

Acculturation Model

The Acculturation Model is a second language acquisition model designed by John H. Schumann in 1978

- This model is based on the social-psychology of acculturation
- Acculturation model maintains that certain social and psychological variables cluster into a single variable, acculturation
- Learners will acquire the target language to the degree they acculturate to the target language group.

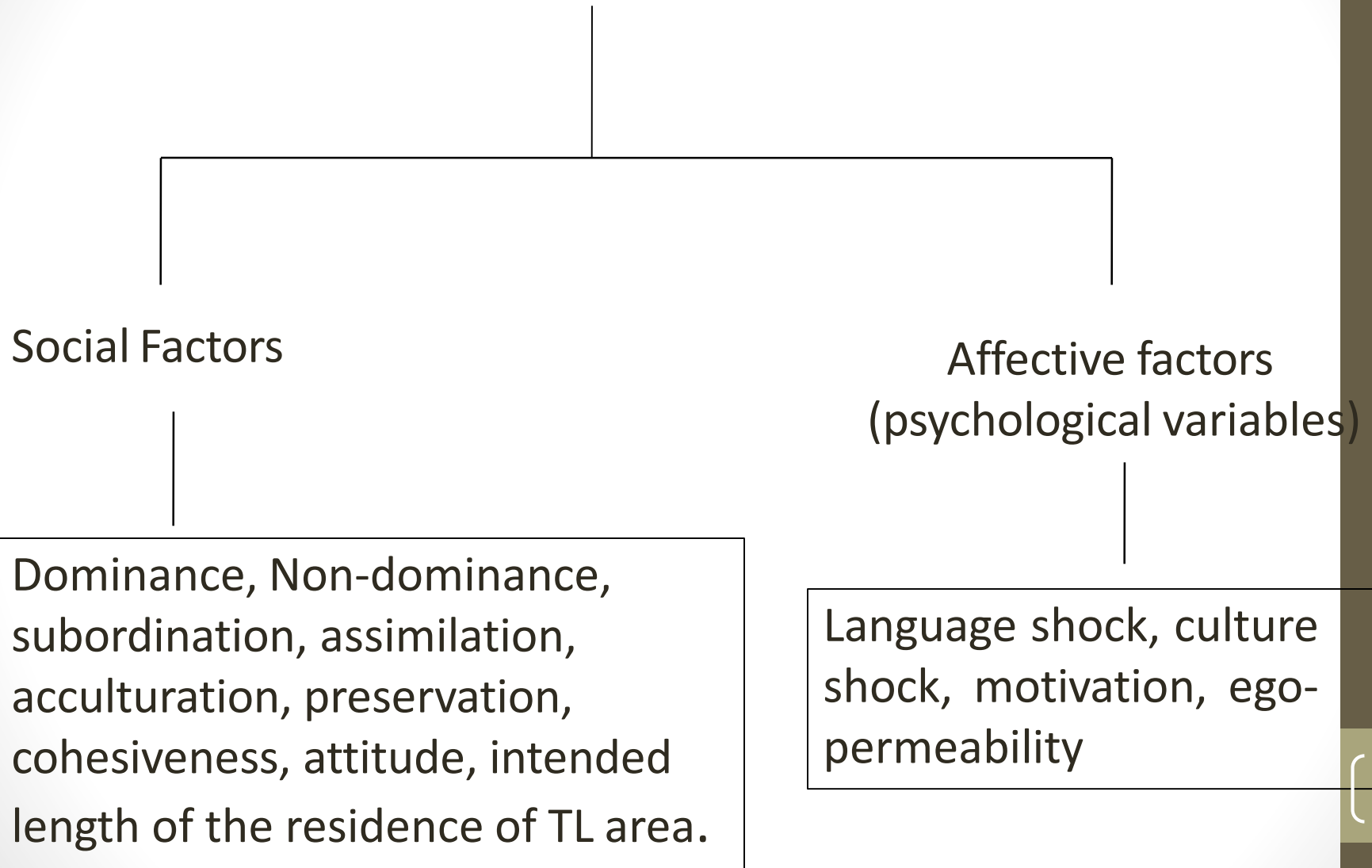
Acculturation: Acculturation means the process by which a human being acquires the culture of a particular society from infancy

- Two groups of variables – social factors and affective factors batch into a single variable, acculturation
- Acculturation is a major casual variable in SLA
- It is defined as social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language (TL) group
- Social and psychological distance between the second language learner (2LL) and the target language (TL) community is a major factor in determining the degree to which the language learner will acquire the L2
- The learners acquire the second language (L2) only to the degree that they acculturate

There are two types of acculturation -

1. Learners are socially integrated with the TL group and develop sufficient contacts with TL speakers to enable them to acquire the target language.
 2. Learners consciously or unconsciously desire to adopt the life style and values of the TL group.
- Both types of acculturation are important to provoke acquisition of the TL.
 - Social and psychological contact with the target language group is the essential element in acculturation.
 - adopting the values and life-style of the target language group is not necessary .

Acculturation Factors



Social variables _____

- Two social groups with different languages are in a contact situation
- One group considered as the second language-learning group (2LL) and the other is the target language group (TL)

(1) Social dominance pattern

- Social dominance pattern explains how political, cultural, technological and economical differences between the 2LL group and TL group influence language acquisition process.
- If the 2LL group is politically, culturally, technically and economically superior to the TL group then it will tend not to learn the target language.

