



# Second Language Acquisition

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# Second language learning

\*The distinction between

- 'Foreign Language Learning':

“language is not generally spoken in the surrounding community.”

E.g. a Japanese student learning English in Japan.

- 'Second Language Learning':

“learning a language that is spoken in the outside community.”

E.g. a Japanese student learning English in USA



# Acquisition & Learning

**Acquisition**: gradual development of a language + occurs in a naturally communicative situations with others.

- Results in better fluency in social interaction

**Learning**: conscious process of accumulating knowledge of vocabulary and grammar + in institutional setting.

- Results in more knowledge about the language than fluency.

E.g. Mathematics is learned, not acquired

# Acquisition barriers

Learning L2 is fundamentally different than L1... why??

1- Already have a language for daily communication.

2- Interaction is not constant .. A few hours each week ..



Many adult learners manage to learn L2 effectively ( written language ) - they do not sound like native speakers..

E.g. Joseph Conrad wrote many English novels that became classic of English literature.

- This provide that some features of language are easier to acquire ( vocabulary and grammar ) than others ( pronunciation)
- This also provides evidence for Critical Period Hypothesis :  
( Around the time of puberty , it becomes very difficult to acquire another language fully

# Affective factors

## Different kinds of acquisition barriers:

- 1- Embarrassment- e.g. being ashamed of producing g different sounds of another language or his/her accent
- 2- Lack of empathy with the other culture.
- 3- Dull textbooks, classrooms, schedule, etc.

# Focus on **method**

## Educational approaches to L2 learning- how L2 might best be learned

- 1- The grammar-translation method.
- 2- The audio-lingual method.
- 3- Communicative approaches.



# 1- The grammar-translation method.

The belief: Treating L2 as an academic subject.

Vocabulary lists, grammar rules, memorization is encouraged, written language rather than spoken language is emphasized.

Criticism: does not focus on how the language might be used in everyday conversations.

## 2- The audio-lingual method

- Emphasizes spoken language.

**The belief:** The fluent use of language was essentially a set of habits that could be developed with a lot of practice.

Dialogue form, mimicry, set phrases, drills, memorization, tapes, language labs, pronunciation important, little use of mother tongue.

**Criticism:** boring + not natural ( actual) setting

# 3- Communicative approaches

- Against “ pattern practice” and grammar rules.

**The belief:** The functions of language( its use) should be emphasized rather than the forms of the language( grammar) .

Classroom lessons are organized around the concepts such as “ asking for things” in different social settings, rather than “ the forms of he past tense “ in different sentences.

E.g. “ Japanese for business people”

# Focus on the learner

A shift has been made in recent years from concern with the teacher, the textbook and the method to the learner and the acquisition process.

# Transfer

- Using L1 sounds, expressions, or structure when speaking L2.

E.g. an Arab may say open the lights?

There are two types of transfer:

1- Positive: L1 & L2 have similar features (marking of plural).

2- Negative “interference”: transferring a L1 feature that is really different from the L2.

# Interlanguage

- Errors that have no connection to the forms of either L1 or L2.
- **Interlanguage**: an in-between system of L2 learners that contains aspects of L1 and L2 and an independent system with rules of its own.

E.g. Spanish learner= She name is Maria.

- **Fossilization**: Fixed expressions of L2... when interlanguage stops developing to a more accurate L2 features, it is said 'fossilized'.

'fossilization'= foreign accent.

# Motivation

- Very important in language learning.
- Instrumental motivation= to achieve some goal

E.g. Join a graduate school , Find a better job

- Integrative motivation= social purposes

E.g. Become an accepted member in a community

# Input

**Input:** the language the learner is exposed to.

1- Input must be comprehensible ( simpler in structure and vocabulary.

E.g. English class, you like it? **Instead of** How are getting on in your studies?

**Negotiated input:** L2 materials that the learner can acquire in interaction while attention is given to what is said

Example .. P.193



# Output

Output: the language the learner produces.

Comprehensible output in meaningful interactions seems to be another important element in the learner's development of L2 ability.

interaction= comprehensive output

# Communicative competence

- Competence = underlying knowledge of a language
- Communicative competence: The general ability to use language accurately, appropriately, and flexibly.
  - 1- Grammatical competence.
  - 2- sociolinguistic competence.
  - 3- strategic competence.

# 1- Grammatical Competence

- The accurate use of words and structures.
- Will not provide the learner with the ability to interpret or produce L2 expressions appropriately.

## 2- Sociolinguistic Competence

- the learner's ability to use appropriate language.

E.g. Give me some water!

Can I have some water?

## 3- Strategic Competence

- The ability to organize messages effectively and compensate any difficulties.
- how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns

# Applied Linguistics

Investigating L2 learning by appealing to other fields such as communication studies, psychology, education and sociology.

[http://aaalmohammadi.kau.edu.sa/Files/0006268/files/16241\\_14Second%20Language%20Acquisition.pdf](http://aaalmohammadi.kau.edu.sa/Files/0006268/files/16241_14Second%20Language%20Acquisition.pdf)