Fall 2008 *Issues in EFL* Vol.6 No.2

Contents

Ⅲ. Thesis Abstracts

Fall 2008 Issues in EFL Vol.6 No.2

Human Perception:

Mental Models and Cultural Models

Young Seon Son
TESOL 4th semester

The workings of the human perceptual system, and how the many fields of human intelligence have developed are great mysteries. Human perception is ultimately all about the study of humans. It covers both physical and mental areas. Language and behavior are the final products of an entire complicated course of perceptions and representations. Therefore, any single article is too short to cover those puzzling mechanisms. The purpose of this review is to recognize general idea of information processing. Besides, understanding of the phenomena should not just be regarded as a piece of knowledge about psychology, but valued as a route to more considerable understanding of other people including students as teachers. That, in a sense, will be the beauty of learning humane studies.

1. Introduction

The flow of human learning theory has been evolving since modern philosophy started with René Descartes (1596-1650), since the main topic in philosophy was the theory of knowledge. Accordingly, the source of knowledge became debatable: do we learn from experience or is some knowledge present in us at birth? Unlike empiricists and rationalists, early experimental psychologists like Robert Thomson (1968) attempted to combine experimental view with philosophy of mind into a scientific account of human thought. One of the experimental scientists, Edward L. Thorndike claimed that learning typically occurs by trial and error. The movement of behaviorism was wide spread over the world. Watson, Skinner, Clark Hull

and Tolman popularized the idea that learning is regarded as a behavior. In the study of human cognitive functions, behaviorist theories were replaced by cognitive theories in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In addition, neuroscientists created new way of explaining mental procedures as connectionism and PDP (Parallel Distributed Processing) models.

Since the question about how humans perceive information and alter it into thought, in short the process of reasoning has been of interest in the field of learning, cognitive scientists and neuroscientists have paid more attention to schematize a series of human perception. Humans perceive information through sensory systems. Five senses - seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling – identify how the outer world looks, sounds, feels, tastes and smells. The information these sensory organs get is sent to the brain, and the brain interprets this information and connects what is happening to what previously happened. This is the simple mechanism of perception and this is the reason why everyone has a different embedded information system according to his or her own experiences and environment. All different signals arrive at the sense organs, and are converted into meaningful perceptual experiences.

However, there is no physical machine that is capable of recognizing and measuring this invisible information. Therefore, we try to figure out the operation of the brain by using an indirect method, called modeling. Mental models and cultural models are terms that refer to models of the mind. Peter Senge (1990) said that "Mental models are deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting." Bartlett's theory was:

> We have mental or cognitive schemata, organizations typically of common-or-garden general knowledge about the world. These organizations of knowledge are dependent on our particular social and cultural background, and also on the particular purposes that we pursue in the world.

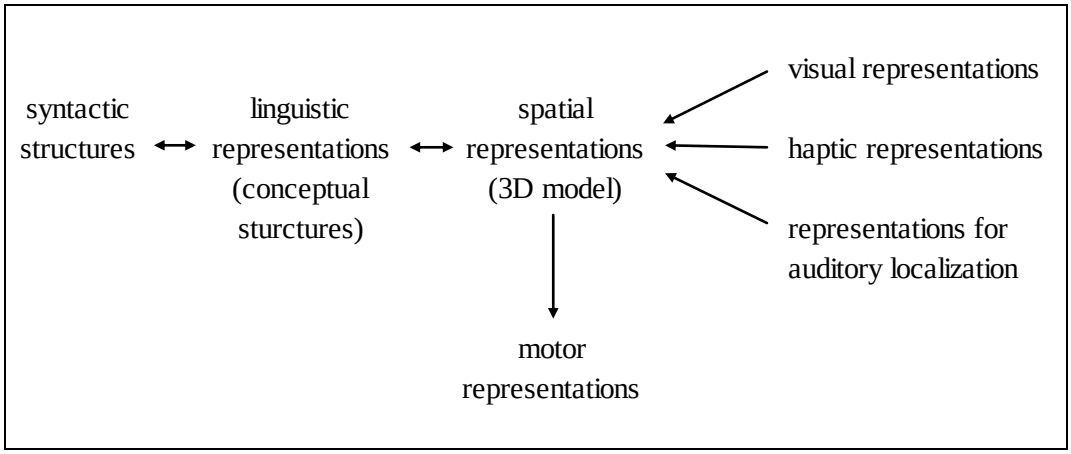
2. Mental Information Processing

We believe that we perceive the world directly, not a representation of it. However, this is illusory. Max Clowes (1972) claimed that "perception is nothing more than successful hallucination." What we perceive depends on both what is in the world and what is in our heads. Not only brain's information processing but visual and auditory recognition is very limited. For example, we think that the Moon in the night is white. This is because the Moon looks white in our built-in interpretation that an object is white if it reflects more light than its surroundings. Reverend Bayes (1982) referred to this phenomenon as 'prior'. He presented an important tool for understanding neural networks and brain. Bayes' theorem describes the kind of computation the brain may be carry out when we infer the existence of an outside world from our noisy sensory input.

As most scientists do not doubt that the brain is the organ responsible for behavior and mental processes, connectionist theories present a style of computation and knowledge representation. Noam Chomsky (1975) has called the division of the mind into "mental organs." Jerry Fodor (1983) called the "modularity" of the mind. This physical view makes it possible to describe how information in the brain connects with neurons to produce a meaningful behavior or language. The thoughts are considered to be built from concepts, which we use to categorize things in the world. Moreover, we speak languages, decide with logic, solve problems and are creative.

A series from recognition to representation takes most of sensory organs. Until we produce some language or behavior, the relationship between spatial language and nonlinguistic spatial understanding or cognition is compatible. Once we form visual, haptic, or auditory stimulus, spatial representations occur to activate motor and conceptual language representations. We can touch what we see, look at what we hear and avoid obstacles. Therefore, we assume that spatial representations must translatable directly into a form of motor representation. Figure 1 shows the relationships between levels of representation.

Figure 1. *Relationships between levels of representation*



To understand the workings of the mind, we have to study the forms of information the brain processes, stores, and retrieves. Information enters the mind and leaves with different patterns such as movement of muscles. Since these different forms of information come in and out, the mind transforms information in various ways. While going through this process, mental representation employs its own method of thinking and reasoning.

There is still little consensus about the development of mental logic for reasoning. **Brain & O'Brian (1991) have made a claim that mental logic is the means for "going beyond the information as given to draw inferences". On the contrary, Johnson-Laird (1983, 1990; Johnson-Laird & Byren, 1991) has presented a general theory of reasoning that includes propositional reasoning. It is a schematic model of reasoning that denies the existence of any sort of mental logic or reasoning schemas. The mental models he is applying in the models are an in-built machinery that might underlie the development of the linguistic and reasoning ability.

3. A Framework of Thinking

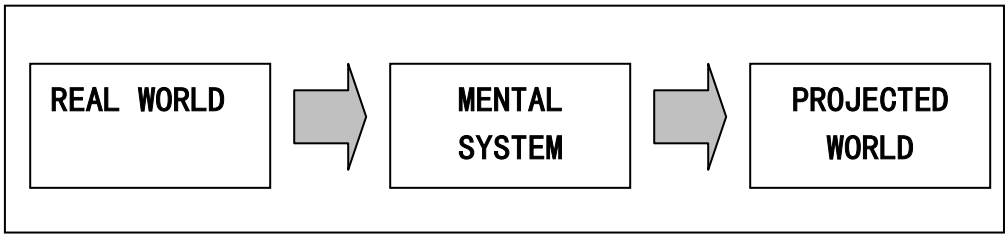
3.1 Three Worlds

The world we understand is not the world itself. We have our own mental system which filters the real world through it. Most of the time, we misunderstand what we see since it tends to be difficult to distinguish the projected world from real world. This is a similar illusion to one we often face which is called 'transparency illusion'. We normally accept that the images that the TV shows are real images, but they are not. Besides, little children or animals like cats would consider that there must be someone actually inside the TV set.

In short, three distinctive worlds are the real world, the mental system and the projected world. It might be controversial how we have to deal with the mental system as one independent world or not, but this is a separate dimension which provides an internal representation of the world even though it is not a miniature world.

The mental system does various jobs through its own internal processing; thinking, figuring things out, deducing things, imaging things, etc. Since we perceive direct stimulus into the surface of the sense organs, it is processed by the mental systems. They find information from previous experiences and build new information based on these. The levels of perception differentiate by people's different knowledge, but our long-term goal is try to bring the projected world as close to the real world as possible. Even though we are surrounded by the same single real world, people perceive and understand it differently by using different mental systems.

Figure 2. *Three worlds*



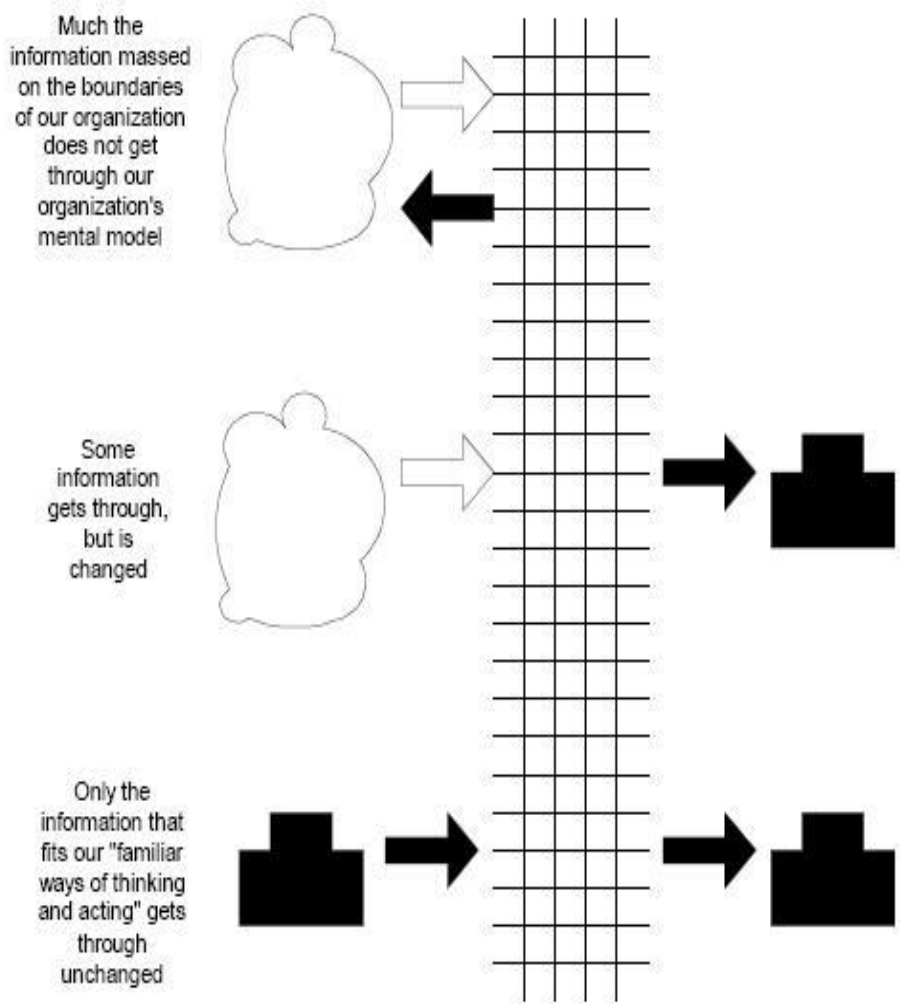
3.2 Mental Models

Cognitive science tries to understand how human perceive, decide and construct ideas and behaviors in a various environments. The Scottish psychologist Kenneth Craik (1943) raised the argument that human beings translate external events into internal models and reason by manipulating these symbolic representations. He wrote that the mind constructs "small-scale models" of reality that it uses to anticipate events, to reason, and to underlie explanation. He considered a mental model to be a dynamic representation or simulation of the world. The term ‘mental model’ was also mentioned by Craik in his book, The Nature of Explanation, in 1943, but it did not draw much attention until cognitive science appeared in around the 1980s. Most cognitive scientists following Craik have chosen the concept that the mind is a symbolic system.

According to Peter Senge (1990), “Mental models are deeply held internal images of how the world works, images that limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting.” As figure 2 shows, the world we see is possibly different to the one we interpret by our own process. We believe everything we are faced with is reality, but they are a filtered reality through our mental system. Therefore, everyone can have a different impression or understanding of the same occurrence. Therefore, the mental system seems to be a cognitive organ which processes all information unconsciously. Mental models have several key characteristics.

- Mental models include what a person thinks is true, not necessarily what is actually true.
- Mental models are similar in structure to the thing or concept they represent.
- Mental models allow a person to predict the results of his actions.
- Mental models are simpler than the thing or concept they represent. They include only enough information to allow accurate predictions.

Figure 2. *Mental models*



3.3 Basic Properties of Mental Models

3.3.1 Analysis and Catalysis

Louis Hjelmslev (1943-1960) presented a distinction between Analysis and Catalysis in his Prolegomena to a Theory of Language. Analysis is breaking-down while catalysis is building-up. Analytical process is observed in linguistic activity. For example, texts are broken down into sentences, sentences into clauses, clauses into phrases, phrases into words, words into morphemes, phonemes into phonological components. Not only linguistic

entities but in everything else humans break things down in order to distinguish what they are. We are often faced with words or situations that are distinctive by only little tiny dot or slash. Surprisingly, that does not cause any difficulty understanding things, which means our ability to analyze must be highly sophisticated. On the other hand, catalysis is a constructing process. However, this procedure does not reflect the steps followed in analysis. Therefore, the consequence could be different from the initial one.

3.3.2 Introjective Models

Introjective models are based on the belief that humans construct internal systems or beliefs first and introject them outside of the world unconsciously. Some model-builders assume that humans have their own linguistic expressions, such as written expression, built into their cognitive systems. This is somewhat similar to transparency illusion in that the cognitive systems mediate the external world and through output internal understanding is transparent. Therefore, the cognitive system plays the role of a vending machine. Whatever output is produced must pre-exist in the internal system.

3.3.3 Descriptive Process

Descriptive process take place by linking several co-occurring elements. Most linguistic elements become meaningful via this process. This is a basic idea of connectionism.

3.3.4 Metaphorical Models

Metaphor is also one way of understanding something new. Metaphor compares seemingly unrelated subjects to familiar concepts. It is useful when we try to understand something that is complex or unfamiliar. We often compare the structure of the brain to a spider web. It is a very economical description explaining a complicated concept with well known easy one. This is widely used in literature for expressing one’s emotion or describing situations.

There are various ways to classify different features of mental models.

Carroll and Olson (1988) presented four kinds of mental models. Comparing these to Lamb's classification above, many ideas seem to more or less coincide. The four kinds of mental model identified by Carroll & Olson (1988) and presented in the lecture were:

- Surrogate: A model that mimics the output of a system, but not the internal workings.
- Metaphor models: You understand a product by comparing it to something else that you already know.
- Glass Box models: Somewhere between a surrogate and metaphor model. A composite of different metaphors that together can describe the system.
- Network representations: Understanding a product as a series of states with transitions between them.

3.4 Cultural Models

Cultural models are types of "lenses" through which our view of the world is shaped. People get affected by these frames in the way they speak, think, and behave. Like mental models, they are another mechanism through which we perceive and represent outer surroundings.

Cultural models are closely related to anthropological field in that this idea has been evolving as human beings did. Therefore it is necessary to explore the various perspectives from anthropology, linguistics, and cognitive psychology for a better understanding this cognitive phenomenon. According to the anthropologist Roy D'Ardrade, 'cultural models' are defined as a cognitive schema that is intersubjectively shared by a social group. (1989; 809) This statement emphasizes the interrelationship between culture and cognition. Therefore, culture does play an important role in the formation and broadening of human cognition beyond its own cognitive schema. According to Kronenfeld, "cultural models" is a term that has come to apply to culturally standardized and shared/distributed cognitive structures for explaining or structuring action. Moreover, cultural models as variously shared and distributed cognitive structures relating behavior to

knowledge, values, goals, emotional states, context of action, context of the presumed knowledge of other involved parties, and so forth.

This is how humans reason about the world. Therefore, a cultural model is another system by which we understand why people vary according to their innate or acquired circumstances. Culture in this perspective is a presupposed world and people who are born with a designated role tend to follow the intended route. It is internalized as a norm within the society. Culture also involves information and roles that offer individuals multiple models for understanding world. This is not decisive but initially the cultural system gives influence on forming our way of thinking. Therefore, it is considered as another format of cognitive schema.

4. Can thinking be taught?

If we assume that humans have a semantic mental system filtering and connecting the world with their own mental system, thinking skills should be considered as one of the important areas we are to develop. As Baron (1988) and others have pointed out, teaching students to think is viewed as one of the key features of education. Dewey, in his book *How We Think* claimed that the main purpose of education is to teach children to think reflectively and critically. Maybe the biggest question people who want to teach thinking skills must confront is whether thinking should be taught as a general skill. According to Baron, heuristics are especially effective in those who are motivated to think well, and curiosity and open-minded thinking empower the development of thinking. However, he provided little evidence that the teaching methods would be successful.

Then, how effective have other fields of study been in developing thinking skills? In other words, whether particular knowledge transfers from the classroom to daily life. Nisbett, Fong, Lehman and Cheng (1987) examined how the effects of different courses of students' learning transfer to thinking. Unfortunately, although they found some improvement from psychology, most of the courses did not have much transferring effect on thinking.

Despite the effort to teach thinking, the systematic development and assessment of realistic courses is still at an exploratory stage. There is a widely known project by Nickerson et al. (1985), even though they are not mutually exclusive.

1. *Cognitive operations approaches*, which attempt to identify, from a cognitive point of view, the component skills that contribute to thinking, and to train people in the use of those skills.
2. *Heuristics-oriented approaches*, which emphasize general methods of problem solving, as described by expert problem solvers, or by people trying to program computers to solve problems.
3. *Formal thinking approaches*, which claim that people need training in what Piaget called formal operational thinking and attempt to teach it, primarily as part of conventional subject-matter courses.
4. *Symbolic facility approaches*, which focus specifically on symbol-manipulation skills.
5. *Thinking-about-thinking approaches*, which attempt to improve thinking about getting people to think about the nature of thought.

The CoRT (Cognitive Research Trust) has also presented some tools for effective thinking with an emphasis on inventive, creative or divergent thinking. However, much of the research on teaching thinking suggests that the transfer of newly acquired expertise is limited. It is difficult to teach global skills that improve general thinking ability.

5. Application

5.1 Mental models

This idea seems to be abstract explanation of the cognitive system, but technically, many varied fields like Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and

Artificial Intelligence etc. have adopted these concepts to further the study in its main area of concern, usability. Usability is the effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction with which specified users achieve specified goals in a particular environment (Dix, 1998). All this models are based on perceptive and receptive processes inside the human cognitive system that are mostly about learning and teaching where interaction is involved. Therefore, not only understanding the phenomena but applying and reinterpreting to our field would be meaningful.

5.1.1 Simplicity

Since mental models simplify reality, the contents of teaching and learning should be simplified. A well-organized procedure supports students' understanding and allows them to work efficiently.

5.1.2 Familiarity

When the surrounding including place, materials, and familiar people, the students have a high chance of building on prior knowledge, especially knowledge gained from experience interacting in the world. The use of concepts and methods that they already understand from their real world experiences allows them to get into the classes quickly and make progress faster.

5.1.3 Availability

The instructor should provide visual cues, reminders and other aids. Humans are much better at recognition than recall. Therefore, this setting will allow students to instantly connect what they see rather than relying on their own memory.

5.1.4 Feedback

It is necessary to give feedback about the results. Psychologically, there are many different variables controlling the way that feedback is given, but in the sense that effective feedback is the main issue dealing with usability of mental models. Any feedback a student gets that supports their current mental

model strengthens it.

