Theories, Models, and Processes of Second-Language Acquisition

Overview

• Current research-based theories and models of second-language acquisition
• Cognitive and social strategies learners use in developing a second language
• The natural building process of language acquisition

Terminology to Know

• Affective filter
• BICS
• CALP
• CULP
• Idioms
• L-1/L-2/primary language/second language
• Communicative competence
Four Domains of Language

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

Receptive vs. Expressive

- Listening (receptive)
- Speaking (expressive)
- Reading (receptive)
- Writing (expressive)

Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition

Five main hypotheses:

- The natural order hypothesis
- The acquisition-learning hypothesis
- The monitor hypothesis
- The input hypothesis
- The affective filter hypothesis
Natural Order Hypothesis

Stages of First Language Acquisition

Normally developing children learn their home language in predictable stages. Language development is a continuum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Typical age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Babbling, No other animal does anything</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
<td>Repeating CV patterns</td>
<td>ba-ba, ma-ma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holophrastic (one word)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Naming words (nouns) used in context—overextensions or underextensions</td>
<td>Juice = &quot;I want juice&quot;; kitty = dog, lamb, cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-word stage</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>Combining words and using set phrases</td>
<td>BIG juice, no way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-word stage</td>
<td>2-6 years</td>
<td>Overgeneralization of the regular case</td>
<td>I runned to the fence; foots</td>
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Activity

- Quick write: For two minutes, write about ways in which you predict first language acquisition and second language acquisition to be different and similar.

Suggested Answer

Your answer should include some of the following:

- Both develop in predictable stages
- L-1 (primary language) learners begin with babble
- L-2 (second language) learners don't babble in L-2
- L-2 (second language) have fewer patient models of L-2 academic language
- L-1 (primary language) learners develop in predictable stages
- L-2 (second language) learners develop in predictable stages
- Many patient social-language models in L-1 (primary language)
### The Natural Order of Acquisition Hypothesis

The second language emerges in much the same order as the first language.

### Natural Order Hypothesis

#### Stages of L-2 Language Acquisition

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<tr>
<td>Silent/Receptive or Preproduction Stage</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
<td>Responds by pointing to an object, talking, or person, performing an act, such as getting holding: &quot;yes/no.&quot;</td>
<td>Point to the country on the map that is north of the United States.</td>
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<td>Early Production Stage</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Uses one- or two-word phrases, short answers to simple yes/no, either/or, or who/what/where questions.</td>
<td>Do you prefer to drink cola or milk? What is your brother's name?</td>
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<td>Speech Emergence Stage</td>
<td>1 year (about 3,000 words)</td>
<td>Longer phrases and simple sentences; asks and answers simple questions.</td>
<td>I need my book. Can I go to the bathroom?</td>
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<td>Intermediate Language Proficiency Stage</td>
<td>1 year (6,000 words)</td>
<td>Longer sentences, simple opinions, asks for clarification.</td>
<td>I agree with Marco. I need to wash my hands; may I go to the bathroom?</td>
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### Natural Order Hypothesis, Continued

#### Categories to assess students' proficiency

- Grammar
- Speech
- Pronunciation and intonation
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

- Krashen distinguishes between acquisition—i.e., the informal way in which we “pick up” a language through listening—and interacting to make meaning
- Krashen’s description of learning a new language involves more formal instruction in and about a language

The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

- The second language is acquired in much the same way as the first language: by using it
- Formal instruction may be useful but is not essential for acquiring the second language

The Monitor Hypothesis

- As second language learners develop more proficiency in the new language, they begin to self-correct or self-monitor their speech to be more like that of native speakers.
The Input Hypothesis

- Language that is not understandable is called noise
- Language learners connect new language to language and concepts they already know
- Comprehensible input consists of the ‘i+1 formula’—that is, linguistic forms just "one level" above what the learner already knows

Affective Filter Hypothesis

- Krashen hypothesizes that a high level of stress and anxiety creates a filter that impedes learning
- When the student’s affective filter is low, the language learner is likely to be motivated and confident and a lot of language learning will take place

Implications for Teaching Activity

Think about the five hypotheses we have just seen. Sort them into the category that best describes each one.

1. a) The natural order hypothesis
2. b) The affective filter hypothesis
3. c) The monitor hypothesis
4. d) The input hypothesis
5. e) The acquisition-learning hypothesis

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