Tonya Kaushik

Resubmitted September 20, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 1 – Chapter 2: First Language Acquisition

Key Words:

1. behaviorism – a psychological theory in which actions are explained as the direct result of stimuli
2. nativism – a linguistic theory that states language acquisition is innately determined and humans are born with a genetic capacity that predisposes us to a systematic perception of language around us that results in the construction of an internalized system of language
3. Universal Grammar (UG) – a linguistic theory that builds upon nativism; UG research attempts to discover what it is that all children bring to the language acquisition process, regardless of their environmental stimuli (the language or languages they hear around them)
4. functionalism – an approach to linguistics that focuses on the meaningful, interactive purposes within a social (pragmatic) context that language users accomplish with the forms and structures of their language
5. competence – one's underlying knowledge of a system, even, or fact; it is the nonobservable ability to do or perform something
6. performance – the overtly observable and concrete manifestation or realization of competence; the actual doing of something: walking, singing, dancing, etc.

Questions:

1. Should teachers expect a child from a home where little attention was paid to teaching language skills to acquire language on his or her own once the child is in a formal educational environment such as kindergarten?

2. How much time should educators spend explicitly teaching young children grammar, or should they avoid correcting errors and wait for the child to acquire the right structure on his or her own?

Observations:

I have a 2-year-old nephew named Adric who is my primary source of toddler-speak. He still babbles quite a bit, saying things that only he understands, but he also uses a lot of telegraphic utterances. What really surprised me about his developing language skills happened several months ago when he took me into his bedroom, slammed the door, and proclaimed, "My room!" I did not know that children that young understood the use of pronouns, but Adric knows the difference between "my" and "your(s)" when people talk to him. I've often said to him, "These are *my* shoes. Where are *your* shoes?" and he knows to go get his own shoes. When he responds, though, most of the time he refers to things that are not his as "Name's item," instead of "your item," as in, "Tata's shoes" when bringing me my shoes. This indicates to me that he has the underlying competence but not the performance ability necessary since I have not heard Adric switch to the use of the second person pronoun, but he clearly understands the difference.

Evaluation:

One strength of the chapter was the author's easy-to-read writing style. The textbook presented various theories on language acquisition, but since the information was presented in an organized and straightforward manner, I was able to understand the concepts without having a background in developmental psychology. Another strength was the use of boldfacing to highlight key words and concepts. Boldfacing certain words made it clear to me as a reader what concepts the author felt were important, helping me as a student know which concepts to highlight and pay closer attention to. A third strength of the chapter was the inclusion of the "In

the Classroom" feature. I enjoyed reading about the development of the Berlitz teaching method, since so many language books and instructional programs are based on his method.

One weakness of the chapter was the lack of charts and graphs. I am a visual learner, so I like seeing the concepts presented in a textbook also explained in graphical form. The one graphic that was in the chapter (fig. 2.1) was presented in circles and at first glance, it appeared to be a Venn diagram, but this was not the case. The information in the graphic should have been listed as a simple table since the author presented the different theoretical frameworks as unique entities that have very little overlap or similarities. The use of circles in this graphic left me wondering if the theories had more in common than I had originally believed just by reading the text. A second weakness of the chapter was the abrupt way the "normal" text of the chapter ended. The publisher used a line of stars to mark the end of the regular text instead of labeling the last paragraph "Summary." Visually, it looks like the last paragraph should accompany the "In the Classroom" feature, even though the feature's text uses a different font, because the stars make such a bold distinction between this final paragraph and the preceding text. A subheading would have been a better choice, with the stars used to separate the chapter's text and the feature on Gouin and Berlitz. Finally, a third weakness of the chapter was putting the study questions at the end. I know this is typical of many textbooks, but some of those questions could have been made more relevant by including them alongside the topics they relate to.

Tonya Kaushik

Resubmitted September 20, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 2 – Chapter 3: Age and Acquisition

Key Words:

7. Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) – a linguistic theory arguing that there is a biologically determined period of life when language can be acquired more easily and beyond which time language is increasingly difficult to acquire
8. lateralization – a neurological process in which certain functions are delegated to either the left hemisphere or the right hemisphere of the brain
9. equilibration – a progressive interior organization of knowledge in a stepwise fashion that is related to the concept of equilibrium; a cyclical process of cognition that moves from states of doubt and uncertainty (disequilibrium) to stages of resolution and certainty (equilibrium) and then back to further doubt that is, in time, also resolved
10. language ego – the interaction of the native language and ego development, particularly in a monolingual person; one's self-identity is interconnected with one's language
11. code-switching – the act of inserting words, phrases, or even longer stretches of one language into another language

Questions:

3. What are some strategies teachers use to help their post-adolescent ESL and foreign language students overcome the inhibitions many may encounter when learning a new language? What role does the teacher's training and personality play in students overcoming their inhibitions in speaking and producing language?