5.2 Cultural models

Cultural models are explored in many areas taking perspectives from anthropology, artificial intelligence, linguistics, and cognitive psychology. As culture involves a flow of information about life, a lot of research related to human behaviors is studied to understand cognitive phenomena. This includes motivation, gender, anger, marriage, romantic love, etc. that culture contains and unconsciously affects human's thought and behavior. Schank and Abelson (1977) said that cultural models combine motives, emotions, goals, mechanisms, classification information, etc. In each case, cross-linking to separate cognitive structures within which these separate entities are organized, structured and classified into possible actions.

In classroom management, raising students' motivation is one of the most important goals. Affective area gives influence on the development and achievement of classes. As a teacher, good performance is not just highly required proficiency but thoughtful understanding of various situations is prerequisite. In the contemporary Korean society, we are on the way to an enormous change in ethnicity, relationships among people, and ideological variety etc. Teachers need to be exposed to new cultural backgrounds and to intercommunicate with the flow of tendency. The boundary of culture is getting broad which means teachers in class would have higher chances to face new cultural variables, not only simple gender difference but unexpected types of factors acquired by cultural education. Teachers' attitude toward awareness of students' difference is basic but easy to forget. Teachers should keep this in mind as a reminder.

5.2.1 Social cognition

Social cognition has its roots in social psychology which attempts "to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others" (Allport, 1985, p. 3). This is how people perceive and interpret social information. Social representation is also referred to as a schema. The

physical process of activation of social cognition is the same as any other information in the brain, which gets activated by priming and firing up with thousands of neuron's connecting each part. Concepts like marriage, group membership, academic tenure and debt are socially constructed fitting into the groups people belong to. It is not just a "tendency to behave in certain ways", but organizing principles that guide or force choices among an infinite range of possible actions. Cheney and Seyfath (1990) claimed that we can investigate the acquisition of such concepts, their cross-cultural realizations and their evolutionary antecedents in primate societies.

Neuropsychological studies have shown that social cognition has an intimate relationship with brain function since when people have brain injury; their social interaction is fatally affected. In this perspective, some aspects of social behavior are innate while culturally influenced social aspects are acquired in the cultural context. Since this schema is reciprocal in that social cognition is formed among different environment and personal factor.

6. Classroom Implications

Both ideas are basically same in that people use different mental representations to understand phenomena. Norman (in Gentner and Stevens, 1983) describes them as follows: "In interacting with the environment, with others, and with the artifacts of technology, people form internal, mental models of themselves and of the things with which they are interacting. These models provide predictive and explanatory power for understanding the interaction."

We often emphasize a student-centered view of the class. If the models are highly valid, as much as we make an effort to organize the class for students' perspective, we are hardly able to access their ways or levels of understanding, because no one would have same mental system. The important thing is that the methods we have discussed above are quite generalized. Using metaphor is one of the most convenient styles to perceive new concept. Therefore, it is necessary to be familiar with those several ways

of understanding. Besides, those are considered as mental processes, it takes time. It is natural for beginners to take time to make connections with their knowledge and finally make out. For example, little children need long time to figure out simple arithmetic problems that we often do automatically without much thinking. Experienced drivers do not stop to review the order of actions required to operate their car. The skill seems to be acquired instinctively, but it took some time to get used to doing it unconsciously.

To use these cognitive phenomena effectively in the classroom there are several theories we need to go over.

First, as the usability of mental models pointed out already, the contents should activate students' schema. This learning theory views organized knowledge as an elaborate network of abstract mental structures which represent ones understanding of the world. Here are some principles to apply:

- It is important to teach general knowledge and generic concepts. A large proportion of learner difficulties can be traced to insufficient general knowledge, especially in cross-cultural situations.
- Teachers must help learners build schemata and make connections between ideas. Discussion, songs, role play, illustrations, visual aids, and explanations of how a piece of knowledge applies are some of the techniques used to strengthen connections.
- Since prior knowledge is essential for the comprehension of new information, teachers either need to help students build the prerequisite knowledge, or remind them of what they already know before introducing new material.
- Schemata grow and change as new information is acquired.
- Learners feel internal conflict if they are trying to assimilate schemata which contradict their previous suppositions. Teachers need to understand and be sympathetic to this tension.
- Deep-seated schemata are hard to change. An individual will often prefer to live with inconsistencies rather than to change a deeply-held value or belief.

Secondly, task-based learning or problem-based learning could activate students' cognitive process because these types of methodology give students more chances to think and produce the result rather than approaching with direct and explicit methods. This is one important part of learning as raising intrinsic motivation. Savoie and Hughes (1994), writing about a process that they used to design a problem-based learning experience for their students, describe the following actions for creating such a process:

- Identify a problem suitable for the students.
- Connect the problem with the context of the students' world so that it presents authentic opportunities.
- Organize the subject matter around the problem, not the discipline.
- Give students responsibility for defining their learning experience and planning to solve the problem.
- Encourage collaboration by creating learning teams.
- Expect all students to demonstrate the results of their learning through a product or performance.

Thirdly, learner-centered education provides a student-focused teaching and learning environment. The idea that instructors attempt to maximize students' personal ability and development facilitate flexible access to the class surroundings. The initial base about learner-centered education begins with understanding the educational contexts from which a student comes. By applying this approach, students are encouraged to join the process of learning. The learner-centered environment explores meaning and content knowledge through personal and interpersonal discovery.

In *A Different Kind of Classroom* (1992), Robert Marzano makes six assumptions about creating a learning-centered classroom:

1. Instruction must reflect the best of what we know about how learning occurs.
2. Learning involves a complex system of interactive processes that includes five types of thinking - the five dimensions of learning.

3. What we know about learning indicates that instruction focusing on large, interdisciplinary curricular themes is the most effective way to promote learning.
4. The K-12 curriculum should include explicit teaching of higher-level attitudes and perceptions and mental habits that facilitate learning.
5. A comprehensive approach to instruction includes at least two distinct types of instruction: teacher-directed and student-directed.
6. Assessment should focus on students' use of knowledge and complex reasoning rather than their recall of low-level information.

In the long run, task-based teaching and learner-centered classroom management share same philosophy of education. (Rod Ellis***) Schema theory also respects the aspect of difference and individuality and emphasizes the importance of students' cognitive activity. They are the concepts which are more interested in stimuli of cognitive field.

7. Conclusion

Johnson-Laird wrote:

> When Craik (1943) argued that people reason by carrying out thought experiments on internal methods, the idea seemed dangerously heterodox. Now the range of phenomena that mental models are used to explain is growing rapidly. They include metacognition (Gilhoodly 1986), consciousness and the self (Oatley 1981), intentional behavior and free will (John-Laird 1988), and psychopathy (Power and Champion 1986). What remains as perhaps the major puzzle is how an entity can have recursive access to a model of its own performance . . .

Mental models and cultural models are valuable fields of study for cognitive science. Even though they are difficult to validate, the usability

and effectiveness of the main idea are adopted to many new fields. Psychologically, cultural and mental entities are accepted as a key to motivate the way of human behavior and everything else.

8. Limitations

Cognitive scientists have argued that the mind constructs mental models as a result of perception, imagination and knowledge, and the comprehension of discourse. The idea of Mental Models is often appealing to us because it seems to make sense and offer practical and useful insights into the way people interact with world. However, there are some critical questions we should consider also. Do people really have mental models? How much does this actually help instructor? As long as mental models are not a physical but superficial system, uncertain characteristics are the characteristics of mental models. They are considered incomplete and constantly evolving.

Cultural models have culture that does not automatically direct personal behavior. Holland, who was going to explain strong bonds between cultrue and romantic desire (motives), fails to explore how the major principles of romantic love reflect prevalent values of individualism and self-expression. It is important to indicate the cultural base construct in the structural dichotomy between personal belief and social system. Culture should be hightly influential on a child's value system like the parents' way of thinking affects the child, but the range of acceptance including expression or interpretation varies.

The incomplete and unstable answer for human cognitive variety might be annoying but this is the most charming and mysterious quality of human beings. What would be the decisive factors which enable to explain how our mental system works? We might be tracing the path of human evolution.

References

Carroll, J. & Olson, J. (1988). *Mental Models in Human-Computer Interaction.* Handbook of Human-computer Interaction.

Oatley, K.(1978). *Perceptions and Representations.* London: The Free Press.

Jackendoff, R. (1992). *Languages Of The Mind.* Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Morgan, M. (2003) The Space Between Ears. New York: OUP.

Granham, A. & Oakhill, J (1994). *Thinking and Reasoning*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Demetriou, A. & Efklides, A. (Eds.) (1994). *Intelligence, Mind, and Reasoning*. Amsterdam: North-Holland.

Cox, C. (2008). *Teaching Language Arts.* (6th Eds.) California State University: Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data.

Peter, H. L. & Donald, A. N. (1977). *Human Information Processing*. (2ne Eds.)London: Academic Press.

Morgan, M. (2003). *The Space Between Our Ears.* Oxford: OUP.

Gigerenzer, G. & Hoffrage, U. (1995). How to Improve Bayesian Reasoning Without Instruction: Frequency Formats. Psychological Review. *102*(4), 684–704.

Johnson, L.(1983*).* Mental models: towards a cognitive science of language, inference and consciousness. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johnson, L. (1980). Mental models in cognitive science. *Cognitive science 4, 71-115*. University of Sussex.

Davidson, M. J., Dove, L. & Weltz, J. (1999). Mental models and usability. *Cognitive psychology 404*. Depaul University.

Craik, K. (1914-1945). The Mental Model Theory of Thinking and Reasoning. Retrieved from http://www.tcd.ie/Psychology/Ruth_Byrne/mental_models/index.html

Arango, J. B. (1998). Mental models. *Algodones Associates Inc.*.

Young I. (2008) *Mental Models: Aligning Design Strategy with Human Behavior.* Rosenfeld Media.

Gentner, D., & Albert, L. (1983). *Mental Models*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Schema theory of learning. (1999). Retrieved from http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/literacy/ImplementALiteracyProgram/SchemaTheoryOfLearning.htm

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. *Learner-Centered Classrooms, Problem-*

Based Learning, and the Construction of Understanding and Meaning by Students. Retrieved from http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/content/cntareas/science/sc3learn.htm

Arizona Faculties Council (AFC). (2000). *Definition of Learner-Centered Education.* Retrieved from http://www.abor.asu.edu/4_special_programs/lce/afc-defined_lce.htm

Task based language teaching. Ellis, R. University of Auckland Retrieved from http://www.tki.org.nz/r/esol/esolonline/research/prof_read/taskbased.ppt#28

Meaningful Classroom Interaction through Drama

Hye Seung Ha
TESOL 4th semester

Students are rarely allowed to view a text as anything but an abstract, flat piece of printed matter, isolated from and irrelevant to their lives. Thus they never really enter into the text or believe in the character's lives and motivations (Wessels, 1987). *The characters in a dramatic work are real, live people, and situations and issues arising in a literary work are pertinent to the student's own life. Thus drama, the art of acting is an efficient, effective means of helping students achieve a deeper level of insight and truly assimilate works of literature. The main reason for using drama is the study of a language as a means of communication implicitly calls for understanding of the culture of the target language, for communicative purpose rather than purely linguistic motives.*

1. Introduction

Learning takes place in environments where students truly understand the nature of the tasks they are undertaking. When individuals understand and freely invest the effort needed to complete a task or activity, meaningful, authentic learning occurs. When learning tasks are relevant and embedded in a meaningful context, students see them as more than simply busywork. Tasks that require intentional, active, constructive, cooperative, and authentic learning process will result in more meaningful learning (Jonassen, Howland, Marra, Crismond, 2008).

For a number of years various premises have underpinned primary classroom practice. The belief that children learn by doing, by being actively involved in their learning, and a belief in the process of learning being as

important as the content, have given rise to discovery methods and activity-based learning(Kao & O'Neil, 1998). Learning how to learn has been a key method. In the classroom we see children involved in doing activities through which their conceptual understanding and their language ability can grow. The most important thing is a distinction between meaningful and purposeful (Kao & O'Neil, 1998). This paper will describe effective ways to develop meaningful interactions through drama activities such as a situational role-play.

2. Literature view

2.1 Why use drama?

Drama integrates language skills in a natural way. Careful listening is a key feature. Spontaneous verbal expression is integral to most of the activities, and many of them require reading and writing, both as part of the input and the output.

Moreover, it integrates verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication, thus bringing in an intellectual aspect of learning. It draws upon cognitive and affective domains, thus restoring the importance of feeling as well as thinking. By fully contextualizing the language, it brings the classroom interaction to life through a focus on meaning.

Furthermore, the emphasis on whole-person learning and multi-sensory input helps learners to capitalize on their strengths and to extend their range. In doing so, it offers unequalled opportunities for catering to learner differences. Drama fosters self-awareness (and awareness of others), self-esteem and confidence; and through this, motivation is developed. Motivation is likewise fostered and sustained through the variety and sense of expectancy generated by the activities. Importantly, there is a transfer of responsibility for learning from teacher to learners—which is where it

belongs—and drama is an enjoyable experience (Mayley and Duff, 2005).

2.2 Communicative competence

Communicative competence has been a widely discussed construct in the second language acquisition literature since the early 1970s and provides the theoretical framework for communicative language teaching (CLT). Hymes (1971, 1972) first proposed the term *communicative competence* to characterize appropriate use of language in social contexts, while Savignon (1972, 1983) used the term to distinguish between a language learners' mastery of isolated grammar rules and the more complex ability to negotiate meaning and interact with other students (Savignon, 1991).

Canale and Swain (1980) defined four components of communicative competence that are required to allow the second language learner to communicate effectively with other speakers of the target language(L2). The first, *grammatical competence,* refers to the learner's knowledge of the structure of the language and the second, *discourse competence* allows the language learner to use knowledge of that grammar system to connect sentences in a meaningful manner. The last two components of communicative competence give insight into the more functional aspects of the language. *Sociolinguistic competence* is based on the knowledge of the social and cultural rules of the L2 environment, whereas *strategic competence* provides strategies such as repetition, hesitation, fillers, guessing and body language, which serve to compensate for any breakdown in communication.

Brown (1994) suggested that in its primary form, communicative competence consists of (1) organizational competence (grammatical and discourse); (2) pragmatic competence (functional and sociolinguistic); (3) strategic competence; and (4) psychomotor skills (pronunciation).

2.3 Multiple Intelligences

Gardner, a developmental psychologist, offers an alternative to the notion of monolithic intelligence in which cultural context plays a role. He states that

"intelligence is a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture" (Gardner, 1999, pp.34-35). Moreover, each individual learns differently through linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence, naturalist intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and an existential intelligence (Gardner, 1999).

These areas represent the range of intelligent human functioning. While each area is identified as a discrete intelligence, each also interacts with others in complex ways to produce the richness of human behavior and achievement.

Based on the notion that drama is an effective tool in the teaching and learning of foreign and second languages because of its capacity to gainfully utilize multiple intelligences, in the following the researcher offer some thoughts on how bodily-kinesthetic intelligence can be tapped in a drama-based language classroom.

We do not necessarily need words in order to communicate, but can express joy, sadness, love, hate – indeed the whole range of human experience – with our bodies. Moreover, this shows especially in the art forms of dance and theater, in which the body and its capacity to create meaning through movement and/or stillness are of central importance.

Furthermore, the signaling possibilities of our bodies are endless. In the play for example, even when words are not spoken during performance, the audiences can enjoy what is unfolding before their eyes and be fascinated by what the actors express through movement and stillness.

One of the examples is *pantomime*, a form of dramatic art. Pantomime work in the classroom sensitizes learners to nonverbal aspects of communication. They train the ability to recognize nonverbal signs, including culturally embedded gestures, and learn to communicate despite lacking certain language skills. Pantomime work offers the opportunity to physically connect academic endeavor with a student's individual experience. Moreover, pantomime can become a starting and reference point for further classroom

activities that involve speaking, listening, writing and reading.

2.4 Input Hypothesis & Interaction Hypothesis

The Input Hypothesis is Krashen's attempt to explain how the learner acquires a second language. According to this hypothesis, the learner improves and progresses along the 'natural order' when he/she receives second language 'input' that is one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence. For example, if a learner is at a stage 'i', then acquisition takes place when he/she is exposed to 'Comprehensible Input' at a level of 'i + 1'. Since not all of the learners can be at the same level of linguistic competence at the same time, Krashen suggests that natural communicative input is the key to designing a syllabus, ensuring in this way that each learner will receive some 'i + 1' input that is appropriate for his/her current stage of linguistic competence (Schütz, 2007).

The underlying foundation of Long's interaction hypothesis is the idea of interaction as promoting a specific type of input that learners seem to need in order to naturally acquire the target language. In designing his hypothesis Long has, therefore, taken the general idea of input as initially put forth by Krashen and extended it and defined it in and through the interaction process. This claim is based on observations made between native speakers and non-native speakers during the interaction process. While the specific strategies employed by native speakers in dealing with non-native speakers vary from the strategies employed by caretakers or adults in dealing with young children, native speakers seem to engage in specific behaviors designed to help the non-native speakers to understand the language they were producing. The specific strategies of the native speakers in such interactions did, upon testing, improve the comprehension of the non-natives trying to learn the language. Thus, interaction has positive effects. This is, in effect, what the interactional hypothesis claims.

In looking at this from another angle, we can see that the interaction hypothesis follows in similar lines, possibly by default, certain aspects of socio-cultural models of language acquisition in that they both envision the

mentor--apprentice type of interaction as being pivotal, to learning (Long, 1983b).

Children learn language through meaningful interaction in which they can negotiate meaning. Moreover, children negotiate meaning through scaffolded interaction when they could have supportive feedback available from a more skilled person (Long, 1983). Moreover, classroom interactions do not need to be between expert and novice or mentor and apprentice to be useful, but they do need to be set up and managed more carefully in situations where this isn't the case.

2.5 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Regardless of the exact definition of communicative competence, it has become the theoretical foundation for a family of second language teaching approaches that came to be known as communicative language teaching (CLT).

Widdowson (1979) warned that communication occurs not in units of meaning, but rather in situations in which meanings are negotiated through interaction. He saw communicative competence as a "set of strategies or creative procedures"(p.248) that the learner uses to apply his or her linguistic knowledge in various contexts. He found the notional syllabus lacking in that it left it up to the learner to develop these creative strategies on his or her own. The notional syllabus, according to Widdowson, addressed the components of discourse rather than dealing with the actual discourse itself. He advocated for a more participant view of language that would be centered on the learner and the language he or she used. Since the mid-1970s the notional-functional approach has evolved into the more comprehensive communicative language teaching approach that has as its primary goal the development by the learner of communicative competence in the target language.

The communicative language teaching approach has been interpreted in various forms over the last three decades depending on the instructional setting and student population. Unlike other methods and approaches in second language teaching, there is no single authority, definitive text, or

universally accepted model of CLT. Nonetheless, there are now some widely accepted principles and practices that characterize communicative language teaching. Brown (2000) outlined four fundamental features of CLT:

1. Classroom goals are focused on *all* the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that *enable* the learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times, fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4. In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in *unrehearsed* contexts. (p.266)

To support these principles, CLT utilizes techniques that engage students in authentic, functional uses of language to accomplish real-world tasks. Students are required to negotiate meaning and use language creatively in spontaneous contexts. According to applied linguists Johnson and Marrow (1981), emphasis is placed on purposeful use of language through communicative activities that (1) utilize information gaps in which information that is known to one person is unknown to another; (2) allow speaker autonomy to make choices about what he wishes to say and how; and (3) provide feedback from the interlocutor that allows the speaker to assess whether her or his message was understood.

2.6 Drama Activity

Study of the dramatic text, when selected from an authentic language, is the most effective means of assimilation of modern communicative language through literature. The situation surrounding the actual production of the drama allows for a more natural acquisition of communicative, rather than text-oriented language. Learning occurs while solving the task at hand, namely the drama production, thus reflecting the precepts of the Comprehension-Based Approach. For example, the teacher gives simple verbal instruction and student must comprehend to solve the task. If it is complicated or there are too many things to learn, the students will be very confused and lose motivation. After the comprehension-based approach is applied to the students, as the drama project gets further under way, Skinner's behaviorism and its correlated Audio-lingual Approach become predominant, with habit-forming conditioning taking place as a result of repeated rehearsals and practices.

