pedagogy as it opens up the possibility of training students in the use of those strategies that have been shown to promote L2 learning. A number of training studies have been conducted in the last twenty years (see the review of these in Hassan et al., 2005). However, these have produced somewhat mixed results in part because there is still no clarity as to which strategies or combination of strategies are the important ones for language learning. Also, it is not clear what role such strategies play in incidental as opposed to intentional learning.

Principles of instructed language learning

This brief historical review shows how SLA has grown into a highly complex subdiscipline of applied linguistics. It has spawned a plethora of theories that address the linguistic, cognitive, social and psychological aspects of L2 learning. It has employed a variety of research methods – descriptive, ethnographic, correlational and experimental. It has produced findings documenting different aspects of learner language and the factors that influence its development. While these findings are not always easy to interpret and are often apparently contradictory, they do provide a basis for identifying a set of general principles that can inform the role that instruction plays in L2 learning. Drawing on Ellis (2003a), we conclude this chapter with a brief account of these principles, which we will refer to in subsequent chapters.

Like the principles proposed by Long (2006), the Principles of Instructed Language Learning constitute design features that are motivated by SLA theory and research findings. Long distinguished 'principles' and 'procedures', arguing that whereas the former constitute 'language teaching universals', the latter consist of a 'potentially infinite range of options for instantiating the principles at the classroom level' (p. 376). In the account of each principle that follows, we have suggested a number of 'procedures' for implementing it.

Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence

Proficiency in an L2 requires that learners acquire both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions, which cater to fluency and their immediate functional needs as well as knowledge of underlying rules that enable them to use the L2 'creatively'. Traditionally, language instruction has aimed at developing rule-based competence but, arguably, formulaic expressions are more important in the early stages of language learning. A complete language curriculum needs to ensure that it caters to the development of both formulaic expressions and rule-based knowledge.

Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus on meaning

As we have seen, there is now ample evidence to show that meaning-focused instruction (MFI) is highly effective in enabling learners to develop fluency and

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confidence in using an L2. MFI is also seen as a means of developing learners' linguistic resources in the L2. Immersion programmes, content-based language teaching and task-based language teaching all constitute ways of providing learners with the input and interactional opportunities they need to develop the implicit knowledge required for effective communication. However, this principle does not preclude the need for attention to form. We have pointed out that MFI does not guarantee high levels of linguistic accuracy. Thus, to be effective, instruction must also direct attention onto form, as proposed by the following principle.

Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form

There is now a widespread acceptance that acquisition also requires that learners attend to form. As we have already noted, some theories of L2 acquisition consider such attention is necessary for acquisition to take place. Instruction can cater to a focus on form in a number of ways:

- Through the explicit teaching of grammar.
- By means of consciousness-raising tasks that assist learners to discover grammatical rules for themselves and to develop an explicit representation of them.
- Using input-based or production-based practice activities.
- By means of 'focus on form' techniques (i.e. methodological options that induce attention to form in the context of performing a meaning-focused task).
- FFI can involve an *intensive* focus on pre-selected linguistic forms or it can offer *extensive* attention to the forms of a range of features through corrective feedback in task-based lessons.

Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge

Given that it is implicit knowledge that underlies the ability to communicate fluently and confidently in an L2, it is this type of knowledge that should be the ultimate goal of any instructional programme. How then can it be developed? There are conflicting theories regarding this (see earlier discussion of the interface positions). Irrespective of these different theoretical positions, however, there is a clear consensus that learners need the opportunity to participate in communicative activities to develop implicit knowledge while there is also a case for teaching explicit knowledge. First, explicit knowledge is useful for monitoring and, given time, also for formulating messages. Second, according to the weak interface hypothesis, explicit knowledge can facilitate the processes of noticing and noticing-the-gap. Accordingly, instruction needs to be directed at developing *both* implicit and explicit knowledge, giving priority to the former.

Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the order and sequence of acquisition

One of the key findings of SLA is that learners manifest an order and sequence of acquisition that is to a large extent universal and reflects the gradual process of acquiring grammatical features. How, then, can instruction take account of this gradual process? There are a number of possibilities:

- Adopt a zero grammar approach, as proposed by Krashen. That is, employ a task-based approach that makes no attempt to predetermine the linguistic content of a lesson.
- Ensure that learners are developmentally ready to acquire a specific target feature. However, this is probably impractical as teachers have no easy way of determining where individual students have reached and it would necessitate a highly individualized approach to cater for differences in developmental levels among the students.
- Focus the instruction on explicit rather than implicit knowledge as explicit knowledge is not subject to the same developmental constraints as implicit knowledge.

It should be noted, however, that not all researchers accept that there are developmental constraints on what learners can learn and, therefore, what can be successfully taught. The strong interface position claims that explicit knowledge of a grammatical structure can be converted into implicit knowledge at any time, given the right amount and type of practice. Similarly, Sociocultural Theory rejects the view that L2 acquisition progresses along a relatively predetermined mental path. Chapters 3 and 4 provide a discussion of this issue.

Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input

As we have already noted, much L2 learning is incidental rather than intentional and this requires access to massive amounts of input. It can be claimed with confidence that if the only input students receive is in the context of a limited number of weekly lessons based on some course book, they are unlikely to achieve high levels of L2 proficiency. How then can teachers ensure their students have access to the extensive input they need? Teachers need to:

- Maximize use of the L2 inside the classroom. Ideally, this means that the L2 needs to become the medium as well as the object of instruction, especially in a foreign language setting. However, this does not mean that the L1 has to be excluded entirely. See Chapter 8 for a detailed discussion of the role of the L1 in the L2 classroom.
- Create opportunities for students to receive input outside the classroom. This can be achieved most easily be providing extensive reading programmes

based on carefully selected graded readers, suited to the level of the students, as recommended by Krashen (1989). Learners can also seek out opportunities to experience the language outside class time and need encouragement and guidance in how to do so.

Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output

The importance of creating opportunities for output, including what Swain (1985) has called 'pushed output' (i.e. output where the learner is stretched to express messages clearly and explicitly), constitutes one of the main reasons for incorporating tasks into a language programme. Controlled practice exercises typically result in output that is limited in terms of length and complexity. They do not afford students opportunities for the kind of sustained output that theorists argue is necessary for interlanguage development. Classroom research has shown that extended talk of a clause or longer in a classroom context is more likely to occur when students initiate interactions in the classroom and when they have to find their own words. This is best achieved by asking learners to perform tasks as these provide them with the opportunity to perform a range of language functions associated with initiating as well as responding roles in interaction.

Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency

Hatch (1978b) famously put it 'one learns how to do conversation, one learns how to interact verbally, and out of the interaction syntactic structures are developed' (p. 404). Thus, interaction is not just a means of automatizing existing linguistic resources but also of creating new resources. What then are the characteristics of interaction that are deemed important for acquisition? Johnson (1995) identified four key requirements for an acquisition-rich classroom:

- Creating contexts of language use where students have a reason to attend to language.
- Providing opportunities for learners to use the language to express their own personal meanings.
- Helping students to participate in language-related activities that are beyond their current level of proficiency.
- Offering a full range of contexts that cater for a 'full performance' in the language.

Creating the right kind of interaction for acquisition constitutes a major challenge for teachers, especially in teacher-centred classrooms. One way is to exploit the interactive opportunities afforded by small group work. When students interact amongst themselves, acquisition-rich discourse is more likely

to ensue although there are also a number of dangers (e.g. excessive use of the L1 in monolingual groups and exposure to interlanguage errors).

Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners

There are a number of ways in which teachers can adapt their teaching to take account of individual learner differences. One way is by matching the instruction to suit individual learners. However, this is not practical in many teaching situations as learners vary in so many different ways. However, teachers can cater to learner variation by adopting a flexible teaching approach involving a range of different instructional activities. They can also use simple learner-training materials (e.g. Ellis and Sinclair, 1989) to make students more aware of their own approaches to learning and to develop their awareness of alternative approaches. They can try to increase the range of learning strategies at learners' disposal and to assist learners to achieve self-regulation. Strategy training – despite the problems referred to earlier – may help to make learners more flexible in their approach to learning. Finally, but perhaps most importantly, teachers need to find ways of fostering motivation in their students (see Dörnyei, 2001). They should accept that it is *their* responsibility to ensure that students are motivated and stay motivated and not just blame a lack of motivation on their students. While it is probably true that teachers can do little to influence students' extrinsic motivation, there is a lot they can do to enhance their intrinsic motivation.

Principle 10: Instruction needs to take account of the fact that there is a subjective aspect to learning a new language[1]

This principle is based on a much broader view of what is involved in learning an L2 and draws on the ideas about social identity discussed earlier. It acknowledges that language teaching involves much more than developing students' linguistic and communicative abilities. It also involves developing them as people. As Kramsch (2009) noted 'language…is not just an unmotivated formal construct but a lived embodied reality' (p. 4). Kramsch argued that learners have the opportunity to develop their subjective selves by taking on new identities and even a new personality. Learning an L2 can change how people view reality and how they see the world around them when the new language enters into their lives and transforms them. For Kramsch, teaching a new language needs to cater to the 'construction of perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, values' (p. 7). Also, it needs to encourage learners to examine the practices and beliefs of their own world-view critically.

Kramsch suggested a number of ways in which instruction can help develop what she called 'symbolic competence' in learners. Teachers need to become 'critical educators' and learners to become politically, socially and personally aware. This requires instructional activities that encourage language play and

emotional identification with the language. One way in which this can be achieved is through the introduction of literature and creative writing into the L2 curriculum.

Principle 11: In assessing learners' L2 proficiency it is important to examine free as well as controlled production

Norris and Ortega (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of FFI studies. A meta-analysis is a statistical procedure that enables researchers to compare the relative effectiveness of two types of instruction. Its advantage is that it examines a large number of studies and thus can show which type of instruction is overall the most effective. The meta-analysis demonstrated that the extent of the effectiveness of instruction is contingent on the way in which it is measured. They distinguished four types of measurement:

1 metalinguistic judgement (e.g. a grammaticality judgement test)
2 selected response (e.g. multiple choice)
3 constrained constructed response (e.g. gap-filling exercises)
4 free constructed response (e.g. a communicative task).

They found that the magnitude of effect was greatest in the case of (2) and (3) and least in (4). Yet, arguably, it is (4) that affords the best measure of learners' L2 proficiency, as it is this that corresponds most closely to the kind of language use found outside the classroom. The ability to get a multiple choice question right amounts to very little if the student is unable to use the target feature in actual communication. Free constructed responses are best elicited by means of tasks.

Conclusion

A fundamental assumption of this book is that good teaching is teaching that proceeds in accordance with how learners learn. Instruction that is not compatible with the way L2 acquisition takes place cannot be successful. Thus, the goal of 'SLA-for-language pedagogy' must be to: (1) to provide a clear and usable account of how learners acquire an L2 both outside and inside classrooms and (2) propose how instruction can take account of what is known about L2 acquisition.

This is not an easy enterprise, however, in part because SLA has grown into an epistemologically diverse area of enquiry affording varying and sometimes conflicting accounts of the same phenomena. Thus, there is no simple SLA recipe that can be applied to language pedagogy. Our approach, therefore, has been to try to draw out of the review of SLA in the first part of this chapter a set of general principles that can guide decision making in pedagogy. In the rest of the book, we will explore these principles and the SLA research that informs them in greater depth as we examine specific issues in language pedagogy.