4. Many school districts require ESL classrooms to be English-only, so what can teachers do to help students who continually code-switch into their native languages feel more comfortable using English in the classroom?
5. Brown says that since adults are often more tolerant of mistakes, adult learners may learn just enough to "get by" in their use of a second language. What are some ways teachers can use positive peer pressure when working with older students, particularly adults, to encourage students learn more than enough to "get by"?

Observations:

When I was in seventh grade, I remember looking forward to choosing my classes for the next school year because as eighth graders, we would be at the "big school" with students in the traditional high school grades. Since we were going to be in high school and not junior high or middle school, we were able to choose a foreign language as an elective. I chose Latin I, which was very helpful in hindsight, but I remember thinking Latin would be the best choice because it was a dead language and I wouldn't have to struggle to learn to speak it. Now I realize that was an example of an inhibition and how my language ego, even at that age, was reluctant to face the challenge of speaking something other than English. My school was very homogenous, with just a few African American students, and no Hispanics or students from other cultures, so I had no practical motivation to learn to speak anything other than English. Instead, I focused on translating and memorizing declensions and conjugations.

The next year, I had space in my schedule for an additional elective, so I chose to take Spanish I in addition to Latin II. I remember loving Spanish from the beginning, even though we all complained about our Spanish teacher. She was from Columbia and spoke only Spanish with us from the first day. It was difficult, but gradually, I was able to understand more and more of what she was saying. As a student, her methods of teaching were sometimes confusing, since she

spoke primarily Spanish, but that strong foundation helped me throughout the rest of my high school Spanish classes. We rarely spoke in Spanish II and Spanish III, and since there were no native Spanish speakers at my school, there was no one to practice with. When I entered college, the "book learning" I had of Spanish enabled me to do well enough in the language placement test to skip two years of college-level Spanish, but our professor expected us to speak in Spanish all the time. Again, my language ego struggled, but I'd like to think that I adapted since I was successful in my Spanish courses, and even now – almost 15 years later – I can still understand most of the Spanish I hear and read, although I admit that it's much easier to reply to a Spanish-speaker in English since I still worry that my Spanish will not sound "proper" or "correct."

Evaluation:

One strength of this chapter were the use of lists on pages 50, 51, 53, and 61 to emphasize key points. The numbered list of seven myths about the relationship between first and second language acquisition on page 50, for example, allowed Brown to quickly list Stern's critiques without having to explain the items or quote them directly. Similarly, the bulleted list on page 51, allowed Brown to offer Ausubel's criticisms of the Audiolingual Method in a concise format. By listing the three categories for comparison on page 53, Brown was able to expand on the graphic in figure 3.1, describing which aspects were held constant for each of the categories. Finally, the bulleted list on page 61 was a quick way to provide an overview of Piaget's outline of intellectual development in a child from birth to age 16.

Another strength was the use of boldface and subheadings to identify key terms. By making key words and phrases bolder than the surrounding text, it was easy to highlight them as important. The use of subheadings, which are larger than the surrounding text and also in boldface, differentiated the sections of the text and made it easy to separate the concepts Brown presented in this chapter. A third strength is the inclusion of the author's comments following

titles given in the Suggested Readings section. Knowing why the author thinks these books are worth reading is significant in deciding whether or not to look for those books.

One weakness of this chapter was the use of stars as a divider. Since the previous chapter used a line of stars to separate the end of the regular text and a summary paragraph, I expected the line of stars to function this way in Chapter 3. After a brief summary, however, the text continued in a subsection labeled "Issues in First Language Acquisition Revisited." While this is also a type of summary, its separation from the main text of the chapter by the stars and the two summarizing paragraphs was awkward.

A second weakness of Chapter 3 is Brown's brief treatment of Jane Hill's (1970) anthropological studies. He offers a long quotation from Hill's work where she concludes that scholars should look beyond monolingual American English middle class speech communities to uncover more information about SLA in adults. This was one of the most interesting parts of the chapter, but Brown only mentions this in passing. He gives references to other scholars following Hill's work, but I would have liked to have had more information about this aspect of SLA research, especially since my husband's native country of India is one of those multilingual nations where adults often have to learn a second or third language in order to communicate with people in different parts of India.

