# TEACHING LANGUAGES TO ADOLESCENT LEARNERS

## FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Rosemary Erlam, Jenefer Philp and Diana Feick

# Teaching Languages to Adolescent Learners

Teaching languages to adolescents can be a real struggle … but hopefully a delight! What works? What doesn't work? This book provides a reader-friendly overview on teaching modern languages to adolescents (Years 7–13). Each chapter takes an aspect of language teaching and learning, and explains the underlying theory of instructed language acquisition and its application through examples from real language classrooms. The book explores teachers' practices and the reasoning behind their pedagogic choices through the voices of both the teachers themselves and their students. At the same time, it highlights the needs of the adolescent language learner and makes the case that adolescence is a prime time for language learning. Written in an accessible, engaging way, yet comprehensive in its scope, this will be essential reading for language teachers wishing to integrate cutting-edge research into their teaching.

**Rosemary Erlam** comes from a background of teaching French to adolescents. She has worked with in-service teachers of a range of modern foreign languages, exploring with them how they might put second language acquisition theory into practice in their classrooms. She has published widely in a range of leading international journals.

Formerly a high school art and language teacher, **Jenefer Philp** has trained language teachers in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, USA, and the UK. Her publications include two books: one on peer interaction (Philp, Adams, & Iwashita, 2014), and another on language acquisition among children (Philp, Oliver, & Mackey, 2008).

**Diana Feick** comes from a background of teaching German as a foreign and second language. She has worked with in-service teachers of German, exploring how they use digital media in their classrooms. She has published on digital media in language teaching and learning, autonomous language learning, and language learner group interaction.

# Teaching Languages to Adolescent Learners

*From Theory to Practice*

**Rosemary Erlam**
*University of Auckland*

**Jenefer Philp**
*Lancaster University*

**Diana Feick**
*University of Auckland*

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# Contents

# Figures

# Tables

# Preface

In our work, we are often inspired by the ways in which language teachers put second language acquisition theory into practice in their classrooms. So we decided to write a book that would showcase the brilliant work of modern language teachers across a range of instructional contexts. We chose instructional contexts that have two important features in common: they are high/secondary schools and the learners are adolescents. This is because a second main aim of this book is to highlight the needs of the adolescent language learner. We believe that adolescence is a prime time for language learning.

   The book is written specifically for those involved in or interested in the teaching and learning of modern languages (also referred to as foreign languages), whether teachers, teacher-trainers, or students. In each chapter, we highlight theory relating to a specific aspect or aspects of language teaching and learning, drawing from both education and applied linguistics. We illustrate how this theory translates into good classroom practice using examples from naturalistic classroom contexts and from teachers who are very experienced. These examples are drawn from classroom observation and recordings, as well as teacher and student interviews. The students, from Years 7 to 13, ages 12 to 18, are all in high school and studying languages such as English, French, Spanish, Chinese, German, and Japanese, taught in a variety of contexts. We draw attention to how the instruction we observed is particularly suited to the needs of the adolescent language learner. We hope that you enjoy the stories of the teachers and students in this book and seeing excellent examples of theory in practice. We hope that these will inspire you as they have us, and that they will encourage you to reflect and perhaps even try out new ideas, whether you are a language teacher or learner!

# The Adolescent Language Learner: Setting the Scene

## Introduction

In this book you will read inspiring examples of theory translated into practice by foreign language teachers. You will see examples of teachers reflecting on language learning and teaching, interpreting the benefits of their practices for their adolescent students. What works? What doesn't work? In this chapter, we look 'behind the scenes' as a starting point for effective learning and teaching. No matter how good the theory and methods or how well organised and carefully selected the lesson plan and materials, it may all come to little effect without a supportive learning environment. What makes for a positive learning environment in the foreign language classroom? What roles do teachers and students play in creating that environment? Why does this make a difference for language learning? We reflect on and explore some of the questions based on current research in classrooms. In this first chapter, we highlight key aspects of the classroom environment, based on educational research conducted in schools. Before we do this however, we need to consider the learners in our classrooms. What do we know about adolescents and their needs? How might they be different to other learners we might teach or have taught?

## What Do We Know about Adolescents?

Adolescence is a time of enormous physical, cognitive, emotional, and social change. This period of transition starts, according to child psychologists (Duchesne & McMaugh, 2016), at approximately 12 years of age. It finishes when the dependent child has become an independent or autonomous adult (Damon, 2004 as cited in Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). Interestingly, adolescence is largely a phenomenon of western or industrialised countries; many cultures don't have the concept of adolescence but rather consider that adulthood starts with puberty.

Adolescence is a time of *physical development*; girls will tend to have a growth spirt until approximately the age of 16/17, boys until 19/20. The

physical changes that accompany puberty may cause insecurity and a lack of confidence, or even feelings of shame (Robins et al., 2002). Adolescents undergo changes that affect their sleeping patterns: the hormone melatonin that regulates the wake–sleep cycle causes them to feel tired around two or three hours later than adults (Randler & Wicke, 2014), meaning that they sleep less even though they need the same amount of sleep as younger children because of the enormous physical changes they are experiencing. For the teacher, there can be significant consequences: students may be tired, pay less attention, achieve less, and even be in a bad mood! The later that the school day starts during adolescence, the better.
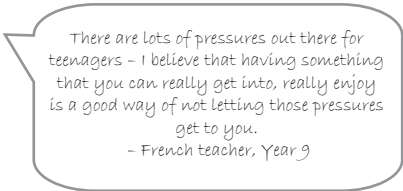
Adolescence is a time of *cognitive change and development*. The brain is still malleable, but it is a time where synaptic connections are strengthened and unused synaptic connections are eliminated. Because cognitive functions may be lost or diminished if not used, the cognitive stimulation of the adolescent is important. The pre-frontal cortex is a part of the brain that undergoes significant development during this period. It is responsible for functions like attention, setting priorities, repressing impulses, and making plans, and its development is not complete until around adulthood. Because of this, teenagers can have difficulty with goal-oriented acting and thinking (Crone, 2011). Duchesne and McMaugh (2016) hypothesise that the slow development of this cortex makes the adolescent prone to risky or impulsive behaviour. Another part of the brain that grows dramatically during adolescence is the amygdala, a region that is responsible for regulating anger and fear. Because development in this cortex is not complete, the adolescent is less able to process and control emotion.

Developmental psychologists (Elkind, 1967) identify, as typical of the period of adolescence, the 'imaginary audience phenomenon'. Young people can assume that their behaviour and appearance is the focus of those around them, with the result that they feel like they are living life on a stage. Of course, this means that the adolescent can feel acute embarrassment when they make mistakes. This may account for the fact that adolescents often experience anxiety speaking in front of others. Their desire to avoid speaking increases with age, peaking at around 15–17, and with the formality of the situation, for example, in front of the whole class (Sumter, Bokhorst, & Westemberg, 2009).

Despite the many changes that the adolescent is experiencing, adolescence is an ideal period for language learning. As we have already seen, the adolescent brain is particularly plastic or malleable. Adolescents

develop the ability to think abstractly and have increased metalinguistic awareness. This means that they can reflect on and talk about language. They can go beyond literal understandings of language and both use and understand figurative speech, sarcasm, and multiple meanings (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2013). They are better able to make comparisons between their first language and their second or additional languages. Another reason why adolescents make good language learners is that their memory skills improve (Duchesne & McMaugh, 2016). They are also better able to multi-task, shifting attention from one task to another.

Adolescence is a time of *social development and change*. Teenagers are both the children they were and the adults they will become (Lemke, 2003) and it is during adolescence that they experiment with and establish their identity. Adolescents are often exploring and asserting new expressions of self, in terms of, for example, their music preferences or commitment to sport and other social activities (Legutke, 2012). At the same time, they are likely to reject rules and values that they may perceive others have determined for them. This is associated with detachment from family and the increasing importance of friendship and peers. Peers become more significant than parents (Cook, Deng, & Morgano, 2007; Wentzel, Barry, & Caldwell, 2004) as adolescents look for emotional stability outside of the family. Belonging to a peer group gives the adolescent more confidence and a greater sense of security. This may account for the fact that they are more willing to take risks, a fact we have mentioned earlier (Gardner & Steinberg, 2005).

> There are lots of pressures out there for teenagers – I believe that having something that you can really get into, really enjoy is a good way of not letting those pressures get to you.
> – French teacher, Year 9

Legutke (2012) claims that the emotional turmoil of the teen years is played out in secondary school. What do we know then about *adolescents in the classroom*? Firstly, and not surprisingly, teachers lose the dominance they once had and are no longer central figures in the life of a teenager. Adolescents expect teachers to be respectful and friendly, but do not necessarily seek more from this relationship. Teachers need to have the professional knowledge that accompanies the subject that they teach, and they need to establish a good learning environment. Adolescents expect teachers to integrate their needs and interests into classroom activities and tasks (Kurth-Buchholz, 2011). We will discuss this further in Chapter 2. There is

a distinct preference for co-operative learning and the 'teacher-up-the-front' style can be considered boring.

## What Makes the Biggest Difference to Success in Classrooms?

John Hattie and his team of researchers combined the results of literally thousands of studies from a wide variety of classrooms and subject areas. He did this to provide sufficient statistical power to identify which factors of the many actually make the biggest difference for learning. Hattie's (2009, 2012) findings were based on 800 'meta-analyses', using information from 50,000 research papers. His team of researchers explored what most contributes to success for students in primary, secondary, and tertiary contexts through meta-analyses on five topics: school, home, curricula, teaching, and students.

*What would be your guess?*

One of the findings was that the classroom environment itself makes a difference to success. However, it was not the physical aspects of the environment that made this difference. Class size, furniture layout, or the latest technology were not the factors that surfaced as important, but the relational factors. The combined studies found that it is the people inside the class and the kind of relationships they build with one another that are most vital to a positive learning environment.

What do these classes look like? Based on Hattie (2012), Figure 1.1 identifies ten of the key features of successful classrooms.

Of these ten, which elements do you recognise in your own experience in classrooms (as a student, teacher, or observer)? Why would these make such a difference?

## What Makes for a Positive Language Learning Environment?

As seen in Figure 1.1, researchers have identified many variables that contribute to effective learning. We focus here on four that are commonly discussed in research conducted in high school classrooms (see Figure 1.2). Each is characteristic of successful learning environments. You will notice that these four variables are all people-oriented and

Teachers monitor understanding and improvise accordingly

Students respect one another

Students value learning and making the effort

Students recognise their teachers' care and commitment

Students are willing to try

Students use feedback well

Teachers have high expectations and expect success

Students ask questions

Teachers monitor learning and improvise according to learner needs

Teachers highly respect their students

**Figure 1.1** Ten indicators of a positive learning environment (based on Hattie, 2012)

predominantly to do with classroom relations: teacher–student relations and peer relations, supportive collaboration, peer feedback, and willingness to take risks (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Hattie, 2012; Philp, 2016; Sato & Ballinger, 2012).

## Positive Class Relationships

Underlying the potential benefits of all that teachers do in language classrooms is the social environment of the class itself. How do relationships between class participants – teachers, assistants, and students – actually relate to learning? Research suggests that teacher–student
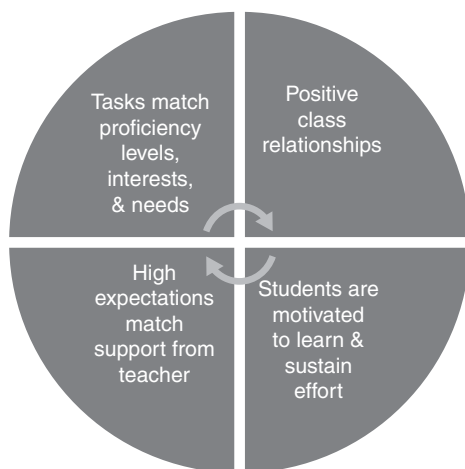
**Figure 1.2** Characteristics of a successful learning environment (based on Philp and Kos, 2017; commissioned by Cambridge University Press)

relations (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Hattie, 2012; Philp, 2016), and peer relations in class (Sato & Ballinger, 2012; Philp, 2016) both play a crucial role in the effectiveness of learning activities, just as teacher–whole class interaction and peer interaction support learning in complementary ways (Batstone & Philp, 2013).

When students recognise that their teacher knows them, respects them, and cares about them, positive relations between teacher and students are more likely, and a benefit is that students are likely to reciprocate in kind, leading to a positive environment (Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Hattie, 2012). When the teacher encourages an environment of inclusiveness and respect, students are more willing to take risks and to work with one another in ways that foster collaborative learning (Philp, 2016). Relations between class members play a crucial role in the effectiveness of learning activities. Teachers can explicitly train students how to work together in ways that encourage peer support, feedback, and collaboration (see Dawes, 2004; Philp, 2016; Sato & Ballinger, 2012).

> [there needs to be] time for people to build their social relationships, have every class be 'get-to-know somebody', 'get to know something', be able to share with them. People [need to] get to know each other, trust each other, or manage relationships in the second language. – Paul, researcher and Spanish teacher trainer

Paul, a Spanish teacher-trainer and researcher, highlights the importance of paying attention to 'the social stuff'. When Paul shares his teaching strategies for group work, he emphasises taking time to build classroom relations and trust between class members. Paul also emphasises the importance of monitoring group work (see also Philp, Adams, & Iwashita, 2013; Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997).

> When you put them in groups ... be active be listening in those activities. See how it's going ... sometimes monitoring. – Paul

## High Teacher Expectations and Support

Teachers' expectations can foster or inhibit students' goals and willingness to succeed (Rubie-Davies, 2007, 2014). In research in schools in New Zealand and in England, Rubie-Davies and colleagues compared teachers' expectations and student outcomes in a wide range of classrooms.

They found that high teacher expectations can motivate students to try harder or to take on a challenging task a little beyond their comfort zone, buoyed up by their trust in the teacher who believes them capable. You will see examples of this in later chapters.

Conversely, low teacher expectations are more likely to be associated with low performance goals and a lack of motivation to reach higher goals. The researchers found that teachers with high expectations of their class gave students greater autonomy: learners were given choices in how they learnt. This included challenging work that took account of their own interests. Student autonomy didn't mean they were just left to their own devices, however. Teachers provided support contingent with the needs of the students, enabling them to reach their goals. This is quite different to the practices and beliefs of teachers with low expectations. In these classes, although the students were similar in ability level to their peers in the 'high expectation teacher' classes, their teachers
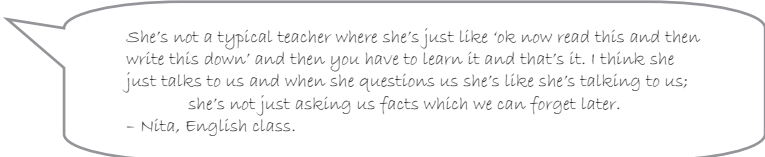
### What Do High Expectations Look Like?

- Students are given autonomy
- Challenging work links to student interests
- Teacher support matches the needs of students to achieve their goals
- Students engage in tasks requiring higher order thinking

(Rubie-Davies 2007, 2014)

did not feel the class capable of higher-order thinking skills such as creative or critical thinking, evaluating or synthesising ideas. They saw their students as low in ability and motivation. Perhaps not surprisingly, in classrooms in which teachers had low expectations of their students, gains were less, both academically and in terms of social and emotional development (Rubie-Davies, 2015).

## Motivation to Learn and Sustain Effort in a Task

We noted above the importance of teacher expectations in a class. Related to this is the affective quality of the relationship between teacher and students. Researchers in educational psychology identify the quality of the relationship between student and teacher, teacher and class, as very important: it may contribute to or impede students' willingness to engage in class, and it may help sustain their efforts when work becomes challenging (Ushioda, 2009; Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997).

In a high school English class, students were enthusiastically positive about their English teacher. Students appreciated the way the teacher treated them, feeling that they were considered as individuals with interests and opinions of their own.

> She's not a typical teacher where she's just like 'ok now read this and then write this down' and then you have to learn it and that's it. I think she just talks to us and when she questions us she's like she's talking to us; she's not just asking us facts which we can forget later.
> – Nita, English class.

Motivation has often been seen as something that 'causes' language learning. However, research investigating motivation in language learning has stressed the importance of the learning experience being appropriately challenging and interesting. That is, it is engaging. This allows learners to experience success and encourages them to keep going. In other words, there is a cyclical effect. Positive language learning experiences can themselves be motivating. In this way, teachers can promote intrinsic motivation in their students (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). That is, rather than completing a task because they have to, ideally, students with intrinsic motivation engage in an activity 'because it is enjoyable and satisfying' to do so (Noels et al., 2000, p. 61). We will discuss motivation in greater detail in Chapter 2; however, in the next section we look at two factors: the importance of (1) formulating clear goals
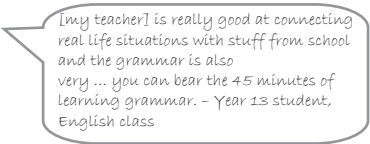
that match students' ability level and provide appropriate challenge, and (2) having the curriculum and materials match the interests of students (Dörnyei, 2001; Tomlinson, 2014).

## Learning Activities that Match Students' Interests and Needs

As with other subjects, it is typical in language classrooms to see a wide range of ability levels, varying needs, and proficiency levels. Adolescents can differ greatly in their experience of languages. Teachers can cater to different levels by varying groupings according to proficiency. For example, where the goal is the same, the material provided to each group can be differentiated in ways that supply more or less information and/or provide the information in different modes: written, oral, aural, visual, or multi-modal. (We discuss the use of digital media in the classroom in Chapter 7.) Alternatively, mixed ability groupings may be based on shared interests; for example, each group can be given the autonomy to choose their own topic (Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Tomlinson et al., 2003).

It is also important that students have the opportunity to work at tasks or activities that are aligned with their own interests. As discussed in the previous section, it is believed that the effort that students are prepared to put in to learning a language is related to the enjoyment that they experience in doing so. We will return again to this issue in Chapter 2 and discuss it in greater detail, along with the notion of learner engagement.

In a senior high school 'English as a foreign language class', the students spoke proudly of their ability to use 'only English', and gave high praise of their teacher, Anna, for making lessons interesting (and grammar classes more bearable). Indeed, in this class, activities varied from candid conversations about love at first sight (prior to reading

> [my teacher] is really good at connecting real life situations with stuff from school and the grammar is also very ... you can bear the 45 minutes of learning grammar. – Year 13 student, English class

*Romeo and Juliet*), to team relays around the room to collect facts on Shakespeare, to a TV-style quiz on grammar.

## A Social Environment: Teacher–Student and Peer Relations

We have considered four key characteristics of a successful learning environment. In this next section, we are going to focus in greater detail on one of these: classroom relationships, and on the role that they play in enabling a social environment that is conducive to learning.

We will examine, in particular, what research has to say about the following:

- the role of the teacher,
- the importance of peers,
- why for adolescents class relationships are so important, and
- group dynamics.

> …I think the most important thing for teenagers is that they feel really valued in the classroom and that they are important, they are good, that the teacher and classmates value them.
> –Jessica, French teacher, Year 9

## Classroom Roles and Positioning

Teacher–student relations play a different role to peer relations (Batstone & Philp, 2013; Philp, 2016), one that is often complementary in nature. This is because of the relative difference between adults and adolescents, more pronounced still for younger learners (Hartup, 1989). In contrast to their peers, who are relatively equal in footing, a teacher's positioning and authority in class typically reflects their greater maturity, superior knowledge, and valued experience (including expertise in the target language) (Laursen & Hartup, 2002). For this reason, the context of teacher–whole class interaction plays a different role to pair and group work among peers (Philp et al., 2013). Teachers provide a context in which students can benefit from their greater expertise. They can scaffold language comprehension and production in ways that fit the specific learning needs of each student (Gibbons, 2007; van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2010). As we will see in later chapters, feedback tailored to students' needs (for example, modelling language use, giving explicit explanation, or identifying key features), enables students to gradually become more independent in their language use (see Chapters 4 and 5). Underlying this provision and use of contingent support are three essential related 'ingredients':

(a) mutual respect between teacher and student;
(b) the teacher's knowledge of the student – their interests, their strengths, learning preferences, and academic needs;
(c) the student's recognition and trust of the teacher's expertise.

Of course, the relative positioning of teachers versus students is often more complex. In some foreign language contexts, 'heritage' learners, that is, students who have connections to the target language through family members or early experience in the home, are more advanced in some skills than the teacher. For example, they may have native-like pronunciation, higher receptive aural ability than their teacher, but be less knowledgeable in literacy, for example. Nevertheless, the teacher, as an adult, holds a different position to the student.