2.7 Classroom Interactions: Turn Taking and Participants' Initiative

According to sociologist Leo van Lier, the most critical feature while analyzing classroom discourse is to examine how speakers take turns in a conversation, because turn taking reveals the level of the individual speaker's involvement in the interaction(van Lier 1984b; 1988). He suggests that equal-rights status of natural conversation creates some rules accepted by participants in a conversation.

For example, the current speaker may select the next speaker, and the next speaker may decide to speak when certain signals are given by the current speaker to indicate his willingness to yield the floor. Once the commonly accepted rules are violated, the conversation may be broken or carried on under an asymmetric condition.

3. Research and Method

3.1 The Purpose of the study

van Lier's notion of classroom interaction provides a comprehensive starting point for conducting research into the nature of teacher-student interaction (van Lier 1984b). Allwright (1988) claimed that classroom interaction might contribute to language development by providing target language practice opportunities. Through actually doing the things they have been taught about turning 'knowledge that' into 'knowledge how'.

3.2 The Objectives of the study

My students are Low-intermediate level and they have 4 language classes per week, 80 minutes per day. The teachers at our English kindergarten present theme-related language and concepts as an integrated whole, emphasize communicative language learning using natural dialogues based on real-life situations. Moreover, the teachers include a variety of materials to help students develop 4 skills: listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing and creates a learner-friendly environment by multiple approaches: songs, chants, dialogues, stories, games, and projects. However they do not have enough chances to apply their leant language skills during their class times.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are to describe the nature of meaningful classroom interaction in the situational role-play. Second, it is to understand the relationship between the learners' drama experience and the growth of their communicative competence. Lastly, to report a concrete example for the view that the communicative language classroom context in a situational role-play offers target language practice opportunities to learn certain linguistic knowledge.

3.3 The Students' Profile

3.3.1 Cognitive level

My students' cognitive level is kindergarten students, age 7. They have interests in friends, family toys, colors, animals, food and transportations.

They also enjoy learning through cartoons, stories, computer games, and songs & chants. They like to dance and move around the classroom. During the lessons, they are interested in other people's feelings and emotions as if they were their own. They often try to get attentions from their friends and teachers.

3.3.2 Linguistic level

In this paper, students' linguistic level is novice high and the teacher need to choose the content for right level. Students have practiced reading simple words and sentences through phonics for several months. They know the relation between letters and sounds, and they can apply the awareness of phonics to their reading. They enjoy communicating with teachers in English with simple questions and answers.

3.3.3 Classroom environment

In a language class, the syllabus emphasizes communicative language learning, using natural dialogues based on "real-life" situations. It takes a student-centered approach, employing a variety of methodologies to provide exciting and stimulating lessons that reflect the interests of students. Students get familiarized with the theme and key vocabulary before the main lesson. Moreover, students get interested, motivated and acquainted with the content through song, chant, vocabulary practice, and short stories. Communication consists of a dialogue employing the unit theme. Students can practice key vocabulary with their peers using substitution drills. Conversation previews the target structure that will be formally presented in the structure section. A variety of situations provide students with practice in using the language in different contexts.

In the wrap up stage, students use previously learned language from the unit in reading a passage, making a project or playing a game or a board game. Sample dialogues serve as example for practicing the language in a variety of authentic and entertaining ways.

3.3.4 The Teacher's role

The teacher instructs students on how to follow the teacher's directions and study effectively in class. Moreover, the teacher needs to focus on the essential parts of the preceding units and provides a chance to recycle and reconstruct the language they have learned. Most importantly, the teacher needs to think about what the learners need and want, and what materials are appropriate for the learners.

3.4 Situational role-play (Skill using)

According to Kao & O'Neill(1998), role-play is an exercise where the student is assigned a fictitious role from which he is to improvise some kind of behavior toward the other characters in the exercise.

Situational role-play carefully designed with creative situation, roles and useful expressions (Paulston, 1977) might make the students more active and willing to involve themselves spontaneously. Students have opportunities to understand the clear usage of the expression in a real context. Students learn social skills such as interpersonal understanding, the relationship between roles and cultural issues.

The teacher provides a context (situation), and a problem is set in the context, so the students must resolve it. The students choose and create their own roles to achieve the given task. Because the students select and use their language, fluency is focused upon more than accuracy. During the situational role-play, dynamic interaction between the students occurs in authentic contexts.

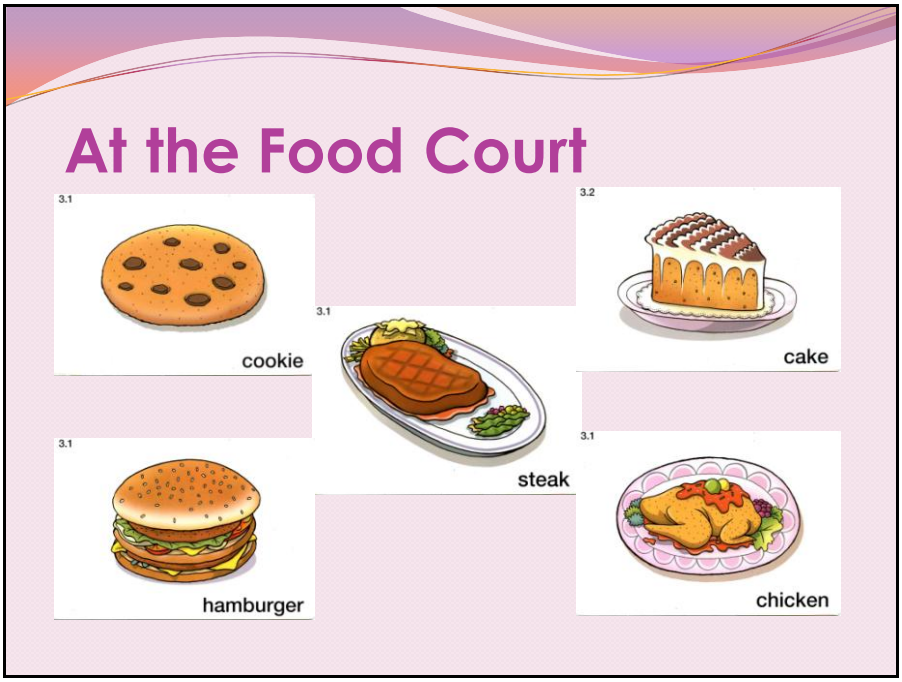
3.4.1 Procedure

3.4.1.1Warm-up Stage

1. Students review previous lesson and practice new language.
2. T introduces the situation of the role w activate their schemata.
3. T asks students what they would do when they go to the food court with their family.

4. T shows some posters and flash cards of snacks to motivate students.

Figure 1. *At the food court*



3.4.1.2 Presentation Stage

1. Ss choose the role
2. Ss create emotional and physical settings and simple dialogues orally.
3. Ss practice the role-play.
4. Ss present the role-play.

Table 1. *Your family is going to your grandmother's house.*

The situation
"Imagine that your family is going to visit your grandmother's house. You (girl) and your sister are going to stop by the food court. You and your sister will buy some food from the food court."

Figure 2. *Video and Audio script*

Table 2. *Transcript*

Casher: Hello! May I help you? [IN]
Girl and sister: Yes. [EX]
Girl: May I have some steak please? [DI]
Casher: Yes, here you are. [IN]
Girl's sister: May I have some…cake please? [DI]
Casher: Here, you are. [IN]
Girl's sister: Thank you. [EX] How much? [IN]
Girl: [No verbal] (Directs her sister to be quiet by putting her finger on her lips and giving a hint to the casher to ask them more questions by pointing at the flash cards by the board.) [IN] & [DI]
Casher: Hmmm…[IM] Do you want this one? [EX]
Girl: No thank, No thanks. Do you want? [EX]
Girl's sister: Yes! [EX]
Casher: Here you are. [IN]

Girl's sister: Thank you. [EX]
Girl: How much are those? [IN]
Casher: Hmmm… [IM] Four dollars ... each. [IN]
Girl: Hmmm… [IM] Here you are. [IN]
Casher : Thank you. [EX]
Girl's sister: Good bye. [EX]
Girl: Good bye. [EX]
Girl's sister: Have a nice day. [EX]
Casher: Have a nice day. [EX]

Table 3. *Four language functions*

	Speech	**No.**
Informative	Hello! May I help you? Yes, here you are. Here, you are. How much? Here you are. How much are those? Four dollars,,, each. Here you are. Non-verbal : putting her finger on her lips and indicating to be quiet) Non-verbal : giving a hint to the casher to ask them more questions by pointing at the flash cards by the board.	10
Directive	May I have some steak please? May I have some… cake please?	2

Expressive	Yes. Thank you. Do you want this one? No thanks, No thanks. Do you want? Yes! Thank you. Thank you. Good bye. Good bye. Have a nice day. Have a nice day.	11
Imaginative	Hmmm… Hmmm… Hmmm…	3

According to Shacher et. al., (1993), the results show that the information function occurs in all group drama sessions with a high frequency. This function is used when children intend to inform others, ask for information from others, or acquire new information. The occurrence rate of directive language is low across all sessions. However, this function appears more frequently in task-oriented activities and less frequently during the oral discussion or problem solving sessions. Interestingly, students are able to distinguish the subtle differences between different types of directive language. They make gentle requests when having tasks to perform and give blunt commands when time is of the essence and actions are fast paced **(**Kao and O'Neill, 1998).

Expressive language occurs most frequently in reflection and problem solving sessions. The imaginative language function is used in all sessions during the group drama; students tend to use this function to create a dramatic climax and authentic atmosphere in the classroom **(**Kao and O'Neill, 1998).

3.4.1.3 Wrap-up Stage

1. T gives some feedback.
2. Survey: T asks Ss about the role-play and discusses what happened.

3.4.2 Expected outcomes

In the preparation, the students will review the previous lesson's language using the flash cards, and go over the language they have learned before.

The participants interact either as themselves in imaginary situations or as other people in imaginary situations. The students have freedom to create both physical and emotional settings, and this activity will be interesting for them because the topic is related to their everyday life experiences. Students can also improve four skills in English at the same time.

Even though students are using verbal language in a situational role-play activity, students are often hesitant to speak out can become confident when the language expectation is removed. They will take an initial step to use non-verbal language.

Moreover, all the gestures that accompany speech serve to sequence what is said, regulate the course of the interaction, accentuate specific meanings, or express feelings.

3.4.3 Limitation of Situational role-play

First, there are disadvantages in showing the picture cards, which enhanced student understanding but impeded their creativity as well in the preparation stage. Second, if the teacher's frequent interference occurs during the activities, limited meaningful interactions on the topic will be developed. Lastly, our students are generally more comfortable with teacher-driven classes because of their own education experiences prior to arriving at our language school. Of course, drama negates this approach, as it lays at the very heart of classroom drama that the teacher becomes co-creator with his/her students. However, it cannot be denied that arriving in an already

foreign learning environment, our students are initially reluctant to become engaged when invited to do so (Nunan & Richards, 1990).

4. Finding and Discussion

4.1 Finding-Lesson planning

4.1.1. Warm-up

This section reviews the previous lesson and previews the day's lesson. It encourages students to begin thinking and speaking in English. Initially, teachers should briefly review the previous lesson through verbal exercises or a quick game before going on to address the new material. A variety of activities and materials should be used, including supplements and flashcards.

4.1.2. Presentation

The main objective is that it takes a student-centered approach, employing a variety of methodologies to provide exciting and stimulating lesson that reflect the interest students. In the situational role-play, conversations allow young learners a chance to practice using language in a way they are not yet able to on their own. This helps students learn the language and builds confidence. It also provides reinforcement of previously studied vocabulary and structures. Once students become comfortable with expressions they have learned, they can begin to experiment and use the language in different contexts. Furthermore, developing communicative competence by describing the nature of classroom interaction is most conductive to language acquisition. For instance, during the drama activity in my class, student interaction explores the implementation and frequency of occurrences of four language functions, namely, *informative, directive, expressive and imaginative (Le francais a lelementaire, 1987*), in the presentation. Students' verbal interactions in the session was transcribed from the video and audio records and then analyzed according to a coding system.

4.1.2.1 Definitions of the four language functions

1. Informative: to obtain or give information, for example, “What are shovels?”
2. Directive: to request help, give permissions, or make commands, for example, “Come with me, quickly.”
3. Expressive: to express personal feelings, opinions or ideas, for example, “I had a sore finger.”
4. Imaginative: for diversion, entertainment, or stimulation of the imagination,
   for example, “I have 50cents, mom.” The speaker changes the tone to very childish as to define the role in drama.

4.1.3 Reinforcement

This section reinforces what students have learned in the Presentation stage by using various interactive activities. Students have enjoyed the situational role-play very much and they have created and developed meaningful production, which was more than I expected from my students. While the casher in the situational role play was having a hard time asking questions, one girl was directing the other girl to be quiet by putting her finger on her lips. Then the girl gave a hint to the casher to ask them more questions by pointing at the flash cards by the board. After that, three girls were flowing with the conversations and finished the situational role play naturally, which made me very impressed.

4.2 Discussion

Teaching children effectively is challenging and rewarding. Many teachers are unsure of which techniques are the most effective in teaching a curriculum. The first research question would be what strategies are intended to help teachers create positive and meaningful lessons. In addition, the teacher should use their imagination and draw on their experience to facilitate a positive learning environment. For instance, songs and chants are invaluable for teaching language. They provide language models for students

to imitate. They illustrate vocabulary and can convey meaning. They use repetition, which is essential to effective language learning. They also offer a chance for students to improve pronunciation, while reinforcing vocabulary and grammar concepts.

4.3 Survey Analysis

Several survey questions were given to the students, and they showed a positive response on the surveys. The questions were as follows:

1. How did you feel during the role play? Choose the emotional sticker.
   - It is fun! (A student takes a smiling face sticker.)
   - Exciting! (A student takes a big smiling face sticker.)

• 90% of students took the "interesting" / "fun" stickers, and they asked to have more lessons. The remaining 10% of students took a "nervous" sticker because they were not used to the situational role-play.

2. Why did you feel that way?
   - Because we used food.
   - Because we can talk about money. (Like it is 10 dollars)
   - Because we can buy something for us.

• 90% of students felt interested and had fun because they liked the topic. They could buy anything they wanted and spend money on what they wanted.

3. During the role play, what was the hardest thing to do?
   - I am nervous and I forgot something.
   - Sometimes, people are too noisy.

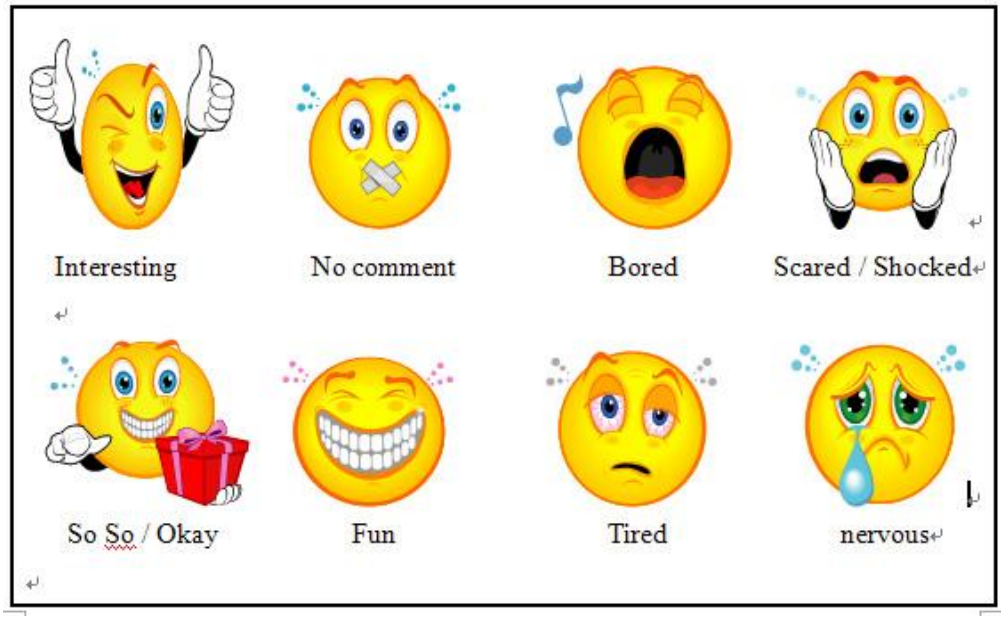
• 20% of students said they got nervous when they forgot things to say, 20% of students said people were too noisy in certain situations, and 60% of students did not feel any difficulties.

4. What would do you better next time?

    - I need to listen to other people, share the ideas and speak up.

- Students have built confidence through drama activity and they realized that they need to associate with other people, such as listening to their friends and teacher. Moreover, they need to share their ideas with their partners and speak up with confidence when they talk to make an interesting class environment.

Figure 3. *Smiley faces*



5. Suggestions and Conclusion

Students are motivated by an authentic situation with an interesting subject, thus teachers for young learners need to encourage students to communicate through their meaningful interactions in the classroom.

Moreover, students will develop their confidence through meaningful experience, so teachers need to provide more drama activities, which will elicit meaningful negotiation. Indeed, teacher should use more drama

activities to encourage students to communicate in an authentic situation with internal tension involved, which prompts them to have a strong desire to speak and negotiate.

In a language class, the syllabus emphasizes communicative language learning, using natural dialogues based in "real-life" situations. It takes a student-centered approach, employing a variety of methodologies to provide exciting and stimulating lessons that reflect the interests of students.

Communication is suspended in traditional classroom activities. The teacher is the supreme ruler who appoints a certain student (or a group of students) as the next speaker and takes the turn back after the appointed speaker responds to the call. Topic control also becomes the exclusive territory of the teacher in the classroom. Since teachers who use drama activities claim that the teacher-student interaction in drama activities resembles real-life communication, it is necessary to investigate how the teacher and students manage their turns differently from what we have observed in many traditional classroom situations. Van Lier's notions of turn taking and turn initiative are based on the way people communicate in real situations, and are particularly useful analytical tools to compare the nature of teacher-student interaction with real-life conversation (1984).

The contexts chosen will determine the authenticity of the drama and thus influence the students' involvement levels. Carefully selecting a wide range of roles for students is also important because it allows the students to explore the drama world and helps them to go beyond the restricted classroom roles they usually inhabit. "Teacher in role" is a unique and effective strategy for launching process drama. With this strategy, the teacher can become involved in the activity, challenge the students with authentic questions, and yet retain some control in developing the work.

A further key issue in the literature on teaching children is that of attitude and motivation. Children will learn better if they have a positive attitude towards what they are doing and if they are motivated or want to do it. Interest becomes a crucial factor in deciding on classroom practices for teaching children (Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

Furthermore, acting is one means of facilitating this learning task, for through acting, the student is required to feel and think and do as his given role dictates. Thus drama, the art of acting, is an efficient, effective means to helping students achieve a deeper level of insight and truly assimilate works of literature.

Indeed, balancing between multiple approaches can create an effective learning environment in the language classroom. A basic responsibility is considering and responding to the needs of our students, so if the course book is inadequate we need to employ the following steps: select, adapt, reject and supplement. Moreover, because each class we teach has its own characteristics and needs, CLT will vary each time we employ it.

References

Allwright, D. (1988). *Observation in the language classroom.* London:Longman.

Bavelas, Janet B., N. Chovil, D.A. LAwrie, & A. Wade (1992). Interactive gestures. *Discourse Processes 15,* 469-489.

Bruner, Jerome S. (1990). *Acts of meaning.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Crawford, Kathryn. (1996). Vygotskian approaches to human development in the information era. *Educational Studies in Mathematics. (31)* p.43-62

Gardner, R. and W. Lambert. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning.* U.S.A.: Newbury House.

Ginsburg, H.P., & Opper, S. (1988). *Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development. 3rd Ed.* N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Kao, S. M. (1994). *Classroom interaction in a drama-oriented English conversation class of first-year college students in Taiwan: A teacher-researcher study.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University, Columbus. Paper granted by National Science Council.