Finally, a third weakness of the chapter lack of a clear distinction between Brown's definitions of "coordinate bilinguals" and "compound bilinguals on page 67. After reading and re-reading the paragraph, I cannot distinguish between the two types. If the difference between these two categories of bilinguals is important, Brown should have given more detailed information about the characteristics of each type.

Tonya Kaushik

October 25, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 3 – Chapter 4: Human Learning

Key Words:

12. conditioned response – a behavioristic response to a stimulus that is learned over time (e.g., Pavlov's dogs salivating at the sound of a bell regardless of whether or not they were provided with food)
13. operants – classes of responses that are governed by the consequences they produce (e.g., crying, walking, sitting down)
14. respondents – sets of responses that are elicited by identifiable stimuli
15. transfer – the carryover of previous performance or knowledge to subsequent learning; positive transfer occurs when prior knowledge benefits the learning task; negative transfer occurs when prior knowledge disrupts the performance of a second task
16. interference – negative transfer; when previously learned material interferes with subsequent material
17. overgeneralization – in SLA, a process that occurs as an L2 learner acts generalizes a particular rule or item in the target language beyond legitimate bounds (e.g., in English, regularizing all past tense verbs, such as go → goed)
18. aptitude – an innate ability or "knack"
19. intelligence – traditionally, a person's linguistic and logical-mathematical abilities; current notions of "intelligence" consider other domains such as kinesthetic ability, musical ability, and emotional/interpersonal skills

Questions:

6. What are some strategies ESL teachers can use to create lessons that target students of differing aptitude and intelligence levels?
7. What are some ways cultural differences may impact American ESL teachers' concepts of aptitude and intelligence, as well as differing culture's acceptance and/or rejection of Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligences?
8. How can ESL teachers in the U.S. help students from cultures where mathematical or scientific intelligence is highly valued learn to place a value on other areas of expertise, such as communicative competence and pragmatics?

Observations:

Most teachers today are taught that students learn differently and have different areas of aptitude and expertise. While I agree with this belief, I think more teachers need to be made aware of Gagné's (1965) types of learning and Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences. I had never encountered Gagné before reading this chapter, but I can see how incorporating knowledge of his learning types into a lesson plan would be beneficial. For example, including a kinesthetic activity that incorporates chaining could be an effective way to help students link certain sounds with actions – especially if the actions and sounds are chained together in a logical fashion. The activity could include making a paper chain that had related sounds or concepts on them, for instance. Also, combining signal learning with inter- and intrapersonal activities could help reinforce the concepts being taught.

In my experience, students who are provided with a variety of activities in a single lesson tend to pay more attention in class, and since they are actively involved in their learning, they retain the material better. The high school students I have taught have enjoyed different types of activities, so once I was able to create meaningful learning opportunities in ways they preferred

to learn, I found greater success in their long-term understanding. In addition, when I made a conscious effort to increase my students' positive transfer and decrease interference they found it easier to learn the new material. I always tried to link new concepts to what my students already knew. Their prior knowledge could be something they had learned in science class or even something from a movie or TV show. I used whatever I could think of to create opportunities for meaningful learning. Therefore, ESL teachers, in my opinion, should also use all the tools at their disposal – learning types information, learning strategies, concepts of intelligence, pop culture awareness – to help their students succeed.

Evaluation:

As usual, I found the strengths of this chapter to be based on graphics and lists. First, the use of several charts and diagrams helped clarify the concepts in the chapter. Table 4.1, which compares the theories of learning presented early in the chapter, and Figure 4.3, which graphically explains the concepts of transfer, overgeneralization, and interference, were especially helpful to me as a visual learner. Second, I found the inclusion of several lists to be a helpful way to present information. In particular, listing Gagné's (1965) eight types of learning, and then providing a second list of those same concepts in regards to SLA, further expanded on those concepts and made them more relevant to me as an ESL teacher-candidate. Third, the use of boldfaced print and italics to identify key words made identifying these terms easier. Finally, the use of section headings helped divide the chapter into parts, which made it easy for me realize which concepts should be considered together and which should be contrasted.