Classroom relations reflect participants' (teachers or students) perceptions of one another. The term 'comity' describes the ways in which people establish and maintain friendly relations (Aston, 1993). How classmates treat each other in their interactions, whether they provide support (e.g. sympathy or concern), or feel solidarity with their classmates, all contribute comity. Through shared experiences, good or bad, whether caught out as trouble-makers, excelling at a particular sport, enjoying the same computer games, or struggling in class, adolescents in particular seek comity with those they identify with. In a study of a North American high school programme, Martin-Beltrán et al. (2016) looked at how learners of English and Spanish developed comity through peer interaction.

---

### The Importance of Social Discourse through Peer Interaction

In this study in the USA, twenty-four high school students learnt English or Spanish from each other (rather than in separate classrooms).

**How?**

Students worked together over fifteen weekly lunch break sessions and four monthly two-hour sessions. Each group had an English speaker, a Spanish speaker, a bilingual expert, and a teacher facilitator as they worked on

1   a collaborative community building activity;
2   a literacy activity; and finally
3   a bilingual multimodal activity.

The students provided peer support, showing sympathy and appreciation. They also encouraged each other to talk and participate, and acknowledged one another's expertise. Comments could be positive: '*Good try!*'; appreciative: '*Thanks for your help*'; or involve sharing struggles: '*my English was so bad*'. The researchers found that students who were involved in positive social talk were more likely to try out new language or make mistakes, providing further opportunities for learning.

   While this programme in the USA involved students who were each learning a second language that was spoken in the community (rather than a foreign language not commonly used in the community), it was new to them both. This example serves to highlight the ways in which students with low proficiency in the target language were able to use it with their peers to talk together socially. The relationships they developed through working together supported their willingness to try to communicate regardless of errors, because of the trust and solidarity gained by their common experience in language learning.

(Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016)

The relationships they developed and the trust and support they experienced from working together led to opportunities for language learning.

## Why Are Classroom Relations So Important?

Work by educational psychologists such as O'Donnell (2006) and Hartup (2009) concerning peer interaction among younger students highlights the ways in which classroom relations can impact students' sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and their willingness to participate in class. This is, as we have seen, particularly true for middle- and high-school students as adolescence is typically the maturational period during which students tend to spend more time with their peers and less time with adults within the family. It is also the time when peers may have the most influence (Laursen, 2010). Specific to language learning, researchers in second language acquisition have increasingly recognised the importance of social factors in classrooms that may support or inhibit successful learning (e.g. Breen, 2001; Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007; van Lier, 2000).

> Creating relationships with my kids is … the top priority … so that we can learn together and that they will trust me and that they will give their best and that they will be motivated through that and motivated through success and the encouragement I give them.
> – Annabel, Mandarin teacher, Year 10

For example, research in adult foreign language classrooms highlights the role peer relations play in fostering useful interaction. Trust in one's peers may affect how willing a student is to listen, offer help, use unfamiliar language, try out new ideas, or take account of a peer's suggestions (e.g. Batstone & Philp, 2013; Martin-Beltrán et al., 2016; Storch, 2002). As we mentioned earlier, research in educational psychology suggests the importance of peer relations is likely to be even more pronounced for adolescents: typically, goals of affiliation (friendship connections)

> **Peer Relations in Pair and Group Work**
> Neomy Storch (2002), drawing from work in education (Damon & Phelps, 1989, as cited in Storch 2002), found that two dimensions characterised how well students in language classrooms benefited from working together: (1) **Equality**, the degree to which students take direction from each other and no one dominates; and (2) **Mutuality,** the degree to which peers respect one another's contributions, engage with each other's ideas. This may depend on the level of respect and trust they have for each other.
>
> Much of this is fostered through a positive learning environment.

and reciprocity motivate their interactions (Laursen & Hartup, 2002). Classrooms can sometimes reflect a dysfunctional setting, characterised by unwillingness to interact with peers, domination by some members, negativity or isolation, and an individualistic mindset.

It is very important that adolescents see each other's contribution as important and worthwhile, and feel that their own participation is valued. Sato and Ballinger (2012) describe this as having a 'collaborative mindset', and argue that it is vital for productive peer interaction, including cooperative and collaborative learning, peer tutoring, and other forms of help from peers, whether in a face-to-face or virtual setting.

An example comes from a high school English class where students had been reading a book about a student's first day at school. The teacher gave them a task where they had to work in pairs and compare their own experiences of their first day at school. What stood out was the mutuality of the way they worked together. They listened to each other, demonstrating respect for each other's contributions, and they took turns providing ideas. This class reflected a positive mindset in that students were able to work collaboratively and support one another.

> – When you are speaking to your partner it is a relaxed atmosphere … because I know him, I know we can have a joke or two, … knowing how his first day at school was. It is really good for our vocabulary.
> – Yeah, if we fail a word or two it is not a biggie
> – pair of male students from English class
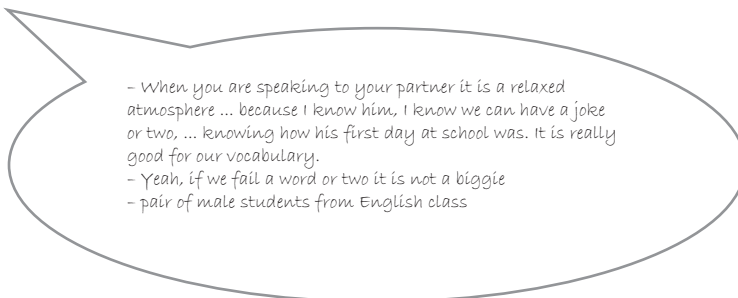
Roseth, Johnson, and Johnson (2008) combined results of 148 studies (published 1960s–2000) of interaction between adolescent learners (n = 17,000) aged 12–15 across a variety of topic areas. Through meta-analysis, they compared the effects of three different goal structures or approaches to work: 'cooperative, competitive and individual' on peer relations and achievement in school. What they found from this mixture of experimental and classroom-based studies was that those with cooperative goals were more likely to have

Co-operative goals
- Students must work together to complete the activity successfully.
- Co-operation may include mutual help (collaboration), and/or sharing resources and information.
- Students more likely to be successful in building positive relationships.
- Students likely to reach higher levels of achievement.

Competitive goals
- Students' success depends on the failure of peers' goals.
- Competition may reflect indifference to others' goals or outcomes.
- Students less likely to build positive social relationships (vs co-operative).

Individual goals
- Students more likely to be indifferent to others' efforts, goals, and outcomes.
- Students more likely to show low achievement.

**Figure 1.3** Effects of goal structures on peer relationships among early adolescents (Roseth, Johnson, & Johnson, 2008)

positive peer relationships, showing 'belongingness, social responsibility, caring' (p. 224). The researchers concluded: 'the more successful students are in building positive peer relationships, the more likely these students are to achieve' (p. 239). This is illustrated in Figure 1.3.

This is another argument for taking the time to build positive relationships between students. This is often seen as something that happens in the playground and outside of school, but the study by Roseth and colleagues recognises that classroom tasks are also a context for developing social goals (Philp et al., 2013; Martin-Beltran et al., 2016). Given the potential benefits of cooperative goals, this suggests the need for explicitly training adolescents in how to work cooperatively with one another, as a life skill that may not be modelled in the home.

## The Complexity of the Classroom: Challenge and Support

Researchers in Educational Psychology describe the successful 'classroom learning environment' as complex (Shernoff, Ruzek, & Sinha,
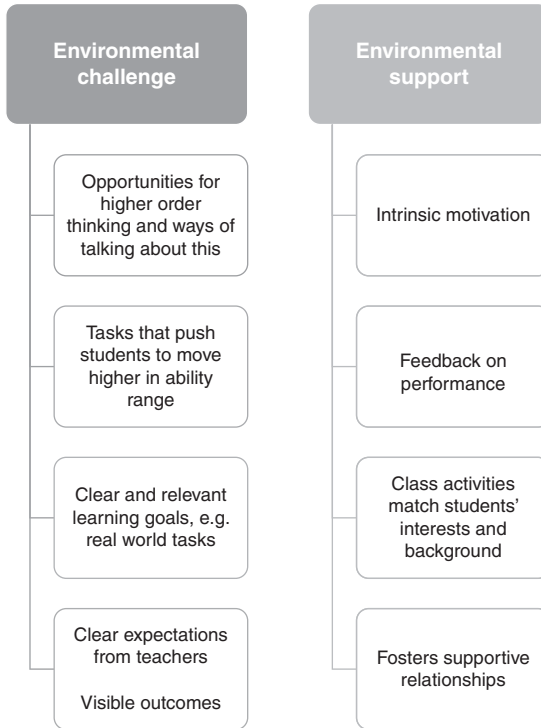
**Figure 1.4** Summary of features of environmental complexity (adapted from Shernoff et al., 2017)

2017). It surely is! Shernoff et al. (2017) explored the influence of the classroom environment on learning. To do this, they conducted interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations in six subjects (including Spanish, Grades 9–12), with 254 upper high school students in the USA.

How do they describe a positive learning environment? It needs to include both 'environmental challenge and environmental support' (p. 52), as shown in Figure 1.4. Environmental challenges guide behaviour and thinking. They are 'the challenges, tasks, activities, goals, and expectations' planned and enacted in class. They determine what students need to do and think about (p. 203). Complementing this is 'environmental support'. This support influences learners' engagement and motivation, and enables them to successfully complete classroom activities and tasks (p. 210).

A crucial aspect of environmental support is the role played by supportive relationships, between teacher and students, and between the

students themselves. Such relationships provide the social and emotional resources that help learners meet the challenges set. Over the following chapters, we explore examples of teaching practices from varied high school classrooms and include the voices of teachers and students to illustrate what environmental challenge and support might look like in practice in the language classroom.

## Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter we set the scene for the book as a whole by exploring the nature of the classroom environment, optimal characteristics, and the potential contributions of teachers and students in providing and making the most of learning opportunities.

## Key Points

- Adolescence is a time of tremendous change: in physical growth, emotional intensity, identity, and social and cognitive ability. These all have implications for teaching and learning.
- It is a time of transition towards greater independence.
- Research in educational psychology highlights the important and complementary roles that teachers and students as peers play.
- A successful learning environment for language learning is characterised by positive relationships – both between the teacher and students and between the students themselves.
- Students need to develop ways to work together to maximise opportunities for learning.
- The teacher needs to have high expectations of students and, at the same time, provide them with activities and tasks that match their interests and motivate them to engage in the learning process.
- Appropriate support from a teacher and/or peers can enable students to meet the challenges established for them.
- A successful classroom is described as one that is environmentally complex, that is, it provides both 'environmental challenge' and 'environmental support'.

## Reflection and Discussion

1 Think of an example of a class of adolescent students you really enjoyed teaching (or observing). What was it about that class that made it such a pleasure? (or the opposite!)

**2** To what extent do the characteristics of the adolescent learner outlined in this chapter describe adolescent learners with whom you are familiar? If there are differences, what might account for these?

**3** What aspects of the classroom environment discussed in this chapter do you recognise in your classroom, or in a classroom you have observed?

**4** Can you think of examples where high teacher expectations/low teacher expectations impacted on learner success?

**5** This chapter describes a change in role for the teacher of adolescents. In your experience, in what way(s) is the role of the teacher different? What are the challenges for the teacher?

**6** This chapter places a lot of emphasis on the importance of peer relationships in the adolescent classroom. To what extent is this true of your experience of these learners? What changes in classroom practice might be needed/advised to get the best outcomes for the adolescent learner?

**7** Look at Figure 1.3. What effects of goal structures are reflected in peer work that you have observed or created for your own class? (cooperative, competitive, or individual) To what extent was/is it possible to have a cooperative goal structure? How could this be facilitated?

**8** Describe some environmental challenges in classrooms you are/have been familiar with. What support is/was available to help students meet these challenges?

## Further Reading

Dewaele, J., Witney, J., Saito, K., and Dewaele, L. (2018). Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety: The effect of teacher and learner variables. *Language Teaching Research*, 22(6), 676–697.

This research, carried out among British secondary school learners, explores learners' foreign language learning class enjoyment (FLCE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA), finding that 'effective teachers fuel learners' enthusiasm and enjoyment and do not spend too much time worrying about their FLCA' (p. 694). Those teachers who made more use of the foreign language in class also tended to have students who enjoyed their classes.

## For Reflection and Discussion

(a) Discuss together/reflect on what this study found with respect to learner-internal factors (these included age, gender, attitude towards the foreign language, etc.).

(b) What factors seemed to make a difference to the learners' performance?

(c) Were there any findings that surprised you? What were these and why did they surprise you?

(d) To what extent might findings from this study be relevant to your classroom or classes you have observed?

# Fostering an Inclusive Language Classroom

In this chapter, we are going to focus on the learner as an individual. This is because we think that the first task of a language teacher would be to know the learner! We will look at some of the ways in which learners differ from each other and are unique. We will investigate some of the differences they might have in terms of strengths for language learning, and also consider specific learning differences that they may bring to the language classroom. We will also focus on some of the general characteristics of adolescent language learners. We will explore, for example, how to motivate them to engage in the language learning process. In looking at the learner in both general and individual terms, we are following the lead of psychology which, as a discipline, also aims to understand both the general principles of the human mind and the uniqueness of the individual (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Two key ideas running through this chapter are inclusivity and differentiation. How can we have a classroom or learning context where, on the one hand, the language learner feels included and keen to invest in learning, but where, on the other hand, their individual differences and needs are catered for?

## Inclusivity and Differentiation

In education, the notion of 'inclusion' first emerged in the area of special needs but has since evolved to emphasise the importance of providing education that caters for all students. According to UNESCO (2009), in order to ensure that instruction is inclusive, the teacher may need to make modifications to teaching

> **Inclusion**
> 'A process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all . . . through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education.'
> (UNESCO 2009, pp. 8–9)

content, instruction, approaches, and strategies. We looked at some of the ways in which students may feel included and part of a supportive

classroom environment in Chapter 1. An inclusive classroom will allow for differentiation, that is, it will make space for, and even celebrate, the ways in which students are different from each other. In a paper highlighting practices which centre on flexibility and differentiation, Liu et al. (2017, p. 386) describe a school which had the following ethos:

'Being Different, Belonging Together'

This ethos emphasises an important idea, that is, that inclusivity caters for difference. There is a tension perhaps, between, on the one hand, ensuring equal opportunity and social inclusion for all learners (Leung, 2016) and, on the other hand, valuing and accommodating the needs of the individual (Spada, 2007).

What are some of the ways in which learners may differ from each other in the language classroom? They may differ in terms of aptitude for language learning and motivation or interest in learning an additional language. They may come from different linguistic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, and from different socio-economic backgrounds. They may have specific learning differences, for example, special physical or learning needs. We will explore some of these differences in this chapter, with the aim of investigating how the language classroom may be inclusive of the richness and diversity that these learners bring to the language learning context.

There is one thing that the adolescent learners we focus on in this book have in common, and that is not a point of difference, this is age. We have already mentioned elsewhere how adolescence is an optimal age for language learning (see Chapter 1)! This is because the adolescent learner is faster at learning, has better memory and has developed metalinguistic awareness, or the ability to see and reflect on patterns and characteristics of language (see Chapter 5). All these abilities are important for language learning, as we will see in the next section, on language aptitude.

## Language Aptitude

The idea that language learners differ in the ability they have to learn another or additional language is one that has, historically, been unpopular, if not controversial. One of the reasons for this is

> **Aptitude**
>
> Aptitude is a learner's inherent ability for language learning. It consists of several components and is not considered part of general intelligence.
>
> (Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2008)

that it is obvious that everyone, unless they have a disability, has the ability to learn language, if we consider learning a first language as evidence of this. Another perhaps no less important reason is that predictions about success and failure can be self-fulfilling. In other words, students can tend to live up to the expectations that teachers have of them. We discuss elsewhere in this book the importance of teacher expectations on learner achievement (see Chapter 1). Nonetheless, the notion of language aptitude has continued to interest researchers, and there is convincing evidence that the language learning abilities that the learner brings to the classroom are important in facilitating language learning. This is considered all the more important given the differences that there may be for the learner between the experience of learning a first language and that of learning an additional language. The second or foreign language learner may have far less exposure to the language they are learning than they had to their first language(s) (see Chapter 3). Research suggests that it is exactly in this context, where the input is impoverished, that language aptitude is important (Wei, 2018). There is evidence to suggest that higher language aptitude can help the learner to make better use of the input they are exposed to, and so make greater progress in language acquisition. However, it is important to understand that lower language aptitude does not predict failure. Aptitude is only one of the individual difference factors that is believed to help account for learner success. We will discuss other important factors such as motivation elsewhere in this chapter.

The term 'language aptitude' can be misleading because it suggests that there is AN ability, and that this ability predicts success in language learning. However, 'language aptitude' refers to a cluster of cognitive factors that researchers believe are related to success in learning a foreign or second language (Dörnyei, 2005). The three main components of language aptitude are:

1 *Language analytic ability.* This refers to the ability to see patterns and regularities in language and to develop an understanding of how language 'works'. It underlines the learning of the grammatical structures of a language.
2 *Phonemic encoding ability.* This relates to the ability to associate symbols and sounds. It is associated with the ability to decode aural language and to express oneself orally.

3. *Memory.* Of all the components of language aptitude, understanding about memory is the one that has changed the most over time. Current thinking refers to 'working memory' as being important for language learning. Working memory is a complicated construct that is involved in the storage and processing of information (Miyake & Friedman, 1998).

> **Working Memory**
>
> A temporary memory storage system that processes and rehearses information (Baddeley, 2003).
>
> An example is when someone looks up an address and remembers it, often repeating it verbally, until they have written it down, after which it will probably exit working memory.

We mention elsewhere in this book the importance of noticing or attention (see Chapter 5). The learner, especially the beginner learner, has to work hard to make sense of the language input that they receive. They need to both store and process information and because much information is new rather than familiar, memory capacity is stretched to the full. Those learners who have greater capacity to store and process information in working memory are believed to be more successful language learners. This is because they have an advantage in making use of the input they receive, particularly the aural input, or input that they hear. With a better working memory capacity, they are better able to process this information that is temporary (unlike written input), and which they hear under a time constraint.

Language aptitude is not an 'all or nothing thing'. It is quite possible to be strong in one or more components and weak in another or others. It is also important to emphasise that weaker language aptitude does not mean that a student will not be able to learn an additional language. In a class of learners, it is likely that there is quite a wide range of language aptitude profiles. That is, there may well be learners who vary considerably in terms of the strengths they might have in different components of language aptitude. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the teacher will know in what areas of aptitude individual students have particular strengths or weaknesses. One of the reasons for this is that testing for language aptitude is highly specialised and usually done for research rather than for instructional purposes. It is even doubtful that 'aptitude' testing would benefit either the teacher or the learner. An experienced teacher will usually have some understanding of the particular

strengths of individual students, and it is arguable whether aptitude testing would contribute in any way to this knowledge. For example, we will see in a later section of this chapter how Jessica knows that Emily, a student with learning difficulties, has problems with French grammar, but has a 'good ear', and that this has helped her develop a good French accent.

The question remains then of how the teacher can best cater to the different aptitude strengths and weaknesses of the students they have in their class. Research has suggested that giving learners explicit information about the language they are learning, including grammar rules and explanations, is important because it tends to even out differences that there might be for learners in terms of aptitude (Erlam, 2005). In other words, it tends to 'level the playing field' and provide the type of instruction that all learners can benefit from. Another principle that is important in catering for the range of individual needs that there may be in the language classroom is to make sure that there is variety. In particular, it is important to have tasks that vary in modality. Some students, for example, will find it easier to learn through what they hear or through auditory channels, whereas others will find it easier to process information visually. Other learners may enjoy learning kinaesthetically, for example, singing action songs or being involved in role plays/drama. These different ways of processing information can help learners with different aptitude strengths learn in a way that is likely to advantage them more.