Kao,S.M. and O'Neill,C. (1998) *Words Into Worlds: Learning a Second Language Through Process Drama. U.S.A.(Stamford): Ablex Publishing Corporation*

Krashen, Stephen (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Long, M. H.(1983b). Linguistic and conversational adjustments to non-native speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 5, 177-93.

Maley, A & Duff, A (2005). *Drama Techniques*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. & Richards J.C. (Eds.).(1990) *Second language teacher education.* Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (Ed.). (1992). *Collaborative language learning and teaching.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Saettler, P. (1990). *The Evolution of American Educational Technology*. Egnlewood, Co:Libraries Unlimited. p.331

Schewe, M.L. & Shaw, Peter (Eds.). (1993). *Towards drama as a method in the foreign language classroom.* Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Schütz,R. (2007). *Stephen Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition.* Retrieved November 2, 2007, from the World Wide Web: http://www.sk.com.br/sk-krash.html

van Lier, L. (1984). Analysing interaction in second language classrooms. *English Language Teaching Journal, 38, (3), 160-170.*

van Lier, L (1988). *The classroom and the language learner: Ethnography and second-language classroom research.* New York: Longman.

Vygotsky, L.S.(1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wagner, B.J. (1990). Dramatic improvisation in the classroom. In S. Hynds & D.L. Rubin (Eds.), *Perspectives on Talk and Learning.* Urbana, IL:

NCTE.
Wessels, Charlyn. *Drama*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987

2008 Fall Issues in EFL Vol.6 No.2

Using More Tasks in Korean Classrooms

Draper Kirke
TESOL 2nd semester

The way that English has been traditionally taught in Korean schools is no longer sufficient. In the following entry, ideas will be put forth that have the possibility of ameliorating what some perceive to be a glaring issue. A variety of methods from the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach will be discussed with a particular focus on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). A task will be analyzed on whether it meets set criteria, modified to show its versatility and shown to be a fit for language classrooms of any size, age, or proficiency level.

1. Introduction

This analysis seeks to explore the relative degree of ease/difficulty in integrating Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) into classrooms that may or may not already employ methods derived from the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. In Korean schools, language teachers have defaulted to traditional methods that may not have the effectiveness or efficiency to compete with modern methods. This is most often done, because of a perceived lack of a feasible, readily applicable implementation that could serve as an alternative. The theories of CLT, including TBLT and Content-Based English Language Teaching (CBELT), have been researched to offer the theoretical rationale for using more meaningful content and tasks in South Korea's English education system, due to the lack of opportunities students have to encounter authentic language outside of the classroom. It also seeks to clearly exemplify how tasks can easily be modified to maintain relevancy to the learners, and fit within the constraints of any class situation. First, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) will be defined. Then after

a quick foray into the origins of CLT, various current incarnations of it shall be presented. Then, Task-Based Learning will get a closer inspection due to its suitability for this environment, and an activity shall be evaluated and modified to show the ease with which tasks can be adapted for almost any classroom situation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 CLT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to teaching English that is guided by the idea that meaningful interaction is the most effective tool for learning a language. Brown (2001, p.43) explains CLT, thusly:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside of the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
5. Students are given the opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and

through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower (sic.) of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

I would like to start with the sixth point and work my way to the top, because as a teacher, CLT puts many in a position that may seem unconventional. You are a guide and your class becomes more "student-centered." The students will have to accept a role that puts them in a situation that allows them to develop their language ability, autonomously, with a chance to use the strategy that suits them. The teacher stands ready to give guidance in the event that the students lose their way. In this way, the students are preparing themselves for real communicative interaction that may occur outside of the classroom. They will not need someone to hold their hand in a real life encounter, because they have produced and received meaningful language, autonomously, within the CLT classroom. Because of the focus on meaning, fluency is allowed to take control of the airship, while accuracy is along as a co-pilot. The CLT teacher must correct errors indirectly without interrupting the flow of speech, and/or note errors in accuracy in order to refocus on them in subsequent lessons, as long as the meaning of the produced language is understood. CLT dictates that fluency and accuracy must both be attended to, as they are both important in determining meaning. Language is at its most meaningful, when it is authentic, so this approach suggests selecting (reading or listening) texts based on their authenticity, and allowing the salience of the material be the driving force for students to acquire the language. The basis for the acquisition of language will be derived from the purpose for which it will be used, so linguistic forms are not the focus of the lesson, but rather the functional use of meaningful language to achieve some goal. This leads the students to achieving one of the primary goals of CLT: to attain communicative competence through proper understanding and use of the grammar, discourse, function, sociolinguistics, and strategy.

2.2 The Origins of CLT

2.2.1 Interactionism

CLT has its roots in interactionism. The importance of meaningful interaction in CLT is one of the marks of interactionist beliefs. Lev Vygotsky advanced the field of SLA with his Sociocultural Theory, which introduced the Zone of Proximal Development, or ZPD. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory stated that, "interaction not only facilitates language learning, but is a causative force in acquisition." (Vygotsky 1968 via Saville-Troike 2006, p. 111) Saville-Troike (ob. cit) writes that Sociocultural Theory, "differs from most linguistic approaches in giving relatively limited attention to the structural patterns of L2 which are learned, as well as in emphasizing learner activity and involvement over innate and universal mechanisms...It also differs from most other social approaches in considering interaction as an essential force rather than as merely a helpful condition for learning." This idea has trickled down to become one of the pillars of CLT.

Vygotsky asserted that a mediation of symbolic meaning between what he termed an expert, and learners or between peers (learners), happened within a 'Zone of Proximal Development,' according to Saville-Troike (op. cit.). An expert in this circumstance would be a teacher, or more knowledgeable learner, and the ZPD is considered to be the area of potential development, where the learner can achieve that potential only with assistance. One of the principal means of interaction within this ZPD was 'scaffolding' which is a metaphor which "refers to the verbal guidance which an expert provides to help a learner perform any specific task, or the verbal collaboration of peers to perform a task which would be to difficult to any one of them, individually." (Vygotsky 1968 via Bruner 1985 via Saville-Troike 2006). Saville-Troike also writes, "Very importantly, scaffolding is not something that happens *to* a learner as a passive recipient, but happens *with* a learner as an active participant.

2.2.2 The Role of Output

Krashen (1985) asserted that comprehensible input was sufficient for second language learners to acquire a language, however Swain (1985, as cited in

Swain, 1995) declared that input was necessary, but not sufficient, in response to Krashen's Input Hypothesis. Swain then went into detail about several functions of output in language acquisition. According to Swain (op. cit.), output is necessary for learners of a language to practicing the language to enhance fluency. She is very clear in her assertion that there is a definite distinction between practicing and drilling. Her second function was the noticing/triggering function. In this case, Swain (1995) purports that during the process of output, the learner will encounter gaps in their knowledge of the target language that will trigger a reaction to notice or seek input which can fill in those gaps. The final function that Swain mentions is the metalinguistic (reflective) function, which has its roots in Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1962, 1978). She claims that through output and mediation among others, linguistic knowledge is internalized in a variety of psychological processes.

2.2.3 The difference between CLT in ESL and EFL environments

In Korea, we, as language teachers, may have what some would perceive as the disadvantage of teaching in an EFL environment as opposed to an ESL environment. Brown (2001, p 117) terms this the "ESL advantage," which refers to the potential opportunities that they may have outside of the classroom on a daily basis. Brown (op. cit.) estimates that based on lessons for 25 hours a week, ESL learners have (with sleeping time subtracted) an additional 80 hours per week of authentic contexts to learn and practice English. Brown (op. cit.) states that in the EFL context, additional efforts must be made to compensate for the lack of opportunities to learn and practice outside of the classroom. Littlewood (1981, p. 44) says, "The classroom is often called an artificial environment for learning and using a foreign language." Because of this, Littlewood (op. cit.) goes on to say, "...we should not forget that the classroom is also a real social context in its own right, where learners and the teacher enter equally real social relationships with each other." This means, that in an EFL context, teachers must work a little bit harder in planning lessons to make sure the learners will maximize their interaction within the target language, in order for CLT to be

effective. In EFL, one cannot depend on the students' lives outside of the classrooms to present them with enough opportunities for authentic, pragmatic use of their acquired language. Littlewood (op. cit.) also likens the way that acquired linguistic structures and skills are transferred from the 'real' classroom context to other kinds of situations to how "we can acquire basic communication skills in a close family context, and transfer them in later life to a much wider range of social situations."

2.2.4 Content-Based English Language Teaching

Teaching English with "the integration of content learning with the language teaching aims," is what Brinton, Snow, and Wesch (1989 via Brown 2001, p. 49) would refer to as content-based instruction, or CBI. Brinton, Snow, and Wesch go on to specify that it is the "concurrent study of language and subject matter, with the form and sequence of language presentation dictated by content material." (Brown op. cit.) Because content-based instruction in language falls under the umbrella of CLT, it of course, subordinates form and a focus on accuracy to meaning. Larsen-Freeman (2000, p.140) says that one of the principals of content-based instruction, is that, "Language is learned most effectively when it is used to convey informational content of interest to the students." It is important to understand that although students will learn the content material and new language, simultaneously, they will need help that presents quite a challenge to the teacher. Brown (2001, p.235) states that, "You are first and foremost teaching geography or math or culture; secondarily you are teaching language. So you may have to become a double expert!" In addition, Larsen-Freeman (2000, p.138) states, "When students study academic subjects in a non-native language, they will need a great deal of assistance in understanding subject matter texts; therefore, there must be clear language objectives as well as content learning objectives." If the teacher is up to this daunting task, they will reap the benefits of content-based instruction's allowance for the complete integration of language skills. The students will not only have you to rely on the teacher, but their own experiences and knowledge, as well as each other. Activating the students'

background knowledge, or schemata, is very important to the learning process, and makes teaching the content that much easier.

2.2.5 Tasks: Social, Interactive, Communicative Output

Tasks, and task-based learning, are recommended tools at the disposal of language teachers. Skehan (1998) gives the rationale for using tasks as the medium of language instruction and gives reasons why so many have been reluctant to implement this in their curricula and classrooms. What Skehan terms the 3Ps (Presentation, Practice and Production), is a traditional approach that has fallen out of favor with communicative language teachers (Brumfit and Johnson 1979 via Skehan 1998), and acquisition theorists. (Long and Crookes 1991 via Skehan 1998) The reasons why this approach has been so "durable," is in its appeal to various stakeholders:

> First of all, the approach has had an excellent relationship with teacher training and teachers' feelings of professionalism. It is very comforting and places the teacher firmly in charge of the proceedings. The 3Ps sequence is relatively easy to organize, and comes bundled with a range of techniques which, besides having the potential to organize large groups of students efficiently, also demonstrate the power relations within the classroom, since the teacher is the centre of what is happening at all times. (Wright 1987 via Skehan 1998, p.94)

Skehan (op. cit) goes on to explain that due to the ease in which clear, tangible goals, precise syllabuses and itemization that allows for effective evaluation leading to neat accountability. These are the reasons why there are those who persist in using what White (1988 via Skehan 1998, p.94) calls "a discredited, meaning-impoverished methodology." Skehan (op. cit.) also points out another reason why the 3Ps have managed to retain their position in so many classrooms:

> But in addition, a major contributory influence to this lack of persistence has been the lack of a clear alternative for pedagogy, not so much theoretically as practically,

> an alternative framework which will translate into classroom organization, teacher training, and accountability and assessment. (Skehan 1998, p.94)

2.2.6 Defining and justifying tasks

Skehan (op. cit.) then describes what a task is, with input from Candlin (1987), Nunan (1989), Long (1989), et. al., and what a task is not with input from Willis (1996). Tasks are communication problems to solve in which the meaning takes precedence over everything else, during the task. While there may be forms of grammar that could necessarily facilitate progress in the task, they are not the focus of the task. Tasks must also be related to real-world activities in order to assure their salience to the learner. A large idea within the CLT framework is that materials must be authentic, and provide authentic contexts for learners to the extent to which it is possible. According to Skehan (et. al.), an activity must prioritize task completion, meaning that completing the task should be the learners' primary objective, and they are assessed first on whether or not they complete the task, and secondly, on how efficiently they complete the task.

Skehan and Willis (Willis 1996 via Skehan 1998, p.95) then assert that a task will not give learners other peoples' meanings to adopt and use as their own, and is not particularly concerned with language display. For instance, when a task is given, the language should be creatively produced by the learners for the purpose of completing the task, not for the sake of rehearsing a pre-formulated response for the benefit of the teacher. Skehan and Willis (op. cit.) also reinforce that any pre-formulated displays of language are not a part of tasks by clearly enumerating that tasks do not orient themselves on conformity or practice. My interpretation of what non-practice oriented means, in this case, presupposes that what is meant by practice is the rote memorization and regurgitation of specific forms. It seems quite clear that they are practicing the different element of spontaneous, creative language production that ties the language to a very meaningful context. Skehan and Willis' last missive states that a task does not embed

specific language into the materials in order to elicit responses that use a particular structure.

In his justification for using tasks, Skehan calls upon Long and Crookes for their assertion that completing a task: (a) enables acquisitional processes to operate, particularly by allowing meaning to be negotiated, and (b) maintains a focus on form, as opposed to a focus on forms (Long and Crookes 1991 via Skehan 1998, p.97). Skehan then, offers that by altering the difficulty of task, you can shift the focus by allowing spare attentional capacity to be diverted to matters of accuracy, or by allowing the entire attentional focus to be consumed by the demands of the informational-processing load (op. cit.). Finally, Skehan writes that through the use of selective-channelling, a task leads attention towards some "aspect of the discourse, accuracy, complexity, fluency in general, or even, occasionally, the use of particular sets of structures in the language." (Skehan 1998)

Tasks can be helpful, if they are communicative, according to Littlewood:

> In considering how people learn to carry out various kinds of skilled performance, it is often useful to distinguish between (a) training in the *part-skills* of which the performance is composed and (b) practice in the *total skill*, sometimes called the 'whole-task practice'...In foreign language learning, our means for providing learners with the whole-task practice in the classroom is through various kinds of communicative activity, structured in order to suit the learners' level of ability. (Littlewood 1981, p.17)

Brown (2001, p.50) writes that task-based instruction "views the learning process as a set of communicative tasks that are directly linked to the curricular goals they serve, the purposes of which beyond the practice of language for its own sake."

3. Lesson Analysis and Modification

3.1 Objectives

The lesson I selected for analysis is a Theme Activity Plan (YBM Pre-School Academy) (Appendix 1) intended for use with seven year old kindergarteners are in their second or third year of study. By taking a look at the objectives, I can say that they are very general, which makes the objectives easy to meet, but I feel that the teacher would have to make them more specific to know whether or not the lesson was successfully learned. Additionally, the teacher would have to establish their own linguistic goals, although these could be either functional or form specific. The materials seem easy enough to prepare with information that can easily be procured from an online encyclopedia.

3.2 Procedure

Procedurally, the first step is to activate the students' schemata about the topic. Sample questions could be, "What animals do you like? Do you like flying animals or animals that live in the water? Do you like furry animals like the panda and wolf or scaly animals like the crocodile and snake?" This is a key component of any content based lesson, and I think the questions will get their mind on the right track. Warming up in this fashion will allow the students to contribute meaningfully, so the seed is already planted for meaningful interaction in the next phase of the lesson.

The next step is to help them understand the characteristics of a mammal, by using humans as an example. By first going through all of the mammalian qualities we possess, and then introducing the term mammal, they already have something meaningful (themselves) to put into that category. This should be very effective, as it is very hard for the students to forget about something that is so similar to their own existence.

The next step is to offer them some facts about interesting mammals, such as a bat, whale or platypus. I feel this is a point which can engage in some of the less interested students, and draw others even further

in. This also establishes a meaningful web of interconnected concepts that will, through their salience, cement some of the qualities of mammals in their minds. Initially, it would have been easy for them to see monkeys as mammals, due to their similarity to humans (the learners' basis for comparison), but the introduction of a flying mammal, a swimming mammal, and one of the most puzzlingly peculiar mammals to swim and walk upon Earth, forces them to categorize more objectively.

With your warm-up and presentation completed, you should then hand out an information-filled index card to each student. The problem they will have to solve is to determine whether or not the information about the animal is true, based on what they know. An example of an erroneous index card might have a baby rabbit hatching from an egg. They will move to one side of the room to show whether or not they think it is true or false, using a minimal application of Total Physical Response. After all of the students have moved to one side or the other, they will sit down and individually tell why they think the information is true, so their classmates can assess whether or not they are correct, in a form of scaffolding. In the future academic and non-academic endeavors of these students, they will have to begin to understand how things are categorized according to established criteria, so this is a good start on doing that will content that will be compelling for most of the learners in this age group. To wrap up the lesson, you can preview the differences of birds, fish, frogs and crocodiles to a mammal, such as a dog. This sets up future lessons that focus on reptiles, birds, amphibians and fish.

3.3 Is this a task? Is it content-based?

This definitely corresponds well to the aforementioned, outlined qualities of a task, and there is absolutely a content aspect of it that is very clear. The teacher must understand and convey the knowledge of Biology and English. The lack of preordained vocabulary and phrases really makes this an excellent task, as the students will need to use the appropriate vocabulary to make distinctions and communicate those distinctions, but they will have to discover the language due to the nature of the task, which forces them to acknowledge the gaps in the language that they are able to produces.

Throughout the task, the teacher must act not tell them what to think about, or how to arrive at a decision, but be a reference to the students during the task to facilitate the exposure to the pertinent language that learners will request.

3.4 Variations

I thought about a variation on this task that could be used as a follow-up after mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds and fish had been covered. In my task, a single, unique quality of a type of animal (such as, "I have hair") would be written on a card. Each child would be given a card, and they would have to find others with corresponding qualities (such as, "My babies are born alive"). When everybody establishes their groups (mammal group, reptile group, etc.), they would search through laminated pictures of animals to find all of the animals of that type. To end the lesson, every group would present the pictures of their animals, telling their classmates why these animals were a part of that group. I feel as though this activity would bring about a good amount of voluntary interaction among the students of this age, and there would, of course, be an incentive (stickers) that would make them even more motivated to participate. Other variations include adjusting the difficulty of the task by either using pictures only, pictures with text, or only text on the information cards.

It might appear that this task would only work with very young children, but there are ways to vary this task to work with any age group or level of language proficiency. Say for instance you were teaching English to Engineering students at K.A.I.S.T. or Physics students at Seoul National University, you could easily swap out classes of animals with components of a vehicles powertrain or sub-atomic particles that needed to be classified. For these students, the process of classifying objects would be a familiar one, so more of their attentional capacity could be devoted to deciphering more complex linguistic forms. A businessperson studying Business English might have to sort through real listings on the New York Stock Exchange to make a recommendation on which stocks to buy based on criteria set in advance, and present them to their classmates (pretend they are a group of

prospective clients). The possibilities for adaptation are limited only by the amount of learning situations in the world.

4. Conclusion

The material that I read to complete the literature review drew from years of research and the experiences of the authors, some of whom probably never have set foot on the Korean peninsula. Despite that fact, this material was still very helpful in establishing criteria from a theoretical basis, and can be applied in almost any situation. As helpful as the theories have been to helping educators understand how learning can occur in optimal circumstances, we must consider the exterior factors and constraints our educators face in implementing some of the most well-thought ideas, in reality.

In Korean schools, the language classrooms can have 30-40 students, and the argument is that students are taught the curriculum in such a straightforward, no-frills manner because it would be impossible for the teacher to address the students equally and meaningfully in such a short time (generally less than an hour). This is where tasks become extremely relevant. By breaking a big class into smaller groups, you give everyone a chance to participate and use language meaningfully in the completion of a task. When there is a mass of students with a teacher lecturing and drilling in the front of the classroom, many students will disengage from the lesson, but tasks will maintain if not increase their level of engagement. You will also address the problem of some students being slightly more or less proficient than others, because then some will have a chance to act as an "expert" and others will benefit in their scaffolding sessions. The more we explore TBLT, the more we can see its benefits for foreign language learners in Korean schools.

