ABSTRACT

During the last two decades, researchers in both linguistics and psychology have increasingly focused on the influence of learners’ age on second language acquisition (SLA). Based on a study on the acquisition of English auxiliary and copula constructions by immigrants from Bangladesh in East London, I show that learners are able to achieve almost native-speaker-like competence in syntax and morphology even after puberty, and that there is no statistically significant impact of learners’ age on the acquisition process and eventual L2 performance. Furthermore, I argue that length of residence in the United Kingdom has more importance on L2 performance than age of acquisition onset. However, neither learners’ age nor their length of residence can ultimately account for L2 performance completely; results suggest that as yet latent factors influence L2 performance to a considerable extent.