> I always make sure there are lots of elements of choice in my lessons.
> – James, French teacher, Year 9
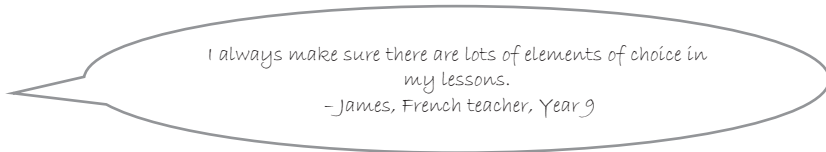
The teacher needs to consider not only the different ways of learning that students bring to the classroom in relation to their strengths and needs, but also their interests and preferences. We will consider the importance of student motivation and interest in learning in the next section.

## Motivation

We asked teachers in some of the classes that we observed the following question: What, for you, are the challenges of teaching adolescents?

Here are some of the answers that we received:

> I want them to have fun and experience success ... if they're motivated and they've got that identity as a language speaker and they 'buy into it' they're away.
> – James, French teacher, Year 9

> Where do I start? ... keeping them interested. Because if they're interested they're going to learn.
> – Shona, Japanese teacher, Year 11

> I think creating a very happy, fun, safe environment, where they feel valued is good.
> – Jessica, French teacher, Year 9

Teachers cannot change the language aptitude profiles that characterise the learners they have in their classroom, but they can do a lot to make learning a fun and motivating experience. In fact, it is hard to over-estimate the importance of motivation in accounting for success in the language classroom.

Firstly, what does the research literature tell us about motivation and the adolescent? A general principle about motivation is that it is not static; it changes over time. Research suggests there is a decline in motivation for academic learning that extends over the school years, but that, interestingly, it picks up again around secondary school (at approximately 14+ years). Adolescent girls will be more motivated than boys, and this is even more likely to be the case for the language classroom (Dotterer, McHale, & Crouter, 2009). Motivation will not only change over time, it will also vary according to the individual. Motivation for learning a particular language will also depend on the social context (Vötter & Treter, 2009). Factors that will influence motivation include, amongst others, the image that the target

---

**Motivation**

Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation comes from within an individual, while extrinsic motivation is imposed on the individual by external influences. Intrinsic motivation is more powerful for language learning.

(Dörnyei, 2005)

language culture and country has. Not surprisingly, a positive image will increase interest in learning the language (Riemer, 2010; Salomo, 2014). Researchers found that, for learning German, the pleasure of learning a language, feeling positive about German as a language and having friends/relatives in German-speaking countries were all intrinsic motivators. On the other hand, being obliged to learn German by a parent or parents, or for a job, were examples of extrinsic motivation (Riemer, 2010; Salomo, 2014); less effective because learners had a sense of 'having to' learn rather than 'wanting to'.

A leading researcher in the area of motivation for language learning, Zoltan Dörnyei (2005), believes that the image that the language learner has of him/herself speaking the language in the future is very important. This is called the 'ideal L2 self' and is an example of an intrinsic type of motivation. The ideal L2 self is one of the best predictor variables of how much energy and effort learners are willing to put into learning a language (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). However, some learners in the foreign language learning contexts we have been describing may not have made an active choice to learn an additional language. In other words, they may have been required to study a language because of school policy or timetabling/subject choice pressures. For these learners the motivation may be extrinsic and may not come from any image that they have of themselves as future speakers of the language. However, even though they may not, initially, have high levels of motivation, it is possible that they may develop the incentive to engage with language learning (Dörnyei, 2009). This will be more likely if the language learning experience is enjoyable and one at which they experience success.

> **Motivation and the Self**
> In education, the ideal self is a useful concept. It refers to the 'characteristics that someone would ideally like to possess. It includes our hopes, aspirations, and wishes'.
> (Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013, p. 22)

Researchers in the field of education (Deci & Ryan, 1985), as well as in the field of language learning (Dörnyei, 1994, 2009; Noels, 2001), have recognised the impact on motivation of the learning experience itself, such as the teacher, the curriculum, learning materials, and one's peer group. It is not surprising that there is a relationship between learners' classroom experiences and their ongoing willingness to persevere in learning. In the language classroom, these positive experiences

**Figure 2.1** Motivation and the language learner

of learning will help learners establish images of themselves as language users (Kormos, Kiddle, & Csizér, 2011). In other words, there is a link between students' positive experiences of language learning in the classroom and their ability to imagine themselves as competent L2 speakers (i.e. the ideal L2 self). These have a reciprocal relationship with each other and are both important in accounting for ongoing motivation for the language learner to persist with and invest effort in learning. We can see this depicted in Figure 2.1.

The teacher, therefore, has a lot of responsibility to ensure that language learning is an enjoyable experience for the learner!

A concept that is related to that of motivation and that has interested researchers working in education is that of engagement.

## Engagement

Engagement is a term that is often used to describe the degree to which students are involved in a task or activity. It has been defined as a 'state of heightened attention and involvement' (Philp & Duchesne, 2016, p. 3). Fredericks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) describe three types of engagement: behavioural, emotional, and cognitive (see Figure 2.2). Behavioural engagement draws on the notion of participation: the extent to which the student makes an effort in academic tasks/class activities and persists to complete these. Emotional engagement is determined by students' reactions to school, the curriculum, the teacher, and their peers. These reactions can, of course, be both negative and positive. Key to cognitive
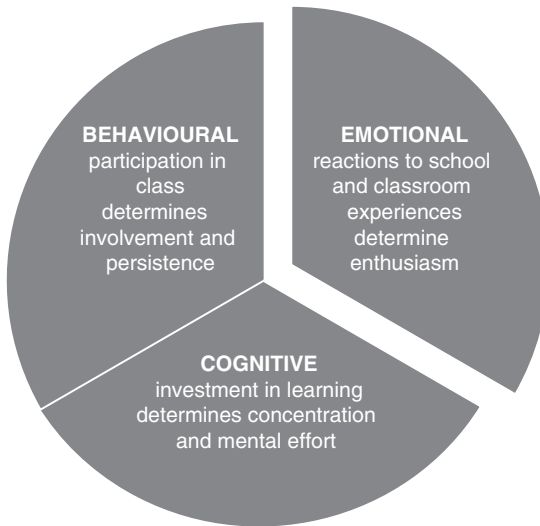
**Figure 2.2** Engagement and the classroom learner

engagement is the idea of investment, that is, the willingness on the part of the student to put in the sustained level of attention required to complete classroom work and master difficult skills.

Another dimension of engagement, which is relevant to situations where students are working together, is the notion of social engagement. Social engagement is determined by the willingness that students have to collaborate on the task they are completing, to listen to each other, and to support and encourage each other (Lambert, Philp, & Nakamura, 2017).

Engagement is an important concept because student engagement will be key to achievement. It is also important because it is presumed to be malleable. In other words, the teacher is likely to be able to change learner engagement but less likely to be able to have a significant impact on the individual strengths and characteristics that learners bring to the classroom. The research literature suggests that there are a number of factors that impact on learner engagement. Some of these will not be surprising, because we have discussed them before, in Chapter 1. For example, teacher support and peer support can influence student engagement. Students who feel supported and cared for by their teachers and who also feel accepted by their peers are more likely to engage positively

in learning. The structure of the class-
room is also an important influence on
student engagement. Teachers who are
clear in their expectations and who pro-
vide consistent responses to students are

> What would be
> your guess?

more likely to foster higher levels of student engagement. Supporting
students to be autonomous can also impact positively on engagement.
A way of doing this is to offer students choices in terms of classwork.
Finally, the characteristics of the tasks and activities that students work
at are also important in determining investment in learning. Authentic
and challenging tasks, for example, are more likely to lead to higher
engagement (Fredericks et al., 2004). What else can we find out about
the types of tasks that might appeal to adolescents?
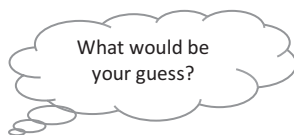
In many classrooms, it is the teacher and not the student who will
determine the activities or tasks that learners undertake. Yet the char-
acteristics of the activity/task that the teacher chooses will be crucial in
determining to what extent learners are willing to persist and work at it.
What are the types of topics and activities that are likely to appeal to
adolescents?

---

## Engaging Adolescents

Topics need to allow adolescents the chance to speak, write, and act as
themselves. Teachers need to think about how they can 'personalise'
work.

Adolescents want to test their language abilities beyond the walls of the
classroom. They need authentic encounters with language and with speakers
of the language. Teachers need to set up opportunities for learners to use the
language to communicate, to be 'users' of the language and not just 'lear-
ners'. For example, they could use digital media to set up online exchanges
(see Chapter 7).

Songs and lyrics play a major part in teenagers' lives. Narratives, in particular
teen and young adult fiction, are important in that they allow learners to
explore their own lives and issues relevant to them in a non-threatening way.
The adolescent appreciates the freedom to either empathise with or distance
themselves from the characters.

Teenagers want to be taken seriously in decision-making and negotiation
of classroom procedures. They want to be involved in choosing texts and
topics.

(Legutke, 2012)

---

**Table 2.1** Aspects of lessons that students reported enjoying

| They enjoyed | No. of students who referred to this aspect of the lesson |
| --- | --- |
| the opportunity to work or interact with others in the class | 41 |
| a particular activity or game | 31 |
| learning something | 18 |
| the opportunity to move around the class/do an activity outdoors[*] | 14 |
| speaking in the target language | 14 |
| winning a game/getting a prize | 06 |
| the teacher's enthusiasm | 03 |
| Total number of comments | 127 |

[*] In one Chinese class, a group of young men (aged approximately 14 years) went around the school on a digital Scavenger Hunt (see Chapter 7) designed for them by their teacher.

We asked 122 adolescents in 8 different language classes, studying Japanese, French, Spanish, and Chinese, how much they enjoyed their language lessons. We got them to rate the lessons on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being 'very enjoyable' and 1 being 'really not enjoyable'. Of these students, ninety-nine rated their lessons as 4 or 5, in terms of enjoyment. We then asked them to tell us what they liked about the lesson. Students could give more than one answer to this question. We list in Table 2.1 the main reasons that students gave for enjoying these lessons.

Given the literature on the importance of friendship and peers for the adolescent (Cook et al., 2007; Wentzel et al., 2004), we should not be surprised that nearly half of the ninety-nine students taking part in our questionnaire found their lessons enjoyable because they had opportunities to interact in pairs, or work together in small groups. Some of the students who said that they liked interacting with classmates also wrote on their questionnaires that they appreciated being able to choose who they worked with. We can conclude from this data that the teachers of these classes had been able to set up classroom environments where there was trust and supportive positive relationships between students. Such a supportive environment was likely to promote opportunities for language learning. We need to point out that the teachers we observed

**Table 2.2** Class activities/games students reported enjoying

| Activity | Classroom |
|---|---|
| Charades – one student had to mime a sport and others had to guess what it was | Japanese |
| Categorising sports – sports had to be put into categories according to whether they were individual/pair/team sports | Japanese |
| Giving opinions about TV programmes – students compared favourite TV programmes | Spanish |
| Snakes and Ladders | Spanish |
| An online quiz competition (see Chapter 7) | Spanish |
| Watching the film *Viva Cuba* | Spanish |
| A Scavenger Hunt | Mandarin |
| A 'gap-share' activity – students had to work together to complete Chinese secondary school timetables to learn about school in China | Mandarin |
| Interview – students interviewed each other to find out what their lives were like when they were 6 years old | French |

were all very experienced, in other words, setting up supportive classroom environments, like these teachers did, may take some time to achieve.

In addition, thirty-one students also referred to specific activities that they enjoyed doing in class, and there were a further six mentions of winning a game or getting a prize as a result of doing these activities. We list in Table 2.2 some of the activities that the adolescents reported enjoying.

What stands out about many of these activities/games is that they are modelled on the sorts of activities that are part of the 'real world'. In other words, most children/adolescents will have had the opportunity to take part in a Scavenger Hunt, play Charades or Snakes and Ladders outside of the language classroom. In the classrooms we observed the teacher had adapted them and made them appropriate for use in the language classroom. These activities, used in the classroom, were 'authentic' and gave learners opportunities to use the language to communicate and be language 'users' and not just 'learners'. Other activities (e.g. giving opinions about TV programmes/talking about one's childhood) gave learners the chance to use language in a personalised way, that is, to be themselves (Legutke, 2012).

One high school teacher wanted to explore a very specific issue in her class of 16-year-old English language learners. Inspired by research she had read (Lambert et al., 2017), she set up a research project to determine whether students were more engaged when working at tasks designed by their teacher, containing fictitious ideas and events, or tasks which were related to experiences and events in their own lives. She had twelve students work in pairs to complete two tasks where they had to prepare stories to tell the rest of the class. In the first task they were given a picture story by the teacher and in the second task they were allowed to tell their own personal story. She found higher levels of engagement when students were allowed to determine the content of and tell their own stories (Vatansever, 2018). Here are some of the comments that the students in this study made.

I was able to show my creativity better while making up a story on my own.

(Vatansever, 2018, p. 31)

It was more difficult to tell a story made by someone else in the first task, in the second task everything was easier since I had experienced it myself and I didn't need to understand the pictures.

(Vatansever, 2018, p. 35)

In the second task it was easier to tell what we had in the mind as we were the ones who had experienced it.

(Vatansever, 2018, p. 85)

We can perhaps summarise the topic of engagement by looking at what Fredricks et al. (2004) say about the individual needs that students bring to the classroom. They suggest that, if these individual needs are met by the classroom, engagement can be promoted. These needs, along with our comments, are listed in Table 2.3.

A language classroom that fosters a caring and supportive learning environment may have to cater for learners from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Liu et al. (2017) highlight how, increasingly, schools have become more diverse. In the next section, we will discuss the challenges for the teacher in establishing environments that include the multilingual learner.

## The Inclusive Multilingual Language Classroom

The language classroom can be a 'safer' place for the multilingual learner whose first language(s) may be different from that of some of their

**Table 2.3** Individual needs of students

| | Individual needs | Comment |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Need for **relatedness** – students need to feel that they 'belong', and that the classroom is a caring and supportive environment. | This has been a constant theme of this chapter, first introduced in Chapter 1. |
| 2 | Need for **autonomy** – students need to feel they 'want to' work at classroom tasks and activities rather than that they 'have to'. Giving choice in the classroom is one way in which students' need for autonomy can be satisfied. | In this chapter, we have investigated the types of tasks that students might 'want to' work at. In one example, students appreciated being able to choose their own stories to tell. |
| 3 | Need for **competence** – students need to know what they should do to achieve/succeed. | In Table 2.1 a number of students reported that a highlight of the lesson for them was that they experienced the success of learning something. Experiencing success is motivating! |

classmates. This is because the multilingual learner may be at less of a disadvantage when learning a foreign or additional language than they are in other subject areas. They will, firstly, most likely already be 'language aware' as a result of knowing more than one language and they can draw on this knowledge. Secondly, if the teacher does not depend on the use of the first language (L1) of the majority of learners to teach the target language, the multilingual learner will not be disadvantaged if they have lower proficiency in this language.

The language classroom can be an ideal place for the multilingual learner to experience inclusion. For these students to engage academically, it is crucial that the approach to teaching and the interactions that take place in the classroom affirm their identities (Cummins, 2015). How can this happen? Firstly, students need to be encouraged to maintain their heritage linguistic identity (Liu et al., 2017). The first or heritage language and culture needs to be acknowledged (Gray, 2012), and celebrated (Liu et al., 2017). Some schools have, for example, 'International Days/Weeks' where students are able to share aspects of their culture and language with their peers. Teachers can also make positive cultural and contextual

references, which create resonance, or encourage students to do this themselves. The language teacher may be able to make comparisons between the target language and the learner's other language(s), or ask the student how, in their language(s), a particular meaning might be expressed.

It is also possible that the multilingual learner is a heritage speaker of the language that is being taught! In this case, the challenge for the teacher will be to create learning opportunities that provide challenge for such learners. These learners may, in particular, need help with literacy; their reading and writing skills may be inferior to their ability to understand and produce spoken language. On the other hand, these students may be a valuable 'expert' resource for teachers to draw on.

In this we focus on the learner who comes to the language classroom needing to learn in a different way.

## Accommodating the Learner with Specific Learning Differences

Some learners may have specific differences which will have consequences for language learning. However, McColl (2005) claims that there are no 'special needs' groups of young people who should be excluded from the language classroom, although she does suggest that such a decision might be advisable in individual cases. In a survey she conducted of 4,000 adolescents attending special schools in Scotland, half were learning a foreign language and half were not. The half who were *not* learning a language had a range of difficulties: visual or hearing impairment, learning difficulties, communication disorders, and social/emotional or behavioural disorders. However, what was surprising was that those who *were* learning another language, and successfully, were represented in all these same categories. In making the case for including learners with special educational needs in the language classroom, McColl (2005) stresses that it is important that the language teacher is able to collaborate with and draw on the expertise of support specialists.

The way that we view and talk about disability is important because it will determine how we act towards those who have a disability. Judit Kormos and Anne Margaret Smith (2012) choose to use the expression 'specific learning difference' (SpLD), claiming that this is a more positive way of viewing these learners, acknowledging their individuality and the different way that they have of perceiving the world.

| An Interactional View of Disabilities |
|---|
| This view acknowledges that the difficulties an individual may face interact with barriers in the environment. This impedes their full participation in society (Frederickson & Cline, 2002).<br><br>    This perspective helps us to understand the strengths and weaknesses of learners with SpLDs and how they may be supported in their learning contexts. |

Some of the types of learning differences that a teacher may come across in the classroom include: dyslexia, autism, and attention deficit or hyperactivity disorders (ADHD).

It is important for the language teacher to:

- identify if the reason a student is making slow progress is due to a learning difference;
- understand how the SpLD may affect learning processes and outcomes; and
- know how to best provide support for this learner in the classroom.

While it is likely that a student with a SpLD is also experiencing problems with their first or home language, these may be more evident when they have the opportunity to learn an additional language (Kormos & Smith, 2012). Jessica tells of how she was the first one to diagnose a SpLD in one of the students in her Year 9 French class.

> [No one] ever said 'Emily has a problem with learning literacy' and I said it on day 2 … and her mum was really thankful and as a result Emily's had heaps of academic testing and there's been huge amounts of things said about her.

Kormos & Smith (2012) describe some simple tasks that can help establish potential signs of a SpLD for teachers who are familiar with the first language(s) (L1) of their students. These include asking the learner to:

- spell words in their L1;
- read aloud in their L1 and then say what the passage they read was about;

- write in their L1 to a time limit (say ten minutes); and
- read 'non-words' that are similar to words in their L1 (e.g. in English words like 'tep' or 'plinfer').

In the foreign language classroom, learners with SpLDs may fall behind their peers in many areas of language learning. They may have difficulties with:

- writing, spelling, and reading;
- acquiring new vocabulary and grammar; and
- acquiring the pronunciation of new sounds and syllable patterns.

These problems with learning another language are heightened in a context where there is limited exposure to the language, which is true of many foreign language learning contexts. These learners may not face the same type or severity of problem if they have the chance to be immersed in the target language and the opportunity to use it for communication on a daily basis (Kormos & Smith, 2012). The potential consequence for these students is, perhaps not surprisingly, a lack of motivation for continuing to learn a language, a loss of confidence in their ability to do so, and reduction in self-esteem.

It is not possible, in this chapter, to deal extensively with the topic of how to help students with SpLDs. However, there are some general principles that can make a big difference to life in the language classroom for these SpLD learners. (We recommend Judit Kormos and Anne

> **Accommodations**
>
> Accommodations are 'changes in the delivery of instruction, type of student performance, or method of assessment which do not significantly change the content or conceptual difficulty of the curriculum'. (Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009, p. 64)

Margaret Smith's book (2012) *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences*, for a very readable and much more comprehensive coverage of this topic.) Landrum and McDuffie (2010) say that accommodations are necessary to support the needs of students with educational difficulties.

Perhaps the most important principle, a constant theme in this chapter, is that the learner needs to feel included in the language classroom. Jessica mentions this with respect to the

student, Emily, mentioned earlier, who had, as Jessica had established, a SpLD.

> So for me I see Emily [and] all my students ... not just learning French, the classroom is a life experience and ... I want them to feel valued in my classroom. I want to try and have a personal relationship with all of them.

Also important is the awareness and understanding that the teacher develops of the particular learning processes and strategies that the student with a SpLD brings to the classroom. Again, Jessica talks about Emily, demonstrating that she understands both the strengths and weaknesses that she has for language learning.

> Emily's got problems with concentration and reading and writing. I want to get her to see that she's good at doing something because she is actually quite good at French, not the grammar side of things, but she's got an excellent accent and she's got a really good ear and she can learn.

