the Positive Impact of Mother Tongue on Second Language Acquisition . *Foreign Language*, 11-15.
- [9]. Mashiri, P., Y. Lin, Mushangwe, H., Mukaro, L., Chabata, E., Mugari, V., Musona, M., Dhumukwa, A., & Chisoni G. (eds.). (2015) *Shona—Chinese, Chinese—Shona Dictionary with English glosses*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications. Mushangwe, H. (2015) Comparison of Chinese and Shona Vocabulary and the Acquisition of Chinese Vocabulary by Zimbabwean Students [M] ,
- [10]. Hebei University. Musona, M. & Tahwa, P. (2018). A study of the influence of Shona Semi-metaphoric phrases on the Acquisition of Chinese language, *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches* (5)10 Nida, E. & Taber, C. (1969) *The theory and practice of translation* [M],
- [11]. Leiden, Brill Academic Pub. Osgood, C.E. (1949). The similarity paradox in human learning: A resolution, *Psychological Review*, 56 (3) (pp. 132–143)
- [12]. Rod, E. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition* [M]. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, Shanghai. Rosenberg J., & Travis C. (1971) *Readings in the Philosophy of Language*, Prentice-Hall, Inc.; Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Selinker, L. (1972).



- [13]. InterlanguageIRAL; International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching,10:3 (1972) p.209 Su L. (2000) The influence of native language transfer on second language learning .Journal of Beijing International Studies University, (4), 44 - 52.  
Wang C.(2001). Two major factors affecting foreign language learning and foreign language teaching . Foreign language circles, (4), 8 - 12.

Hamadziripi Etheldredah Vimbayi" The Negative Role of Native Language (L1) on Second Language AcquisitionA Comprehensive Comparison of Chinese and Shona Language. " International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI), vol. 08, no. 3, 2019, pp. 35-43