Social dominance pattern

- If the second language-learning group is subordinate and inferior to the TL group –
→ then there will also be social distance between the two groups, and the 2LL group will resist learning the target language .

American Indians living in the Southwest have traditionally been subordinate to the dominant Anglo group and have resisted acquiring English language

- If the 2LL group and the TL group both have equal political, social, economical, cultural and technical status
→ then the acquisition of the target language by the 2LL group will be enhanced .
→ contact between the two groups likely to be more widespread

(2) The second social factor affecting target language learning involves three integration strategies. These strategies are: (I) **assimilation**, (II) **preservation** and (III) **adaptation**

Assimilation : The 2LL group gives up its own values and life-style and adopts the values, life-style and views of the TL group.

- > Maximizes contact between the two groups
- > Promotes acquisition of the TL .

Preservation: The 2LL group maintains its own lifestyle, values, and refuses to adapt or assimilate the TL group values and lifestyle

- > Creates social/ideological distance between the two groups.
- > Makes it improbable that the 2LL group will acquire TL.

Adaptation : The 2LL group adopts the life-style and values of the TL group, but maintains its own values and life-style.

(3)Enclosure : Enclosure refers to the degree to which the 2LL group and the TL group share the same social constructs such as schools, churches, clubs, recreational facilities, profession and trades. If the two group share these constructs enclosure is said to be low and contact between the two groups is improved.

——> Acquisition of L2 by the 2LL group is facilitated

If the two groups have different social construct-

——> Then enclosure is high

——> Contact between the two groups is limited and opportunities for acquisition of the L2 are reduced.

(4)Cohesiveness and size: If the 2LL group is cohesive , it will tend to remain separate from the TL group. If the 2LL group is large, the intragroup contact will be more frequent than intergroup contact.

——> Both these situation will reduce opportunities for L2 acquisition.

- (5) **Congruence** : if the two cultures are similar, social contact social contact between the two groups more likely to happen spontaneously and thus L2 learning becomes easier .
- (6) **Attitude**: If the 2LL and TL groups have positive attitudes towards each other, L2 learning is more easily facilitated.
- (7) **Length of residence in the target language area**: If the 2LL group intends to remain for a long time in the target language area, it is likely to develop more widespread contacts with the TL group. Therefore, an intended lengthy residence in the TL area suppose to promote L2 learning.

Affective factors (psychological Variables): The psychological variables which influence acculturation and SLA include – (i) **language shock**. (ii) **cultural shock**, (iii) **motivation** and (iv) **ego permeability**.

A learner may learn L2 within such social conditions, which are not favorable for SLA, on the other hand he may not learn under favorable social condition.

- (i) Language Shock:** When learners attempt to speak a second language, they often fear that they will appear comic.
- Adult learners fear ridicule and criticism .
 - A children does not have fear for criticism. Child sees language as a method of play and finds communication as a source of pleasure.

(ii) Cultural Shock : Culture shock can be defined as anxiety resulting from the confusion, a learner encounters while entering a new culture . When moving into a new culture the learner –

- finds himself in a dependant state.
- His problem solving mechanisms often do not work
- His routine activities of his native country require a great deal of energy in the new environment.
- This situation can cause fear, anxiety, disorientation and stress.
- can develop a powerful syndrome of rejection.
- may reject his own culture, his organization and the people of the host- country. Makes less effort to learn The L2.

(iii) Motivation: Motivation involves the learner's reason for acquiring the target language. There are two motivational factors for L2 learning- (1) **Integrative motivation**, (2) **instrumental motivation**.

(1) Integrative motivation: An integratively-motivated learner wants to learn the L2 because he values and admires the target language. The learner wants to talk, behave and maintain life-style like the target language group .

(2) Instrumental motivation: An instrumental oriented learner shows less interest in the people and lifestyle of the TL group. But wants to learn the language for some utilitarian reasons, like getting ahead in his occupation, gaining recognition in his own community .

Learners instrumental goals needed low level of proficiency in L2- like be able to buy food or take public transport

It has generally been thought that integrative motivation is more effective than instrumental motivation.

(iv) Ego permeability: Learners native like ability in L2 develops “language ego”. language ego is parallel to the Freudian construct, body ego. In the course of general ego development the child acquires body ego by which he becomes aware of the limits of his physical entity and adapts himself according to the environment around him. In similar fashion, the child acquires a sense of the boundaries of his language. The sounds, words, syntax, and morphology of his language becomes objectified and develops strong boundaries. In the early stages of development, language ego boundaries are permeable, but later they become fixed and rigid.

Criticism of Acculturation Model

- According to Freeman & Long (1991), Schumann did not specify the combinations and levels of social and psychological factors to predict learner's language outcome.
- Acculturation model also does not explain how social and psychological factors affect the rate of acquisition.
- This model does not give statement for the change of the social or psychological distance over time.
- Does not explain learners current social and psychological distance and how it collarets to the learner's proficiency, while learning a L2.
- Does not show how social and psychological factors vary from individual to individual.

- Kelley (1982) and Stauble (1981) did not find any relationship between acculturation and proficiency .

- Schumann did not include important personal factors such as age, family separation, previous educational experiences, or the traumatic experiences of the learner.

These additional stress factors determine how well a learner performs in a new social/school environment.

Acculturation model is a conceptual framework which permits the interpretation and understanding of success or failure in SLA in various contact situation. this theory attempts to explain the relationship between learners' second language acquisition and their social and psychological factors and it helps to prove the importance of social factors in second language acquisition.

CONCLUSION

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