4.1 Suggestions

The creators of the national language curriculum need to consider hiring teachers to develop ways to integrate more tasks into the curriculum. If the government requires all teachers and all classes to be on the same page, the page should, at the very least, give the learners an upgraded language experience. It is one thing for the Ministry of Education to require teachers to go back for additional training in EFL-related developments, but if the structure of the curriculum does not evolve to accommodate the progressive methods they will learn, then it will not do much to improve what happens in the classroom. Until the planners of the national curriculum have a fundamental paradigm shift, the teachers will still be held hostage to a curriculum that inadequately addresses the communicative aspect of language.

4.2 Limitations of this paper

This analysis was limited by its scope. Only one example task was analyzed, so it is far from being a comprehensive look at TBLT. One task was intentionally chosen to explore and illustrate how easily the general task could be modified to suit the needs of the class. It was not meant to be comprehensive, and does not even begin to address the wide variety of ways that tasks can be deployed within the classroom.

References

Brown, H. Douglas. (2001) Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy - 2nd Edition. White Plains:Addison Wesley Longman.

Bruner, J. (1985) Vygotsky: a historical and conceptual perspective. In J.V. Wertsch (ed.), *Cultures, Communication and Cognition: Vygotskyan Perspectives* (pp. 21-34). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Littlewood, William (1981) Communicative Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Krashen, Stephen D. (1985) *The input hypothesis* . London: Longman.

Martin, Virginia S. (2003) Promoting Fluency in Korean EFL Students through Dialogue Journals in Oral Communication Classes. In Susan Oak & Virginia S. Martin (eds.) Teaching English to Koreans. Hollym International Corporation (May 30, 2003)

Pica, T. (1994) Research on Negotiation: What Does It Reveal About Second-Language Learning Conditions, Processes, and Outcomes?
Language Learning 44 (3), 493–527 doi:10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01115.x

Prasai, M. (2005) Korea's National Curriculum: Form and Function – How Communicative Is It? KOTESOL Proceedings 2005 (pp. 251-259)

Saville-Troike, M. (2006) Introducing Second Language Acquisition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Skehan, P. (1998) A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (1985) Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In Gass, S. and Madden, C. (Eds.), *Input in Second Language Acquisition*, pp. 235-256. New York: Newbury House.

Swain, M. (1995) Principle and practice in applied linguistics, 1995 - Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (1995) 'Three functions of output in second language learning' in G. Cook and B. Seidlhofer (eds.)

Swain, M. (2005) Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning. Eli Hinkel (Ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Van Ek, J.A. (1975) The threshold level. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1962) Thought and Language. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

White, Ronald V. (1988) The ELT Curriculum: Design, Innovation and Management. Oxford: Blackwell.

Appendix A: "Lesson Plan"

Activity Plan			
Month - Week	July-2-2	Level	7-2 / 7-3 (Level 3)
Monthly Theme	Animals		
Weekly Topic	Vertebrates and Invertebrates		
Objective of the Week	Students learn vertebrates, invertebrates, and 5 classes		
Useful Vocabulary or Sentences			
Materials to Prepare	1. 20 index cards having information about mammals		

PROCEDURE

Warm-up: 1. Ask students how they were born, what they fed on, and what they looked like when they were just born.

Main Lesson: 1. Encourage the students to think that we are mammals by explaining the characteristics of mammals.
2.Teach them bats which are the only mammals that can fly, and whales.
3. Draw a line in the middle of a carpet with a colored tape.
4. Hand out the index cards prepared. Each student will get one card.
5. Let them read their own cards and decide if it is true or false.
6. If it is true, student will sit on the right on the carpet and it is false, on the left.
7. Each student reads his or her card aloud and a class decides all together if he or she is sitting on the right side.

Wrapping up: Talk about differences between chickens and dogs, fish and dogs, frogs and dogs, and crocodiles and dogs.

Using Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in Korean Context

Min Kyung Kwon
TESOL 4th semester

In recent years, teaching English has focused on activity-based approaches to promote motivation to learners. The purpose of this paper is to present and discuss how language is learned based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), especially Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) within the Korean EFL adult learning environment. This paper analyzes the lesson plan according to Berwick (1993), Brown et al. (1984), Duff (1986) based on Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Then, through the survey from students, I investigated whether it is effective or not for students' motivation and interests.

1. Introduction

The intended purpose of this assignment is to present and discuss Communicative Language Teaching material in terms of usefulness within the Korean EFL adult learning environment.

Topics in many kinds of English textbooks seem to be cognitively less challenging to the learners. First, use of inappropriate topics may have a more harmful effect on older learners than younger ones. Second, In an EFL context like Korea, unlike the first language, the learners' language level does not always match their age. Third, language objectives should be appropriate for the learners' current language level. Fourth, language objectives should be recycled systematically and meaningfully throughout the Lesson. (Kang, Nam-Joon (2008) and others.)

This paper looks at interactions in English classrooms where a CBLT approach is adopted. The paper analyses the lesson plan I made by TBLT, and teachers' and students' interaction and motivation. This assignment aims at investigating how language is learned in the Korean context, and especially how my own practice can be used to teach English to help the students to develop their proficiency and accuracy. My lesson is based on communicative language teaching.

2. Literature review

2.1Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. CLT also places great emphasis on helping students use the target language in a variety of contexts and places great emphasis on learning language functions. This means that successfully learning a foreign language is assessed in terms of how well learners have developed their communicative competence, which can loosely be defined as their ability to apply knowledge of both formal and sociolinguistic aspects of a language with adequate proficiency to communicate.

One of the most recognized of principles or features is David Nunan's (1991) six features of CLT; a) An emphasis on learning is communicated through interaction in the target language; b) The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation; c) The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the Learning; d) Management process; e) An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning; f) An

attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can help the teacher and students to overcome the students' resistance to learning the new language: by making the learning of the new language an enjoyable experience; by setting realistic targets for the students to aim for; by creative real experience; by linking the language-learning experience with the student's own experience of life by the use of 'creative tension' (situations requiring urgent solutions); by putting more responsibility on the learner, as opposed to the teacher.' (Wessel: 53-54)

Under this broad umbrella definition, any teaching practice that helps students develop their communicative competence in an authentic context is deemed an acceptable and beneficial form of instruction.

2.2 Interaction Hypothesis

In an interactionist view language can be learned most effectively when the learners are engaged in a meaningful interaction in which they could negotiate meaning. **Meaningful interaction** occurs when the learners are interested in topics (Cameron, 2001), so they feel a real purpose and a goal. Otherwise, learners lose their interest in learning language (Brewster et al., 1991; Cameron, 2001). Teachers should build schema by relating a new topic to the students' prior knowledge and experiences to help students understand easily. Be sure to provide variety of input such as visual, auditory, and tactile input, and clearly model each instruction as it is given. Allwright (1976, 1984) claimed that classroom interaction might contribute to language development by providing target language practice opportunities. Through carefully designed classroom interaction activities, learners can become skilled at

actually doing the things they have been taught about, turning 'knowledge that' into 'knowledge how'.

2.3 Comprehensible Input & output Hypothesis

Krashen (1987) examined language development and differentiated the process of language acquisition from the process of language learning. Krashen's (1985) 'acquisition hypothesis' supports the argument that language can only be used naturally when it is acquired through natural exposure to the target language and as a consequence the language that is learned consciously would not be used naturally. When a child is acquiring their native language at home, the focus is on the message being conveyed rather than the form or correctness of the language.

It is important that students are presented with language that they can understand. Comprehensible input promotes language acquisition. Comprehensible input can be achieved more through meaningful and purposeful interaction in which children negotiate meaning (Krashen 1985, Long 1981, 1983, Swain 1985, 1995). **Comprehensible input** is input which is a little bit above the learner's language level but still understandable (i + 1, Krashen, 1986). Although the language is slightly above the learner's level, it is meaningful and understandable because of the context and other support provided with the input. There are many different ways to make input comprehensible. The most important thing is to provide meaningful context (Curtain and Pesola, 1994). The Input Hypothesis claims that output is automatically produced after acquisition (Krashen, 1985). Through meaningful communication in which they could express their own meaning, children could notice linguistic forms as **comprehensible output** (Schmidt 1998, Skehan 1998, Swain 1985, 1995). We have to accept that speaking

does not come ‘for free’ simply through listening to comprehensible input. We have to speak in order to develop speech. For that, we need meaningful interaction.

Every learner has a different cognitive background and they may approach a particular task in different ways. I want my students to use many kinds of multiple intelligences to acquire language, not only learning or practicing language. Teachers need to give appropriate input and meaningful interaction to students.

2.4 Content-based language teaching (CBLT)

CBLT is one of the innovative methods these days. CBLT aims at improving English skills while sustaining the content learning. CBLT integrates the learning of some specific subject-matter content with the learning of a second language. CBLT is very effective because it encourages natural acquisition of a second language. CBLT focuses not only language but also content.

There are several benefits of CBLT. First, CBLT is meaningful and understandable to the learner. It provides meaningful basis for understanding and acquiring new language structures and patterns. Second, language, cognition and social skills develop concurrently among young learners. Third, the integration of English and content instruction emphasizes the specificity of functional language use (Genesse, 1994).

2.5 Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an approach which offers students material which they have to actively engage in the processing of in order to achieve a goal or complete a task. TBLT seeks to develop students’ interlanguage through providing a task and then using language to solve it. In

language learning, task-based activities stimulate effective use of language. Learner centered. meaningful interaction can occur through meaningful tasks.

What is a task? A number of definitions of the concept of task exist in the literature. A task is an activity or any kind of event that learners participate in, such as games. A task should have a clear purpose and meaning, not just language practice, but for the teacher the task should have clear language goals. Tasks focus on form rather than individual forms of many separate structures and learners have to actively negotiate meaning and produce communication to complete the task.

Skehan (1998) proposes a definition of 'task' following Candlin (1987), Nunan (1989), Long (1989): a) Meaning is primary, b) there is some communication problem to solve, c) there is some sort of relationship to comparable real world activities, d) task completion has some priority, and e) the assessment is done in terms of outcomes. On the other hand, tasks a) do not give learners other people's meanings to regurgitate, b) are not concerned with language display, c) are not conformity oriented, d) are not practice oriented, e) do not embed language in materials so that specific structures can be focused on. (Willis, 1996)

Prabhu (1987) tells is that the focus of the work was on task outcome, not form. Prabhu approached this by using a pre-task whose purpose was to present and demonstrate the task, modify and adapt the main task if necessary, and let the language relevant to the task come into play. (Prabhu 1984: 276) The task would be transacted by the students, and focus on error and on feedback would be explicitly avoided. Language learning would be incidental to the transaction of the task itself.

Berwick (1993) used multivariate statistical techniques to uncover underlying dimensions of tasks. On analyzing educational activities (Cummins 1984; Mohan 1986), he proposed two dimensions as underlying

tasks. The first concerns task goals, with contrasting educational and social poles at either end of the dimension. Educational goals have clear didactic goals while social poles require the use of language simply because of the activity in which participants are engaged. The second concerns task process, with extremes of experiential and expository tasks. Experiential tasks seem to be more concrete in nature, and relate to learners' experiences. Expository tasks are based on more abstract information and decontextualised language use (Cummins 1984).

Brown et al. (1984) investigated various task design features in an attempt to establish task difficulty on an empirical basis. They proposed dimensions which influence degree of task difficulty. The easiest tasks on the first dimension, information type are Static tasks, in which the information does not change during the course of the activity, for example, diagramming and giving instructions. Visual information is involved, the task is a one-way information-gap task, and transmitter simply has to explain. More difficult than this are dynamic tasks in which elements change during the course of the task. It is necessary to indicate narrative element, visual information, sequence of events, as well as the nature of the causality involved. The most difficult type is an abstract task, since this contains decontextualized elements, for example, expressing opinions.

Duff (1986) examined the contrast between convergent and divergent tasks. Duff reported no overall difference in the amount of language produced with each task type, but did point to significant interactional and discoursal differences. The convergent tasks produce many more and shorter turns such as the desert island game (a choice of six items from larger groups of items that you would like to have if marooned on a desert island), while divergent tasks produce fewer but longer and more complex turns, such as the good or bad effects of television. This difference is due to meaning negotiation,

3. Research and Method

3.1 Overview - Type of class

The class is an English conversation class for adults at Hyundai department store. The length of the class is 1.5 hours once a week for twelve weeks, which is one semester in a one-year course. It is a content-based and leaner centered learning class. I chose material focusing on students' motivation. I focused on understanding content and not just focus on form. During the class, common interests or related issues are typically discussed. The roles of the teacher are to encourage students, interact with students, force students to ask and answer questions spontaneously, and give specific instruction and guidance for tasks. The roles of students are to perform in front of the class, interact with both teacher and classmates, and participate in each class.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives of this course are to help the learners to develop links with meaning that will later enable them to use this language for communicative purposes, develop more performance skill, develop both fluency of behavior and clarity of understanding, develop the nature of classroom interaction and develop the nature of student-student participation patterns.

3.3 Student profile

The learners for which this lesson has been designed are adults, ranging in age from 35 ~ 70 years old. There are eleven students in the class and all of them are female. They are all university educated and all of them held a professional certification within specific area. However, most of them are not working anymore since quitting to care for a child or retiring. All of the learners are married, and all of them have children. Some of students have

grandchildren. The Language proficiency level of the learners ranges from intermediate low to intermediate high. Students have strong motivation. Students want to build their English proficiency in order to be more competent women. They want to practice and produce language skills with authentic intriguing materials which are related to their daily lives. Most students are tired of learning grammar only, they want a more conversational class. Some are also aiming to develop their language skills in order to help their children's education. When they are able to be present, most of students are eager to practice their English speaking skills, but some of them are afraid of the English only policy, and share wider ideas in Korean. With this in mind, I allowed speaking Korean when they want to explain something in detail. Language experience in the class is varied. Most students have had experiences traveling overseas.

3.4 Content

I do not use one specific textbook, I use independently developed materials to focus on students' motivation as Leaner centered learning. I select topics or readings students like from magazines, textbooks, internet, newspapers, etc. I refer to some textbooks or create activities and tasks by myself. I use both practice and process skills as skill getting and using in the lesson.

3.4.1 Weekly course description

I used the following weekly course description in my class for twelve weeks, which is one semester in a one-year course. I chose the topic according to students' common interests and related issues. 'The Truth about Lying' on weeks 3 and 4 is the example lesson below.

Table 1. *Weekly course description*

Week	date	topic	Skills	content
Week 1	03/05	Introduction	Listening, speaking	Who are you?
		Friends and relationship	Listening, speaking, reading	Five Friends Every Woman Should Have
Week 2	03/12	Friends and relationship	Listening, speaking, writing	Five Friends Every Woman Should Have
Week 3	03/19	Relationship	Listening, speaking, reading	The Truth About Lying
Week 4	03/26	Relationship	Listening, speaking, writing	The Truth About Lying
Week 5	04/02	politics	Listening, speaking, writing	election
Week 6	04/09	No class		
Week 7	04/16		Listening, speaking, writing	Personal story sequencing
Week 8	04/23	Schedule	Listening, speaking, reading, writing	It's about time.
Week 9	04/30	Having party	Listening, speaking, reading	Children's day
Week	05/07	Travel	Listening,	Parents' day

10			speaking, reading, writing	
Week 11	05/14	Culture	Listening, speaking, writing	Romeo and Juliet Activity
Week 12	05/21	Information gap	Listening, speaking, reading, writing	Discovering location

3.4.2. Evaluation

There is no written test. The teacher checks students' comprehension by asking and answering questions and observing students' discussion.

3.4.3 Lesson plan - The Truth About Lying

The grammar point is frequency adverbs. For example, once a week, seven times a day, etc. The focus vocabulary is white lie, big lie, false excuse. The function is discussing about lying. The materials required are hand outs, a movie poster, a board, and activity instructions.

Table 2. *Lesson Plan*

Lesson 1	**Step-by-step Instructions**
Warm up 	1. Ask students about their experiences and background about the movie to activate schemata. "Do you have any idea about this movie?" "Could you tell us what the story is?" 2. Suggest sharing lying experiences with partner. "Do you often tell lies?"

	"What have you lied about? When, why, to whom? 3. Tell about teacher's lying experience. "I went abroad to study alone. One day I was so sick, when my mom called me, I could not tell the truth. I just said I was ok." 4. Ask students' opinion about teacher's lying "In that case, I didn't want to make my mom worry about me so I told a lie. Was it good or bad?" 5. Introduce a new expression 'white lie' and ''big lie' to the students
Presentation	1. Ask students to find which type of lie is in the article. 2. Ask a question to identify structure. "How many white lies are there?" 3. Tell the students to read the first paragraph and ask them to answer 2 questions. "Why do people tell a lie?" "How many times a day do people tell a lie?" 4. Tell the students to read the first way of lying and ask them to answer 2 questions. "Why do people tell a lie?" "What does a boy hide?" 5. Tell the students to read the second way of lying and ask them to answer 2 questions. "Why do people tell a lie?"

	"What is the excuse not to go to the party in this article?" 6. Ask students the meaning of false excuses. Define the meaning of false excuse. "False excuse is giving a reason that is not true." 7. Tell the students to read the third way of lying and ask them to answer 2 questions. "Why do people tell a lie in the third way?" "Was the food delicious in this article?" 8. Tell the students to read the forth way of lying and ask them to answer 2 questions. "Why do people tell a lie in the fourth way?" "How was his day at work?" 9. Move on to the grammar point. Explain how to express how many times we do something. Give an example question "How many times do you have a meal a day?"
Lesson 2	**Step-by-step Instructions**
Review	Review the previous lesson; go over key expression and structures with language practice activity. Draw pictures of weekly activities and asking and answering question using grammar point.
Dependent task	First tell students my example and the reason I lied. Ask students to make the examples of white lies and talk about that with partner. Tell what type this white lie is and the reason they lied about.

	Students can choose the reason from context.
Independent task	Ask students to discuss about their thought "Is white lie always good? Sometimes It's much better to tell the truth. What do you think of this?" Discuss with partner and then with whole class. Tell teacher's opinion about white lie. Then closure.

4. Findings and Discussion

Based on theories I reviewed, especially Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), I am going to observe and analyze my lesson according to Berwick (1993), Brown et al. (1984), Duff (1986), if there are tasks or not and the reason I think so. Then, through the survey from students, I will figure out whether it is effective or not for students' motivation and interests.

4.1Finding - Analysis of task

4.1.1 Warm up

Swain, 1985 argues that learners need to process meaning before they can go on to internalize form. Before reading the text, the first thing for students to do is pre-reading activities to activate students' schemata as a warm-up. I suggest students sharing lying experiences with partner and the class. "Do you often tell lies?" "What have you lied about? When, why, to whom?" These pre-reading activities could provide readiness for the students. Familiarity with the text can make students feel easier and comfortable. Is this a task or not? This is definitely a task.

Berwick (1993) concerns task goals and task process. First, he concerns task goals, with contrasting educational and social poles at either

end of the dimension. The goal of this task is social poles require the use of language simply because of the activity in which participants are engaged. The aim of this task is to complete the mission, which is sharing students' own experiences in the target language. Second, he concerns task process, with extremes of experiential and expository tasks. The process of this task is experiential tasks, which seem to be more concrete in nature, and relate to learners' experiences. This kind of task is engaging and can be helpful in activating students' schemata. Therefore, I created this activity as warm-up.

Brown et al. (1984) investigated various task design features in an attempt to establish task difficulty on an empirical basis. They proposed dimensions that influence the degree of task difficulty. This is a dynamic task in which elements change during the course of the task. It is necessary to indicate narrative elements, visual information, sequences of events, as well as the nature of the causality involved. My students' proficiency level ranges from intermediate mid to high and their cognitive level is higher than that. This means that they prefer complex tasks to static tasks.

Duff (1986) examined the contrast between convergent and divergent tasks. Duff reported no overall difference in the amount of language produced with each task type, but did point to significant interactional and discourse differences. This task is divergent a task, producing fewer but longer and more complex turns.

4.1.2 Independent task

The aim of this task is to complete the mission which is to discuss about students' own thoughts with a partner and then with whole class. "Is a white lie always good? Sometimes it is much better to tell the truth. What do you think?" Is this a task or not? This is definitely a task. Through this task, students produce language and learn from listening to other students'

opinions. In this stage, students can internalize input and intake to the long-term memory and produce output.

