

# IMITATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

HARISON MOHD SIDEK



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# PREFACE



For the past six decades, studies on second language (L2) imitation have evolved from the behaviourist view to the cognitive view and recently to the socio-cultural view to include imitation via interaction. Since general learning theories often serve as platforms of L2 learning theories which theories serve as the fundamental of L2 research, basic understanding of pertinent general learning theories and the respective generative L2 learning theories becomes imperative. The discussion of socio-cultural theory is presented with the emphasis on Vygotsky's theory of zone of proximal development within the constructivist paradigm, which theory maps onto interactive imitation or imitation with the involvement of interaction.

Subsequently, various concepts of imitation are presented within historical and current research perspectives. A brief discussion on imitation and first language acquisition is provided because first language (L1) research often serves as the platform for second language (L2) research. With the review of studies on the roles of imitation in L1 acquisition, the discussion on the roles of imitation and L2 acquisition is presented within the field of L2 research.

As this book attempts to present a case study on interactive imitation which design was developed based on the review of the framework of historical and current studies on imitation, the methodology of the study is presented by discussing the characteristics of the selected participant, the definition of imitation as it is referred to in the selected study, the instrument and the methodology for data collection. The study indicated that interactive imitation may assist an L2 child in semantic, syntactical, and lexical development. A brief discussion on pedagogical implications for L2 learning in relation to listening comprehension is also presented.



# REFERENCES

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STEP 3	Write the vocabulary word on the board in a jumbled-up manner. In a specified time, instruct student to talk about the picture to each other using the vocabulary words that they have learned, using the written vocabulary words on the board as cues. The teacher should facilitate during the activity to provide scaffolding when necessary.	
STEP 4	To conclude the activity, each pair will be asked to come to the front and display their pictures to the class and get the class to say the vocabulary word for each picture.	

Imitation can be an effective tool and also a fun way of learning L2. Imitation-based instruction for young learners can be designed in so many creative ways. However, when using imitation as a vehicle for L2 instruction, particularly when dealing with young learners, to reiterate, teachers should bear in mind the elements presented in Table 6.1 and also a careful consideration of the approach to be used in order to ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of the instructional planning, design, and implementation.



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## APPENDIX A: INTER-RATER RELIABILITY FOR CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

Based on your expert opinion, state the degree of your agreement/disagreement on the descriptions below and their corresponding illustrations provided to you by circling your choice based on the KEY below. If you choose NS please provide reason(s).

KEY : SA=Strongly Agree A=Agree NS=Not Sure D=Disagree  
SD=Strongly Disagree

Illustration	Descriptions	Rating				
		SA	A	NS	D	SD
1	A boy and a girl are playing on swings. A dog is watching them.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
2	The boy and the girl are playing on a see-saw.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
3	The boy and the girl are at the beach. The boy is climbing onto the back of the boat.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
4	The boy is talking to the girl. The boy is pointing to the fish in the water. The dog is barking.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
5	The boy is in the boat. He is laughing. The girl is getting into the boat. The dog is trying to get into the boat.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
6	The dog is in the boat. The girl is handing over a plate of cakes to the boy. There are two cans of Coca-Cola in front of them.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
7	The boy and the girl are watching a train coming.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
8	The boy and the girl are playing with a toy train.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
9	The boy and the girl are at a pet shop.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
10	They are watching rabbits. There are two dogs next to the rabbits.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
11	The pet shop salesman is holding a rabbit. The boy is talking to the seller. The girl is taking out some money from her purse to buy a rabbit.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
12	Mother is handing a piece of paper to the boy and the girl.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
13	The boy is playing with water. The girl is in the car. Father is washing the car and watching the boy playing with water.	SA	A	NS	D	SD

14	Father is driving the car. The girl is sitting in front. The boy is sitting in the back of the car.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
15	Father stopped in front of the police station and got out of the car. The boy is already out of the car. The girl is getting out of the car.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
16	The boy is on an apple tree. The boy is passing an apple to the girl. The girl put the apple into the basket.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
17	The boy and the girl are picking some flowers.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
18	The boy and the girl are at a fruit stall. They want to buy red apples. The fruit seller is attending to them.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
19	Some boys are playing soccer. The girl is jumping and cheering. One of the boys is trying to catch the ball and fell down.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
20	The boy and the girl are waiting for the bus. They are both carrying a bag.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
21	The boy and the girl are holding some coins. They want to pay for the bus fare to the bus conductor. The bus conductor is holding a coin box.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
22	The boy is passing some chocolate cake to another boy. The girl is handing a cup of drink to another girl.	SA	A	NS	D	SD
23	The boy and the girl are wearing their night clothes. They are going up to their room to sleep. Their parents are wishing them good night. The dog is watching them.	SA	A	NS	D	SD



## IMITATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Imitation has often been one of the vehicles used in second language (L2) acquisition particularly among young L2 learners. Prior to the emergence of the Vygotskyan socio-cultural notion, imitation was confined to the behaviorist and cognitivist views. However, recent socio-cultural paradigm has included the context as part of a process in which L2 learners may develop their L2 semantic, syntactic, and lexical acquisition via interactive imitation. The case study presented in this book sets as an example of the case of how an L2 learner might be able to develop the target language via interactive imitation.

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