The ABC of SLA

Edited by

Olga Kulchytska

ОСНОВИ ТЕОРІЇ *SLA*

Редакція

Ольги Кульчицької

Друкується за ухвалою
Вченої ради факультету іноземних мов
Прикарпатського національного університету імені Василя Стефаника
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Рецензенти:

Бистров Я. В.
доктор філологічних наук, професор, завідувач кафедри англійської філології Прикарпатського національного університету імені Василя Стефаника

Цегельська М.В.
кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри англійської мови з методикою викладання Криворізького державного педагогічного університету

У посібнику стисло викладено положення теорії освоєння другої мови (*Second Language Acquisition*). Висвітлено сутність теорії *SLA*, відмінності між освоєнням (*acquisition*) і вивченням (*learning*) другої мови, аспекти теорії, гіпотези стосовно процесу освоєння другої мови. Приділяється увага методиці подачі нової інформації (*the Input Hypothesis*) С. Крашена, стратегіям підвищення ефективності освоєння другої мови. Контрольні запитання, питання для обговорення в парах/малих групах, практичні завдання, що подаються в кінці розділів чи підрозділів посібника, полегшують процес самостійного опрацювання матеріалу.

Призначається для студентів факультетів іноземних мов.

CONTENTS

1. LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Language acquisition is defined as

- the process of learning a first language in children;
- the analogous process of learning a foreign/second language;

<div align="right">Crystal, 1987: 226, 368</div>

- developing ability in language.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 10</div>

THE ACQUISITION – LEARNING DISTINCTION

Language acquisition is a subconscious process. Typically, language acquirers are not aware of the fact that they are acquiring the rules of the language. They just use the language for the purpose of communication in different contexts.

Language learning is a conscious process. Learners know the rules and use them in speech.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 10</div>

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA) and
SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING (SLL)

Acquiring a language, we focus on communication, i.e. we try to express our thoughts (orally or in writing). The level of acquisition determines the fluency of our speech.

Learning a language means trying to make our speech grammatically correct. Learners consciously use grammar rules, either before they speak/write or after. This process is called Monitoring.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 10, 11, 15–20</div>

SLL The necessary conditions for conscious use of rules are as follows:

- time – we need time in order to remember rules and use them;

- focus on form – we think about how to say things correctly;

- knowledge of the rule – the language structure is quite complex; some language rules are comparatively easy, others are more or much more difficult; it is very difficult to remember and use all the rules.

Krashen, 1987: 16

SLA According to Krashen,

- acquisition is more important than learning;

- in order to acquire, two conditions are necessary:

(a) comprehensible input; it should contain a ***new element*** – a new word/phase/grammar structure; e.g. the Present Simple, singular (*He reads a lot*) after a person has acquired the Present Continuous (*He is reading a text*). Input formula: **i + 1;**

(b) affective factors:

- ❖ high motivation;
- ❖ self-confidence;
- ❖ low anxiety.

Krashen, 1987: 32, 33

Differences and similarities between SLA and SLL

Teaching can be deductive and inductive.

Deductive teaching is presenting a clear explanation of rules, which is followed by a certain amount of practical work (exercises). It is believed that practice will result in understanding a rule and the ability to use it automatically in speech.

With *inductive teaching*, the learners do as much practice as possible; they are supposed to notice patterns and to work out rules.

Both inductive and deductive learning are conscious learning.

Krashen, 1987: 113

SLA	**INDUCTIVE LEARNING**
data come first, rule follows	data come first, rule follows
rule is subconscious	rule is conscious
focus is on meaning	focus is on form
SLA is a slow process	learning may occur quickly
SLA requires a large amount of data	learning may require small/large amount of data

SLA compared to inductive learning

According to Krashen (1987: 113), there are certain similarities and differences between SLA and inductive learning:

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. Is it easier to acquire a language as a child or in adulthood?
2. Do you believe language rules can be acquired subconsciously?
3. What is the purpose of communication?
4. Why is SLA compared not to deductive, but to inductive learning?

In pairs/small groups discuss

- ❖ how an adult person can develop ability in language;
- ❖ how language rules can be acquired through communication;
- ❖ things you like about SLA and SLL;
- ❖ things you dislike about SLA and SLL.

Tasks

1. Write a short essay on the preferred types of teaching/learning in Ukrainian schools and universities.
2. Think of your own examples to illustrate the input formula **i + 1.**

2. FACTORS IN SLA

LINGUISTIC FACTORS IN SLA

According to Crystal (1987: 368), **second language** is a non-native language that has an official role in a country.

O'Malley and Chamot (1995: 33, 37) define **language comprehension** as a process in which people get meaning from information they receive. They define **language production** as a process of constructing and expressing meaning.

Language serves the purpose of communication. Communication is the exchange of information, ideas, attitudes. Typically, we exchange information, ideas, and attitudes through oral/written texts. Text has two aspects: form and meaning (message).

