Answers to Dr. Szilvia Bátyi on her review of

Bilingual written word recognition of learners of English in a vocational secondary school

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Bátyi for reviewing my thesis. I wish to acknowledge the supportive analysis, and constructive recommendations. In case of publication of my thesis and results, I will definitely follow your supportive guidance.

I give the following answers to your valuable remarks.

Chapter 1.

Thank you very much for your comments on Chapter 1.2.2, in which you miss the elaboration of the most influential factors in successful language learning. You had previously suggested a guideline and articles on finding these factors and recommended some literature to read. I was happy to see that the literature shows that motivation strongly predicts the achievement in L2. Motivation is followed by aptitude as a predictor of successful language learning. In my study, besides these factors, I also found strong correlation between creativity and L2 school achievement, and L2 word recognition results confirm that the more creative students have better results not only in word recognition but also in instructed L2 learning.

I am really thankful for your remarks on Chapter 1.4. In fact, it was my intention to give definitions, to conceptualize the factors in the Introduction. However, I recognize that findings from previous research should have been discussed here as well, and in case of publication I will make these amendments.

I absolutely accept your criticism on the lack of cohesion in some subchapters. I will carefully think the whole dissertation over, consider all my results and try to make my findings more coherent, and I will edit the relevant literatue and make a proper review of it before the publication of my study.

On page 8, 9, 22 I conveyed the general view that I hear on the acquisition of two written languages – both L1 and L2 – at a time. This is what teachers in the first grades and speech pathologists warn against in Hungary. However, in Bialystok's studies we can see that the acquisition of the two written languages sometimes can accelerate each other – if the two languages use the same alphabet -, or have no effect at all – if the alphabets are totally different.

You are absolutely right in connection with all your suggestions on the footnotes and sources of figures and tables. I will follow the traditional referencing in the future.

Chapter 2.

I accept your critical remarks in connection with the checking of the adapted instruments, I missed it. Thank you for highlighting the importance of it, and in the future, when I decide to apply a well-known test, I will do as you have advised. This is my fault that I trusted the available instruments, but from now on, I will know that it is necessary to ensure reliability and validity.

Chapter 3.

You asked about the statistical background of my study and results. In chapter 3.3 SPSS / Descriptive statistics was used to define means. (Analyze, Descriptive Stastics, Frequencies, Statistics, Mean)
"r" stands for correlation coefficient – shows how the size of one variable defines the other variable, the direction of the correlation and its strength. The value of it is between +1 and -1. The value, close to 0 indicates the lack of correlation. Positive correlation indicates the same direction, while negative correlation – reverse relationship.

In Table 31, I meant to summarize the correlation between the linguistic and non-linguistic affecting factors of word recognition. In order to clarify the data on the strength of the correlations and the significance, I can say that the following results were gained:

- language attitude – L2 achievement r=-,283 p<0,05
- appearance of ICT – L2 achievement r=-,334 p< 0,05
- creativity – word recognition r=,274 p ,034

- word recognition – L2 achievement r= -, 506 p ,000
- fluency – creativity r= , 272 p< 0,05

Thank you for calling my attention to the necessity of multiple regression analyses and data analyses of ERP results including background variables from the questionnaires. I will definitely work on it in case of publication of my thesis.

Chapter 4.

Thank you for the positive comments on the discussion of my results. You miss the linking of my results with previous ones presented in the Introduction. The reason why I did not make a parallel analysis of my results and those known from the literature is because I found no similar studies for similar populations with the same methods as the ones in my study. However, I do understand that I could have made some efforts to compare my data with some of the most relevant findings in other contexts.

I can accept your comments in connection with my claims on page 31 and 119 relating to Singleton's (2017) views on aptitude. Thank you for calling my attention to the adequate definition. "The view of language aptitude as an innate trait has, however, long been questioned (see e.g. Neufeld, 1978). Recently, this questioning has intensified (see Singleton, 2014), especially since the development of a widespread consensus that working memory needs to be recognized as an important component of language aptitude (see Wen, 2016). Working memory was also once thought of as a trait, but is now recognized as susceptible to the influence of experience and instruction (see e.g. Williams, 2012). Still, I do believe that aptitude is very much dependent on the individual, this is why I quoted him in this way.

Thank you very much for your appreciation of the novelty of my research and for the claim that it is pioneering in providing and analyzing data concerning bilingual visual word recognition gained from underprivileged learners of English as an L2 in low SES circumstances in Hungary.

Let me answer your direct questions.

Q1: How did you ensure the reliability and validity of the self-made instruments?

Concerning the validity of the tests, I can say that I piloted them in a previous experiment, based on the same theory and concepts. As I referred to it on page 70, prior to doing the whole test, I did the pretest with 15 participants. The results of this pre-test made me realize that some amendments needed to be done in the time frame of the survey. This is why in the real testing time, the participants completed the tests in 3 days. Reliability was ensured by coding the results of the self-made tests twice, at two different times.

Q2: What were the main principles and underlying concepts when developing the instruments?

I wanted to carry out the same or similar tests as the ones in the literature, and this is why I used either the available ones, which I adapted, or I developed my own tests. I was hoping to gain the same or similar results in my study and be able to compare them with the ones in the literature. However, when I finished the analyses, I could realize that the influential factors had made my results quite different from the ones in the literature.
As I referred to it on page 42, anagrams were used as testing instruments in the Northwestern Anagram Test. In 1983, Mayer found that word frequency influences anagram solution, so based on this, I developed the anagram test, with given letter strings to formulate frequent meaningful content words in English or Hungarian. I checked the frequency of the expected words in both COCA and HNC.

On page 43 and 62, I made references to my application of Navracsics and Sáry's study from 2013, in which they concluded that word recognition sometimes can happen with just orthographical awareness and without phonological and semantical processing. I applied the wordlist of their study, which contained 240 words (see Appendix 14.) Sixty Hungarian, 60 English words, 60 interlexical homographs and 60 pseudowords were included in the test. I was happy to see the results, which proved that there is a tendency of correlation between word recognition and school achievements.

We tend to remember the beginning and end rather than the middle of words, which is called 'the bathtub effect' (Brown & McNeill, 1966). Furthermore, as Lengyel claims: „The beginning of the word plays an important role. The deletion of the end of a word causes a smaller problem

than the deletion of the beginning of the word in word recognition." (Lengyel 1997). With this in mind, I developed my first syllable test.

Finally, thank you for encouraging me to dig deeper in my dataset. I also think that there is a lot of potential in the data for future analyses. Your criticism is a great help for me in improving the quality of my work in the future.

Again, I would like to express my greatest appreciation to you for your substantial review, for the positive and critical remarks.

Siófok, 2021.05.18. Lengyel Zsófia