In an inclusive classroom, the teacher can adjust the curriculum and teaching methods to meet the needs of all students. This may also mean that assessment requirements need to be changed to meet the needs of SpLD students. Jessica explains how she does this for a group of weaker students in her class:

> For the weaker ones I've got probably about five in my class now. I just want them to enjoy learning French, that's my bottom line I want to encourage them, People like Emily I just encourage, I don't expect a lot – if they don't do well in tests I don't actually really want to give their test mark back. At the beginning of the year I did, but I thought 'I really feel wrong giving someone a test back when they got four out of twenty', it's really disheartening when they're obviously trying their hardest.

In the dialogue shown below, we have specific examples of how Jessica accommodates Emily who, as we have seen, comes to the language classroom with specific learning differences.

> Jessica is taking time out from the rest of the class to focus on Emily, making sure she is participating and actively involved in the classroom.

**translation**

Teacher    Emily you're going to try really hard to concentrate

for...

T    **une minute ...**    One minute

> Jessica encourages Emily's peers to support her in her learning. Here this means giving her space to work on her own; earlier in this dialogue she had supported Amelia sharing her notes with Emily

T    **Oui**, we want to all help Emily to become a really good ...    Yes.

writer, okay. No, Amelia what you're going to do is you're

going to ignore her – Emily okay, and we've only got **une**

**minute.**    One minute.

Emily    **D'accord.**    Okay

T    **D'accord.** We've got – **on a une minute.**    Okay. – we have

one minute

Emily    **D'accord.**    Okay.

T    So Emily you're going to try really hard to add some more,

write one of these questions and one of these answers,

okay.

> Jessica breaks down the task for Emily, demanding less than she does of the stronger students.

Often these students with specific learning differences will need instruction and explanations about language that are very explicit; they may be less able to notice and establish patterns in language without assistance. We mentioned earlier in this chapter that giving learners explicit information and explanations may help to even out differences that there might be for learners in terms of aptitude for learning and, also, provide the type of instruction that all can benefit from (Erlam, 2005).

A constant theme throughout this chapter has been that learners do not learn at the same pace or in the same way. We have therefore argued

for the need for differentiated instruction to ensure that the needs of all learners are met (Tomlinson, 2014). However, first the teacher needs to be able to establish what these needs might be.

## Discovering the Needs of the Individual Learner

If instruction is to vary according to students' learning profiles and their readiness to learn (Tomlinson et al., 2003), the challenge for the busy teacher is to have an adequate knowledge of the student as an individual. Formative assessment is vital for establishing students' readiness for learning and needs. Teachers will gain a lot of information about students informally as they observe their performance during their completion of classroom tasks and activities. In the ideal classroom, all these

> **Formative Assessment**
> Assessment 'for learning', rather than 'of learning'. In formative assessment, teachers obtain information about learners and their progress that helps them guide what they and their students will do next.
>
>            (Green, 2014, p. 14)

observations contribute to establishing a picture of the student as an individual, and help the teacher shape their practice so that it is maximally effective (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). At the same time, teachers will also gain information about learners more formally, for example, from looking at and marking their classwork. Formative assessment involves both informal, and more formal, ways of collecting information about learners (Nation & Macalister, 2010) (see Table 2.4).

In this chapter, we have covered some of the many 'differences' that might characterise learners in a language classroom. Unfortunately, we are not able to give advice about how to deal with all the individual needs

**Table 2.4** Implementing formative assessment in the classroom

| Assessment Options | |
| --- | --- |
| More formal | Less formal |
| tests | observing classwork |
| marked class/course work | observing class participation |
| homework | informal conversation with teacher |
| presentations | learner logs |
| interviews | project work |

that learners might have. A last 'individual difference' we will consider is one that Jessica identified in discussing one of her students, when we visited her classroom. This learner was very different from her peers in that she was exceptionally able.

## The Gifted or Very Able Student

Jessica describes the challenge of accommodating the learner she described as 'very gifted'.

> So at the beginning of the year … I identified that she was someone who was going to get bored very, very quickly and also was vocal about getting bored. So I wanted to make sure that I provided challenges for her.

The learning challenges that Jessica provided for this student included:

- giving her a grammar book (Jessica reports that she learnt to use a number of verb tenses, independently, from this grammar book);
- giving her opportunities to do free writing in French;
- talking to her exclusively in French;
- giving her books to read in French (e.g. *Le Petit Prince*); and
- encouraging her to sit the DELF scolaire (international exam) (she got the top mark for her region).

Jessica also identified a number of other students in her class who she described as 'very able'. She discusses the challenge of accommodating these students.

> Often it's easier to extend them with reading and writing than it is with speaking … the good thing about all these students is that they naturally want to extend themselves so all you have to do is provide the opportunity … I always make sure there are lots of elements of choice in my lessons so they can work at their own pace.

We have, in this chapter, considered how students differ from each other in terms of strengths and weaknesses for language learning, in specific learning needs or differences, and in the interests and preferences they might have. In this next section, we describe how one teacher implemented a very different and specific approach to dealing with individual differences.

## One Approach to Catering for the Individual in the Classroom

Annabel had been concerned about how to cater for differences in terms of the pace of learning of her students. She decided to implement what she termed: a 'flipped mastery class' (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015).

> The kids that are going fast don't feel held back by the slower ones and the slower kids feel that they have enough time to learn the content before they get moved on.
> – Annabel, Mandarin teacher, Year 10

This is how she described her approach to teaching Mandarin:

- All content was delivered to students in an online video – she described 'content' as 'introduction to a new unit, new grammar, new vocabulary, new characters'.
- As students watched these videos, they had to 'do' something; e.g. complete a worksheet.
- Students could watch the video as many times as they liked, at their own pace, and in their own time – it was available 24/7!
- After watching the videos, students worked at a range of activities in class, individually or in pairs/groups, at their own pace.
- The teacher was available, in class, to check on students and give them help as needed.
- Before students could move to another unit, they had to complete a 'mastery check', e.g. write a text or give a speech, to the teacher's satisfaction.
- If students were very slow to finish a unit, the teacher would select some activities they needed to complete and then move them on to another unit.

Annabel described these benefits for this approach to language teaching:

> With flip mastery, yesterday, I was able to get around every single kid and have a chat with them one on one about where they're at and answer their questions. If I were just standing up the front, I wouldn't be able to be with the kids every day.

## Summary of This Chapter

We have discussed the importance of a language classroom which is inclusive, and which also caters to the individual strengths and differences that the language learner brings to the language classroom. We have focused on some of these, whilst not being able to give advice about how to deal with all of the many 'differences' that might characterise learners in a language classroom. We have emphasised the importance of engaging students, providing them with activities and tasks which interest them, and motivating them to put in the sustained effort that is likely to lead to success in learning.

## Key Points

- The language classroom needs to be inclusive while also valuing and accommodating difference.
- Students vary in terms of language aptitude, and the strengths and weaknesses that they bring to the language classroom.
- Having a variety of types of classroom activity can help ensure that the needs of different learners are met. Some may cater for learners who find it easier to learn through what they hear, others, for those who like to process information visually or who learn kinaesthetically.
- Motivation will account for the effort that a learner is prepared to put into engaging with and completing work in class.
- A powerful motivator is the ideal L2 self; that is, the image that the learner has of him or herself being able to one day speak the language.
- Activities and tasks, which are interesting and enjoyable, will motivate the learner. For adolescents, these are likely to involve the opportunity to interact or work with peers and/or involve opportunities for students to use the language for real purposes.
- Some learners have specific learning differences and will need teachers to accommodate these, drawing on the advice of support specialists if necessary.
- Teachers need to carefully assess and observe learners to be able to ascertain their specific learning strengths, weaknesses, and needs.

## Reflection and Discussion

**1** Reading about the components of language aptitude, do you see yourself (or another language learner you know well) being stronger in one or other of these? How might a teacher cater to these strengths?

2  In your own language learning experience, how powerful was the notion of the ideal L2 self?

3  The authors describe characteristics of topics and tasks that are likely to engage adolescents. Do you agree with them, in terms of your own experience? Why/why not?

4  Many of the students surveyed in this chapter enjoyed working in groups. What might teachers need to do to help ensure that students get the most out of group work in terms of learning?

5  In Table 2.2, the authors list a number of activities/games that students reported enjoying.

   Could you use these in your context? How would your students respond? What do they enjoy?

   OR

   How typical were these of your language learning experiences? How would you respond as a learner to these types of activities?

6  Discuss the sorts of individual differences described in this chapter that you have encountered in classrooms with which you are familiar. What do these students need in order to be and feel included?

7  Have you ever had an extremely talented learner in your classroom and how did you accommodate them?

## Further Reading

Chung, K. K. H., & Lam, C. B. (2020). Cognitive linguistic skills underlying word reading and spelling difficulties in Chinese adolescents with dyslexia. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 53(1), 48–59.

This study explores difficulties in reading and spelling in both L1 and L2 for Hong Kong Chinese adolescents, in Grade 7, highlighting problems for students with dyslexia in both L1 and L2. The findings of this study highlight the importance of morphological awareness. The authors suggest that morphological awareness might

> **Morphological Awareness**
>
> An understanding of how words are constructed of smaller units of meaning (or morphemes). For example, the word 'subway' consists of:
>
> 1  a prefix 'sub' meaning 'under'; and
> 2  the root word (morpheme) 'way'.

play a critical role in predicting word reading and spelling across languages, both for children with dyslexia, and for those without learning difficulties.

## For Reflection and Discussion

(a) How might knowing about studies like this one help language teachers to support students with dyslexia?

(b) Do you agree that morphological awareness is important? Can you think of any examples from your own context?

# Input: Creating a Language-Rich Learning Environment

## Introduction

For many students who are learning a foreign language, there may be little opportunity to access the language outside of the classroom. This is usually because they are learning this language in an environment where it isn't commonly spoken and because there are no links to the language in their family background. For other students, the language they are learning may be part of their cultural heritage, meaning they have had some previous exposure to it through family members. In recent years, with the development of technology, communication across space and cultures is now possible in a way that it wasn't in the past. Yet, even so, it will often be necessary for the teacher to facilitate these opportunities in order for students to be able to take advantage of them. This chapter focuses, then, on how the teacher can create an optimal environment for language learning. It is exactly because of the reduced opportunities for learners to access the language outside of the classroom that what happens in the classroom assumes even greater importance.

> ### Input Hypothesis
>
> One of the first researchers to highlight the importance of input was Stephen Krashen (1985). His Input Hypothesis has had considerable influence on thinking about language learning. He argues that 'comprehensible input' is both necessary and sufficient for language learning.
>
> Today many researchers see the notion that input is 'sufficient' as rather limiting (for example, it does not allow any role for 'output' in the language learning process) but few would deny the importance of input in the language learning process.

> Output is production of oral or written language.

## The Importance of Input

To learn a language, students need input. By input we mean language that is available to them, anything that they can see (read) or

hear. This input is necessary because it constitutes the data that they process for language learning (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). Gass (1997, p. 1) claims that input is 'the single most important concept of language acquisition'. The premise is that no learning can take place without access to language input.

Students don't just need any quantity of input – they need large amounts of it. There is wide acknowledgement of this in the research literature. In his list of ten principles of effective instructed language learning, Ellis (2005, p. 38) includes input:

'Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input'.

Similarly, Lightbown (2014) notes that the learner, in order to gain proficiency, requires thousands of hours of exposure and engagement. Children learning their first language have precisely these conditions for acquisition. Estimates are that by the age of 4, a child has had tens of thousands of hours of exposure to their first language! It is not hard to see that by comparison, the learner in the language classroom is at a disadvantage.

In the school environment the time allocated to learning a language may be similar to that of any other subject (or in some schools, even less). Content is determined by curriculum priorities and tradition, rather than by a consideration of what would be best from a pedagogical point of view (Stern, 1985). So, in other words, decisions about the time allocated to language learning are not typically made according to what learners might need in order to obtain a reasonable level of proficiency, much less what they might need to become fluent speakers. In a review of studies, Collins and Muñoz (2016) suggest that it is still typical for foreign languages in many contexts to be taught in brief lessons several times a week and that outside of these lessons, learners may rarely be exposed to the language (Lightbown, 2014). Allowing only a couple of hours per week for language learning has been termed the 'drip-feed' approach (Stern, 1985), yet it remains the reality for many. This is concerning, because it is widely accepted that there is a strong relationship between the amount of exposure to language, and learning outcomes. Insufficient time is likely to impact negatively on language learning success.

**Usage-Based Theory of Second Language Acquisition**

Language learning is primarily based on the linguistic input that learners receive. Constructions such as 'good + (time of day)' emerge gradually as the learner's language system processes exemplar after exemplar from this input. The system takes into consideration how frequent the exemplar is, what kind of words and phrases it occurs with, and so on.

Over time the patterns, or models, for how a particular aspect of language should be used are established in a learner's developing language system.

(N. Ellis & Wulff, 2015)

Exposure to phrases such as
'good morning'
'good evening'
'good afternoon'
helps to build up patterns in language.

The reason that the amount of input in language learning is so important is that it is believed that learning takes place incrementally as learners are exposed to input over and over again. Each time a learner is exposed to a word, or a linguistic item in input, a connection is potentially reinforced in the learner's developing language system. To give a simple example, a beginner learner of English will often hear the phrase 'how are you?' so that, before long, when they hear the word 'how ...' in a context when they are being greeted by someone, they will know that 'are you?' will most likely follow. When this happens, the words in this phrase have been 'chunked' or associated together in their developing language system enough for them to be able to anticipate it. This process is explained by a 'usage-based' theory of language learning, that is, the more language is used, the more automatic it becomes. This is a theory that is also used to describe how learning in general takes place, not just language learning.
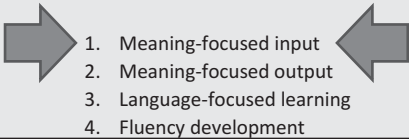
Another important reason for exposing learners to lots of language input is that comprehension of language precedes production. Comprehension provides the main source of learning required for language production (Keenan & MacWhinney, 1987). In other words, learning vocabulary items or new aspects of grammar does not start with the production of these forms, but rather with attending to them and understanding them in language input. In fact, for some learners, there is an initial reluctance to produce language, documented in the research literature (Saville-Troike, 1988) as a 'silent period', that is, a time when they acquire language through input only, and are not ready to engage in language output.

We talked to Margaret, a teacher of French to Year 11 students. She felt that there is not always enough emphasis on the importance of exposing students to language input. With reference to an in-service course she had been involved in, she said:

> [it is] important for students to have lots and lots of input. And I felt that sometimes on the [in-service] course we were concentrating a lot on output at the expense of input.

**Nation's Four Strands**

Nation (2007) argues that a well-balanced language course should consist of four roughly equal strands:

1. Meaning-focused input
2. Meaning-focused output
3. Language-focused learning
4. Fluency development

As we have mentioned, according to Paul Nation (2007), exposure to meaning-focused input should make up approximately one quarter of a teaching programme. Meaning-focused input refers to spoken or written input where the learner attends to the message or ideas being communicated (i.e. attends to *what* is being expressed rather than just to *how* it is being expressed). Nation has written this as a general guide for all language learning contexts; it could be argued, perhaps, that there should be a greater emphasis on input (receptive ability in a language) and less emphasis on output (productive ability) at beginning stages of language learning. This would be the case especially in environments where there is little access to the language outside of the classroom and because, as we have seen, it is from learning to comprehend input that students will build up the language resources that they need for producing language output.
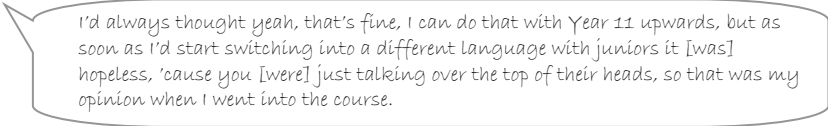
## Maximising Target Language Input in the Language Classroom: Teacher Talk

In order to 'drive' language learning, one very important and powerful way that teachers may maximise learner exposure to input is through *teacher talk*. That is, they will use the target language as much as possible

in the classroom. In this way, the language becomes the medium as well as the object of instruction (Ellis, 2005).

For some, it might seem that this is not possible, especially with younger or beginner learners. Linda, a highly experienced teacher of both French and Spanish, explains how initially she would use the target language in the classroom only with her more proficient Year 11 learners, those who had been learning the language for 2 to 3 years. She explains what happened when she tried to use the target language in the classroom with her juniors:

> I'd always thought yeah, that's fine, I can do that with Year 11 upwards, but as soon as I'd start switching into a different language with juniors it [was] hopeless, 'cause you [were] just talking over the top of their heads, so that was my opinion when I went into the course.

However, Linda later explains what happened when, thanks to the learning that she did during an in-service course she was attending, she was encouraged to use target language with her junior students.
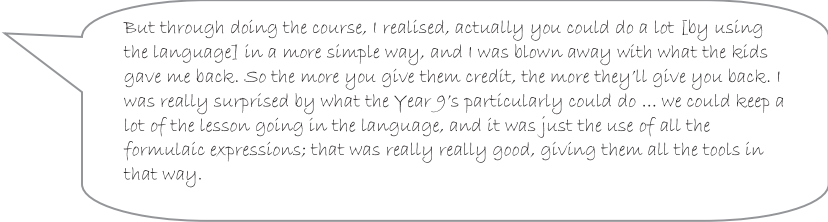
> But through doing the course, I realised, actually you could do a lot [by using the language] in a more simple way, and I was blown away with what the kids gave me back. So the more you give them credit, the more they'll give you back. I was really surprised by what the Year 9's particularly could do … we could keep a lot of the lesson going in the language, and it was just the use of all the formulaic expressions; that was really really good, giving them all the tools in that way.

This is a good example of how Linda's lower expectations, that is, thinking that they were not capable of using the target language much, had initially limited her students. In Chapter 1, we discussed how powerful high school teacher expectations can be in enabling students to succeed (Rubie-Davies, 2007, 2014). Linda explains that it was through using '*formulaic expressions*' or formulaic language with her students that she was able to sustain the practice of using the target language in the classroom. Once her students had learnt to understand this formulaic language, they had the 'tools' that they needed in order to be able to understand when she spoke in the target language. Formulaic language is language that is used repeatedly or a lot in everyday communication. It can consist of short phrases as well as single words. For example, some of the formulaic

language that Jessica and Nicole used in their French and Spanish classrooms (as we will see in Examples 3.1 and 3.2) were:

| French | | Spanish | |
|---|---|---|---|
| écoutez s'il vous plaît | please listen | cerrar la puerta | close the door |
| fini? | finished? | silencio por favor | quiet please |
| pas fini? | not finished? | gracias, muy bien | thank you, very good |
| continuez | carry on | primero . . . luego | first . . . then |

These formulaic expressions were associated with the classroom routines that these teachers had established in their classrooms as a way of managing the learning context. The learners heard these expressions repeatedly. They also heard them in a context that helped them understand them, because they were familiar with the procedures and processes that were typical of their classroom, and so they knew what to expect. Using formulaic language for classroom routines, therefore, is a very powerful way in which learners can be exposed to input. This is further demonstrated in Examples 3.1 and 3.2.

**Example 3.1**  (Year 9 students of French)

| | Translation | Comment |
|---|---|---|
| Alison, qu'est-ce que tu fais avec ton portable? Dans ton sac, ok, oui. | Alison, what are you doing with your phone? [Put it] In your bag, ok, yes. | Teacher addresses Alison only |
| Ok, écoutez s'il vous plaît. Fini? Pas fini? Continuez, oui. | Ok, listen please. Finished? Not finished? Carry on then, yes. | Teacher addresses the whole class |

**Example 3.2**  (Year 10 students of Spanish)
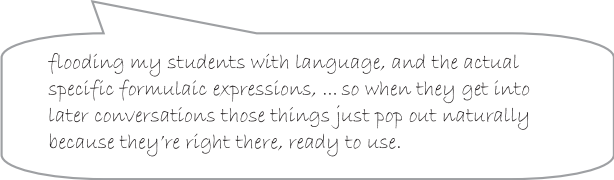
| | |
|---|---|
| Bueno, silencio por favor, chicas, gracias. Vamos a empezar. Ah Leah, puedes cerrar la puerta? Gracias muy bien. Bueno, chicas. Hoy vamos a continuar con las compras en el supermercado. Y primero vamos a practicar los números un poco más; luego vamos a hacer una actividad en pareja, ah bueno, en grupo de cuatro, haciendo las compras. | Good, silence, please girls. We are going to start. Oh Leah, could you please close the door. Good thank you. Right, girls. Today we are going to continue with practising shopping in the supermarket. And first we are going to practise numbers a bit more; then we are going to do an activity, buying things, in pairs, oh ok, in groups of four. |

In Example 3.2, taken from Nicole's Year 10 classroom, we see another type of formulaic expression, that is, a language chunk that can be used to combine with other phrases to communicate a wide range of meanings. Nicole uses the phrase 'vamos a. . . ' in many different ways:

'Vamos a empezar'/we are going to begin; 'vamos a continuar' . . . /we are going to continue . . . / 'vamos a practicar' . . . /we are going to practise . . . .