Despite these strengths, the chapter did have some weaknesses. First, I found Brown's treatment of some topics to be too short, especially when he referred to other studies that I as the reader may find useful. One example in particular is at the top of page 98 where he presents a single sentence on research done by Wong (1986). To me, it read as if Brown had included a

paragraph or more on Wong's discussion of intonation patterns that an editor removed before publication; there was no transition into the next section. Second, the chapter did not always present clearly defined terms. In the discussion of aptitude and intelligence, for example, the concepts are presented in light of historical research without obvious definitions given. I know these notions are constantly being redefined, but a sentence or two explaining that or even offering sample definitions would have made this part of the chapter more informative. Third, Brown mentions subsumption theory on page 88 but does not clearly define this concept. I believe it comes from Ausubel's (1968) work on meaningful learning and systematic forgetting, but I am not able to define the term or its significance based on its treatment in the chapter. Finally, how important is language attrition, a concept introduced on page 87? I would have liked to have read more about how and why L2 learners lose language skills. I feel like this topic was given too brief a treatment in the chapter, and like subsumption theory, I'm unclear as to the importance of this concept.

Tonya Kaushik

November 1, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 4 – Chapter 5: Styles and Strategies

Key Words:

20. style – consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preferences within an individual
21. strategy – specific methods of approaching a problem or task; designs for controlling and manipulating certain information
22. learning strategies – what learners do in order to acquire and retain information
23. communication strategies – what language learners do to productively express meaning or deliver messages to others

Questions:

9. How much impact do cultural differences have on learning strategy usage?
10. Are the differences between learning strategy inventories described in the chapter significant? That is, what would be the impact in the classroom if a teacher preferred O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) system rather than Oxford's (1990) system?
11. How often should students assess their own personal learning strategies? What characteristics should they examine when thinking about the ways they learn?
12. What are some ways ESL teachers can incorporate strategy instruction into daily lessons?

Observations:

I am a firm believer in differentiated instruction, and this chapter reinforced what I learned about learner styles and strategies last semester in our differentiated instruction course.

As a teacher, my goal is to design lessons that will appeal to students of all levels, which can be difficult depending on the topic. Many of the ESL students I taught had not been in the United States very long, so creating ways for them to quickly grasp history and government concepts was crucial. I observed my students in class and often asked them what they did on their own to remember new information. By using strategies for different types of learners, I tried to make the content accessible and relevant to their lives. I believe teachers should help their students become better learners overall, not just in their particular content area, so students will continue to grow and succeed in all of their courses.

Evaluation:

The strengths of this chapter were (1) the excellent use of lists, tables and figures to further describe learning strategies, (2) the use of boldface to highlight key terms, and (3) the information included in the "In the Classroom" section.

The weaknesses of this chapter were (1) the fact that information given on styles and strategies was limited by being covered in only one chapter, (2) there were many referenced studies listed together, which sometimes made it difficult to follow the flow of the text, and (3) the inclusion of examples from French on page 129 to try to explain errors in syntax; I don't understand French so I did not understand how this text is an example of avoidance.

Tonya Kaushik

November 8, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 5 – Chapter 6: Personality Factors

Key Words:

24. affect – emotion or feeling
25. self-esteem – a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that individuals hold towards themselves
26. language ego – the identity a person has based on his or her native language; a person with a strong language ego may have difficulty learning a second language
27. anxiety – emotional feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and/or worry; trait anxiety is a more permanent predisposition to be anxious, while state anxiety is experience in relation to some particular event or act; debilitative anxiety is harmful anxiety that prevents someone from doing something, while facilitative anxiety is helpful anxiety that allows someone to do something
28. motivation – the reason or reasons a person does something; can be intrinsic (motivation coming from within the person) or extrinsic (motivation coming from an outside source)

Questions:

13. What are some techniques American ESL teachers can use when trying to evaluate the personalities of their international students, particularly students from more reserved cultures or cultures that do not emphasize expressing emotions in the classroom?
14. How can instructors help their students build self-confidence and increase their intrinsic motivation to learn?

15. What are some ways teachers can balance the desire to help build student self-esteem with the instructional goal of providing accurate, corrective feedback for student errors?

Observations:

This chapter reinforced my knowledge of personality factors from our discussions last semester in Differentiated Instruction. The affective realm plays a significant role in a student's learning, since a student only learns when he or she is motivated, interested, and willing to take the risk that a response may be incorrect. Teachers who are aware of the impact of affective factors should be better prepared to help students on a daily basis. For example, a teacher who notices that a normally outgoing student is suddenly quiet and reserved should take a moment to talk to the student privately to check on him or her. Problems in a student's personal life often carry over into the classroom, making it hard for him or her to learn, and possibly even making it difficult for others to learn if the upset student acts out or interrupts class. Also, teachers who pay attention to their students' emotional states should be better able to understand what motivates a student to learn – information that can be valuable when designing lessons that incorporate learning strategies that will prompt students to engage in the lesson and actively participate in class.