According Krashen (1987), both the form and the meaning of a text

- ➢ have to be comprehensible;
- ➢ have to be interesting and meaningful to students;
- ➢ have to contain a new element (**i+1**).

COGNITIVE FACTORS IN SLA

Cognition is the process of knowing, understanding, and learning something.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

New information is stored in short-term memory (working memory) or in long-term memory. The stages of this process are as follows:

➢ selection – a person focuses on specific information and transfers it into working memory;

➢ acquisition – a person transfers information from working memory to long-term memory;

➢ construction – a person constructs connections between ideas in their working memory; the information from long-term memory may help to understand new ideas;

➢ integration – a person retrieves knowledge from their long-term memory.

O'Malley and Chamot, 1995: 17

Comprehension and production of text are complex cognitive processes. In order to be able to use a language, we have to master cognitive skills.

First, we master new skills that require little conscious effort. Practice makes such skills automatic processes. When a skill becomes automatic, it frees space in working memory for new information.

Some skills require more or even *much more* conscious effort. It is a controlled process, which is called learning.

O'Malley and Chamot, 1995: 63–67

Working with text (oral or written), we have to focus on

➢ its meaning (message, content);

➢ its structure (form).

Comprehension of text depends on:

- ❖ our general knowledge of the world (information stored in long-term memory);
- ❖ our understanding of the context of a text – a word may have a range of meanings; we select the meaning that is appropriate to a given context.

Speaking/writing is the ***production*** of text. In order to produce a text, we have

- ➢ to express our intention;
- ➢ to construct a series of utterances;
- ➢ to retrieve the needed words from memory;
- ➢ to use appropriate grammar rules.

<div align="right">O'Malley and Chamot, 1995: 63–67</div>

SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS IN SLA

Exposition to foreign talk

At first, a native speaker should modify their speech so that it is easier to comprehend. In the classroom, the teacher uses "foreign talk". A person can converse with other people who also acquire a SL; it is called ***interlanguage*** talk.

When a person is in the country whose language they try to acquire, two factors affect their SLA:

- ❖ length of residence (LOR); LOR helps if a person actively communicates with native speakers; e.g. the longer an international university student stays in the country, the more fluent their speech is; active use of the SL;
- ❖ active use of the second language.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 24, 37–43</div>

SCHUMANN'S ACCULTURATION HYPOTHESIS

Acculturation is cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture.

<div align="right">The Dictionary by Merriam-Webster</div>

SLA is one of the aspects of acculturation.

There are two types of acculturation:

- ❖ establishing regular contact with native speakers;
- ❖ adopting the life style and values of native speakers.

The greater the psychological/social distance between a person and native speakers is, the less successful the SLA process will be.

<div align="right">Schumann, 1978: 27–50</div>

Talking to people, we have to take into account the following factors:

- ➢ why we say/write certain things (our purpose);
- ➢ what we say/write (the content of our speech);
- ➢ who we speak to (the addressee, their status);
- ➢ how we express our idea (the form of our speech).

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. Three factors in SLA are mentioned above. Do you think they differ in importance?

2. Why does learning require conscious effort?

3. Can you think of a case when selecting the wrong meaning of a word prevents a reader from understanding the text?

4. What is the difference between *foreign talk* and *interlanguage*?

5. Why is LOR not always effective?

In pairs/small groups discuss

- ❖ whether there is any difference in acquiring a second and a foreign language;

- ❖ the four stages of storing information in a person's memory; come up with your own examples of the process;

- ❖ how our general knowledge of the world can affect the process of comprehension of a text;

- ❖ what is more important in the production of text: expressing our intention or using appropriate grammar rules;

- ❖ the importance of the following factors:

    * why we say/write certain things (our purpose);

    * what we say/write (the content of our speech);

    * who we speak to (the addressee, their status);

    * how we express our idea (the form of our speech).

    Can we achieve a desired result if we ignore them?

Tasks

1. Give your own definition of *language comprehension* and *production*.

2. Interpret the statement "Text has two aspects: form and meaning".

3. Choose a text from your Student's Book. Can you say that it is built according to Krashen's principles:

    - ❖ *both the form and the meaning of a text have to be comprehensible;*

    - ❖ *have to be interesting and meaningful to students;*

    - ❖ *have to contain a new element (i+1).*

4. Look for information about Brighton Beach, New York City. In a short essay discuss why some of its residents find it difficult to speak English.

3. HYPOTHESIS ABOUT SLA

THE NATURAL ORDER HYPOTHESIS

Certain grammar structures are acquired early, others later.

It depends on the difficulty of a structure.

e.g. 1. He *is playing* baseball. (Pr. Cont. – acquired early);

He *lives* in New York. (Pr. Simple, 3rd person sing. – acquired later);

e.g. 2. Two *days* (-*'s* for the plural form of a noun – acquired early);

John's hat (-*'s* for the possessive case – acquired later).