Berwick (1993) concerns task goals and task process. First, he concerns task goals, with contrasting educational and social poles at either end of the dimension. The goal of this task is not educational and social poles require the use of language simply because of the activity in which participants are engaged. The aim of this task is to complete the mission, which is to discuss about students' own thoughts and not learning new things. Second, he concerns task process, with extremes of experiential and expository tasks. The process of this task is experiential, relating to learners' experiences and what they believe based on experience.

Brown et al. (1984) investigated various task design features in an attempt to establish task difficulty on an empirical basis. They proposed dimensions that influence the degree of task difficulty. This task is an abstract task, since this contains decontextualized elements, dealing with expressing students' own opinions.

Duff (1986) examined the contrast between convergent and divergent tasks. Duff reported no overall difference in the amount of language produced with each task type, but he did point to significant interactional and discourse differences. This task is a divergent task, producing fewer but longer and more complex turns. Students do not need to answer shortly; they need to explain what they believe with examples. To explain their own idea, they need to have some time.

4.1.3 Survey analysis: Questionnaire

Based on theories I reviewed, I observed within my lesson whether it is effective or not for students' motivation and interests. Students do not want

to write answers on paper (they said that they want to express their opinion in both English and Korean to explain themselves more thoroughly), so I did face to face interviews with seven questions (See Appendix D). There are ten students in the class and I asked each student with a smile.

The first question is “How did you feel during the lesson?” and second question is “Why do you think so?” 70% of students checked the happy face picture, they liked to have new lesson. Another 30% of students were little bit nervous and had some difficulty. The reasons include “It is exciting and fun.” “I like to try something new.” “I was nervous because sometimes I cannot think of the words.” The third question is “How did you feel during the task?” and the fourth question is “Why do you think so?” 70% of students checked the happy face picture, they liked to have a new lesson in which need to think about their opinion. Another 30% of students were a little bit nervous, had some difficulty in expressing themselves in English, and needed more time. The reasons include “I need more time to think about it.” “It is fresh and interesting.” “I like to think about what I want to say.” “It was difficult.” The fifth question is “Do you want to have this kind of class more often?” The sixth question is “Why do you think so?” 90% of students want to have this kind of class more because it is more interesting than just memorizing dialogue, studying grammar and vocabulary. The seventh question is “Did you participate in today’s class?” 100% of students answered that they participated more than usual.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to analyze two tasks in a lesson plan using several TBI theories as tools of analysis. First, I reviewed the literature on CLT, CBI and TBI. Both TBI and CBI fall under the umbrella of CLT and they are

modern developments of CLT. Then I presented a lesson plan and analyzed it based on TBI theories by Brown et al. (1984) and Duff (1986) and Berwick (1993).

Task-based learning offers a change from the grammar practice routines through which many learners have previously failed to learn to communicate. It encourages learners to experiment with whatever English they can recall, to try things out without fear of failure and public correction, and to take active control of their own learning, both in and out of the class. For the teacher, it may be true that task-based language teaching is an adventure but it is also an effective language instruction that is worth trying. Task-based learning can also be used in content areas well beyond language learning. In such instruction, the learning "task" is viewed as a basic tool that teachers use to guide students developing strategies for real-world problem solving. By completing the task, learners are provided with a real purpose for knowledge or strategy use and a natural context for content study.

5.2 Limitations and suggestions

There are some strong points of my lesson. First, it can be more flexible to choose material, topics and function because it is private sector and there is no fixed course syllabus. I can choose anything according to the students' motivation. As a learner centered class, I let students to choose main topics they like, but I choose the way to teach. Secondly, I believe that both language practice and production is important to develop language. Littlewood (1981) distinguished two major activity types as functional communication activities that aim at developing certain language skills and functions which involve communication, and social interaction activities such as conversation and discussion sessions. These can be described as 'skill

getting' and 'skill using'. I do not use these two activities separately; I believe that both of them are important, so I use them in order. These two kinds of activities are included in my lesson, and these come out as synergy. I believe that both language practice and production is important to develop language. Therefore, I put these two things in the lesson plan. Even though TBLT can contribute to meaningful learning, there could still be some limitations or problems in certain school settings such as large class sizes, cramped classrooms, lack of appropriate resources, and traditional examination-based syllabi. There are some weak points of my lesson. The first one is time management. My students are all females who love to chat. So I need to monitor them doing activities in order to finish on time. Usually they are talking about related topics to those we are learning, but in Korean. Sometimes I let them chat about it for a while because it could be helpful to their understanding of the content. Secondly, students' language proficiency level is varied even though their cognitive level is almost the same. I therefore gently try to do interesting tasks using simple language that they can handle. Teachers might not have enough time to take care of every student and monitor their learning process or progress. In response, teachers could choose and train some high-level students as little teachers. They can help teach or model target skills for other students and also learn communicative skills for themselves. And about traditional examination-based syllabi problems, many students who have not taken the class using tasks can be confused and concerned that they cannot see their results through an exam. Teachers are responsible for striking a balance between standardized tests and task-based instruction.

Analysis of the lesson plan based on TBI suggests that the application of TBI into EFL learning can provide learners with material that students have to engage actively in the processing of in order to achieve a

goal or complete a task. This integration helps learners who have a linguistically low grasp of English but a high cognitive level. Any teaching practice that helps students develop their communicative competence in an authentic context is deemed an acceptable and beneficial form of instruction. It is extremely important to find out learner variables related to students' motivation, needs, interests, and attitudes. TBI emphasizes the fact that a good grasp of students' motivational and de-motivational factors can help educators better understand students. As a result, application of TBI motivates learners to learn their target language naturally and unconsciously. In short, both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge can be promoted. Moreover, motivation, learner autonomy, social equality, and identity can also be encouraged through the use of TBI inside and outside of the classroom.

References

Krashen, S. (1981). Second language acquisition and second language learning. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Krashen, S. (1985). The input hypothesis: Issues and implications. Oxford: Pergamon Press. Curtain and Pesola, 1994 Languages and Children: Making the Match : Foreign Language Instruction for an Early Start Grades K-8. Pearson Education.

Swain, M, 1985. 'Communicative competence: some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development'.

Littlewood, W. T. (1983). Communicative approach to language teaching methodology (CLCS Occasional Paper No. 7). Dublin: Dublin University Trinity College, Centre for Language and Communication Studies.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. Applied Linguistics 11, 129-158.

Schmidt, R. (1994). Implicit learning and the cognitive unconscious: Of artificial grammars and SLA. In N. Ellis (Ed.), Implicit and explicit learning of languages (pp. 165-209). London: Academic Press.

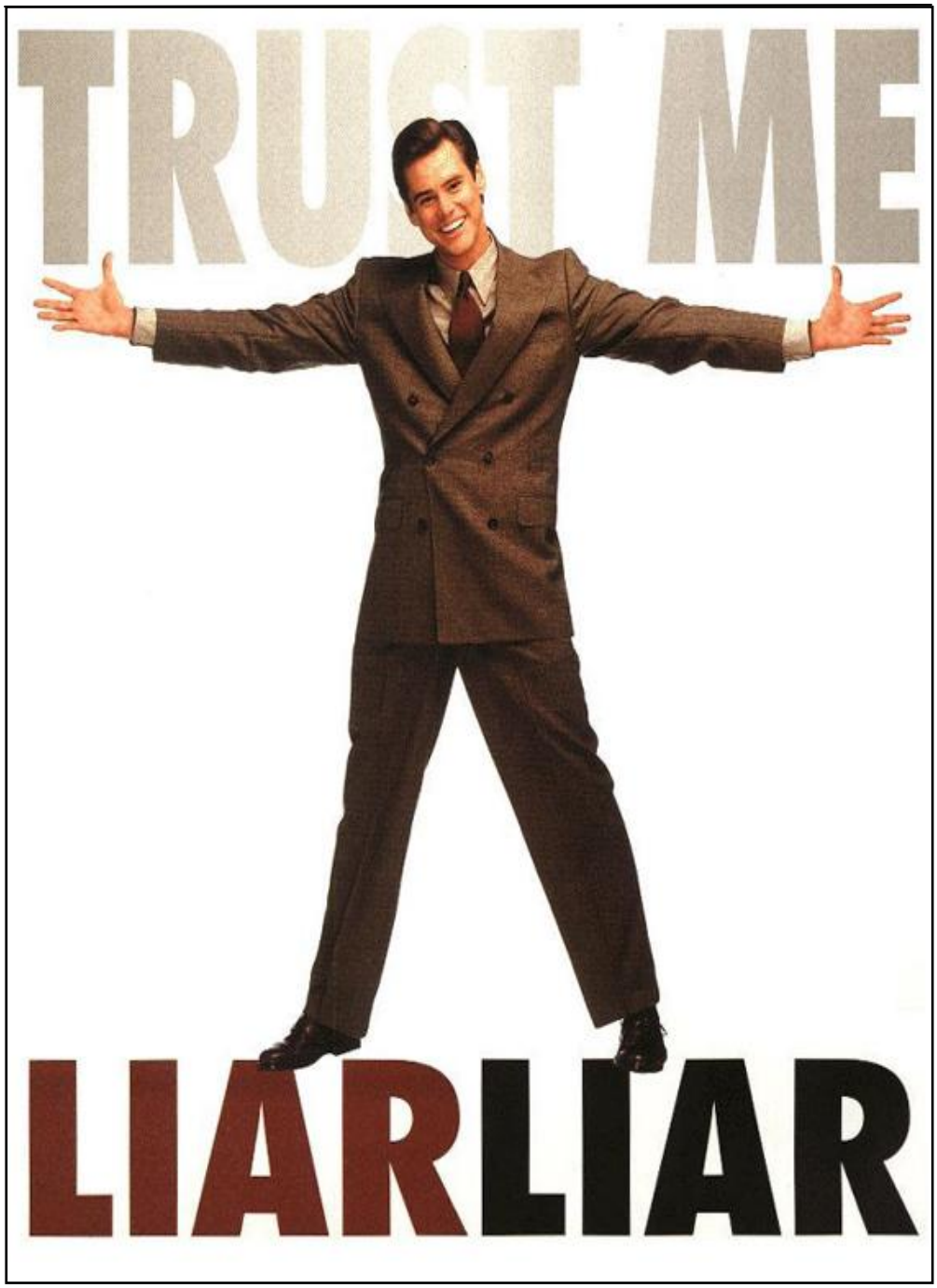
Skehan, P. (1996). Second language acquisition and task-based instruction. In D. Willis & J. Willis (Eds.), Challenge and Change in Language Teaching (pp. 17-30). London: Heinemann.

Skehan, P. (1998). A cognitive approach to language learning. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kang, N. J. (2008). Communicative language teaching course, TESOL MA: Sookmyung Women's University.

Additional and practical suggestions for using and managing lesson can be found on the Internet. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communicative_language_teaching

Appendix A: "Warm-up stage: movie poster"

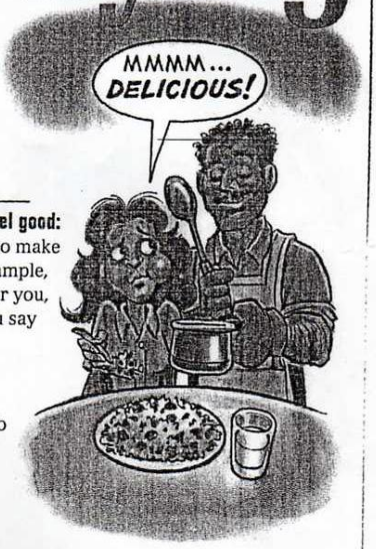


Appendix B: "Reading handout"

The Truth About Lying

Do you ever tell little lies? If yes, when and why?

It seems that everybody tells lies – well, not big lies, but what we call "white lies." Telling white lies isn't really that bad. Most of the time, people do it because they want to protect a friendship. Some studies suggest that the average person lies about seven times a day. The only real questions are about when we lie and who we tell lies to. A recent study found that people frequently stretch the truth. Here are some ways they do it.



#1 Lying to hide something:
People often lie because they want to hide something from someone. For example, a son doesn't tell his parents that he's dating a girl because he doesn't think they will like her. Instead, he says he's going out with the guys.

#2 Giving false excuses:
Sometimes people lie because they don't want to do something. For example, someone invites you to a party. You think it will be boring, so you say you're busy.

#3 Lying to make someone feel good:
Often we stretch the truth to make someone feel good. For example, your friend cooks dinner for you, but it tastes terrible. Do you say so? No! You probably say, "Mmm, this is delicious!"

#4 Lying to hide bad news:
Sometimes we don't want to tell someone bad news. For example, you have just had a very bad day at work, but you don't feel like talking about it. So if someone asks you about your day, you just say everything was fine.

#1. _____ Q1. Why do people tell a lie? Q2. What does a boy hide?	#2. _____ Q1. Why do people tell a lie? Q2. Was the food delicious?
#3 _____ Q1. Why do people tell a lie? Q2. What is the excuse not to go to the party?	#4 _____ Q1. Why do people tell a lie? Q2. How was his day at work?

☞ **Fill in the blanks**

① Telling ____ _____ isn't really that bad.

② Average person lies about _____ _____ a day.

③ _____ _____ ; Giving a reason that is not true.

④ It seems that everyone ____ _____. *(Guess something related to this article.)*

Appendix C: "Review activity"

Appendix D: “Questionnaire”

1. How did you feel during the lesson?



Interesting same as usual difficult

2. Why do you think so?

_____

3. How did you feel during the task?



Interesting same as usual difficult

4. Why do you think so?

_____

5. Do you want to have this kind of class more?

1) Yes 2) No

6. Why do you think so?

_____

7. Are you participated in today’s class?

1) More than usual 2) Same as usual 3) Less than usual

8. What is your favorite part of today’s class?

_____

Fall 2008 Issues in EFL Vol.6 No.2

Universal Grammar in Second Language Acquisition

Young Shin Cha

TESOL 2nd semester

In this paper, I will examine what Universal Grammar (UG) is, that is, its concepts which are widely and commonly accepted by linguists, and how UG is appraised as one of the second language acquisition theories. After this, most importantly, I shall deal with a key issue for many SLA researchers since 1980s on whether or not second language learners have access to UG and, if they do have access, to what extent UG is available to them. Each position will be compared and contrasted with each other and their limitations and weaknesses will also be discussed. This is done for the purpose of looking at the possibilities of the role of UG in SLA and furthermore, offering a perspective on how UG is related to SLA theory.

1. Introduction

It would be horribly daunting to think that human beings need learn every new word and structure they encounter without the innate ability of systematizing and generalizing the linguistic rules. It is widely thought that this cannot be and human beings must be born with some prior knowledge of what a possible language might be. This innate knowledge is what we call 'Universal Grammar' (UG). If UG does operate in second language (L2) acquisition as well as first language (L1) acquisition, any study or discussion of the effect of UG on L2 acquisition would be very crucial and meaningful work.

This paper will begin with an overview of UG and move on to how it is appraised in second language acquisition theory. Through the critical evaluation conducted by Ellis (1995), we can know the strengths and weaknesses of the theory in depth. To just have knowledge of a theory and to have an objective view of the theory by evaluating it, can be very different in consequences. Next, the accessibility of UG in SLA will be discussed, as it is the main focus of this paper. This issue is important to Korean English teachers because our teaching approaches must be different according to whether students still have a certain intuition of linguistic principles in learning another language other than their mother tongue. Depending on the outcome, we teachers might have to not only change our attitude toward students but also readjust our beliefs on our students' potential for language learning.

2. Universal Grammar: An Overview

In this section, I will briefly outline UG by defining its important concepts and terms, which will lead to a better understanding of UG.

2.1 Universal Grammar

The Theory of Universal Grammar derives from Chomsky's claim that there is an innate knowledge of language, which is the property of a child's brain. According to Chomsky (1976, cited in Ellis, 1995), there is a 'system of principles, conditions, and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages' (p. 75). This basic and abstract grammar is supposed to guide children in the development of their specific grammar of a particular language.

2.2 Principles and Parameters

Universal Grammar is assumed to consist of a finite set of fundamental principles and parameters (Ellis, 1985). More specifically, principles are things that are common to all languages; e.g., that a sentence must always have a subject, even if it is not overtly pronounced. Parameters are options which determine and account for variation among languages. That is, they allow for a choice between language A and language B; e.g., the pro-drop parameter determines whether or not the subject of a sentence must be overtly represented. More specifically, English, as shown in the following example sentences, is a non-pro-drop language because the subject of a sentence should not be omitted:

1) My sister will not be home this evening. *She* is going to the movies.
2) *It* will rain tomorrow.
3) *There* is a blackhole in the universe.

2.3 Generative Grammar and the Government/Binding Model

Generative grammar, which is closely tied to UG Theory, refers to a particular approach to the study of syntax. It attempts to give a set of rules that will correctly predict which combination of words will form grammatical sentences. The government and binding model was developed from this grammar and identifies and describes the principles and parameters that comprise UG. The importance of binding theory is shown in the grammaticality of the following sentences:

1) *John$_i$ saw him$_i$.
2) John$_i$ saw himself$_i$.
3) *Himself saw John.
4) *John$_i$ saw John$_i$.

2.4 Core and Peripheral Grammar

The rules of a language are distinguished by core and peripheral grammar in relation to UG. Core grammatical properties are part of language constrained by UG and are, therefore, seen as being relatively easier to acquire than peripheral rules. Those rules that a child discovers with the aid of UG form the core grammar of his language. On the other hand, peripheral properties of a language are the features that are not part of UG, such as rules that are derived from the history of the language or come about through borrowing (Ellis, 1995). UG Theory is restricted to an account of the core grammatical properties that are governed by UG.

2.5. Logical Problem of Language Acquisition

The Theory of Universal Grammar relies on 'the poverty of the stimulus' phenomena – where neither the first language nor the second language is possible sources for L2 presentations (Hawkins, 2001). That is, this is the question of how learners come to know properties that go far beyond the input received and how they know that certain constructions (e.g. *John explained Mary the book.) are not possible even though they are not provided negative feedback or adequate data for setting the parameters of a language. In other words, as Ellis (1995, p. 75) puts it, 'input underdetermines the final grammar'. This is where the logical problem of language acquisition arises, and a rationalization of the logical problem of language acquisition is UG; a child must be equipped with an innate knowledge of grammar.

3. Universal Grammar: An Appraisal

This section provides an overview of how UG is appraised within second language acquisition theory. This critical examination which was conducted by Ellis (1995) might enable us to determine the strengths and weaknesses of UG Theory and consequently let us take a more objective stance toward it. This theory will be evaluated with the following criteria: limited scope,

completeness, accountability, simplicity, operational constructs, falsifiability, power of prediction, and fruitfulness.

3.1 Limited Scope

This criterion is very controversial in that there is no absolute virtue in narrowly restricting the scope of a theory while there are also dangers of attempting to explain everything about a complex phenomenon. In terms of limited scope, UG Theory is explicitly modular because it focuses narrowly on competence as opposed to performance, on grammatical competence as opposed to pragmatic competence, on the formal as opposed to the functional properties of grammar, and on 'core' rather than 'peripheral' properties (Ellis, 1995). While this limited scope makes UG a strong theory and is justifiable from the perspective of linguistic enquiry by UG supporters, this might be problematic in that its limited scope provides only for a part of the whole picture of language.

3.2 Completeness

Completeness might be in opposition to the criterion of limited scope because a theory that is restricted in what it tries to explain cannot be complete. Long (1990, cited in Ellis, 1995) took a different consideration of completeness: a theory of language acquisition must propose a 'mechanism' to account for change. In this sense, UG Theory is clearly inadequate since it offers no account of how the process of acquisition takes place. There is no mechanism to explain why learners acquire some grammatical structures before others.

3.3 Accountability

The criterion of accountability is met when a theory is able to explain the relevant known facts. In the case of UG, the 'relevant known facts' are the linguistic universals - the principles and parameters. UG Theory explains the role these play in language acquisition. The problem is that differences exist

with regard to which grammatical properties are implicated in these principles and parameters. For instance, grammatical properties in ‘pro-drop’ are not fully agreed on by researchers yet. In this respect, UG Theory falls short of meeting this criterion.