In addition to understanding students' emotional needs, teachers can use the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to discover their students' personality tendencies. I have used this inventory with my students before, and the results showed me who would be more likely to blurt out an answer in class (the extroverts) and who I would need to specifically call on (the introverts). I also was able to understand why certain students behaved the way they did based on the results from the type indicator. As an ESL graduate student, I am interested in learning more about how different Myers-Briggs types behave in language class, and since I'm a fan of Rebecca Oxford, I am specifically interested in her research on the various strategies the

different Myers-Briggs types tend to prefer. I remember reading about this last semester in our Dörnyei book, and I used information about Madeline Ehrman and Oxford's research as part of my final project for Differentiated Instruction. Their research makes sense to me because I can see the practical implications: Helping a student better understand his or her personality type can assist a teacher in suggesting the best learning strategies for that individual.

Evaluation:

As usual, this chapter's strengths were (1) the use of boldface and italics to highlight important terms; (2) the use of lists, tables and figures to illustrate the information in a more visual manner; and (3) the information covered in the "In the Classroom" section. However, the first weakness of the chapter is also included in the "In the Classroom" section: What does a discussion of "method" versus "approach" have to do with a chapter devoted to personality types? The second weakness is the brevity of the chapter's description of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Ehrman and Oxford's (1990) research linking personality types with learning strategy use. Again, I'm a fan, so I would have liked to have read more about this topic. A third weakness was the brief mention of Bloom's taxonomy at the beginning of the chapter; this taxonomy was recently updated, but the book does not include the newer information, nor does it provide a figure further describing the taxonomy, which is extremely important in the field of education.

Tonya Kaushik

November 15, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 6 – Chapter 7: Sociocultural Factors

Key Words:

29. culture – the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time that help establish for each member of the group a context of cognitive and affective behavior
30. stereotype – a biased, oversimplified view of another person or cultural group that exaggerates certain characteristics of that person or group; the stereotype may be accurate in depicting the "typical" member of a culture, but it is inaccurate for describing a particular, unique individual
31. acculturation – the development of a second identity or language ego in order to become better oriented to a new culture
32. culture shock – the disruption of a person's self-identity that happens when he or she comes into contact with another culture; effects can range from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis, and is associated with feelings of estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, unhappiness, sadness, loneliness, homesickness, and even physical illness
33. linguistic imperialism – the belief that the worldwide spread of English and its use as a *lingua franca* is causing the devaluation of native languages, particularly when

Eurocentric ideologies are embedded in English-language instruction and have the effect of legitimizing colonial or establishment power and resources

Questions:

16. How can teachers encourage ESL students who seem to have a "bad" attitude about learning English to become more willing to try the new language?
17. What are some strategies teachers can use to incorporate cultural awareness into their lessons without making them seem too obvious?
18. What are some ways teachers can help students who are dealing with severe culture shock become more acclimated to their new environment?

Observations:

I experienced culture shock firsthand during the final week of a month-long study abroad trip to Greece during the summer of 1998. The first three weeks were spent with a large group of Americans who were fellow students in the program, so even when we stayed at a Greek university, I still had extensive contact with other Americans, including my younger sister. The last week I was in Greece, however, I was only with my sister and another female student. The three of us visited a few islands, but by the time we returned to Athens to prepare for the flight home, we were all ready to leave Greece behind us – despite how excited and enthusiastic we were just 30 days earlier when we first arrived. For us, the biggest problem was the language barrier. None of us spoke Greek, and we could barely make out signs because of the different alphabet. We had been traveling almost every day of the final week, so when we returned to Athens at last, we were exhausted. To make matters worse, the woman who had helped our group earlier during the trip short-changed us (probably by accident) when arranging our final

hotel, and she had given us incorrect directions. We walked for hours in the neighborhood trying to find where we were to spend our final night in Greece, so our parting memories were soured by our negative experience. I was mad and disgusted at the Greeks and craving an American meal. I wanted to go home where things were "normal." However, I think that had we been overseas as part of a linguistic study abroad instead of one for art history, our final memories may have turned out differently. We would have been better able to ask others for help, because even in a huge city like Athens, we often could not find people who spoke English. We also may have had a better understanding of how the Greeks view the world by learning their language and a few of their idioms. Overall, I would love to return to Greece because the country is beautiful and the people really do try to help foreigners. If I do get the chance to return, I'll probably go with a group of other Americans, just to make my travel experience more like what I'm used to. I know traveling in a tour group is not the best way to experience the "true" culture of a nation, but the history buff in me would rather visit ancient ruins than Greek families.