It is obvious that the phrase 'vamos a' is one that is often used in Spanish and thus very useful for beginner learners to understand (and learn to use). From this short extract we can see that Nicole's students hear this 'chunk' used repeatedly and in a context that helps them to understand it. At the beginning of a lesson, due to the routines that they have learnt to be familiar with, Nicole's students will expect her to be telling them about their goals for the lesson. This will help them consolidate the meaning of 'vamos a …' Researchers also believe that, through being exposed to such formulaic language, students can 'extract patterns' from language and learn how the structure or grammar of the language works (N. Ellis, 1996). For example, students might just learn 'vamos a empezar'/'we are going to start', as a 'chunk' at first. Later, as they hear other examples of phrases with 'vamos' ('vamos a continuar'/'vamos a practicar') they might learn that 'vamos' is followed by 'a' plus a verb, and they might understand this incidentally without needing it to be pointed out to them, and even begin to use 'vamos' themselves with other verbs to communicate their own meanings.
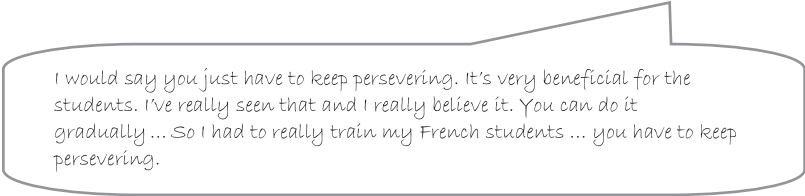
Tania, a teacher of Japanese, working with Year 9 beginner learners in their first year of learning Japanese, speaks about how exposing her students to formulaic language had powerful consequences for their language learning:

> flooding my students with language, and the actual specific formulaic expressions, … so when they get into later conversations those things just pop out naturally because they're right there, ready to use.

For some teachers, the idea of using only the target language with beginner language learners may still seem daunting. Jessica, teaching

French to beginner learners, was asked what advice she might have for a teacher who was afraid or reluctant to do so. She replied:

> I would say you just have to keep persevering. It's very beneficial for the students. I've really seen that and I really believe it. You can do it gradually ... So I had to really train my French students ... you have to keep persevering.

## Other Sources of Input in the Classroom

It is perhaps reassuring to realise that teachers cannot be the sole source of input! Learners need greater amounts of input than can be provided by their teacher, and they also need to be exposed to different varieties of language (see below). One effective way of giving learners exposure to large amounts of written input in the target language is to help them access books. Elley and Mangubhai (1981) set up an extensive reading programme for their learners of English in Fiji. They called it a 'book flood' and gave them copious amounts of books to read for pleasure. They found that these students improved both their reading and their listening comprehension.

Additional opportunities for learners to access language input through aural or visual media include: listening to radio, music, or other audio media, watching films or TV, and accessing social media and other online material. There may also be opportunities in the community for learners to be exposed to the target language.

Some of the opportunities we have referred to may expose learners to authentic language material. By this we mean written or spoken language that is not intended for learners, but rather for those who already speak the language and, in particular, those for whom it is a first language. Examples might be: listening to a commentary on a football match in Spain or watching the tour de France on French television. This may also expose students to different varieties of the language, and also allow them to hear different accents, as well as giving them opportunities to listen to other people using the language who, like them, have learnt it as a second language. Giving learners access to this type of material is important because it is 'real'; it is the sort of language they are likely to come across in contexts where the language is used and,

also, because doing so is usually very motivating and interesting for learners.

## Supporting the Learner to Understand

We have tended to focus thus far in this chapter on the challenge for the teacher in providing the learner with large amounts of language input. However, it is important to consider that the learner also will be challenged as they try to make sense of unfamiliar input in the language they are learning. This is not a bad thing because research tells us that one of the aspects of learning that promotes engagement on the part of the learner is 'environmental challenge', a concept which was introduced in Chapter 1 (Shernoff et al., 2017, p. 204). Some of the aspects of environmental challenge that are associated with student engagement are lesson demands (Goetz et al., 2013) and high expectations for student accomplishment (Rubie-Davies et al., 2015), features that appear to have been typical of the classrooms of the teachers we have referred to in this chapter. However, Shernoff et al. (2017) maintain that environmental challenge must be combined with environmental support. In other words, high expectations have to be accompanied by initiatives to scaffold the learner to success. We will now consider ways in which learners may be helped to understand target language input that they are exposed to in the classroom. In other words: how can teachers help to make input comprehensible for students?

Earlier in this chapter, Tania, a teacher of Japanese to beginner learners, talked about 'flooding' learners with the target language. However, we will all have had the experience of hearing or reading totally incomprehensible input in a foreign language and it would seem obvious that unless we are given some help or clues in making a connection between what we hear or read and what it means, we will not learn. This, then, is the challenge for the teacher: how to 'manage' the input so that it is accessible for the level of the learner. It does not, of course, mean that the learner must understand all language input, but that they need to be able to make some links between what they hear (or read) and what it means.

In the following example, Jessica, a very experienced teacher of French, introduces a new classroom activity to her students who are in their first year of learning the language. As you read this extract, notice the strategies that Jessica uses to help guarantee that her input is comprehensible for her learners.

## Example 3.3

| | | Translation | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| T | Nous avons un jeu. Qu'est-ce que c'est un jeu? | We're going to play a game. What's un jeu? | |
| Unidentified Student | A game | | |
| T | A game. Un jeu, une activité, quelque chose à faire. Vous allez travailler en groupes de trois, oui, groupes de trois, et vous allez jouer à « Guess Who ?, C'est qui ?» Vous allez lire le livre et je vais vous donner quelques questions, par exemple, « elle a treize ans, elle fait de la danse quatre fois par semaine.» | A game. Un jeu, an activity, something to do. You're going to work in groups of three, yes, groups of three and you are going to play 'Guess Who, Who is it?' You are going to read the book and I am going to give you some questions, for example, 'she is 13 and she dances four times a week'. | Students have produced a class book of descriptions they have written of themselves, without including their names. They are now going to use this book for this game. The teacher gives an example statement using a description from this book |

Reformulation
uses similar words/expressions (une activité, quelque chose à faire) to further help learners establish the meaning of new language

Comprehension check
establishes whether students have understood what might be new language – 'un jeu'

Nous avons un jeu. Qu'est-ce c'est un jeu?

We're going to play a game. What's un jeu?

A game

A game. Un jeu, une activité, quelque chose à faire. Vous allez travaillez en groupes de trois, oui, groupes de trois, et vous allez jouer a « Guess Who, C'est qui» ? Vous allez lire le livre et je vais vous donner quelques questions, par exemple, « elle a treize ans, elle fait de la danse quatre fois par semaine »

A game. Un jeu, an activity, something to do. You're going to work in groups of three, yes, groups of three and you are going to play 'Guess Who, Who is it?' You are going to read the book and I am going to give you some questions, for example, 'she is 13 and she dances four times a week'.

Repetition
Repeats words and/or phrases e.g. a game, un jeu (note use of English) groupes de trois, groupes de trois

Gives an example
of how to carry out an activity, 'par exemple, "elle a treize ans, elle fait de la danse quatre fois par semaine"'

One of the key principles guiding the strategies that Jessica uses here is that of *redundancy*. Jessica gives more information than is necessary for

comprehension, but this extra, redundant, information (repetitions, refor-mulations, examples, translations) helps make this target input more com-prehensible. Here we see Jessica providing support for her learners face-to-face. She could also have used gesture or whole-body cues/movement. In online learning contexts (see Chapter 7), learners can make use of a wide range of multimodal resources delivered digitally to support comprehen-sion, often accompanied by emoji or images (tweets, texts, chats, email).

It is most probable, although we can't be sure unless we ask her, that Jessica also used another common way of making her input comprehen-sible: she used grammar and vocabulary that was adapted to the profi-ciency level of her learners. In terms of vocabulary, this would most likely be vocabulary that occurred with high frequency in the language. In terms of grammar, Jessica probably used utterances that were shorter and structures that were less complex. Research shows that teachers tend to adjust their language so that it is appropriate to the level of their students naturally, although there is some evidence to suggest that not everyone is equally good at doing this (Ellis & Shintani, 2014).

Other ways in which teachers may make what they say comprehensi-ble are:

- Adjusting speed: slowing speech down and making greater use of pauses
- Adjusting volume: speaking more loudly and as clearly and distinctly as possible.
  (Ellis & Shintani, 2014)

## Engaging Students with Input

So far in this chapter we have been primarily focused on the 'how' of input, now we need to look at the very important aspect of 'what' input. We will start with the notion of topic.

In research on student engagement, three features have been found to be important: interest, concentration, and enjoyment (Shernoff, 2013; Shernoff et al., 2017). It would seem obvious that teachers need to choose topics that they know will motivate their students to attend to the lan-guage they hear or read (see Chapter 2). Margaret, the teacher of Year 11 students of French, had her students listen as she talked about herself and her life as a 6-year-old, even bringing in some of her worn toys from that period of her life. One student said about this lesson:

> I liked learning about Madame X's childhood.

In talking about her approach to teaching, Margaret recalled her own experience as a language learner. She talked about how motivating it was for her to read stories in French.

> I've always felt that stories were a very good way to learn a language. When I was at school, [every chapter in our] French book, even though it was really old-fashioned started with a story, and as we got older, it was a story from French literature, and I would read on to find out what happened. I do feel that maybe there should be a bit more of an acknowledgement that stories can be a very powerful way of getting students hooked into the language.

Many students respond to well to games. When these and other activities are designed so that all instructions and materials can only be accessed in the target language, a natural need is created for students to engage with and work to understand what they hear. This type of learning opportunity is likely to lead to learning (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001) and to foster concentration and enjoyment, as we discussed in Chapter 2.

Earlier on in this chapter we focused on the importance of teacher talk in the classroom being in the target language as much as possible. In the research on teacher talk, one focus is on the types of questions that teachers ask in class. Often teachers ask 'display' questions, that is, they require students to give an answer that the teacher already anticipates. An example is the question that Jessica asks when describing the activity that her students are going to do: 'Qu'est-ce que c'est un jeu?' (what is a 'jeu'?) She knows what the word means, but is asking the question to draw their attention to the word 'jeu' and to establish whether they know it. Researchers (e.g. Lee, 2006) claim that teachers need to ask genuine (also known as referential) questions, as well as 'display' questions, because these are how questions are more typically used in everyday conversation. They need to give students the opportunity to be language users, not just language learners. In other words, they need to give learners opportunities to use language the way that it is used in the real world. We can see this in Example 3.4, an extract from Shona's classroom, where she talks to her student, at the beginning of the lesson, about the apple that she is eating. When teachers use the target language to relate to their students in this way, they form and strengthen relationships with them. We saw in Chapter 1 that positive relationships are an important aspect of providing learners with the type of support that they need to learn (Shernoff et al., 2017). There is also evidence that genuine or referential questions are more likely to lead to the type of language output that helps students learn (see Chapter 4).

**Example 3.4**

|   |   | **Translation** |
|---|---|---|
| T | Ringo wa oishii desu ka | Is the apple nice? |
| S | Suppai | It's sour |
| T | Suppai. Suppakute oishii? | Sour. Sour and nice? |

| S | Hmmm | |
|---|---|---|
| T | Hmmm. Watashi mo, suppai ringo ga suki desu. Ichiban suki na ringo no shurui wa Cox's Orange. | I like sour apples too. My favourite type of apple is Cox's Orange. |
| S | Haven't heard of it | |
| T | They're . . . they're small and they're hontou ni suppai. Hontou ni mukashi no shurui | They're . . . they're small and they're really sour. They are a very old variety. |

The fact of being able to 'function' successfully in a classroom where the target language is spoken can be very motivating and energising for students. This is something that Jessica refers to. She concludes a discussion about the challenges of using teacher talk or target language in the classroom with a strong endorsement of its effectiveness:

> They just learn so much and also the kids that came into my class that weren't using the target language in class all said 'oh we love this, this is awesome' and they found it very empowering and they picked it up very fast.

## Input + 1

We have stressed the importance of comprehensible input. In this section we argue that input also needs to present a challenge for the language learner. The formula 'i + 1' represents this notion (Krashen, 1985). Students need access to input that is just beyond their easy comprehension (in other words, 'plus 1'). That is, input that is within their reach for understanding, but which requires them to 'work' or to struggle a little in order to comprehend what they hear or read. In this way, they will make new connections between language input and what this input means and/or how it is structured to convey this meaning. If students are exposed only to language they are familiar with and can understand easily, then they will not be challenged to progress further in their language learning. However, Paul Nation (2006) suggests that, in order for learners to be likely to 'pick up', independently, without teacher assistance, new language as they read or listen to challenging input, only a small amount of language should be unfamiliar. In every hundred words there should be one or two unfamiliar words, and no more than five. In other words, ninety-five to ninety-eight per cent of words should already be familiar.

In the classroom, the experienced teacher can provide help to facilitate comprehension in order to, as mentioned earlier, support learners to cope

with challenge. In the extract below, Nicole provides her learners with input + 1, but also is careful to 'scaffold' this activity to facilitate their learning.

Just prior to the extract shown in Example 3.5, Nicole has had her students of Spanish watch a video that shows people purchasing items in a market in Mexico. Watching this video is part of a larger activity that the students are preparing for, which is to compare the differences between supermarkets and markets. The language that they will listen to as they watch the video is challenging for Nicole's students, who are in their second year of studying Spanish (Year 10). Notice the 'work' that Nicole has her students undertake as they are exposed to this challenging input and how she helps them by breaking the challenge into manageable components for them.

**Example 3.5**

| | |
|---|---|
| Bueno, ahora chicas, vamos a escuchar, necesitan sus cuadernos, una pluma o lápiz y vamos a escuchar a un video – so first we're just going to listen to it – I'm not going to show it to you, y tienen que escribir las palabras que entienden, so the words you understand. Escriben las palabras que entienden. Vale? Listas? And then we'll watch the video and see how many you can pick up in the second go. | Good, now girls, we are going to listen, you need your notebooks, a pen or pencil and we are going to listen to a video – so first we're just going to listen to it – I'm not going to show it to you and you are to write the words that you hear, so the words you understand. Write the words you understand. Ok? Ready? And then we'll watch the video and see how many you can pick up in the second go. |

After listening to the sound only the first time, the students then watch the video, at the same time listening for new words they don't know to add to their list. This second time they are also thinking about how markets might be similar to or different from supermarkets as they listen. So each time the learners listen to/watch this video they are given a goal which guides their listening/viewing.

Determining whether input is 'linguistically rich' for a given group of students will of course require some knowledge of their proficiency. Where students in a class vary greatly in proficiency, using differentiated instruction to cater for all needs is important (Tomlinson, 2014). In fact, in Chapters 1 and 2, we discussed how one of the indicators of a positive classroom environment is having learning activities that match students' needs. Sometimes, it may be appropriate for all students to work at the same task but for different students to have varying degrees of scaffolding to successfully complete it. For example, in the listening task described above, lower proficiency students, new to the language, could be given some of the words they will hear along with images, so that they only need circle the words they hear rather than have to write them down.

We have stressed the impor-
tance of comprehensible input
while also acknowledging that
it is not enough just to ensure
that input is comprehensible: it
also needs to be comprehended.
In other words, the teacher
needs not only to provide the
conditions for learning, learning
needs to occur! In order for
learning to take place, the lear-
ner needs to notice and pay
attention to the language that

> ### The Noticing Hypothesis
>
> In 1995, Schmidt controversially argued
> that nothing is free in language learning.
> In other words, in order for a language
> feature to be learnt, the learner has to
> notice and pay attention to it.
>
> More recently, Schmidt (2001) has mod-
> ified his initial stance to acknowledge that
> some learning might be possible without
> noticing, but he maintains that the more
> that is noticed, the more that is learnt.

they are being exposed to. In particular, they need to notice what words
mean, how they sound, what they collocate with (i.e., what words tend to
occur with others), how they change and when – the patterns of language
that are new to them. Of course, it is the role of the teacher, too, to help
students 'notice'. In Chapter 5 we will return to this idea again. In this
chapter we argue that having students notice and pay attention to aspects
of language is necessary; in Chapter 5 we will discuss in some detail how this
might happen and give examples.

## Maximising Input Outside the Classroom

Earlier in this chapter we referred to the fact that the second language
learner is often disadvantaged in comparison to the first language learner
because they have so much less exposure to the target language.
Certainly, this is the case if the only access that the learner has to the
language is while they are in the classroom. Increasingly, however, espe-
cially with advances in technology (see Chapter 7), the learner has ways
of accessing target language input outside of the classroom. We asked a
number of teachers for suggestions of ways in which they thought that
learners could access target language output outside of the classroom.
Jessica comments:

> I give quite a lot of them some reading to do. I encourage them to watch French
> movies and I encourage them to watch video clips ... [I encourage them to] go to La
> Cloche [French café] at the weekend and listen to the French people and I think they
> do do that but I could probably encourage much more input outside of class. I get
> them to send texts to each other in French.

James, also a teacher of beginner learners of French, explains how he attempts to give his students opportunities outside of the classroom:

> YouTube, music, you know, there's heaps of stuff. I run a trip to New Caledonia in Year 11 and I dangle that in front of the kids in Year 9. Get the seniors in, 'hey guys, let's talk about our trip'.
> What else do I do? French film festivals.

Shona comments that her Year 11 students in their third year of learning Japanese watch anime in Japanese with English subtitles. Another teacher of Japanese, the only teacher of Japanese in her school, and teaching students from Years 8 to 13 (i.e. aged 12 to 18 years), describes an anime club set up by her students of Japanese that runs regularly on a Friday during lunchtime. For her the benefit of this exposure to the language is that students will pick up incidentally on different expressions in Japanese:

> because when we do certain writing, often [an] expression will come [up].

This teacher also describes a school intranet where she can give students access to different types of language input in Japanese.

> Each class level has got their dashboard and I put in lots of websites of interest that connect to radio stations, TV, language clips of interest.

Exposing learners to a wide range of different types of input is also important because it allows learners to see how varied language is and how much it changes according to who is involved, what is being talked about, and in what context the language is being used. Referring to the idea we discussed previously, that is, that comprehension precedes output, students need to be aware of and understand these variations in language use before they themselves can use language in these different ways.

## The Teacher as Language Learner

Some teachers may feel that they cannot use the target language in the classroom because, while they may have expertise in teaching languages, they may not themselves be highly proficient speakers of the language

they are teaching. In the following interview extract, a teacher contrasts her proficiency in Mandarin with that in French.

> And in Mandarin, where I'm much less proficient in learning the language … [in class] we don't have as rich a [repertoire] of expressions as we do in French, but my Mandarin students from Day One they had to say 'thank you, you're welcome, hello, sorry, I'm hungry, I'm thirsty, Can I go to the [toilet], laoshi'… they use all of those. Whereas the [students] who had the Mandarin teacher, who is Chinese, they don't use [Mandarin] and it's because they didn't get trained to say all these things.

It is interesting that this teacher makes the point that proficiency in the target language does not, by itself, ensure the best learning conditions for students. The teacher needs skill and determination to know how to structure and use input for students to be able to learn from it. Another advantage for teachers (like this one) who are not so proficient in the language they are teaching is that they can better identify with the experience of language learning, and even model the example of 'an effective language learner'. What is crucial is that they see themselves as ongoing learners of the language they are teaching.

## 'Translanguaging' in the Language Classroom

There has been a lot of focus on the use of the target language in the classroom in this chapter. However, it would be wrong to conclude that a teacher must never use the students' first or other languages. Jessica refers to how helpful using the first language can be (in her classroom the L1 of almost all students is English), especially at the beginning stages of language learning.