Errors made in the process of acquisition are called **developmental errors**.

e.g. 1. *Not like it now* (*no/not* placed outside the sentence);

I no like it (*no/not* placed between the subject and the verb);

e.g. 2. *How he can* be a doctor? (direct word order).

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 12–15</div>

Practical application of the Natural Order Hypothesis

Krashen (1987) maintains that

- ❖ we need to establish things that are acquired early and things that are acquired late;
- ❖ there is no need to learn the rule if a skill is already acquired;
- ❖ rules should be understandable;
- ❖ learning materials that illustrate rules should be interesting.

Krashen (1987) suggests that

- ❖ we need to establish things that are acquired early and things that are acquired late;
- ❖ there is no need to learn the rule if a skill is already acquired;
- ❖ rules should be understandable;
- ❖ learning materials that illustrate rules should be interesting.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. What is the essence of the Natural Order Hypothesis?

2. What are *developmental errors*?

In pairs/small groups discuss

❖ Krashen's statement that there is no need to learn the rule if a skill is already acquired;

❖ why students often make mistakes forming the 3rd person singular of verbs (*he go* instead of *he goes*).

Tasks

1. Use your own experience. Compile two lists of grammar structures: a) things that are acquired early; b) things that are acquired late.

2. Pick a difficult rule in your English Grammar book. Rewrite it so that it looks more understandable. In your Student's Book, find interesting examples to illustrate the rule.

THE MONITOR HYPOTHESIS

According to Krashen, **Monitor** is using rules; it is conscious learning.

People consciously use rules if they:

➢ have time to think about a particular rule;

➢ concentrate on the form and try to say/write things right;

➢ know the rule.

Monitoring their speech, people change the form of a ready utterance, i.e. *Monitor comes after acquisition.*

Certain grammar structures are acquired naturally and easily. Others – more complex in form and meaning – are acquired later or even much later. The simpler the form and meaning of a grammar structure is, the easier it is for a person to monitor it. *Monitor* may help to acquire a difficult structure.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 15–18</div>

Types of Monitor Users

- **Monitor Over-Users** – people who constantly search their memory for the right rule; as a result, their speech is not fluent.
- **Monitor Under-Users** – those who do not know rules or do not care about them.
- **Optimal Monitor Users** – those who know when *Monitor* won't interfere with communication; they use *Monitor* when it is appropriate.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 18–20</div>

Practical Application of the Monitor Hypothesis

Risks:

Conscious application of rules takes time and a person's speech may become hesitant; it is difficult to listen to someone who makes long pauses in order to remember and apply a rule. Planning their next utterance, a person does not pay enough attention to what others are saying.

NB

We should use *Monitor* when we have enough time; for example, when writing an essay, a letter, a speech.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 89–104</div>

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. Do you agree that *Monitor* comes after acquisition?

2. Is *Monitor* a synonym to *conscious learning*?

In pairs/small groups discuss

- ❖ the strong and weak sides of Monitor Over-Users/Monitor Under-Users;
- ❖ how Monitor may help to acquire a difficult grammar structure.

Tasks

1. Write a short essay on the difficulties of monitoring your speech.

2. Think of someone who is an Optimal Monitor User (a friend, a classmate, a teacher, a character in a movie or a book). Describe the person. What traits of character help them to use appropriate style of speech?

THE INPUT HYPOTHESIS

Krashen maintains that acquisition is moving from one stage to the next:

from **i** (what a person already knows and can say) to **i+1** (new knowledge).

Necessary conditions:

- ➢ a person *understands* input **i+1**; "understands" means that a person is focused on the *meaning* and not on the form of what they hear;
- ➢ a person uses context, their knowledge of the world, extra-linguistic information in order to understand the message.

Krashen, 1987: 20–30

Four Important Things About the Input Hypothesis

❖ Input hypothesis concerns *acquisition, not learning*.

❖ We acquire new input (**i+1**) relying on context, our knowledge of the world, and extra-linguistic information.

❖ **i+1** is *provided automatically* (we do not "teach" or "learn" new things, but acquire them in the process of communication).

❖ A person starts speaking/writing when they are "ready"; at first, their speech is not accurate.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 20–30</div>

OPTIMAL INPUT

Accordng to Krashen (1987: 57–82), the characteristics of optimal input are as follows:

➢ optimal input is *comprehensible* (understandable);

➢ it is *interesting*;

➢ it is focused on *meaning* (message) rather than form (grammar);

➢ it should be *sufficient* (we should provide as much input as needed).

Optimal input should be comprehensible. At initial stages, input is directed at a person and simplified.

In order to make it comprehensible we should:

❖ slow down the rate of speech;

❖ articulate words clearly;

❖ use high frequency vocabulary, less slang, fewer idioms;

❖ make sentences shorter and syntax easier.

With beginners, real objects (realia) and pictures can help in a class.

More advanced acquirers can get more complex input.

We can encourage students to use their knowledge of the world (for example, to discuss familiar topics).