Evaluation:

This chapter's strengths were (1) the use of boldface and italics to highlight important terms; (2) the use of lists, tables and figures to illustrate the information in a more visual manner; (3) the use of indented quotes to emphasize important research by using longer but direct quotes from several authors and studies; and (4) the information about culturally appropriate teaching covered in the "In the Classroom" section.

One of the weaknesses of the chapter was the brief treatment of Condon's (1973) research into cross-cultural studies about American, French, and Hispanic world views. Brown refers back to this research later in the chapter but fails to fully explain what the research means.

For instance, how does my American "psychomotor" view of the world make my interactions with those around me different from a Hispanic's "affective" world view? Does that mean I am not as emotional as a Hispanic, nor as intellectual as a French woman would be? A second weakness is also related to a lack of information, specifically, I would have liked to have read more about world Englishes as well as linguistic imperialism. Brown could have included a paragraph or two about how linguistic imperialism is often linked to cultural imperialism, i.e., the belief that Western culture (particularly American culture) dominates the world just as much as English seems to dominate the world.

Another weakness has to do with the formatting of the chapter. The font used to indicate a major section heading is only slightly different than the font used to indicate a subsection. New sections are identified by using all capital letters, while subsections are in the same font but in mixed case. Visually, it would have been better to use a different typeface for the sections to make it easier to distinguish the larger sections and the subsections that belong under those headings. Finally, a fourth weakness of the chapter was putting the study questions at the end. I know this is typical of many textbooks, but some of those questions could have been made more relevant by including them alongside the topics they relate to. The size of the paper the book is printed on makes this difficult, so in order to include questions, key words, or other "points of entry" along the outside margins, the book would need to be reformatted to fit larger paper.

Tonya Kaushik

November 15, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 7 – Chapter 8: Cross-Linguistic Influence and Learner Language

Key Words:

1. Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) – the theory that by studying two languages in contrast, linguists can make predictions about the difficulties people will face while learning a new language (the strong version of CAH)
2. Cross-Linguistic Influence (CLI) – the concept that prior experience plays a role in any learning act, and the influence of native language as prior experience must not be overlooked in SLA (the weak version of CAH)
3. Markedness Differential Hypothesis (markedness theory) –distinguishes between a pair of related forms or structures by assuming that the marked member of a pair contains at least one more feature than the unmarked (neutral and more widely occurring) one; Eckman (1981) showed that marked items in a language will be more difficult to acquire than unmarked ones, and that degrees of markedness will correspond to degrees of difficulty
4. mistake – a performance error that is either a random guess or a "slip" in that it is a failure to use a known system correctly; mistakes, when attention is called to them, can be self-corrected
5. error – a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker that reflects the competence of the learner

Questions:

1. What are some strategies teachers can use to better distinguish between student mistakes and student errors?
2. Since marked forms are usually more difficult to acquire, should teachers begin by showing students the irregular forms before the regular ones? What are some ways teachers can instruct students about marked forms without overwhelming new language learners?
3. Even though the strong version of CAH is mostly discredited, aren't some of the theory's predictions still valid? For example, shouldn't new language instructors be taught that to expect Japanese speakers to have difficulty differentiating between /l/ and /r/ in English, as well as teaching techniques to help Japanese students improve their English pronunciation?

Observations:

I understand why contrastive analysis was mostly abandoned in favor of other teaching methods, but I think it sounds like an interesting field of study. When I learned Latin and Spanish, one of the main strategies I used was to compare what I was learning in the new languages with what I knew of the grammar of my native language. Learning Latin, for instance, helped my English grammatical skills tremendously since it is impossible to correctly translate Latin texts without knowing how the words function in a sentence. I learned more about English grammar as a ninth-grader studying Latin I than I had in all my previous years of studying English. Contrastive analysis also helped me understand Spanish since there are many cognates in English and Spanish. Our textbook gives the example of the Spanish verb *embarazar* "to make

pregnant" as a false cognate for the English *embarrass*, but the similarities between the words actually helped me remember them: My strategy was to think, "I would be totally *embarrassed* if I had to tell my parents I'm *pregnant*." Using contrastive analysis helped me understand which words were similar and which ones I could remember because they are dissimilar. As a teacher, I always try to include word plays as part of my lessons since many students, like myself, are analogue learners, and making connections between words reinforces their meanings.