> I would say you just have to keep persevering. It's very beneficial for the students. I've really seen that and I really believe it. You can do it gradually … you can use a bit of English. So I had to really train my French students and I'd say that English has been reduced over the year and that I personally don't think that it's a crime especially with beginners to use English. I think you have to have a bit to help them … they're 13 so it's not like they're little pre-schoolers that don't know the difference, they really really need to have the English to hold their hand but you have to keep persevering.

However, rather than talking about teachers using the students' 'L1', it is better to use the term 'translanguaging', given that, in many classrooms, there are learners from different language backgrounds, many of them speaking more than one language. Translanguaging refers to the process

where two or more languages are used to make meaning or gain knowledge and understanding (Martínez-Alvarez, 2017). Teachers can 'translanguage' or use any of the languages that learners are familiar with, including the target language, in a number of ways to help language and literacy learning (Hornberger & Link, 2012). For example, the teacher may give an explanation about language or make a comparison between the target language and another language (see Chapter 5). There is evidence to suggest that learners can perform at a higher level when they use a language they are proficient in (Alegria de la Colina & Del Pilar Garcia Mayo, 2009), and also that they may be less anxious (Auerbach, 1993). Denying learners the right to translanguage may be seen as a rejection of the language(s) they know (Cook, 2001) and a denial of their right to be treated as individuals and with respect (Edstrom, 2006).

## The Expanded Learning Space

An underlying message of this chapter, perhaps, is that creating a rich language learning environment is a significant challenge for the teacher of foreign languages. For teachers who are working in immersion, content-based learning, study abroad, and other learning contexts, it will not be so difficult to ensure that their students have access to input and a rich learning environment. However, many teachers work in a 'drip feed' context where the time for language learning is a limited number of hours per week. For them it can be important to remember that people have, for centuries, been successfully learning foreign languages, working with constraints similar to those that may be facing them. For them, too, the advice of one researcher who has had a long career working in the context of second language teaching in Canada, may be helpful. Patsy Lightbown (2014) suggests that teachers who are faced with the 'drip feed' context may need to embrace an aim that is more realistic for their students in terms of language learning outcomes. Rather than a focus on fluency or high degrees of proficiency, they may want to ensure that their learners have:

- a positive attitude to language learning; and
- the ability to use what little language they do know to understand and make themselves understood.

Lightbown argues that when working in contexts where there is reduced time, it is important for teachers to help learners to continue to learn outside of the classroom. Collins and Muñoz (2016) take this idea even

further and refer to the notion of an 'expanded learning space'. In other words, the learner can be helped to see that the classroom is only one place where learning can take place and that they need to take responsibility for ongoing learning outside of this space. Of course, technology can play an important role here for the learner, and we will investigate this further in Chapter 7. Teachers could also encourage their learners to see themselves as lifelong learners of a language or, indeed, of any languages. In other words, language learning is not limited in terms of space, nor in terms of time.

## Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter we have examined why creating opportunities for learners to be exposed to target language input is so important in the learning process.

## Key Points

- Learners need large amounts of language input in order to develop proficiency in the language they are learning.
- One way of maximising learner exposure to the target language is for the teacher to use it as much as possible in the classroom.
- Teachers need to support learners as they expose them to large amounts of input; good teachers are highly skilled in 'scaffolding' learners to understand language input.
- Input needs to challenge learners, so that they have to work a bit to comprehend what they read or hear.
- Learners need to notice and pay attention to language, in particular language that is new to them.
- There is a place for 'translanguaging' – using other languages that learners are familiar with – to help language learning in the classroom.
- Learners need to take responsibility for their own learning and realise that the classroom is only one of the contexts in which they can learn a language.

## Reflection and Discussion

1 Think of your own language learning experience (or that of another learner you know). To what extent did the development of comprehension skills precede the ability to use the language productively?
2 What type of input did you find helpful as a learner? What examples can you give of input + 1? How were you supported to make sense of this input?

3 In classrooms you are familiar with, what are/were some of the routines? What formulaic expressions/language could be associated with these?

4 To what extent is the target language used in your class or in a class you have observed? What constraints are there and how might these be addressed?

5 In a context which is familiar to you, do students face challenges in getting exposure to extensive amounts of language input? What is/could be done to help maximise exposure to the target language? Discuss/reflect on how this might benefit your students. Are there any limitations?

6 Is the idea of an 'extended learning space' (Collins & Muñoz, 2016) helpful for a context you are familiar with?

## Further Reading

Saito, K., & Hanzawa, K. (2016). Developing second language oral ability in foreign language classrooms: The role of the length and focus of instruction and individual differences. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 37, 813–840. Doi:10.1017/S0142716415000259

In this paper, the authors looked at the oral language ability of Japanese learners of English who had learnt English at school from the ages of 12 to 17. They compared them with Japanese learners of English who had moved to Canada after the age of 18 and had been there for more than 20 years. The aim of the study was to find out what oral language gains the adolescent learners had made and how important the length of instruction was (some of the adolescent learners attended 'cram' schools outside of their regular school classrooms). The authors also considered the impact of the type of instruction and language aptitude variables (see Chapter 2).

## For Reflection and Discussion

(a) On pages 815, and 824–827, Saito & Hanzawa give information about the types of conditions that tend to characterise foreign language learning, and the learning contexts that were characteristic of the learners in this study. To what extent are these typical of contexts you are familiar with?

(b) What factors predicted successful learning for the learners in this study? (The Discussion section will be particularly helpful here.) What conclusions could be made about the importance of language input?

# Opportunities for Language Output

## Introduction

In the previous chapter we investigated the role of input in the language learning process and the importance of giving language learners large amounts of 'accessible' language input. In this chapter, we focus on the importance of creating opportunities in the language classroom for productive language use, that is, 'output', whether spoken or written. We investigate why output, alongside input, is considered essential for the language learning process and what sort of output is most likely to lead to successful language acquisition. In the classroom context, creating opportunities for output is an ongoing challenge for the teacher given that, for many students, opportunities to use language outside of the classroom may be limited.

> **Nation's Four Strands**
>
> Nation (2007) argues that a well-balanced language course should consist of four roughly equal strands:
>
> 1. Meaning-focused input
> 2. Meaning-focused output
> 3. Language-focused learning
> 4. Fluency development

In this chapter, we are concerned with the second of Nation's (2007) four strands. Opportunities for students to engage in meaning-focused output should, according to Nation (2007), make up approximately one quarter of the classroom focus. We will discuss further the type of output that Nation recommends.

## The Importance of Output

In Chapter 3, we encountered the Input hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) and Krashen's claim that exposing learners to language input (i.e. language that they can read/see or hear) was all that was needed for successful language learning. This belief in the absolute sufficiency of language input was challenged by research from immersion classrooms

> **Comprehensible Output Hypothesis**
>
> Learners do not only need comprehensible input for language learning, they also need to produce comprehensible output (Swain, 1985).
>
> According to this hypothesis, output does more than just help learners to become more fluent as they use language; it actually contributes to the language learning process.

where students had been exposed to years of language input. Researchers like Merrill Swain (1985) found that, even after years of schooling with English as the medium of instruction, learners of English were not able to correctly use some common grammatical structures. Although fluent and able to comprehend and communicate well, their language was characterised by many grammatical and spelling errors. They simply had not noticed many features of English, such as the use of pronouns, the use of 's' with verbs in the third person singular (e.g. he speak**s**), articles, and so on.

Swain realised that a key characteristic of these immersion classrooms was that the students had not had many opportunities to produce the second language. This led Swain and other researchers to rethink the role that language output might contribute to language learning (Gass & Selinker, 2001). The result was the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985). In this chapter we will use both the terms 'output' and 'production' interchangeably. Each of these terms can refer, of course, to the oral and/or written use of language.

A key idea behind the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis is that production forces language learners to process language differently from the way they process it when they are just listening to, or reading, language input. In focusing on language input learners can often 'get away' with just paying attention to vocabulary, that is, all they may need to do is to understand what they hear or read. However, when they want to produce language, they also have to pay attention to grammar so as to communicate effectively. For example, when they are listening to language input, they may know from hearing adverbs like 'yesterday' or 'last week' that the speaker is referring to past time and so they don't need to pay attention to the tense of the verb. When they produce the language though, they may notice that they don't know how to use the verb in the way they need to, in order to indicate that something happened in the past. As Nation (2009) points out, when you produce language you have to think like a writer, rather than just a reader! You have to pay attention to aspects of the language you haven't necessarily needed to previously. Production forces you 'to move from semantic to syntactic processing' (Swain, 1985, p. 249), from processing meaning to processing grammar.

This role for production, or for practising something that you have learnt about and understood, is not limited to language learning (Gass & Selinker, 2001). We can all think of examples where having to use knowledge productively, or put it into practice, consolidates that knowledge and leads to better learning. I might read and follow instructions for how to put up my new tent successfully. Having to actually do it, or explain the process to a friend so that they too can successfully erect the tent, will

further extend and consolidate my learning (and help me see where any gaps might be).

## The Benefits of Language Output

Swain (1985, 2005) claims that there are several ways in which giving students opportunities to produce language output might lead to language learning. Below we look at an example of a dialogue from one language classroom, and use it to demonstrate the different ways in which Swain claims that production may facilitate language acquisition.

The background to this example, from Shona's Year 11 Japanese classroom, is that the students are working together to solve a murder mystery. They have been told that their Deputy Principal has been murdered and they have been given a list of suspects, all of whom are employed at the school. The students have written descriptions of the suspects in Japanese and their task is to establish the identity of these key suspects. If they are stuck, they are allowed to go and ask the teacher for clues. This is what the student in Example 4.1 has done, asking in Japanese: *uhh, yougisha C no hinto wo oengai shimasu* (can I have a hint for Suspect C?). The clue that the teacher gives him, in Japanese, is that Suspect C works in Student Services (*Ah, yougisha C was Student Services de hataraite imasu*). The student wants more information, however, and asks a question, but he asks it in English and the teacher insists it needs to be in Japanese! As you read the dialogue, see if you can find instances where the student thinks like a writer and pays attention to aspects of language that are new for him (note that we indicate in bold anything that the student says in Japanese).

**Example 4.1**

|   |   |   | Translation | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | S | What are the names of the people who work at Student Services? | | |
| 2 | T | Nihongo de | In Japanese | The teacher requires the question to be in Japanese |
| 3 | S | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Uhh Student Services . . . worker? | | |
| 4 | T | Student Services – happening at a place? | | The teacher tries to elicit the particle used to specify action happening at a place – 'de' |
| 5 | S | **de** | | The student produces the particle 'de' |
| 6 | T | De. Working? | | The teacher tries to elicit the word for 'working' in the L2 |
| 7 | S | Work is like **shigoto**. Work worker. Is worker different? | Work is like 'job'? | The student knows the word for 'work' but doesn't know if this is the same as the word for worker. |
| 8 | T | Yeah, I suppose, yeah, you're looking at | | |
| 9 | S | **Sensei?** | Teacher? | |
| 10 | T | Yeah, we'll just go with [it] | | The teacher accepts the word 'sensei'. |
| 11 | S | **Student Services de sensei** | Teacher at Student Services | The student uses the whole phrase in Japanese. |
| 12 | T | In that case it's 'Student Services no sensei wa dare desu ka?' | In that case it's 'who are the teachers at Student Services?' | The teacher now models in Japanese the original question. |
| 13 | S | **Student Services no sensei wa dare desu ka?** | Who are the teachers at Student Services? | The student repeats the whole sentence correctly in Japanese. |

In having an opportunity to produce language output, a learner may notice the gap between what they want to say and what they can say (Gass, 1997; Swain, 1995). The opportunity or need to produce language helps the learner notice problems they have in using language. In other words, it serves as a *consciousness-raising function*. In Example 4.1 this happens at Turn 3.

3    S        Uhh Student

Services … worker?

> The student notices the gap in his language knowledge – he doesn't know the term for 'worker'.

Noticing a problem or a gap may lead a learner to *reflect on language* (Swain, 1995). Reflecting on language may take place in different ways. It may involve thinking about, questioning, or talking about the language to use. We see this for our student in Turn 7, where he is still working on the problem of how to say 'worker' in Japanese.

7    S        Work is like **shigoto**. Work …

worker. Is worker different?

> The student reflects on and talks about language. He wonders whether the word for 'worker' is the same as the word for 'work'.

Having to produce language output can give learners opportunities to *test out hypotheses*, or understanding, about the language they are learning. Here they may try out new language they are not sure of, working at the 'cutting edge', so to speak, of their language ability. When they do this they may, at the same time, get valuable feedback about how successful their attempt to communicate was (Swain, 1995) and this feedback may facilitate learning. For our learner, we see this at Turns 9 and 10.

9    S        **Sensei**?

10   T        Yeah, we'll just go with [it]

11   S        **Student Services de Sensei**

> The student decides to test out the hypothesis that he can use the word for 'teacher' in this context. The teacher agrees. This is helpful feedback.

In this short dialogue from Shona's classroom, we have seen how the student encounters a difficulty in saying what he wants to say in Japanese. However, in the end, in Turn 13, the student finally does, with help from the teacher, correctly produce the sentence that he was initially unable to formulate for himself: 'Student Services no sensei wa dare desu ka?' We could argue that this sentence represents 'pushed output' for this student, and that the opportunities he had to try out and reflect on language during this dialogue may have facilitated important learning. In the next section, we will investigate in greater depth the notion of pushed output.

To summarise, then, opportunities to produce language output can be beneficial for language learning in a number of ways. They can highlight for the learner where there are *gaps in their language knowledge*; they can

help him or her notice language and pay attention to it. In Chapter 3 we discussed how noticing language is important for learning to occur (Schmidt, 2001), a notion we will return to again in Chapter 5. In the example we give from Shona's classroom, the student had an opportunity to *consciously reflect on language* while talking with the teacher. These opportunities might also occur as learners interact and collaborate to complete a task or activity. For example, in writing a story summarising a picture sequence, they may discuss what to say: thinking, questioning, and talking about the language to use. Reflecting on language is something that learners may also do on their own as they work independently at producing language. Opportunities to produce language may allow for *testing out new forms of language* that learners have learnt, and allow them to get feedback about these. Often this feedback may come from a listener or a reader, but sometimes learners are also able to correct themselves, as a result of hearing or reading what they have said or written. When students interact together to produce language output, there is another important benefit, this time for the listener rather than the speaker. The speaker's output can be input for the listener, and there is always the potential that they can learn from this input (we looked in some detail at the ways in which input can drive language learning in the previous chapter). A final benefit for language output is that it allows the learner to develop *a personal voice* or a way of using the language to communicate that is unique to them (Skehan, 1998).

## Pushed Output

In Chapter 3, we discovered that input needs to be challenging for the language learner, it needs to encourage them to work to comprehend what they hear or read. In a similar way, researchers claim (e.g. Swain, 2005; Nation, 2009) that output needs to push learners to produce language that is slightly beyond, or, as we have already mentioned, at the cutting edge of their linguistic ability. This is important so that learners continue to make progress in their learning and don't remain

> **Pushed Output**
> Swain (1985) claims that language learning is promoted when learners have to produce language that is slightly beyond their level of ability. Swain calls this 'pushed output'. It takes effort.

stuck at a certain level of proficiency. According to Bygate and Samuda (2009), communicative opportunities must be structured so as to prompt language learning to take place. In pushed output, the learner is put
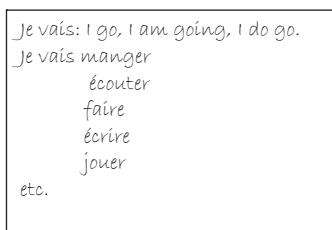
under some pressure and encouraged to use language at a more challenging level.

   We have already seen one example of pushed output from a Japanese classroom in the previous section. Another example comes from a Year 9 French classroom (first year of secondary education with students approximately 13 years old, in their first year of learning French). The students are working at a sequence of lessons on the topic of dating. James, the teacher, wants his students to learn how to talk about something they plan to do. They already know the verb they would use for this: the verb *aller*, to 'be going to'. James elicits from the students the verbs that could be used with *aller*, and together they form a list that he writes on the blackboard, as in Example 4.2.

**Example 4.2**

Je vais: I go, I am going, I do go.
Je vais manger
          écouter
          faire
          écrire
          jouer
etc.

James then asks his students to write a sentence about what they are going to do on the date they are planning, thus pushing them to use this structure to express personal meaning in a complete sentence. For most, if not all, students in this class, using this verb '*aller*' to express a future intention could be considered an example of 'pushed output'. This is because although they are familiar with this verb, they are now using it in a new way for a new grammatical function. They are therefore having to extend their use of this grammatical feature/word (Nation, 2009) and move from word level to sentence level production (Toth, 2006).

   Pushed output can also help language learners gain greater control over language that may only be partially acquired or learnt (De Bot, 1996). In the dialogue we looked at in Example 4.1, we could argue that it is now more likely that the student will be able to ask independently, in the future, the question that they worked hard to formulate in correct Japanese with the teacher's help ('Student Services no sensei wa dare desu ka?').

   Another way of encouraging students to push their output and gain greater control over language is to have them work at activities where there is a degree of time pressure. James has his beginner level learners of French play

'Spike's game', which involves time pressure, at the end of most lessons. Spike refers to a big, 'spiky', plastic ball which the students throw from one to another. The student holding Spike asks a question in French and throws Spike to another student. This student has to first answer the question and then throw Spike to another classmate, asking another question that they will then answer in turn. Examples of the types of questions that James's students were asking each other as they played Spike's game were:

As-tu un animal? [Do you have a pet?]

Où habites-tu? [Where do you live?]

Quel âge as-tu? [How old are you?]

Spike's game put students under some time pressure in that they were unwilling to hold on to Spike for too long. However, James describes below a variation of Spike's game – 'Spike's questions' – which puts students under even greater time pressure. For this game, he hands out an egg timer or a 'bomb' timer, which will 'explode' after a certain time. The aim of this game is to ask and answer questions quickly so that you are not left holding the bomb or timer when time is up.

'Cause I might just say to them 'Ok, just Spike's questions at your table.' And I'll give them the bomb and I'll hit the button and they have to pass it round and at the end, whoever's holding the bomb or the egg timer … when it goes off is 'out' and they keep going and they just keep exploding over and over.

There are a number of other ways in which learners may be encouraged to 'push' their output. We list some of these below, along with examples of ways in which we saw them being implemented in the classes we observed.

| | Method | Example |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Provide learners a range of topics, including less familiar topics, to talk about (Nation, 2009). | In Linda's Year 11 Spanish class, students had to research information about a Spanish festival and make a presentation, in Spanish, about this festival to the rest of the class. |
| 2 | Give learners a range of different genres of language to produce, such as monologue, dialogue, narration, colloquial versus formal language, etc. | The above example required learners to demonstrate use of a different type of language – the more formal language required for a presentation. |

Tania had her Year 10 students have a conversation in Japanese with a fellow classmate. Some of the students said how rewarding it was for them to have their first ever conversation in Japanese.

3  Learners can produce output that is extended in length, 'long' turns rather than 'short' turns (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). In this way learners develop discourse skills – the ability to link together ideas and meanings and demonstrate relationships between these.

In Margaret's Year 11 French classroom, students had to write a comparison between their childhood/adolescence and that of a family member.

The presentations on Spanish festivals (referred to above) that Linda's students made were examples of extended output.

We point out that the teachers whose practice we profile in this and other chapters of this book were very experienced, and that it can take considerable expertise to establish the types of classrooms we describe.

A final example of pushed output comes from another Japanese classroom, this time a Year 10 classroom, where students are in their first year of learning Japanese. This time, the teacher, Tania, speaks of how amazed she was by one of her student's willingness to try out language that she had learnt. Tania describes how she was teaching her students about sports and she had given them the phrase in Japanese for 'I think it's a sport', even though she thought that this was quite a hard language structure for them to use at their level of language learning. Tania describes how she and the student had the following exchange in Japanese:

> 'so Miss, do you think such-and-such is a sport?' and I said 'oh, no, I don't think it's a sport' and she said 'Well I do'. I said 'Okay ... Do you?' I didn't know what to say after that, I was so shocked.

Tania goes on to explain further the reason for her surprise:

> I was just so shocked that she was trying to have an argument with me, but I could see that she had set it up so that she could actually have an argument with me, 'cause she wanted to test it out and see if it worked with someone who really spoke [Japanese].