Optimal input is interesting. What is *un*interesting? – Activities focused on form rather than meaning; for example, drills, reproduction of dialogues from the textbook, grammar exercises, boring reading materials, etc.

THE AFFECTIVE FILTER HYPOTHESIS

Affective factors (also called **affective filters**) can help a person to acquire a language. They are as follows:

- **Motivation.** A person with high motivation typically does better in acquiring a language.
- **Self-confidence.** A person with self-confidence and good self-image typically does better in acquiring a language.
- **Anxiety.** Low personal and classroom anxiety typically helps people to acquire a language.

NB

Input (**i+1**) is the *main factor* in SLA; *affective factors can just help to get the message.*

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 31–32</div>

Krashen (1987: 32; Fig. 2.2.) presents the Affective Filter Hypothesis as follows:

Affective Filter

input → | - - (part of the brain where knowledge is stored) → **acquired competence**
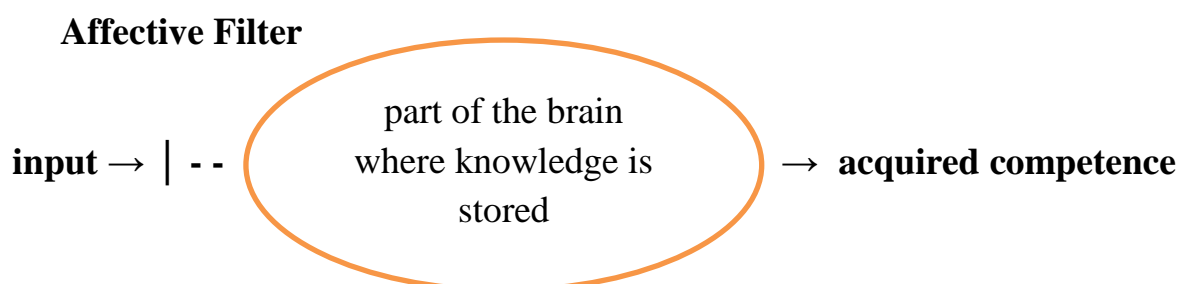
Practical Application of the Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen (1987: 31–32) suggests that we should

- ➢ motivate students;
- ➢ help them develop self-confidence and good self-image;
- ➢ help them to cope with anxiety.

SLA MECHANISMS

According to Corder (1967, 161–170), language **input** is what language acquirers hear/read.

Intake is the part of the input which they understand.

Output may be roughly defined as the production of speech.

Krashen (1998) suggests the **Comprehensible Output Hypothesis**: we acquire language when we attempt to convey a message but fail; then we have to try again. Eventually, we manage to produce the correct form of an utterance; our interlocutor finally understands us, thus we acquire the new form we have produced.

Swain and Lapkin (1995: 371) maintain that "… sometimes, under some conditions, output facilitates second language learning in ways that are different from, or enhance, those of input."

APPLICATION OF THE INPUT HYPOTHESIS

A person may acquire language through real-world communication and/or in the SL classroom.

Krashen (1987) suggests that in the SL classroom, we should

➢ simplify input for students to understand it;

➢ show students how to manage conversation.

Krashen (1987: 61; Fig. 3.1.) presents the process of communication as follows:

input ⟶ **language acquisition** ⟶ **output**
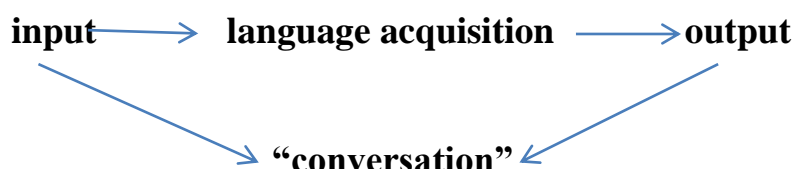
"conversation"

Input makes it possible to acquire language.

Output is the result of acquired competence.

Conversation occurs when when a person speaks (output), and people speak back to him/her (input).

Language skills are improved through practice (Krashen, 1987: 57–82):

output ⟶ **error correction** ⟶ **better performance**

The teacher should minimize pressure in class. They should

➢ focus on the message, not the form;

➢ encourage students to speak, but not force them to speak too early;

➢ remember that students errors are inevitable; not try to correct every error students make because in communicative-type activities, error correction is *not* the most important thing.

The teacher should ensure that students obtain more input

❖ Acquisition comes through communication; encourage students to communicate – not only with their teacher, but among themselves – even if their language competence is not perfect.

❖ It is essential to shows students how to start a conversation and keep it going, how to express their opinion.

<div align="right">Krashen, 1987: 57–82</div>

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. What are *input*, *intake*, *output*?