Evaluation:

This chapter's strengths were (1) the use of boldface and italics to highlight important terms; (2) the use of lists, tables and figures to illustrate the information in a more visual manner; (3) the use of indented quotes to emphasize important research by using longer but direct quotes from several authors and studies; and (4) the information about ways to address student errors covered in the "In the Classroom" section.

One of the weaknesses of this chapter is listing just one of the hierarchies of difficulty but not the others mentioned in the text. Brown mentions the eight-level hierarchy designed by Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin (1965) first, then describes Prator's (1967) six-level hierarchy in more detail. I know that the latter work was based on the former, but presenting the two side-by-side would have helped me gain a better understanding of how the concepts progressed. A second weakness was the roundabout way Brown explained the strong and weak versions of CAH. While it was clear that the strong version was the one initially explained in the chapter, Brown's explanation of the weak version was confusing. He explains that the weak version of CAH is now called CLI, but I would have preferred having more information about the transition from one theory to the other.

Another weakness has to do with the formatting of the chapter. The font used to indicate a major section heading is only slightly different than the font used to indicate a subsection. New sections are identified by using all capital letters, while subsections are in the same font but in mixed case. Finally, I dislike how the chapter puts the study questions at the end. This is typical of many textbooks, but some of those questions could have been made more relevant by including them alongside the topics they relate to. The size of the paper the book is printed on makes this difficult, so in order to include questions, key words, or other "points of entry" along the outside margins, the book would need to be reformatted to fit larger paper.

Tonya Kaushik

November 22, 2011

Dr. D. Kovalik

Journal 7 – Chapter 9: Communicative Competence

Key Words:

34. communicative competence – the aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts
35. discourse analysis – the analysis of the relationship between forms and functions of language
36. pragmatics – the effect of context on strings of linguistic events; understanding meaning based on the context of the discourse
37. kinesics – gestures and other body language that accompanies speech
38. proxemics – physical distances among interlocutors that varies (often widely) among cultures and groups

Questions:

19. How can teachers help international students better understand the American need for a large distance between interlocutors? What are some strategies teachers can use to help ELLs in the U.S. not be offended if an American backs away from them in a face-to-face conversation?
20. How important is it for ELLs in the U.S. to practice listening to a variety of American styles of speaking? What can teachers do to help their students become more aware of

and accustomed to American varieties of speech, especially since many international students learned British English but are now studying in the U.S.?

Observations:

This chapter helped summarize many of the topics we discussed in previous courses while also adding new information to the mix. I found the short treatment of proxemics to be very interesting, especially considering what I've learned about language and culture. In America, we tend to stand as far away from our interlocutors as possible. I often joke that if I can reach out and touch you, then you're standing too close to me. Within the American culture, though, there are certain times we stand purposefully close to someone else. My theater directors in college taught us that when acting, you only stand inches away from someone if you're going to hit them or kiss them. What happens when this proximity rule is violated? For example, my dad and I like to watch professional wrestling together, which features tall, muscular men as its main athletes. We both refer to the WWE as a soap opera for men, and since the focus is on promoting a "macho" image of masculinity, I find it strange when two "enemies" stand just inches away from each other. I know they are trying to show how angry their characters are with one another, but to my eyes, they look like they're about to kiss. I've never been around men who get into real fistfights, so I don't know if standing this close is normal, despite what I was taught in theater classes. Since the WWE is broadcast internationally, it would be interesting to study how other cultures interpret the face-to-face "angry stares" the wrestlers use. Would the proximity be seen as threatening, as it could be in America (and probably most of the English-speaking world), or would members of other cultures not

understand that shortening the distance between interlocutors in the U.S. is meant to be a face threatening act?

Evaluation:

This chapter's strengths were (1) the use of boldface and italics to highlight important terms; (2) the use of lists, tables and figures to illustrate the information in a more visual manner; (3) the use of cross-cultural examples to illustrate different speech situations; and (4) the information about communicative language teaching covered in the "In the Classroom" section.

One of the weaknesses of this chapter is how Brown introduces a variety of topics but then covers them very briefly. I think he tried to include too many aspects of communicative competence and was unable to discuss them equally well. A second weakness is the short treatment of communicative language teaching presented in the "In the Classroom" section. This is the shortest of these sections we've encountered so far, even though Brown says the CLT is one of the most commonly used ESL teaching approaches today. A third weakness has to do with the formatting of the chapter. The font used to indicate a major section heading is only slightly different than the font used to indicate a subsection. Finally, a fourth weakness of the chapter was putting the study questions at the end. The size of the paper the book is printed on makes incorporating questions and other "points of entry" throughout the chapter difficult, so the book would need to be reformatted to fit larger paper in order to have these user-friendly features appear throughout the chapter.