This last example stands out because so far in this chapter we have been looking at ways in which the teacher can set up and facilitate opportunities for pushed output. However, in this last example, it is the student who initiates this for herself, very much to the surprise and delight of her teacher.

This section on pushed output has focused on how we can get students communicating in ways that challenge them in their use of language resources; in this next section we will return to Nation's idea, referred to earlier, that output needs to be meaning-focused (Nation, 2007).
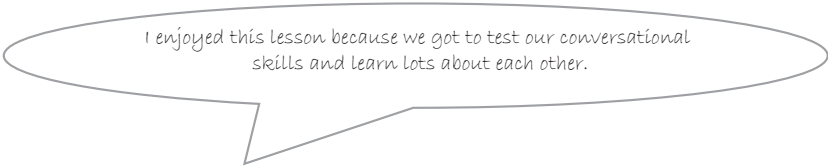
## Communicating with Language Output

The main goal of output is usually to convey a message to someone else. This will often involve finding out something that wasn't already known. Output where there is a genuine need for the message that is conveyed, and where those involved in the exchange are discovering something they didn't already know, is 'communicative'. It meets Nation's criterion of being meaning-focused. Examples of communicative output are: greeting someone, inviting someone to a party, expressing emotions, and so on. Back in an earlier section, we looked at an example of communicative output where a student, trying to solve a murder mystery, was asking questions to find out who the suspect was. Communicative output can lead to opportunities for learning, as we identified in that example.

A very powerful reason for including opportunities for the genuine communication of information is that they are highly motivating for learners. In this way learners are not just learning the language, but also using it authentically for real purposes. They become language users rather than just language learners. In Chapter 1 we introduced the idea of 'environmental challenge' and discussed how this can lead to engagement on the part of the learner (Shernoff, 2013), particularly when it is accompanied by environmental support (Shernoff et al., 2017). Some of the aspects of environmental challenge that have been associated with student engagement are opportunities for solving meaningful problems (Brandsford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999) and activities that are relevant to students' lives (Shernoff, 2013). Opportunities to engage in real communication of information may fulfil these criteria and promote student engagement (see Chapter 2). We do have evidence from some of the classrooms we visited that students are highly motivated to use language when they are communicating to find out something that they don't already know.
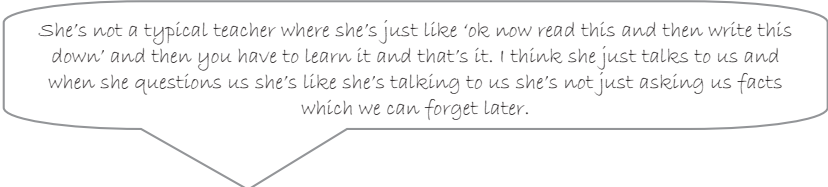
For example:

- In Margaret's Year 11 classroom, students interviewed each other to find out about what they were like when they were 6 years old. Several students mentioned, as a highlight of the lesson, the fact that they got to learn things about each other that they did not already know.
- In a Year 10 Japanese lesson students had the opportunity to ask each other about the sports they played. One student wrote as feedback about the lesson:

> I enjoyed this lesson because we got to test our conversational skills and learn lots about each other.

- In a Year 9 Spanish classroom, students had to write about their television viewing preferences and share these with each other. In a questionnaire completed at the end of the lesson, one student commented that they liked 'finding out what people liked watching'.
- In a Year 13 English class, one student commented that her teacher was different from other teachers because she was interested in learning about them and their opinions:

> She's not a typical teacher where she's just like 'ok now read this and then write this down' and then you have to learn it and that's it. I think she just talks to us and when she questions us she's like she's talking to us she's not just asking us facts which we can forget later.

This emphasis on meaningful communication contrasts with mechanical drills where learners are only practising language and where there is an emphasis on accuracy rather than on the meaning being expressed. (There is a place for practice in the language classroom, but there is a good way to plan for and implement this, as we will see in Chapter 6.) Learners are likely to be demotivated if the task or activity they are working at is seen as little more than an excuse for attending to grammar and vocabulary (Bygate & Samuda, 2009). For this reason, activities where learners are required to pay attention to the meaning of what they are saying, but where the teachers themselves are very focused on eliciting particular language structures, are problematic. The learners may infer, from the lack of attention to meaning, that what they say is

not nearly as important as how they say it – for example how accurate it is! For the learner, producing language in this way, that is, trying to focus on meaning and, at the same time, endeavouring to be accurate, can be cognitively very demanding (Toth, 2006).

## Supporting the Learner

In Chapter 1, we discussed the notions of 'environmental challenge' and 'environmental support' (Shernoff, 2013). In this chapter, one obvious example of environmental challenge that we have considered in some depth is 'pushed output'. But we also need to realise that output does not necessarily need to be 'pushed' to be challenging for learners. For a learner, particularly a beginner learner or a learner of lower proficiency, it can be very nerve-racking to have to speak or write in the target language. This desire to avoid speaking can be even greater for the adolescent. In Chapter 1 we discussed how adolescents often experience anxiety when speaking in front of others (Sumter et al., 2009). Teachers with a high level of proficiency in the language they are teaching, and who are some distance time-wise from their experience of learning a language, can easily forget how difficult it is for their students to speak in another language. Jessica highlights this point:

> I always think speaking French is easy but actually I'm realising more and more that it's not easy, it's actually quite a hard thing for a lot of people to do, not everybody.

At the same time, research in general education demonstrates that teachers who have high expectations tend to have students who achieve more (Rubie-Davies et al., 2015). In the following extract Tania, a teacher of beginner learners of Japanese in Year 10, admits that her low expectations of her students had held them back in terms of their ability to use Japanese in the language classroom:

> I held back on using the language … and I have learned to let it go … just because I think this is difficult doesn't mean that the students will find it difficult … so I can just let them know things they want to know how to say … if they say 'Oh Miss, how do you say "I like playing the piano"?' I'll teach them the whole expression for that rather than just saying 'Oh you just want to know … "I like the piano" cause that's a Year 10 structure.' So that's one of the things that was probably … a challenge for me. To stop holding on [to the language].

James, a teacher of Year 9 students in their first year of learning French, has the expectation that students can and will express themselves orally during a lesson. He describes the importance of prioritising opportunities for oral output:
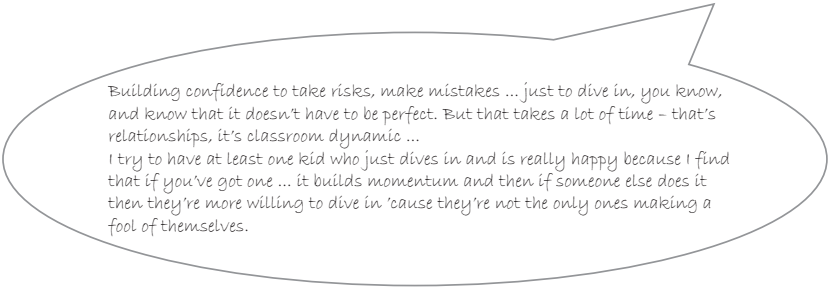
> I aim for them to say something in every period in the target language at least once. Big or small. [I] make it a goal to get every kid to say something every lesson so that they're participating, because otherwise it's just easy for them to just slip out and they're not participating – and then they become non-participative and then that just snowballs, and they don't want to participate because they're not confident.

As we saw in Chapter 1, along with environmental challenge students need to have environmental support. One aspect of environmental support that research has highlighted as being important for learner achievement is the use of class activities that match students' background and interests (Shernoff et al. 2017) (see Chapter 2). Kang (2005) suggests that teachers need to find topics in which their learners are interested and about which they have some background knowledge and experience. He suggests varying topics and accommodating different preferences amongst students.

Along with topic, Kang (2005) found that conversation partners and the conversational context were also factors that would predict whether a learner was prepared to talk in the language they were using. In Chapter 1 we discussed how, for adolescents, relationships with peers are exceedingly important. As part of our research for this book, we asked students what they liked about lessons that we had observed. In three different classrooms, they said they liked:

- conversations with friends;
- interacting/working with friends/classmates; and
- working in groups.

The language teacher, in planning for language output, needs to set up opportunities for peer interaction. Classroom relationships, a feature of environmental support that is considered important for student learning, also need to be supportive (Shernoff et al., 2017). James refers to this below, as part of establishing a safe environment, where students feel it is all right to make mistakes. James talks about encouraging his students of French to take risks and describes his aims:

> Building confidence to take risks, make mistakes ... just to dive in, you know, and know that it doesn't have to be perfect. But that takes a lot of time – that's relationships, it's classroom dynamic ...
> I try to have at least one kid who just dives in and is really happy because I find that if you've got one ... it builds momentum and then if someone else does it then they're more willing to dive in 'cause they're not the only ones making a fool of themselves.

Some other helpful examples of how learners may be supported to produce output come from Nation's (2009) discussion of how to create opportunities for meaning-focused output. These are summarised as:

1 **FAMILIARITY:** learners need to write and talk about things that are largely familiar to them. Only a small proportion of language should be unfamiliar (this is to be held in tension with the idea that talking about unfamiliar topics may help 'push' learners in their output).
2 **STRATEGIES:** learners should use communication strategies, dictionaries, or previous input to help them when they lack the language that they need to communicate successfully.
3 **OPPORTUNITIES:** learners need many opportunities to produce language. In a study describing a focus on one aspect of the Spanish language (the anti-causative clitic *se*), Toth (2006) describes a range of types of output tasks that were completed as part of this one unit: comparing and contrasting pictures, summarising short texts, putting the steps of a recipe in sequence, and narrating personal stories.

In this chapter there has been quite an emphasis on how to encourage students to produce spoken language output, however, it is important to remember that language production also involves written language output. We will focus on written output in the next section, and also continue with the theme of supporting the learner, seeing how teachers set up the type of support that learners need for writing tasks.

## Supporting Students to Write as Well as Speak

We mentioned earlier that when a learner produces language, they have to think like a writer and pay attention to features of language that they might not have had to previously (Nation, 2009). Both writing and speaking are important because, while both can benefit language learning in the ways that we have described earlier, they provide different and

complementary benefits for language learning. Typically, oral language tends to foster the development of fluency but also requires the learner to master pronunciation, stress, and intonation patterns so that they can communicate intelligibly. On the other hand, written language tends to allow for a greater attention to specific features of language and a greater focus on accuracy because, in contrast to speaking, writing typically allows time and this means that learners can plan, select, revise, and edit their language (Harmer, 2015).

It is interesting to note that being good at one of these skills does not necessarily mean that one is good at the other. James comments below about his beginner students of French (aged approximately 13 years):

> I just constantly cycle through those skills [writing and speaking]. There are kids here that love speaking, but their writing is not so great, and there are kids who do better at writing and not speaking because of nerves or whatever.

Another teacher, Jessica, makes a similar observation. She also suggests that being good at either writing or speaking does not mean that one is necessarily good at the corresponding skill. However, she does point out that, for some of her students, writing was a skill that they developed first and one which helped them establish the foundation upon which they could later build to produce the language orally. In the following extract, Jessica is describing how she had her beginner learners of French make a poster where they described themselves. She put all these posters together into a book, which became a reference that the whole class could refer to:

> They really liked making the poster and [this] sort of extended writing practice and I think that for a lot of those girls ... writing helps them learn. It doesn't help them to produce oral French at all because a lot of them can be really good at writing ... especially the ... intellectual types but they can't produce the language [orally] and I see that in Chinese too, they love writing characters, they can write a lot, but they find it really difficult to speak Chinese and so this writing gave them some [foundation] and now ... we're working on production orally ...

We will now explore how James used a writing activity with his beginner learners of French. The aim was that they would, over a series of several lessons in the computer lab, write a love story using an online

platform (see Chapter 7 for more information about the use of digital technologies). Their first task was to choose and describe the characters in their love story. There are a couple of observations to make about this lesson. Firstly, James chose a topic that was likely to draw on the interests of his students (Nation, 2009). Secondly, he had 'scaffolded' his students into this task, in that previous lessons had focused on the language needed for planning and describing (romantic) dates. This meant that the students already had activated some of the ideas and language that they would need for this writing task. Finally, James's implementation of this lesson was interesting in that he could have chosen amongst a number of options in the way that he set this task up. For example, he could have:

- put the students into groups to write one story together, working on the premise that by working together it was likely that they would produce a piece of writing that would be better than anything they could write on their own (Nation, 2009).
- made the task a guided composition exercise where he chose the pictures and helped the students with useful language.

What James actually did was to make students responsible for making up their own stories, requiring them to work independently but being available for help if they wanted it. In this way he gave them a lot of autonomy, albeit with a structure to guide them.

Figure 4.1 shows the introduction to one of the stories that James's students produced. The translation of the French is written below the figures. This is an imaginative story about New Zealand's Prime Minister. It is not without error, the student has forgotten that the adjective 'important' should be modified – important**e** – to describe a feminine noun, but nonetheless it communicates the introduction to an interesting story in an entertaining way.

In Margaret's class (referred to earlier), the students were in their third year of learning French (approximately 15 years of age) and preparing to sit an external exam for which they had to submit a portfolio of written work. The piece of writing which they were working towards was an essay in French in which they would compare their childhood with the childhood of a family relative. An interim homework task was that they would, in French:

> Write a paragraph about what you did and liked when you were 6 years old, and about your friend and what they did and liked when they were 6.

L'histoire de Bacinda



C'est Jacinda Ardern. Elle a trente-sept ans. Elle a un chat qui s'appelle Paddles.

Jacinda est la première ministre de Nouvelle-Zélande, et la dirigeante du Parti travailliste. Elle est très important.

> The story of Bacinda. This is Jacinda Adern. She is 37. She has a cat called Paddles.

> Jacinda is the Prime Minister of New Zealand and the leader of the Labour Party. She is very important.
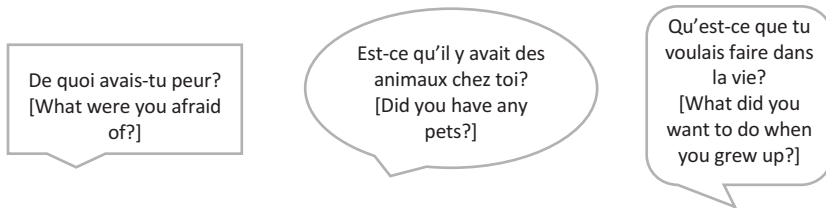
**Figure 4.1** The story of Bacinda[1]

Margaret prepared students for this homework task over a period of two lessons. In the first lesson:

1 Students were given questions to ask their teacher, Margaret, about herself as a child of 6.
2 As they asked these questions and listened to Margaret's answers the students made notes.
3 The students subsequently took part in a game where they had to see who could remember the most facts about their teacher's life at age 6.
4 Finally, they listened to the teacher reading a short paragraph about her life at the age of 6 and identified factual errors based on the information she had given them earlier.

In the second lesson:

---

[1] We can't explain why the student used Bacinda in the title and Jacinda in the story. Perhaps they enjoyed the play on words?

5 The students were given a sheet of questions. The types of questions were:

De quoi avais-tu peur? [What were you afraid of?]

Est-ce qu'il y avait des animaux chez toi? [Did you have any pets?]

Qu'est-ce que tu voulais faire dans la vie? [What did you want to do when you grew up?]

6 They had to write answers to these questions that were true for them and memorise these answers.
7 They then, in pairs, had to ask and answer these questions of each other.
8 At the end of the lesson the teacher asked the students to share aloud interesting facts they had learnt about each other.

The important point to make about this lesson sequence is that Margaret planned very carefully a series of steps which scaffolded the students to be able to write a short paragraph. This paragraph was, in actual fact, preparation for the bigger writing task (the essay to go in their writing portfolio) which they would continue to work towards during other lessons. In the ways in which Margaret prepared her students for this written task, we see examples of Nation's (2009) strategies (listed in the previous section) in practice. Firstly, Margaret had her students listen to language input which contained key vocabulary and language structures relevant to the topic, so that they became familiar with the language they needed. This language input activated the language that students needed for the topic. She also had her students listen to a model of the type of discourse they were to produce in written form; this was a paragraph about her life as a 6-year-old. Secondly, in the second lesson, the students had resources to draw on as they formulated answers to the questions they were given; dictionaries and Margaret herself, who helped many students work out how to say what they wanted to in French. Finally, Margaret gave students many opportunities to orally produce this language. Here the students were able to draw on written notes as a guide as they asked each other questions and so used this language in pairs. It was only after this careful preparation that students were asked to write a paragraph about the topic of their childhood.

In the next section we will continue to focus on the importance of scaffolding learners toward successful language production.

## Scaffolding Learners to Communicative Success

In this section, we take a closer look at scaffolding through a conversation between Jessica and a Year 9 student, as seen in Example 4.3. The student, in her first year of learning French, has something that she would like to say but doesn't know how to say it. She is encouraged by Jessica to try to do this and with her help she finally manages to communicate her message, which is that her uncle has told her that in Switzerland French speakers say 'yes' in two ways, *oui* and *ouais* (which we translate as 'yes' and 'yeah'). We understand this from her acceptance of her teacher's interpretation of what she has been trying to say, in Turn 25. This dialogue is a good example of pushed output. It is also communicative, in other words, the learner wants to convey novel information to her conversation partner (in this instance, the teacher). This is important because if Jessica, the teacher, had already known what the student was trying to say, this dialogue may not have taken place. We should also acknowledge that for the student, the idea that she was trying to communicate was quite complicated, not related to 'here and now' but requiring communication about someone and about language use in another place. (Anything that the student says in French is in bold.)

**Example 4.3**

|   |   |   | Translation | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | S | question | | |
| 2 | T | Oui | yes | |
| 3 | S | Like I can't speak it in French | | Student doesn't know how to ask in French but the teacher encourages her to try |
| 4 | T | Oui, oui, oui, essaie, essaie, essaie X, essaie | Yes, yes, yes, try, try, try X, try | |
| 5 | S | **Mon**, **comment dit-on** uncle | My, how do you say uncle? | |
| 6 | T | Mon oncle | My uncle | |
| 7 | S | **Mon oncle j'habite en en en Geneva** | My uncle I live at at at Geneva | Student says 'I live' instead of 'he lives' but the teacher understands what she means |
| 8 | T | Ah ha à Genève . . . oui ensuite | Ah in Geneva . . . yes and . . . | |
| 9 | S | okay | | |

| 10 | T | Oui, oui, oui, continue | Yes, yes, yes, go on | |
|----|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | S | Um ah (pause) **il** | Um ah . . . he | |
| 12 | T | Il | he | |
| 13 | S | **Il parlait un peu français** | He was speaking French a bit | Student uses past tense instead of present 'he speaks' |
| 14 | T | oui | yes | |
| 15 | S | **il** | he | |
| 16 | T | oui | yes | |
| 17 | S | **Parler ça** . . . I don't know | To speak that . . . I don't know | |
| 18 | T | Oui, oui, oui, essaie, super, ton oncle habite à Genève | Yes, yes, yes, try, good, your uncle lives in Geneva | |
| 19 | S | **oui** | yes | |
| 20 | T | Oui il parle un peu français | Yes, he speaks French a bit | |
| 21 | S | **Ouais,** yeah | Yeah, yeah | |
| 22 | T | Ouais. Il dit ouais, oui, tu as entendu ça, did you hear him say that? | Yeah. He says yeah, yes, you heard that, [. . .] | |
| 23 | S | **Oh non, non, non, um, il parler, il écouter le français** | Oh no, no, no, um, he speak, he listen to French. | |
| 24 | T | Ahhh. Oui, il dit que les Français disent oui et ouais | Ahhh. Yes, he says that the French say yes and yeah like | |
| 25 | S | comme ça. Oui? | that. Yes? | |
| 26 | T | **Oui** | Yes | |
| | | Ah, c'est bien. Donc ton oncle habite à Genève, il parle un peu français, oui? Et il t'a dit, he told you, il a dit que les Français disent oui et ouais. Oui, ah, c'est bien, super. | Ah that's good. So your uncle lives in Geneva, he speaks a bit of French, yes? And he told you that the French say yes and yeah. Yes, ah, that's good. Very good. | |

In an earlier section of this chapter, we looked at another dialogue (Example 4.1) between a teacher and learner and we considered the mental processes and general learning skills that the learner appeared to use as he spoke and expressed himself in Japanese. Note that we could only make hypotheses about these, based on what we observed, because, of course, we were unable to be sure what the learner was actually

thinking or how they were processing language. However, because we were focused on how language learning and knowledge appeared to be processed in the brain, we were viewing learning from a cognitive perspective. We referred to Swain's Output Hypothesis and looked at how opportunities for output might lead to language learning.