3.4 Simplicity

The criterion of simplicity requires that a theory should avoid the unnecessary multiplication of variables. In this respect UG is a strong theory because it has few principal tenets and these can be expressed straightforwardly as shown in one of its main tenets, ‘input underdetermines the final grammar’ (Ellis, 1995, p. 75).

3.5 Operational Constructs

‘Construct’ is an abstract, theoretical concept that is unobservable. In order to operationalize the construct, a theory should have empirical means to measure it. In the case of UG, it uses grammaticality judgment tests as a way of eliciting learners' intuitions about the L2 grammar (Ellis, 1995). However, the problem is how to interpret the behavior that has been measured. More specifically, it is not clear what demonstrates if learners have access to UG. Moreover, when there is a violation from the test result, it is difficult to decide whether this is a performance error or lack of competence (Ellis, 1995).

3.6 Falsifiability

The falsifiability criterion is the extent to which a theory affords hypotheses that can be proven wrong. If its hypothesis is unfalsifiable, it is impossible to prove it is wrong because it cannot be tested. In this respect, UG Theory runs the danger of being unfalsifiable. Its main tenets or hypotheses such as ‘input cannot provide an adequate data basis for setting the parameters of a language', or 'a child is born, equipped with innate knowledge of language’ (Chomsky, cited in Cook, 1996, p. 205) cannot be empirically tested.

As Ellis (1995) said, if a theory is unfalsifiable, it causes a very serious problem. In UG's case, a lot of linguistic models are being established and tested, based on UG Theory. If their underlying theory is not correct, or cannot be proven right or wrong, the models are all useless.

3.7 Power of Prediction

This criterion asks whether a theory is capable of predicting what will occur if certain conditions are met. UG Theory has a strong power of prediction because it represents a clustering of grammatical properties (Ellis, 1995). Namely, once a particular parameter has been set, a whole range of linguistic properties are expected to become available to learners. For example, 'pro-drop' is linked to such phenomena as variable word order, expletives, 'that' trace in pro-drop languages, and modal verbs.

3.8 Fruitfulness

The criterion of fruitfulness is the question of whether a theory motivates substantial research and is likely to continue to do so in the future (Ellis, 1995). UG Theory is very fruitful, considering the growing number of empirical studies based on it. It is true that it obtains many support groups and stimulates a strong research following.

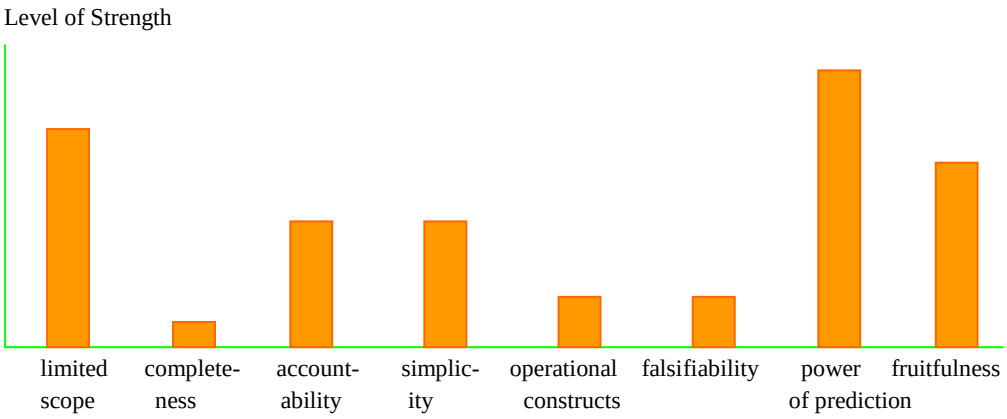
3.9 Overall Evaluation

According to Ellis (1995)'s evaluation, UG is not a strong theory at all. Rather he concluded that it was seriously deficient as a theory of L2 acquisition, failing to reach some criteria like completeness, operational constructs, and falsifiability. This is inevitable because UG involves people's inner mind and innate knowledge, which cannot be explained or proven empirically.

More seriously, UG Theory definitely lacks practicability. It is generally agreed that human beings have an innate faculty of language

(Chomsky, cited in Cook, 1996, p. 49), but it is not of much use unless it rules out the functional part of language by focusing only on 'knowledge of grammar', not the actual use of the structure when it is thought that the primary function of language is for communication. Another problem is its focus on competence, not performance. If UG Theory tries to explain competence, why does it exclude performance? The way to look through competence might be by examining performance. In this respect, UG Theory is a very pure and remote theory which is hard to apply to the practice of teaching methodologically. That is why UG is devalued in other fields such as language pedagogy. The above discussion is represented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. *Overall Evaluation*



4. Different Positions about the Accessibility of UG in SLA

There seems to be a consensus that in the case of first language acquisition (FLA) a child is endowed with UG, a system of linguistic principles (Chomsky, 1965, cited in White, 2003, p. 2). This is because UG can be a rationale to the child’s mastering of his first language in spite of finite and inadequate input. Meanwhile, there was much debate over the question of whether UG is still available for the second language acquisition (SLA).

There are three different positions over whether or not UG is still available to adult second language learners who have already acquired one language as their mother tongue and have fully matured cognitively as well as affectively. One is the *No Access to UG* position that UG is not available at all (Clahsen and Muysken, 1986). Another is the *Full Access to UG* position that L1 and L2 acquisition are alike because UG is operating in the same way to both acquisitions (Flynn, 1983). A third is the *Partial Access to UG* position, which suggests that UG is still available but it does not operate in an identical way in L1 and L2 acquisition due to either the effect of adult learners' first language (White, 1985a, b) or the operation of other cognitive systems which are not language-specific (Bley-Vroman, Felix and Ioup, 1988). First, each position will be summarized and analyzed separately and then will be discussed together in the discussion section.

4.1 No Access to UG

In a research article by Clahsen and Muysken (1986), they hypothesize that adults no longer have access to UG and have to depend on general learning strategies that lead them to come up with grammars that are not within UG principles. To test this, they investigated the developmental sequences of German word order in L1 and L2 acquisition with children who are learning German as their L1 and adult native speakers of Italian, Spanish and Turkish who are learning German as an L2. Consequently, they found stark differences between the two groups.

The most remarkable difference from their findings is that while children grasp the verb-final character of German from the very beginning, adults tend to start from a subject-verb-object order. Considering the characteristics of German whose underlying position of the verb is at the end of the verb, the children's approach is considered to be much more productive than that of adults[1].

[1]This is debatable because it has been shown that German is a verb-second language like English, but parameters sometimes cause the verb to move to the end of the sentence. For example, in main clauses the finite verb is found in second position after the subject, as in the following sentence: Die Kinder *haben* das Brot gegessen (the children have the bread eaten). On the other hand, in embedded clauses, the finite verb is found at the end of the clause, as in the following sentence: Ich glaube dass die Kinder das Brot gegessen *haben* (duPlessis, Solin, Travis and White, 1987, p 58).

Another difference is the different sequences that the two groups go through: whereas children discover the structure of their L1 quite early and effectively, passing through four stages, adults have considerable difficulties acquiring this rule and they pass through several complicated and unnecessary stages, creating a rule system which is not effective and goes beyond the general grammar.

With these results, they assume that children possess learning capacities specific to language which enable them to acquire an abstract underlying order, whereas adults use general learning strategies, which are not specific to language because they do not have access to the principles of UG in the same way as children do.

Another *no access* position is taken by Schachter (1988, 1990). Her claims are a little weaker than those of Clahsen and Muysken (1986) in that she does not deny L2 learners have access to some principles which are common in all languages. Nevertheless, she argues that UG is not fully available to adult learners since the process of second language acquisition is not the same as in first language acquisition. To support this view, in her article (1988), she lays out four differences between L1 and L2 acquisition as evidence: completeness, equipotentiality, previous knowledge, and fossilization.

She explains what each difference is as follows. Firstly, in terms of completeness, while all children attain complete mastery of the language

they are exposed to, this is not the case for adult L2 learners. Secondly, adult L2 learners are not equipotential in the way the children L1 learners are: for example, a Spanish speaker has more difficulty learning English than she does French because English is typologically less close than French to Spanish speakers. Thirdly, it is obvious that adult second language learners already have their first language which both facilitates and interferes with their L2 learning. Lastly, it is likely that adult second language learners more easily fossilize than children do when they acquire their L1 (Schachter, 1988).

Moreover, in another research paper (1990), Schachter tries to prove that second language acquisition has nothing to do with parameter resetting by testing the accessibility of the Subjacency Principle of four different language groups: Korean, Chinese, Indonesian and Dutch. The result is that Korean speakers of English, whose native language shows no Subjacency effects, performed most poorly among the groups on the tests while the best performance group was Dutch, which has similar Subjacency rules to English. This indicates, according to Schachter (1990), that a native language has a significant effect on acquiring the principles of UG and that parameter resetting for the second language is impossible.

4.2 Full Access to UG

In a thesis by Flynn (1983), it is hypothesized that learners not only have access to all principle and parameter options, but also that the process of L1 and L2 acquisition is basically the same. In order to test this, she studied the principle of Principal Branching Direction (PBD) in L2 acquisition of English by two groups which have different parameter settings for PBD in their L1: one language group is Spanish (L1PBD=right) and the other is Japanese (L1PBD=left) who are learning English (PBD=right).

Among many findings from the investigation, one of the most important things is that both groups showed preference for right branching structures in English even though acquisition was significantly facilitated for

the Spanish speakers(L1 PBD=L2 PBD) over that of the Japanese speakers(L1 PBD≠L2 PBD). This result is inspiring especially for Japanese learners, whose L1 is a left branching structure. Another notable finding is that some of the aspects shared by both groups are consistent with those found in L1 acquisition of English, which suggests that both L1 and L2 acquisition might be determined by certain common principles of UG (Flynn, 1983).

Given this result, she suggests that although values of parameters of UG are fixed by the L1 experience, sensitivity to the basic parameter remains and values can be revised from L1 to L2. This suggests that the essential language ability involved in L1 acquisition is also involved in L2 acquisition and therefore L2 learners have complete access to UG.

4.3 Partial Access to UG

Unlike the two previous extreme positions, *partial access* to UG takes the intermediate position about the access question of UG. However, among the proponents of this, there are distinctive claims; White (1985a, b) proposes that UG access is mediated by the learner's first language and Bley-Vroman, Felix and Ioup (1988) suggest the possibility that a different cognitive system, in addition to UG, is operating in the case of L2 acquisition. It would be better to look though their views separately.

4.3.1 Access to UG by Means of L1

In White's article (1985a), it is proposed that adults learning second language come to face problems when their L1 has activated a parameter of UG which is not operative in the L2. If this is the case, she says, L2 learners tend to carry the parameter settings of the L1 to the L2 and, in this course, transfer errors inevitably arise. In order to see the effect of L1 transfer on L2 learning and their relationships with UG, she tested various aspects of pro-drop with Spanish adults learning English as a second language. Spanish, unlike English, is a pro-drop language, having the properties of missing subjects,

free subject-verb inversion and *that trace* effect. After a grammaticality judgment task, it turned out that the Spanish students carried the pro-drop parameter, which is the property of their mother tongue, over into English particularly at lower levels of proficiency.

This finding indicates that L1 parameter affects L2 acquisition, having learners make transfer errors in the course of resetting the parameter appropriate for L2. One thing that should not be missed, however, is that the Spanish subjects gradually overcome this difficulty and showed improvement, which implies their learnability of parameterized principles.

In another research article by White (1985b), a similar study was undertaken with Subjacency Principle to native speakers of French and Spanish speakers learning English as their L2. The result was the same as above. The majority of subjects behaved consistently with respect to certain aspects of the Subjacency rule, showing that they have knowledge of the Subjacency Principle in some sense. In addition, many subjects consistently transferred the L1 parameter setting for Subjacency and were, therefore, less accurate in their judgments. This suggests that the L1 parameter has effects on L2 acquisition.

4.3.2 Dual Access: UG and General Cognitive System

In a research article by Bley-Vroman, Felix and Ioup (1988), it is hypothesized that adult learners use both language-specific UG principles and general problem-solving cognitive systems. They performed a study to determine whether Korean learners of English have access to the constraints on *wh-movement* which is related to the Subjacency Principle of UG. Since Korean does not have *wh-movement*, a transfer effect can be excluded. In their grammatical judgment test, the Korean speakers' average score was 75%, while the native speakers' score was 92%. Among the notable findings from the result, they point out two things: one is the Korean speakers' score which was far better than chance, and the other is the difference in scores

between two groups.

They interpret this result as follows: the Korean speakers' far better than chance performance indicates that the subjects have a surprising awareness of grammaticality of English sentences and this awareness is due to the access to UG principles. One more thing to think about is that if access to UG explains why the non-native speakers did better than chance, what explains why they did not do well as native speakers? They suggest as one of the possibilities that a different cognitive system—a general problem solving system—is involved in adult learning of L2.

4.4 Discussion

With the contradictory positions mentioned above, it seems appropriate to discuss the problems of the experiments and the limitations of each position. First, when it comes to the experiments the researchers made, all these different suggestions about the accessibility of UG in SLA are dependent on the studies' validity and the objectivity in the choice of experimental subjects, their language background, and the linguistic structures chosen.

For example, in Clahsen and Muysken's study (1986), their selection of structure as a principle of UG was German word order and White (1985a) used a pro-drop parameter of Spanish and English. In Bley-Vroman et al.'s (1988) case, they studied Subjacency Principle of English with Korean learners and Flynn (1983) performed a study of Principal Branching Direction of English to Spanish and Japanese subjects. Their subjects and linguistic principles are all distinctive, so their claims must be reasonable and persuasive within the boundaries of their experiments. It is doubtful if they would get the same results if they had done the experiment with a different linguistic principle and a different subject group, or even if other researchers do the same experiment with the very same principle and subject group. The result might not be the same. In fact, Eubank (1989) performed the same study as Flynn's (1983) with the same procedure but utilizing different subjects—Arabic-speaking learners of ESL—and obtained findings

contradicting those of Flynn's work.

More seriously, it is doubtful that the experiments and results from them are valid enough to prove what they claim. For instance, in Flynn's study (1983), an imitation task was administered individually with instructions to 'repeat exactly what I say'. After the repeated sentences were recorded, they were counted correct. It is needless to say that in this repetition task, there could be multiple sources of variation such as memorizing abilities of the subjects or their levels of proficiency. In other words, it is not clear whether this performance data accurately respresents the subjects' underlying competence. This is why each of their claims is being attacked continuously.

Considering this, it is necessary to doubt the rationale of each position to see them in a more objective point of view. First, as far as Clahsen and Muysken's (1986) claim of the inaccessibility to UG is concerned, other researchers (duPlessis, Solin, Travis and White, 1987) offer a different analysis. They argue that adult learners still have access to UG and the differences in the sequences of acquisition of German word order, which are observed by Clahsen and Muysken, are due to the fact that adults may initially assume the wrong parameter setting for the L2 because they misinterpret the L2 input or because they transfer settings from their L1. That is to say, according to duPlessis et al. (1987), L2 learners do not set all the parameters correctly all the time, so that they make wrong guesses. However, these intermediate stages where they make errors also fall within the range of UG so there is no need to assume that adults no longer have access to UG principles.

Most of all, if Clahsen and Muysken are to protect their claim of unavailability of UG on L2 acquisition, they need to explain the logical problem of L2 acquisition, because L2 learners acquire complex and subtle properties of language that could not have been grasped from the L2 input (White, 2003). Apart from other researchers' attacks on their claims, more

interestingly, in another paper (1989), Clahsen and Muysken themselves seem to step back from the strong denial of UG effects on SLA by saying that some stable UG principles are available to adult L2 learners in structuring their intuitions about the target language grammar.

Secondly, concerning Flynn (1983)'s claim of the full accessibility of UG, there are strong counter-arguments against it. For instance, as Schachter (1990, p. 96) puts it, "If UG were totally available, adult second language learners' outcome would be more uniform and they would generally be more proficient". This argument is reasonable because the incompleteness of SLA is obviously true. This incompleteness of adult learning of L2 can never be explained by the *full access* position. Clahsen and Muysken (1989) also stand against her work by criticizing that the research design and methodology are problematic for a number of reasons and the effects of parameter resetting are due to different levels of proficiency, so there is no strong evidence for L2-based parameter resetting.

Thirdly, White (1985a, b) and Bley-Vroman et al. (1988), who showed that at a certain level of competence, specific principles of UG are available to L2 learners, are also being attacked by Clahsen and Muysken (1989). They point out that L2 learners show significantly different performance than L1 speakers on the test of particular principles such as the *that t* filter which was not seriously discussed in White's article (1985a). Namely, according to Clahsen and Muysken (1989), while the subjects are likely to show intuition of grammar on the rather easy properties of pro-drop such as missing subjects, they still have difficulties with more abstract and complex rules like the *that t* filter.

As for the study of Bley-Vroman et al. (1988), Clahsen and Muysken (1989) argue that nonnative speakers scored better than chance on the whole on the English target sentences, but showed wide variation on the grammaticality judgment test, meaning that there are significant differences between native and nonnative speakers in their judgments. On top of that, in respect to Bley-Vroman et al. (1988)'s account that adult learners use both

language-specific UG principles and their general cognitive system, it is not clear exactly what the role of the latter is. Following their explanation, if adults still have access to UG, what is this additional system for?

Above all, it is not easy to determine whether this general cognitive system, which is operative only in adult learners, hampers or facilitates the learning process. Considering that adult learners are generally poor in their proficiency of L2 compared with children who acquire their first language, utilization of the additional cognitive system does not seem to be of much help in adults' L2 learning. If this is so, it needs to be explained why this general cognitive system, which is not language-specific, causes adults to have difficulties acquiring another language, instead of facilitating the process of acquisition.

5. Conclusion

So far, what UG is, how it is evaluated as an SLA theory and the different positions over the accessibility of UG to L2 learners have been reviewed. UG is recognized not only as an abstract theory of principles and parameters, but also as competence theory that mainly focuses on the speaker's knowledge of the language. This is why UG is devalued in SLA, which stresses the importance of communicative competence. As pointed out above, UG is a restricted and narrow concept. In spite of this, as Ellis (1995) puts it, UG provides SLA researchers with a theoretical basis of an examination of the way L2 learners acquire the formal properties of language. This was properly expressed by Gregg (1989, cited in Ellis, 1995) as such: UG offers 'a sense of direction'.

From the arguments over whether or not L2 learners have access to UG, two extreme views, *no access* and *full access* to UG, might be difficult to be argued for. These positions went too far to explain the important issues of SLA. That is to say, the *no access* position cannot explain

the poverty of the stimulus of SLA and the *full access* position also fails to explain why it is so rare and difficult for adult learners to attain complete mastery of another language subsequent to their L1. Ultimately, it seems that the *partial access* position gives a more acceptable explanation by claiming that while L2 learners do have access to UG, this access is only partial and limited due to many factors which are not unveiled yet. It would be fruitful to perform ongoing studies in order to find out the very factors that access to UG in SLA, making differences between L1 and L2 acquisition.

I myself take the stance of the *partial access* to UG in SLA, more specifically, supporting White's suggestion (1985a, b) that L2 learners have access to UG by means of their L1 parameter setting. With this position, it is possibly explained as following why L1 and L2 acquisition look so different but still have commonality in orders of acquisition of certain structures; even if it is hypothesized that UG controls both L1 and L2 acquisition, L2 development might differ from the acquisition of one's mother tongue because there is a problem of resetting a parameter that has already been fixed in the learner's native language. The important thing is that the problem of resetting a parameter does not necessarily mean that L2 learners are not able to learn the abstract and parameterized principles. This is actually possible, as evidenced by the subjects that gradually improved on the experimental test.

Lastly, accessibility to UG in SLA seems to mean that second language learners still have some intuition or awareness of the underlying principles of another language, which is desperately needed for language learning. In this sense, it cannot be denied that there must be language capacities inside of language students, and this leads to the *partial access to UG* position.