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Journal 7 – Chapter 10: Theories of Second Language Acquisition

Key Words:

6. chaos/complexity theory – a theory of SLA that argues that SLA is as much a dynamic, complex, nonlinear system as are physics, biology, and other sciences; the sheer number and complexity of the variables involved make SLA exceedingly difficult to predict because each language learner is unique with his or her own strategies and preferences
7. interaction hypothesis – a social constructivist position in the field of SLA developed by Long (1985, 1996) that states comprehensible input is the result of modified interaction (the various modifications that native speakers and other interlocutors create in order to render their input comprehensible to learners)
8. nomothetic research tradition – supports the use of empiricism, scientific methodology, and prediction in studying SLA (the behaviorist school of thought)
9. hermeneutic research tradition – supports the use of interpretation and understanding that does not look for absolute laws (the cognitive /rationalistic approach)

Questions:

4. If SLA really is more like something studied by scientists using chaos theory, should teachers continue to develop teaching strategies based on the old methods from the 20th

century? How can teachers balance their need to classroom methods with students' needs for individualized, differentiated instruction?

5. Clarke (1994) claims that researchers are wrongly omitting classroom ESL teachers from the practice of SLA theory building. What are some ways scholars can interact more with teaching practitioners to jointly build theories of SLA? What are some ways school systems can encourage their ESL teachers to reach out to theorists, instead of leaving theory building to the "experts" in academia?

Observations:

I am not a fan of Krashen's theories, so I enjoyed reading about his theory and how later scholars contradicted him. I've mentioned this before in our classroom discussions, but from my own personal teaching experiences, I do not think modern students would do well under an extended silent period in the classroom. Most of my high schoolers couldn't stay quiet long enough for me to take the roll, so I doubt they could silently focus on listening to a foreign language. Personally, when I studied foreign languages, I was never silent for very long; yes, I listened, but I preferred to repeat the sounds and words my teachers were saying to make sure I understood them. Even now when Rajiv, Noura or Maria shares a word or phrase with me in their language (Hindi, Arabic, and Spanish, respectively), I repeat it several times to reinforce that word in my memory. Repetition and vocalization is important because it also gives the teacher an opportunity to correct any pronunciation mistakes before they become ingrained errors. For example, I've learned that in Arabic, there is a difference between [ka'lam] and [kala:m'], but had I not practiced saying those words after Noura taught them to me, I never would have learned the distinction between [ka'lam] *pen* and [kala:m'] *talk*.

Evaluation:

This chapter's strengths were (1) the use of boldface and italics to highlight important terms; (2) the use of lists, tables and figures to illustrate the information in a more visual manner; (3) the use of indented quotes to emphasize important research by using longer but direct quotes from several authors and studies; and (4) the information about and graphical representation of "The Ecology of Language Acquisition" at the end of the chapter. Brown calls this final "vignette" his "right brain musings" (p. 294), and to my own right-brained way of thinking, this is the sort of thing that should have started the book, not concluded it. His ecological metaphor is a brilliant way to think about SLA and presents an image that is accessible and informative, and could have provided a useful framework under which to think about SLA had it been presented in the first, rather than final, pages of this book.

One of the weaknesses of this last chapter is Brown's addition of summarizing tables such as Table 10.3 at the end of the section the table refers to instead of incorporating it alongside the information. Although Table 10.3 is meant to compare the innatist, cognitive, and constructivist theories and models of SLA, I would have preferred seeing this table earlier in the chapter as a preview, rather than a summary, of the information the table includes. A second weakness was the roundabout way Brown explained some of the definitions, especially where two words were offered in a dichotomy. It was easy to uncover the meaning of unalalyzed versus analyzed knowledge (p. 286), as well as automatic versus non-automatic processing (p. 286), but Brown's explanations of nomothetic versus hermeneutic traditions (p. 291) was not as clear. Although he boldfaces these key terms, Brown should have been more obvious when presenting definitions.

Another weakness has to do with the formatting of the chapter. The font used to indicate a major section heading is only slightly different than the font used to indicate a subsection. New

sections are identified by using all capital letters, while subsections are in the same font but in mixed case. Finally, I dislike how the chapter puts the study questions at the end. This is typical of many textbooks, but some of those questions could have been made more relevant by including them alongside the topics they relate to.