2. What is *extra-linguistic information*?

3. What do *affective filters* do?

4. Do you agree with Krashen's statement that in the SLA classroom, we should simplify input for students to understand?
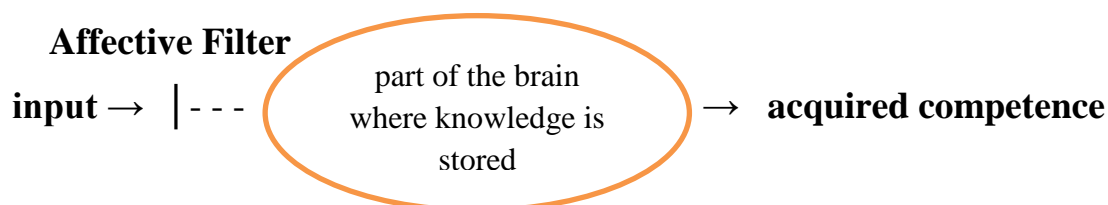
5. What is *optimal input*?

In pairs/small groups discuss

❖ the process of input;

❖ what happens when new information (+1) contains more than one element (+1+1, +1+1+1, etc.)

❖ how to make a person motivated;

❖ how to lower personal/classroom anxiety;

❖ Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis;

❖ how output facilitates second language learning and how this process is different from that of input;

❖ Krashen's graphical presentation of the process of communication (1987: 61; Fig. 3.1.):

$$input \longrightarrow language\ acquisition \longrightarrow output$$

"conversation"
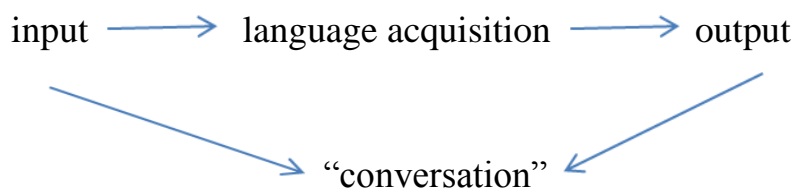
Tasks

1. Suggest strategies that can help a person to become "ready" and to start speaking or writing.

2. Give examples to illustrate Krashen's graphical presentation of the Affective Filter Hypothesis (1987: 32; Fig. 2.2.):

Affective Filter

input → | - - -   (part of the brain where knowledge is stored)   → **acquired competence**

3. Provide examples to illustrate Krashen's comprehensible output hypothesis.

4. Give a mini-lesson:

   ➤ use Krashen's principles: *optimal input should be comprehensible, interesting, focused on meaning, be sufficient*.

   ➤ pick a topic for discussion; look for appropriate information;

   ➤ compile a list of vocabulary items you want the class to remember;

   ➤ introduce your material;

   ➤ think of appropriate classroom activities;

   ➤ engage your students in performing them;

   ➤ check students' understanding.

5. Three strategies of minimizing pressure in class are mentioned above. Suggest other ways of creating favorable classroom climate. Look for speech formulas

   A. to start and maintain a conversation;

   B. to express opinion;

   C. to express agreement and disagreement.

6. Think of a topic for discussion. Discuss it with a partner.

4. INTERLANGUAGE

This section is based on the materials that can be found on the sites given below:

- ➢ ThoughtCo. Fronting (grammar). Glossary of Grammatical and Rhetorical Terms – Definition and Examples. www.thoughtco.com/fronting-in-grammar-Interlanguage
- ➢ Interlanguage. www.tesolclass.com
- ➢ Interlanguage. www.teachingenglish.org.uk

THE INTERLANGUAGE THEORY

Interlanguage theory was developed by Larry Selinker.

Interlanguage is "the learner's current version of the language they are learning". We can use a metaphor to explain the meaning of the term *interlanguage*: it is "a halfway house" between the first language and the target language, which is why it is called "*inter*language".

The first language is the source language. It provides the initial building materials (words and grammar rules); they gradually blend with materials from the target language.

Thus interlanguage is new forms that belong neither in the first language nor in the target language; for example, a student says *Don't do nothing* instead of *I am not doing anything*, or *I said I will do it* instead of *I said I would do it.*

In some situations a person's interlanguage can be more accurate, complex, and fluent, while in others, more primitive:

- ❖ if a student has enough time to plan their speech, their interlanguage is more accurate;

❖ in stressful situations (exams, job interviews, etc.), a student's speech may be less accurate or fluent than in informal ones (for example, in a conversation with another student who speaks English as their native language).

FOSSILIZATION

An interlanguage can *fossilize*, i.e. it can stop developing at some stage between a student's first language and their target language.

Adults often experience fossilization; it can occur even in motivated students, who have every opportunity for communication.

Why Does It Happen?
❖ Some people are unable to acquire a target language.
❖ Sometimes a person is happy with what they already know: they can convey a message and feel no need in developing their skills.

TEACHER TIPS

*It is **important** for teachers to understand that*
❖ interlanguage is influenced by a learner's first language; it may seem logical to them;
❖ students' performance gets better
  * when they have time to think about the form of their speech;
  * when they are not under pressure;
  * when the topic they discuss is interesting;
  * when they have positive attitude to their interlocutor;
  * when they have as much input as possible;
  * when they have as many opportunities for communication as possible.