References

Bley-Vroman, R., Felix, S., and Ioup, G. (1988). The accessibility of Universal Grammar in adult language learning. *Second Language Research*, 4, 1-32.

Clashsen, H. and Muysken, P. (1986). The availability of Universal Grammar to adult and child learners: A study of the acquisition of German word order. *Second Language Research*, 2, 93-119.

Clashsen, H. and Muysken, P. (1989). The UG paradox in L2 acquisition. *Second Language Research*, 5, 1-29.

Cook, V. J. (1985). Chomsky's universal grammar and second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 6, 1-8.

Cook, V. J. and Newson, M. (1996). *Chomsky's universal grammar: an introduction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

duPlessis, J., Solin, D., Travis, L., and White, L. (1987). UG or not UG, that is the question: A reply to Clahsen and Muysken. *Second Language Research*, 3, 56-75.

Ellis, R. (1995). Appraising second language acquisition theory in relation to language pedagogy. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principle & Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in honour of H.G. Widdowson*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 73-90.

Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eubank, L. (1989). Parameters in L2 learning: Flynn revisited. *Second Language Research*, 5, 43-73.

Flynn, S. (1983). A study of the effects of principal branching direction in second language acquisition: The generalization of a parameter of Universal Grammar from first to second language acquisition. Ph. D. Dissertation, Cornell University.

Hawkins, R. (2001). The theoretical significance of Universal Grammar in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research*, 17, 345-367.

Schachter, J. (1988). Second language acquisition and its relationship to Universal Grammar. *Applied Linguistics*, 9, 219-235.

Schachter, J. (1990). On the issue of completeness in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research*, 6, 93-124.

White, L. (1985a). The “pro-drop” parameter in adult second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 35, 47-62.

White, L. (1985b). The acquisition of parameterized grammars: Subjacency in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research*, 1, 1-17.

White, L. (2003). Principles of Universal Grammar in L2 acquisition. In P. Austin. et al. (Eds.*), Second language acquisition and Universal Grammar*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22-57.

Introductory Remark:

Developing a theoretical model for L2 reading

Levi McNeil
Professor of Sookmyung Univ. TESOL

Learning how to read in a second language (L2) is valued because it provides opportunities for learners to acquire both content knowledge and target language knowledge. With second language literacy providing such benefits, reading educators have long searched for explanations of the underlying processes in L2 reading.

As a result of these investigations, conceptualizations of reading have evolved over time, with research identifying more factors involved in the reading process. For example, Coady (1979) proposed a model of L2 reading that over estimated the role of learners' top-down, semantic and syntactically driven guesses of text segments. As researchers found that bottom-up processing of linguistic forms also played an integral part in second language reading, a model that captured both top-down and bottom-up processes was needed. Some years later, an interactive model of L2 reading describing the interplay of top-down and bottom-up reading elements was constructed by Carrell, Devine, and Eskey (1988).

While this interactive model of L2 reading explained top-down and bottom-up elements, it failed to capture other influential factors. For example, the interactive model of Carrell et al. (1988) did not address issues of L2 language knowledge (e.g., grammar and vocabulary) and the role of first language (L1) literacy in L2 reading. In the 1990's a number of researchers examined the relationship between L1 literacy and L2 reading (e.g., Bossers, 1991; Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995). Findings from this vein of research revealed that both L2 language knowledge and L1 literacy significantly influence second language reading.

Based on these findings, Bernhardt (2000; 2005) presented a model of L2 reading that highlighted the roles of L1 literacy and L2 language knowledge. In the model, these two factors account for 50% (30% L2 language knowledge and 20% first language literacy) of second language reading comprehension. While this model has characterized the influence of these two variables, it fails to explain the functions of other factors in reading comprehension.

Bernhardt (2005) points to a number of possible variables that need further exploration in order to explain the remaining 50% of reading comprehension. Among these factors, Bernhardt includes domain knowledge (i.e. background knowledge) and reading comprehension strategies. Background knowledge consists of the topic familiarity or content area knowledge the reader already posses in regards to the subject matter presented in the text. Studies investigating background knowledge have long reported its positive effects on reading comprehension (e.g., Barry & Lazarte, 1998; Chen & Donin, 1997; Lesser, 2007; Pulido, 2004). While background knowledge is involved in comprehension, this relationship is less understood when accounting for other factors affecting reading comprehension.

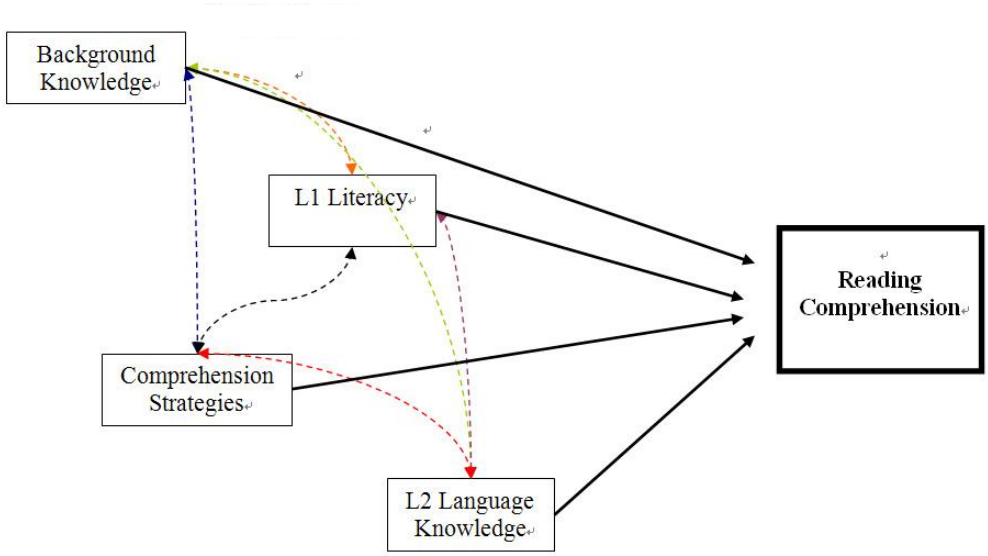
In addition to the documented affects of background knowledge on reading performance, two stems of research involving reading comprehension strategies provide strong evidence for the consideration for the inclusion of this factor in an L2 reading model. Research examining the use of reading comprehension strategies, operationalized as the deliberate cognitive and metacognitive actions L2 readers use to make meaning from texts, between “good” and “poor” readers helps illustrate the involvement of strategy use in second language reading. For example, researchers have consistently discovered that good L2 readers generally use a greater number of comprehension strategies and apply them more effectively than do poor readers (e.g., Anderson, 1991; Block, 1992). In addition to strategy use, a number of studies found that strategy training significantly benefits reading achievement (e.g., Carrell, Liberto, & Pharis, 1989; Ikeda & Takeuchi; Song, 1998). The areas of research examining strategy use and strategy training

demonstrate the power strategic behaviors have in L2 reading and they should be considered in a model of L2 reading.

Given the quantity and consistency of research findings surrounding background knowledge and reading comprehension strategies, these two factors warrant exploration along with the two main factors (L1 literacy and L2 language knowledge) of Bernhardt's (2005) model. Presented below (Figure 1) is a theoretical model of these four factors- L1 literacy, L2 language knowledge, background knowledge, and reading comprehension strategies. The model is titled "Modeling distal and proximal relationships of second language reading factors" because the positioning of each of the four variables represents the influence it has on reading comprehension. For example, after comparing the distances of the background knowledge variable and L2 language knowledge variable in relation to reading comprehension, the model predicts that L2 language knowledge affects reading comprehension more than background knowledge because L2 language knowledge is closer to reading comprehension. Therefore, the distances of each factor from reading comprehension display how influential it is in terms of reading achievement. In addition to plotting the impact of the four variables on achievement, the model demonstrates the relationships of these variables in conjunction with one another.

The aim of this model is to help capture the interconnectedness of L2 reading, helping to shape our understanding of this complex procedure. By examining these four variables in relationship to each other and reading achievement, recommendations for both reading theory and practice may be made provided. However, before this model can inform L2 reading education, rigorous research examining this model is needed.

Figure 1. *Modeling Distal and Proximal Relationships of Second Language Reading Factors*



References

Anderson, N. J. (1991). Individual differences in strategy use in second language reading and testing. *Modern Language Journal*, 75(3), 460–472.

Barry, S., & Lazarte, A. (1995). Embedded clause effects on recall: Does high prior knowledge of content domain overcome syntactic complexity in students of Spanish? *The Modern Language Journal*, 79, 491–504.

Bernhardt, E. B. (2000). Second-language reading as a case study of reading scholarship in the 20th century. In P. B. Mosenthal, M. L. Kamil,P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 3,pp. 791–811). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bernhardt, E. B. (2005). Progress and procrastination in second language reading. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 133–150.

Bernhardt, E. B., & Kamil, M. L. (1995). Interpreting relationships between L1 and L2reading: Consolidating the linguistic threshold and the linguistic interderpendence hypotheses. *Applied Linguistics*, 16, 15–34.

Block, E. (1992). See how they read: Comprehension monitoring of L1 and L2 readers. TESOL Quarterly, 26(2), 319-343.

Bossers, B. (1991). On thresholds, ceilings and short-circuits: The relation between L1 reading, L2 reading and L2 knowledge. AILA Review, 8, 45-60.

Brisbois, J. I. (1995). Connections between first and second language reading. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 27, 565–584.

Carrell, P. L., Devine, J., & Eskey, D. E. (Eds.). (1988). *Interactive approaches to second language reading*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Carrell, P., Pharis, B., & Liberto, J. (1989). Metacognitive strategy training for ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23(4), 647–678.

Chen, Q., & Donin, J. (1997). Discourse processing of first and second language biology texts: Effects of language proficiency and domains pecific knowledge. *Modern Language Journal*, 81, 209–227.

Coady, J. (1979). A psycholinguistic model of the ESL reader. In R. MacKay, B. Barkman, & R.R. Jordan (Eds.), *Reading in a second language* (pp. 5-12). Rowley, MA: Newbury.

Ikeda, M., & Takeuchi, O. (2003). Can strategy instruction help EFL learners to improve their reading ability?: An empirical study. *JACET Bulletin*, 37, 49–60.

Lesser, M. (2007). Learner based factors in L2 reading comprehension and processing grammatical form: Topic familiarity and working memory. *Language Learning*, (57)2, 229-270.

Pulido, D. C. (2004). The relationship between text comprehension and second language incidental vocabulary acquisition: A matter of topic familiarity? *Language Learning*, 54, 469–523.

Song, M. (1998). Teaching reading strategies in an ongoing EFL university reading classroom. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8, 41-54.

Book Review:

The Blackwell guide to research methods in bilingualism and multilingualism

by Wei, L. and M. Moyer (eds.) (2008). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Dr. Stephen Van Vlack
Professor of Sookmyung Univ. TESOL

Human knowledge, our skills and advancement as a species, is all based on research in some way, shape, or form. It is research which has brought us to where we are now and which guides our current behavior as language teachers and language learners in a very basic, but profound way. It is, therefore, extremely important that we, as language teaching professionals, do not coldly relegate research to a distant place, faraway from our day-to-day realities. Research is the fundamental means by which we advance. It is through research that we are able to determine what works and what does not work in certain situations. Those engaged in research increase their knowledge and are able to adopt new and a more efficient behaviors. All professional teachers need to be researchers as well as practitioners. But there is a slight problem.

Research is often perceived by language teachers as something extremely time consuming and difficult. Almost all the students in this program start with the idea of doing a thesis, but many quickly back away when they realize that doing a valid research project is quite involved. There are many things that must be considered in designing a research project. The first step is coming up with a workable concept/hypothesis and this means getting the right kind of data to elaborate on your hypothesis. Many students have good instincts but they do not know how to go about setting things up. Thankfully for all those people, and that basically includes all of us, there is now a book which can help.

Book Review

The Blackwell Guide to Research Methods in Bilingualism and Multilingualism edited by Li Wei and Melissa Moyer is a must for all teachers who not only want to engage in serious research but also simply want to improve their own teaching by incorporating aspects of reflective practices into their own teaching repertoires. In addition to the standard type of general research methods coverage (for example, see Bachman, 2004; Brown, 1988), this little gem provides specific information on some of the basics of doing research in the area of bilingualism and multilingualism. As a note, it should be clear that what we do here in teaching English in South Korea is part of the bilingual tradition and it is beneficial to think of what we do as developing bilingualism/multilingualism.

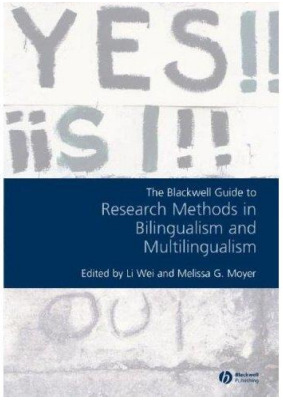
The book is divided into three different sections. The first section briefly introduces some background information about research itself - perspectives and practices in research particularly in relation to bilingualism and multilingualism. The second part is the main part of the book and this covers, in sixteen concise and highly specified chapters, the procedures, methods, and tools of research. The third section deals briefly with generating ideas for research projects, including theses, as well as how to publish and where to find resources for research on bilingualism and multilingualism.

It is the second part of this book which makes it so unique and so uniquely useful for students and those new to research. Each chapter is short and specific which means it is quick and easy to find exactly what one is looking for. Unlike other books on research methods which focus overly much on statistical analysis and more formalized realms, this books introduces a very wide range of methods and tools for doing language-related research in a very simple, easy-to-follow manner. Each chapter explains exactly how each tool can be used in a step-by-step providing a kind of do-it-yourself guide to research while still explaining the underlying concepts of each tool. In a way the book could be used as a introduction to bilingualism itself, but offers so much more.

There are so many students in this program who start their studies here eager to do research, but they are not sure. Until now I never had

an easy answer to the omnipresent question of "how do I start". As up now, I have a stock answer, "go read this book", for now there finally is a book which addresses the issue of how to get started doing research in the area of language teaching.

One word of warning though, although this book has lots of helpful information, it won't do the research for you. Also, the last chapter which presents different resources for doing research, is liable to go out of date rather quickly, but since the book has only been published this year it will take a little while for this to happen. In short, don't hesitate to get this book. Even if you are not interested in doing a thesis, doing even simple research is the best way to improve your own classroom performance.



Wei, L. and M. Moyer (eds.) (2008). *The Blackwell guide to research methods in bilingualism and multilingualism*. Malden, MA: Blackwell. ISBN: 978-1-4051-7900-3

References

Bachman, L. (2004). *Statistical analysis for language assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J.D. (1998). *Understanding research in second language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Language Ego vs. Professionalism - Which pulls rank? Investigating the on-duty English usage of Korean National Police Agency officers

Lara Tosh
Graduate School of TESOL
Sookmyung Women's University

This research investigated the intricate relationships among the ethnically diversifying South Korean population, the perceptions and feelings of Korean National Police Agency (KNPA) officers towards using English in the line of duty, and the actual behavior of KNPA officers when faced with such scenarios. A survey, face-to-face interviews, and test-scenario behavior observations were used in a multifaceted approach to answering the research questions. An attempt to correlate the practical need for English communication skills with the English language egos, as exhibited in the subjects' feelings, perceptions and behaviors, was made.

The findings suggest the existence of an internal conflict within the KNPA officers as individuals. The essence of which lies in the institutionalized high social value placed upon English, contrasted with a lack of any real-world need to communicate in English –beyond the relatively rare event of encountering a foreigner while on duty. The majority of subjects reported and displayed a lack of confidence or comfort in using English professionally, and perceived using the English language in a negative light. Feelings of shame were reported as the result of an overall low level of

English speaking ability. The resulting behavior of the KNPA officers evidenced that, in the line of duty, their professionalism overrides their weak English language egos, and a genuine attempt to communicate (either directly or indirectly) is made.

"Which one is more supportive in picture book decoding, picture cues or phonics skills?"

Mi Jung Yoon
Graduate School of TESOL
Sookmyung Women's University

This thesis originated from the idea that young learners can read unknown words from picture books with picture cues or phonics skills. In order to investigate which one is more supportive in picture book decoding between picture cues and phonics skills, the study proposed two questions: (1) How much picture cues do the learners use in decoding words; (2) How much phonics skills do the learners use in decoding words without glancing at pictures from the picture book. The participants of this study were four kindergarten students aged 5 years and 6 months to 6 years and 1 month. Four participants were divided into two groups; one that has been given pictures from a picture book and the other that has not. The two groups had reading activities for a month using six picture books and were observed by video recording.

This study concluded that young learners usually used more phonics skills than picture cues to decode easy, decodable words from picture books. However when they encountered words that could not be decoded easily, young learners increasingly searched for picture cues rather than phonics skills. At the same time they used less phonics skills.

A Case Study of Enhancing Interaction in an English Class through Drama Activities

Mi young Yu
Graduate School of TESOL
Sookmyung Women's University

This paper presents a case study of enhancing meaningful interaction in an English class through drama activities such as four situational drama activities and two debating drama activities. The main areas of experimenting interaction are turn taking and turn initiative in topic management, self-selection, allocation and sequencing. In order to investigate this study, there is a comparison made between two regular classes and six classes using the drama activities. The purpose of the thesis is to find out whether drama activities affect the three students' (1) meaningful interaction, (2) participation and motivation and (3) vocabulary use. This experiment was conducted over a month period in 90 minutes for the two regular classes and in 30 to 35 minutes for the six classes using the drama activities that met twice a week at a private English language school. The three students were respectively in grade 3, 4, and 5. During the drama activity, the teacher guided the students to examine turn taking and turn initiative between the three students and the teacher. The results revealed that the drama activities were statistically more effective for meaningful interaction, participation and motivation, and vocabulary use. Therefore, this study concluded that the drama activity as a powerful tool could be an effective way to enhance meaningful interaction, participation and motivation, and vocabulary use.

Effects of Journal Writing Experience on ESL Students' Writing Performance

Seong Eun Kim
Graduate School of TESOL
Sookmyung Women's University

In this paper, effects of journal writing experience in improving ESL students' second language writing performance were investigated. Two college students who are studying in the U.S. participated in the current study. Journal writing was used to provide the student with informal writing practice, and a college level academic writing course took the role of context for this study. Considering learning to write in a second language, a research question was proposed: How does journal writing practice contribute to the ESL students' second language writing performance in ESL context. The two participants' writing samples and interviews were collected, and analyzed by qualitative and quantitative methods. Results showed that the participant who engaged both in informal/journal and formal writing practice showed significant improvement in his writing performance. To find out the variables that might have influenced the participants' writing performance, the aspects of additional frequent writing practice, writing as linguistic output, motivation and attitudes towards second language writing were discussed.

Fall 2008 Issues in EFL Vol.6 No.2

An Investigation of the Early Study Abroad Phenomenon in South Korea

Seung Yeon Cha
Graduate School of TESOL
Sookmyung Women's University

This study investigates the characteristics and causes of the current early study abroad phenomenon in South Korea. A survey was conducted to 40 students who had experienced early study abroad while they were elementary school students and returned to Korea and 31 parents who had sent their children to study abroad. The survey consisted of a background questionnaire and specific items.

This study has found four characteristics of the early study abroad phenomenon. First, the increase of elementary school students' study abroad is conspicuous during the last few years. Even though most early study abroad cases are illegal under the current Korean law, more and more students are going abroad for education. Second, the host countries diversified including China and Southeast Asian countries. Third, most participants had positive attitudes toward early study abroad despite various side effects such as parachute kids, adjustment problems, and financial burden. Last, new family types such as Kirogi fathers, astronaut wives, and parachute kids emerged instigating potentially serious problems in terms of family life.

The causes of Korean children's early study abroad were obtained from the survey results: English language acquisition, intercultural competence, and advanced school systems. These reasons were viewed in

light of extension of traditional educational fever deeply rooted in Asian countries, competitiveness in the Korean labor market after the economic crisis of 1997, Korea's inauthentic EFL environment, inadequate public and private English education. However, the survey results indicate that the financial burden of private education in Korea is not the direct cause of early study abroad but rather a part of long term plan to be more competitive in Korean society.