*It is **also important** for teachers to understand that*

- ❖ improving students' interlanguage takes time because
    - * students need to establish connections between new information and what they already know;
    - * students improve their skills through practice and testing;
    - * automatic use of knowledge is achieved through continuous practice;
- ❖ new information should be carefully planned and properly presented:
    - * at first, the teacher should present a reasonable portion of new information;
    - * then the material should be reviewed;
    - * the teacher should offer their students various kinds of activities in order to develop stable skills;
    - * presenting the next portion of information, the teacher should explain how it is   related to what students already know.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. What is *interlanguage*?
2. On what do the accuracy, complexity and fluency of students' speech depend?

In pairs/small groups discuss

- ❖ whether fossilization is a serious problem;
- ❖ the ways of remedying fossilization.

Tasks

1. Develop a mini-lesson plan. Make sure that your material is interesting, you give your students sufficient input, and there is connection between new information and what the students already know. Design tasks for practicing and testing tasks.

2. Study the stages of a lesson (see the paragraph "new information should be … properly presented"). Give a mini-lesson, following all the instructions.

5. ENHANCING LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

EXPOSURE

Exposure is getting experience in the target language.

According to Becker (2007), SLA is a *special form of learning.* There are formal and informal learning settings. Formal situations are school, college, language courses, etc. Informal language settings are "natural" situations: everyday situations such as talking to shop assistants, asking for directions, communicating with people at a party, acquiring language through the media.

THE NOTICING HYPOTHESIS

The Noticing Hypothesis was proposed by Richard Schmidt.

A person learns certain vocabulary and grammar forms only when they *notice* them and will recognize them when they see them again.

Recognition helps a person to use these aspects of language in their speech.

According to Schmidt (2010) attention and awareness are factors in recognizing aspects of language.

AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

"Authentic materials are print, video, and audio materials students encounter in their daily lives, such as change of address forms, job applications, menus, voice mail messages, radio programs, and videos. Authentic materials are not created specifically to be used in the classroom, but they make excellent learning tools for students precisely because they are authentic."

Authentic materials. CALPRO, 2007

The advantages of authentic materials:

❖ they "help to prepare students for the 'real' world communication: students are exposed to the language used by native speakers";

❖ they "help to build the skills of listening and reading (receptive skills)";

❖ they are "a starting point for developing speaking and writing skills";

❖ they are "models of effective communication".

Lansford, 2014

BARCROFT'S FIVE PRINCIPLES
OF ESSENTIAL LANGUAGE VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION

Barcroft (2004: 200–8) maintains that

in input, a new word should be "presented frequently and repeatedly";

"meaning must be conveyed in a comprehensive manner";

learners should be given time to understand a given meaning before the teacher asks them to produce utterances on their own;

the teacher should present one problem at a time;

it is advisable to start from easy and shift to more challenging activities.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. What is *exposure to the target language*?

2. What is the essence of the Noticing Hypothesis?

3. It is stated above that *"Authentic materials are print, video, and audio materials students encounter in their daily lives, such as change of address forms, job applications, menus, voice mail messages, radio programs, and videos"* (Authentic materials. CALPRO, 2007). Can fiction, newspaper articles, blog texts, audioscripts in textbooks published in the English speaking countries be called authentic materials?

In pairs/small groups discuss

- ❖ whether SLA is a special form of learning;
- ❖ the statement *Attention and awareness are factors in recognizing aspects of language*;
- ❖ how authentic materials can help to develop a person's speaking/writing skills;
- ❖ how authentic materials are different from those used in your Student's book;
- ❖ Barcroft's principles of essential language vocabulary instruction.

Tasks

1. In your Student's book, pick an audioscript of a radio or TV program. Have you noticed any interesting vocabulary items or grammar forms in it? Suggest the ways of practicing them in classroom activities.

2. Look for some interesting authentic materials. Prepare a mini-lesson based on some of them. Give a mini-lesson and discuss it with your classmates.

EXTENSIVE READING

This section is based on Hammer's suggestions presented in his book
How to Teach English (2007: 99–109)

Reasons for reading:
> ➤ reading helps to enlarge students' vocabulary, to develop spelling and writing skills, to practice pronunciation;
> ➤ reading materials show students how to construct sentences, paragraphs, texts;
> ➤ good texts provide ideas for discussion.

According to Hammer **extensive reading** is reading texts (novels, web pages, newspapers, magazines, etc.) for both information and enjoyment; it helps to develop general reading skills. It is typically (but not necessarily) done outside classroom time.

Hammer maintains that **intensive reading** presupposes focus on the structure of language and on the construction of text, as well as on its content. Typically, it is preceded and/or followed by a range of tasks and study activities.

Harmer advises that
> ❖ students should read as often and as much as possible;
> ❖ student should pay attention to the content of a text, and only then to concentrate on its form;
> ❖ student should pay attention to the book cover, the headline, the web-page banner, etc. because they provide clues to the content of a given text;

❖ teacher should design/look for interesting activities, which would help to discuss a given text.

Harmer suggests the following types of motivating reading activities:

❖ reading puzzle – students read separate parts of a text; then, working as a team, they put them together and get the whole story;

❖ jigsaw reading – the teacher asks students to read different texts on the same topic; then students get together to discuss the whole problem;

❖ using newspaper – students read newspaper articles, analyze their content (taking into account the text, the headline, and pictures), express their opinions and attitudes;

❖ reading poetry – the teacher writes lines of a poem on separate strips of paper; working as a team, students reassemble the text of the poem and discuss it; students read different poems and compare their form and content;

❖ doing play extracts – students read an excerpt from a play/film, discuss it, and act it out;

❖ predicting the content of a text – the teacher draws a list of words from a text, provides pictures that illustrate the text and asks students to predict its content;

❖ other activities:

* answering comprehension questions;

* saying whether a statement is true or not;

* finding particular words in a text;

* presenting information in graphs and charts;

* predicting the end of a story;

* inferring the author's attitude, etc.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. Why is reading important?

2. What is the difference between *extensive* and *intensive reading*?

3. Do you read much? What type of reading do you prefer?

In pairs/small groups discuss

❖ the teacher's role in the process of reading;

❖ the advantages and disadvantages of

   (a) paper-based reading materials,

   (b) electronic reading materials;

❖ why some young people are reluctant to read.

Tasks

1. Read the list of motivating reading activities suggested by Harmer; look for or think of some other activities that can make the process of reading interesting.

2. Pick (an excerpt from) a short story or a play, a newspaper article, a text of your favourite blogger, a poem; study Hammer's suggestions on motivating teaching activities; prepare a task a give a mini-lesson. Discuss it in class.

EXTENSIVE LISTENING

This section is based on Hammer's suggestions presented in his book
***How to Teach English* (2007: 133–136, 142, 143)**

Reasons for listening:

➢ listening develops the ability to understand spoken English;

➢ listening helps to develop students' speaking skills;

> listening activities enable student to understand different Englishes (regional variants of English).

According to Hammer, **extensive listening** is listening that students typically do outside the classroom, either for pleasure or for some other purpose. As there is no teacher to provide any help, students have to rely on their own listening skills.

Hammer maintains that **intensive listening** is usually done in the classroom under the teacher's supervision; its aim is the development of listening skills.

Harmer advises that

> students should do as much listening as possible;
> teachers should help students prepare for listening – discuss the topic, use pictures, ask guiding questions, etc.;
> a record should be played more than once; difficult parts should be explained and discussed; students should be encouraged to ask questions;
> attention should be paid not only to the form, but, first and foremost, to the content of listening material;
> the first stage should be checking students' general understanding; the next one, listening for detailed information, paying attention to the language and pronunciation.

NB

Listening should not be done for the sake of listening; it is a way of receiving new information.

Harmer suggests the following types of motivating listening activities:

❖ live interviews – a visitor is invited to the class, students are encouraged to ask questions, to discuss different issues;

- ❖ recorded authentic interviews – students listen to a record of an interview and discuss the questions and answers;

- ❖ jigsaw listening – students work in groups; they listen to different records, all of which are about the same issue; then they compare their information;

- ❖ message-taking – students listen to a phone message (voicemail, a message giving the number of the on-call service, an airport announcement, a gallery guide, etc.) and say what they are going to do next;

- ❖ songs – students listen to songs and say what they are about and what mood they convey, fill in the blanks in the lines, suggest synonyms of particular words, etc.

- ❖ news – students listen to a news broadcast; first they say what topics are presented; then they listen for details and discuss the events;

- ❖ stories – students listen to people telling stories, discuss their content, predict the end, say what they would do in the same situation, etc.;

- ❖ monologues – students listen to a lecture and take notes, to interviews and discuss the opinions expressed, to dramatic or comic monologues, political debates, speeches at weddings, meetings, etc. and say whether they like them or not.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. Why is listening important?

2. Is it important to understand different Englishes?

3. What are the aims of *extensive* and *intensive listening*?

In pairs/small groups discuss

- ❖ the role of the teacher in listening process;
- ❖ strategies of classroom listening;
- ❖ why it is wrong to do listening for its own sake.

Tasks

1. Read the list of motivating listening activities suggested by Harmer; look for or think of some other activities that can make the process of listening interesting.

2. Pick an excerpt from a radio programme, an interview, a talk show, a piece of news on TV, a recorded story, a lecture, a song, etc. Study Hammer's suggestions on motivating teaching activities; prepare a task a give a mini-lesson. Discuss it in class.

PROJECT WORK

"Project-based learning is a dynamic classroom approach in which students actively explore real-world problems and challenges and acquire a deeper knowledge."

Project-based learning. EDUTOPIA

The following segment is based on the material presents in Woodson's article *How to Get Your ESL Students Excited with Project-based Learning*. See: FluentU English Educator Blog. www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-english/project-based-learning-esl/

Project-based learning is the "teaching and learning method (…) in which students learn by **actively exploring** and investigating the **real-life problems** and questions over an extended period of time".

The Role of the Teacher

According to Woodson, "the teacher works with their students throughout the entire project,

- ❖ giving feedback;
- ❖ correcting misconceptions;
- ❖ discussing and explaining difficult material;
- ❖ explaining and practicing grammar and writing.

The teacher gives support, but *a project is planned and run by students*".

Woodson suggests **Eight Steps to Complete a Project-based Learning Lesson:**

1. Expose students to engaging topics

"Doing a project is about solving a central question or problem. It is good if these questions/problems are posed by the students."

Discussing a book, a blog text, a real-life experience, a newspaper article can encourage students' thinking.

2. Come up with the central question

"Again, it is good if students can come up with the central question. If it presents a problem, the teacher should be ready to help."

NB

"*The question should not be 'Google-able'*" In other words, students will "find an answer to the question only through investigation and gathering information".

3. Develop a plan with clear steps to follow

The plan is "worked out by the teacher in close collaboration with students. The plan is flexible and may be changed as needed."

4. Draw up a schedule with flexible deadlines; it should be posted in the classroom

"Each step in the plan has to have a deadline. It is advisable that the deadlines are flexible. Make adjustments if needed. Yet students have to realize that deadlines should be met."

5. Do research on the project's central question

- ❖ carry out surveys and interviews;
- ❖ go on the Internet;
- ❖ read books, newspapers, magazines;
- ❖ watch films and TV programs, etc.

6. Do the monitoring and guide students through their research

Monitor the process of the research, give direction instructions and advice. Give model mini-lessons, when necessary or requested.

7. Demonstrate the results

Present the projects in class for further discussion. You may invite other classes and students' parents to demonstrate the results of your students' work. Encourage the presenters and audience to discuss the problem addresses in the project.

8. Analyze the results

Together with the students, discuss what has been achieved. Analyze things that have been missed and failures.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. What are the essential features of project-based learning?

2. Why is it important to develop a plan for the project?

3. What is your idea of flexible deadline?

In pairs/small groups discuss

❖ Woodson's statement: *a project is planned and run by students*;

❖ Woodson's warning: *the central question of a project should not be "Google-able"*;

❖ the ways of researching a project's central question;

❖ the ways of presenting a project's results.

Tasks

1. Pick an engaging topic and do a project.

2. Present your project in class.

3. Together with other students, analyze the achievements and shortcomings of the project.

TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

Task-Based Language Teaching (**TBLT**) is an alternative approach to language teaching: students are engaged in interaction while performing real-world tasks; TBLT presupposes the use of exclusively authentic materials.

According to Nunan (2004), **TBLT is based on the following principles**:

- teachers want to analyze learners' needs.
- teachers use authentic texts in the classroom.

- learners make use of their linguistic experience and intellectual potential.
- people learn language by making use of it.

Teachers want to analyze learners' needs

We use different methods training different professional/social groups (doctors, English teachers, air-traffic controllers, people who want to be able to communicate while travelling around the world, etc.)

<div align="right">

Breen, 1984

Ellis, 2003

Nunan, 2004

</div>

People learn language by making use of it

The target language is used in order to achieve a particular result (to book an airline ticket, to find some specific information on the Internet, etc.).

People try to accomplish the task, using the target language. They learn the language by using it in a particular context.

<div align="right">

Breen, 1984

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TBLT emphasizes the primacy of meaning

The speaker's main concern is the exchange of information and getting the meaning.

Yet, two types of tasks may be used in the classroom:

A. tasks not focused on a specific language form;

B. tasks focused on particular language features (specific vocabulary and grammar).

Type B tasks are *not drills*, but *meaningful activities*. They are designed to attract students' attention to *a particular language form*.

<div align="right">

Van den Branden, 2006

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Giving a partner directions, scheduling a meeting, planning a holiday are examples of task-based activities that can be used in the classroom.

QUESTIONS. DISCUSSION. TASKS

Answer the questions and explain your answer

1. Why is TBLT called an alternative approach to language teaching?

2. What is a task that is *not focused on a specific language form*?

In pairs/small groups discuss

❖ the strengths and limitations of TBLT;

❖ the following TBLT principles:

➢ teachers use authentic texts in the classroom;

➢ learners make use of their linguistic experience and intellectual potential;

❖ how drills are different from meaningful activities.

Tasks

1. Look for some other examples of TBLT activities that can be used in the classroom.

2. With a partner, think of at least three tasks. Use one of them to develop a plan of a mini-lesson; look for authentic materials (texts, pictures, audio and video materials). Give a mini-lesson. Then, discuss it in class.

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