We could, on the other hand, view dialogues like Examples 4.1 and 4.3 from another perspective: from a sociocultural rather than a cognitive viewpoint. Interestingly, Swain (2000) herself later reinterpreted her understanding of the role of output in second language learning in terms of sociocultural theory. Sociocultural theory views learning as a social process and claims that language is acquired through interaction. It argues that learning is facilitated when an expert, or a more proficient user of the language, helps a learner use language that is more advanced than they may be able to use on their own. Swain therefore, argued for a switch from using the term 'output' to 'collaborative dialogue'.

> ### Sociocultural Theory
>
> Sociocultural theory sees learning occurring *in* rather than *as a result of* interaction. Interaction can provide learners with opportunities to collaboratively produce new linguistic forms. Initially they will typically need scaffolding or help to produce these forms, but gradually they will learn to produce them independently. When this happens, it is said that learning has taken place. (Lantolf & Beckett, 2009)

We can therefore look at the dialogue in Example 4.3 through a sociocultural lens. In doing so we are interested in instances where Jessica, the expert, scaffolds and works collaboratively with the student to help her use language that is more complex than she is able to use independently. A good example of where Jessica worked with the student to co-construct what it was she wanted to say is in Turns 5 to 8, and later in Turn 18.

5 S     **Mon, comment dit-on** uncle?

6 T     Mon oncle

7 S     **Mon oncle j'habite en en en Geneva**

8 T     Ah ha à Genève … oui ensuite

> Jessica and the student collaborate together so that the latter can say that her uncle lives in Geneva (5–8).
> In 8 Jessica reframes the incorrect 'en Geneva' so that it is correct – and encourages the student to continue.

18 T    Oui, oui, oui, essaie, super, ton oncle habite à Genève

> Here Jessica reconstructs the whole phrase for the learner, modelling correctly what it was she was trying to say yet maintaining the conversation.
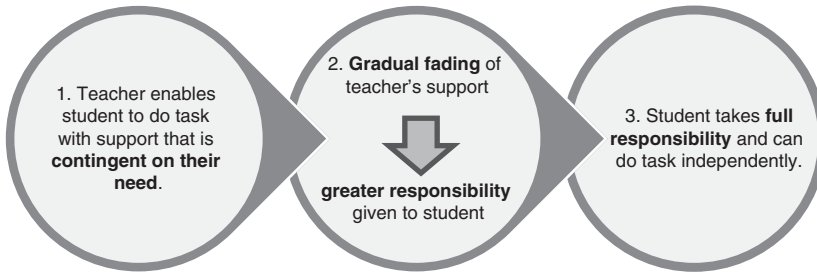
**Figure 4.2** Scaffolding (A summary construct of Scaffolding based on van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2010)

Sociocultural theorists argue that, when learners receive scaffolded help to produce language, as in this example, they will become able to use this language with less assistance, and ultimately, be able to use it independently (see Figure 4.2). However, whether one views second language learning from a sociocultural perspective, or from a cognitive perspective, one believes that this type of interaction is facilitative of language learning. Common to both theoretical traditions is the idea that learning is facilitated as a learner interacts with a more proficient speaker (this can be the teacher or another learner) and receives support.

In returning to a cognitive lens to look again at Example 4.3, we can see how, as the teacher interacts with the student, she negotiates meaning in this dialogue (Long, 1996) to try and establish, when she is not sure, what it is that the student wants to say. We will look at two ways that she does this in the examples below.
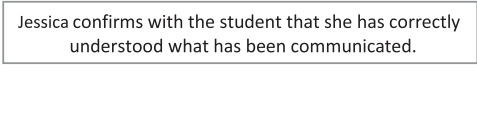
> Jessica requests clarification of what the student has said.

22 T   Ouais. Il dit ouais, oui, tu as entendu ça, did you hear him say that?

23 S   **Oh non, non, non, um il il parler, il ecouter le français**

> The student rejects Jessica's interpretation and explains further in French.

In the next exchange, we have the second example of negotiation of meaning.

> Jessica confirms with the student that she has correctly understood what has been communicated.

24 T    'il dit que les Français disent oui et ouais comme ça? Oui?'

Negotiating meaning in this way is an important way of ensuring that the message is successfully communicated. The checks and clarifications that ensue provide the crucial opportunity to hear language repeated, broken up, slowed down, and key words emphasised. This helps the learner to notice different features of language (the Output Hypothesis claims that this is one way that output can promote language learning).

An important aspect to note with this example is that both Jessica and her student were prepared to struggle to get meaning across instead of dropping the topic, which can often happen with language and topics that cause communicative difficulties. For both conversation participants, this was quite brave and the fact that they remained focused on communicating the information that the student wanted to share demonstrated determination and patience. At the end of the lesson Jessica mentioned to the researcher how good she thought it was that this learner had persevered to express her message in French.

We can note two more important points that contribute to the success of this exchange. Both interlocutors, the teacher and the student, are required to pay close attention to what is said, to relate their utterances to the other's utterances and to the topic (Nakahama, Tyler, & Van Lier, 2001). For example, in Turn 23, as we have seen, the student realises that the teacher has misinterpreted her meaning and quickly responds, 'non, non, non', etc. This response demonstrates how invested she is in making sure that her message is communicated accurately.

The other thing to point out, which is crucial here, is just how sensitive the teacher is to the student, making sure that she has the confidence to continue the conversation. She first encourages her to 'try' ('essaie, essaie, essaie') and then gives her lots of reinforcement. For example, she says 'oui' (yes), sixteen times to encourage the learner or to indicate that she understands. She also uses expressions such as 'super, c'est bien' ('great', 'that's good'). It is easy, as we have noted, to imagine that the student might have given up without this persistent encouragement. This feedback on performance on the part of the teacher is an aspect of 'environmental support' which Shernoff et al. (2017) recognise as contributing to learner engagement and success.

## Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter we have discussed the potential that opportunities to produce language output can contribute to language learning.

## Key Points

- Producing output can encourage learners to think like writers and pay attention to aspects of the language they might not have noticed.
- In producing output, learners become aware of gaps in their knowledge and take opportunities to try out hypotheses about the language.
- Learners need opportunities to engage in 'pushed output', that is, to use language that is just slightly beyond their level of ability.
- Potential for learning is greater when learners are communicating a message, rather than just completing language drills with an emphasis on accuracy rather than on meaning.
- Speaking in another language is challenging for adolescents and teachers need to know how to support these learners and create the right type of environment in which they feel safe to take risks.
- Learners need opportunities to produce written, as well as spoken output, as each contributes unique benefits for language learning.
- In looking at language output from a sociocultural viewpoint we understand the importance of collaborative dialogue and see how students may be scaffolded to communicate successfully.

## Reflection and Discussion

1 Can you think of examples when as a language learner, yourself, the need to communicate made you aware of 'gaps' you had? What happened? Were these opportunities for learning? In what way?

2 What sort(s) of 'pushed output' opportunities have you observed in classes you have taken, and/or created in classes you have taught? In what ways might these have led to language learning?

3 A number of examples are given in this chapter of ways in which teachers set up opportunities for learners to push their output. Would these examples 'work' in contexts you are familiar with? Discuss/reflect on these.

4 A theme in this chapter and elsewhere in the book is that it is motivating and more effective for learning if students can function as language 'users' and not just language 'learners'. Do you agree? Give some examples of activities/tasks that might have learners functioning as 'users' of the language. What are the challenges of setting these up?

5 Do students you know experience anxiety using the language they are learning orally in class? What might be the evidence of this? How can they be supported?

6 What challenges have you been aware of in your class, or a class you are familiar with, in getting students to write in the target language? How could these students be scaffolded in their writing?

7 This chapter argues that interaction facilitates language learning. Discuss how. How might opportunities for the type of interaction described in this chapter as beneficial for language learning be set up in your context?

## Further Reading

Gass, S. M., & Mackey, A. (2006). Input, interaction and output: An overview. *AILA Review*, 19, 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.19.03gas

In this paper, the authors explain how output is connected to input and interaction and how through these processes, language learners have opportunities to notice differences between their own formulations of the target language and the language of their conversational partners. It discusses how learners can be pushed to modify their output during conversation.

## For Reflection and Discussion

(a) Discuss what your understanding of the term 'output' is, whether written or oral. Do you differentiate between things learners say, and things learners say when they have been pushed by their conversational partners? Are both valuable for learning? If so, how do you think they are different in the ways they are helpful?

(b) In this chapter there are examples of different ways in which learners might be provided with feedback about their language use. What type(s) of feedback do you think that you give as a teacher? What are the advantages/possible disadvantages of this/these type(s) of feedback?
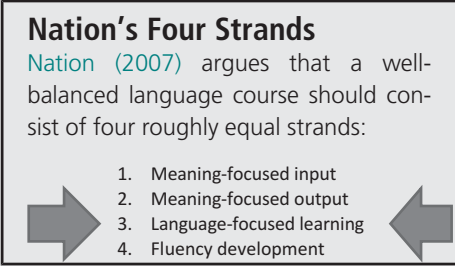
# Encouraging a Focus on Language Form

## Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on how we might help students notice and pay attention to important aspects and patterns of the language that they are learning. The emphasis is on language-focused learning, the third of Nation's four equal strands of focus or emphasis in the classroom (Nation, 2007).

**Nation's Four Strands**

Nation (2007) argues that a well-balanced language course should consist of four roughly equal strands:

1. Meaning-focused input
2. Meaning-focused output
3. Language-focused learning
4. Fluency development

We will first start by looking at the reasons why a focus on language is important and then consider the aspects of language that should be included in this focus. Finally, we will discuss some of the ways this might happen.

## Why Have a Focus on Language in the Language Classroom?

The idea that it is useful, or even important, to have a focus on language in the language classroom has not been without controversy. Some researchers, such as Krashen (1981), have claimed that this is a waste of time, maintaining that learners will learn purely from exposure to language input in much the same way that children learn their first language. They, of course, do not receive 'lessons' from their parents, or caregivers, about the patterns or structures of the language they are acquiring.

In some ways Krashen is right, learners, in particular younger learners, can and do learn language implicitly in this way. However, as we have already seen in Chapter 4, Krashen's idea that just giving learners lots of input would be enough was put to the test, so to speak, by research conducted in Canada. This research looked at the language learning of English-speaking children who had been enrolled in immersion programmes where their school classes were conducted in French. Swain and other researchers (Harley & Swain, 1978; Allen et al., 1990; Lightbown & Halter, 1989) found that while students who had been learning French in this context benefited in terms of vocabulary

development, listening, reading, and speaking skills, they failed to acquire important aspects of the grammar of the language and made serious errors when speaking or writing in French, even though they had been exposed to large amounts of input. In a follow-up study of these students in Grade 8 of secondary school (Lightbown et al., 2002), written work reflected difficulties with spelling, function words (e.g. articles, prepositions, and pronouns), and morphology (e.g. putting a verb into the correct tense).

To explain why students in these classes had such gaps in their language knowledge, it was important to examine how the instruction they had received might differ from that of traditional classrooms. One big difference, which we discussed in Chapter 4, was that they had had limited opportunities to produce

> Form can be pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, features of text, or genres, etc.

language output. Another key characteristic was the lack of opportunities to focus on grammar or on other features of the language. That meant very little attention to language form. It appeared, then, that the reason they had not acquired many of the important features of the language they were learning was because they had not noticed them. This was despite being exposed to extensive amounts of input (listening and reading) over 6 years of primary and secondary schooling. The absence of opportunities for a focus on language, and for output, had meant a lack of opportunities to pay attention to language and to notice features of the language and how it is structured.

The importance of attention in language learning is underscored in the Noticing Hypothesis (we referred to this in Chapter 3). By 'noticing', Schmidt means the conscious registration of features and patterns in the

> **The Noticing Hypothesis**
> Learners must notice a language form before it can be learned. (Schmidt, 1995; 2001)

> **The Interface Hypothesis**
> Teaching *about* language can help students notice features of the language and the gap between how they use language and how it should be used. This helps learners acquire language.
> (R. Ellis, 2008)

language. For example, learners of English may notice that a noun often ends in 's' and go on to hypothesise that 's' has the meaning of 'more than one'. In his initial version of the Noticing Hypothesis, Schmidt claimed that learners do not learn anything they do

not consciously attend to. In other words, no noticing, no learning! However, as we have already seen, learners can pick up features of language that they have no conscious awareness of. Schmidt later modified his theory to suggest that learning will be more effective when learners pay attention to what they are learning, in other words, the more noticing, the more the learning that will result!

To some extent, researchers are still divided over the question of whether and to what extent a focus on language form is important. Some would query, for example, whether teaching learners grammar rules helps them use language in spontaneous production. There is, however, increasing evidence that learning about language may indeed help learners develop the implicit knowledge that they need to be able to use the language fluently (N. Ellis, 2005). 'The Interface Hypothesis' argues that there is a role for teaching *about* language and for drawing attention to language features and patterns. The claim is that doing so will speed up the learning process and make it more efficient. In fact, paying attention during (any) learning has been described as the 'universal solvent of the mind' (Baars, 1997, p. 304).

## Why Is a Focus on Language Form Particularly Effective for Adolescent Learners?

> **Metalinguistic Awareness**
> 'Understanding of how the various components of language work'.
> (Loewen & Reinders, 2011, p. 114)

There is evidence to suggest that providing opportunities for adolescent learners to explicitly focus on language form is even more important than it is for the younger learner. This is because around the age of puberty, as we discussed in Chapter 1, learners are capable of learning explicitly (Muñoz, 2006). In fact, some researchers have suggested that, because their language learning abilities are different from those of younger children (DeKeyser, 2000), adolescents need a type of instruction that allows them to use their developing analytic skills. Younger children learn both incidentally (as they happen to notice language they use) and implicitly (without paying purposeful attention). Older learners are more skilled at thinking abstractly. Their growing metalinguistic awareness means that they are more able to reflect on and talk about language (Berman, 2007), and also make comparisons and connections

between their first language(s) and the one they are learning. All of these changes explain why drawing attention to features of language may, for the adolescent, be a particularly efficient way of learning.

We saw earlier, in this chapter, that students learning in schools where they are immersed in the language they are learning and receiving lots of input were still considered to need opportunities to focus on language form. This is even more the case for learners in foreign language classrooms where the input is 'impoverished'. In Chapter 3 we discussed how, in the typical foreign language classroom, learners do not receive anything like the amount of language input that they need to be able to build up sequences and constructions of language in their memories. There is evidence to suggest that drawing learners' attention specifically and explicitly to language form can help to make up for this deficit and speed up the language learning process (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). It can also help students who may not have noticed aspects of language, perhaps because they lack strengths in analytic ability (see Chapter 2).

## What Do We Mean by Form?

Paying attention to the form of language means that we focus on the linguistic features of the language (Doughty & Williams, 1998). For some, this might suggest grammar. Grammar, however, is one aspect of language form but not the only one. As well as grammar, there is vocabulary, pronunciation, and the appropriate use of language according to context (i.e. pragmatics). In fact, it is difficult to give a comprehensive list of what might be meant by language form as it covers any attention to language and the way that it is used.

In Example 5.1, taken from the Year 10 Spanish classroom, Nicole has students listen to a dialogue. She asks the students to listen for the way that the woman in the dialogue asks for the price of something. In doing this she draws the students' attention to the language the person uses, asking 'so what does she say?' Nicole contrasts what the woman says with the more common phrase that students are already familiar with. This focus and explanation about the way that language is used differently, in a different context, is an example, albeit brief, of focus on form (we put in bold anything that is said in the target language).

**Example 5.1**

| | | Translation | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| T | So what does she say? Did you catch it? | | Students have just listened to a dialogue of a woman shopping at a market in South America |
| S | She said **'A cómo tiene?'** | She said 'how much is it going for?' | |
| T | **A cómo tiene?** | How much is it going for? | |
| S | Yeah | | |
| T | **A cómo tiene?** Which is quite a local way to say it. **A cómo tiene? Tiene el** blah blah blah. **A cómo tiene?** What – uhm what – how much is that going for? . . . Yeah, so it's quite a different way. This is a bit more common: **Cuánto cuesta?** | How much is it going for? [. . .] How much is it going for? It is going for blah blah blah. How much is it going for? [. . .] How much does it cost? | Nicole highlights 'A cómo tiene?' as a more colloquial, or as she says, 'a local way' of saying the more common 'cuánto cuesta?' (how much does it cost?) that students are already familiar with. |

In Example 5.2, from the Year 9 French classroom, Jessica has her students focus on how to use 'fillers' in the way that French speakers would use them. A 'filler' is a sound or word that is used in conversation to give the speaker time to think about what they want to say next and to signal to others that they haven't finished speaking yet. Examples in English are 'um, er, you know, like'.

**Example 5.2**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | **donnez-moi des expressions pour** showing that you're thinking en français. Okay, **vite, levez la main** . . . . | Give me some expressions for showing that you're thinking in French. Okay, quick, put your hand up . . . |
| Rosie | Uh, wait. | |

| T | Okay this is a perfect example because . . . Rosie's just been thinking and she went 'uh, wait, what are we saying again?' Okay. So **en français. Oui.** | [. . .] Okay. So in French. Yes. |
|---|---|---|
| S | **Donc.** | So. |
| T | **Donc. Oui.** | So. Yes. |
| S | **Euuh.** | Er. |
| T | **Euuh** . . . **Alors.** | Er . . . then. |
| Students | **Alors.** | Then. |
| T | If you want to say wait – **Attends.** | If you want to say wait – 'Attends'. |
| Students | **Attends** | Wait. |

In Example 5.3, we have an example of how a teacher briefly focuses her students' attention on an aspect of grammar during a lesson. In this example, Margaret gives her Year 11 students, in their third year of learning French, an explanation of how to say what someone's name was, referring to past instead of present time:

**Example 5.3**

T    **Il s'appelait, s'appelait**. So if you're writing about someone in the past and you wanted to say what he *was* called, you wouldn't say **il s'appelle**, that's 'he *is* called' . . . **Il s'appelait**, ok? **Il s'appelait**. He *was* called.

## Focusing on Form in the Language Classroom

There seems little doubt that a focus on form in the language classroom is important. However, ideas about how to do this have changed somewhat as research has led to greater understanding about how languages are learnt. More traditional approaches to teaching grammar tended to have the idea of implanting specific grammatical features in the learner. In these classrooms, the teacher

> **Focus on FormS**
> The primary goal of the lesson is to teach specific aspects of language form, often by presenting language rules.
> (Long, 1991)

would usually choose a particular language feature and plan a lesson around it. Often, the lessons would start with the explanation of some grammar point followed by the requirement to practise the grammar in quite controlled exercises. This has been called an 'isolated' approach to focus on form (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), because the primary aim of

the lesson is to teach students about a particular language feature and this feature occurs in activities that are separate from the communicative use of language. This isolated approach to focus on form is similar to what is often called, in the research literature, a Focus on FormS (the use of the capitalised 'S' helps differentiate this approach from Focus on Form).

Increasingly in classrooms today, however, there is a greater emphasis on creating opportunities for students to use language to communicate, that is, to convey meaning or information. Often lessons are planned not so much around the teaching of language structures, but around how these opportunities to use language will be provided. This does not mean that a focus on form is less important, it means, rather, that the attention to form will arise out of these attempts to understand and use language. In interacting and using language,

> **Focus on Form**
> Attention is given to language form while students are engaged in meaning-oriented activities/tasks.
> (Long, 1991) (see Example 5.4)

learners can attend to and learn about language form. Arguably it is at these times, when students may notice the gap between what they hear or want to say and their knowledge of what it means or how to say it, that learning can be most effective. Spada and Lightbown (2008) say that this type of focus on form is integrated. In the literature, this type of approach is often called a Focus on Form.

Below is an example of integrated focus on form from the Year 10 Spanish classroom. Nicole explains to the students that they are each going to get a shopping list. They will also get four playing cards, each of which depicts a different item. The aim is for them to acquire the items on their list from others in the group they are seated with, by asking them whether they have the cards for the listed items. The teacher explains that this activity will give them practice using the Spanish language they would need to go shopping. She starts by reminding the students of the type, or register, of language that they will need to use in this particular context.

**Example 5.4**

T  We're going to use a really polite language, because we're in the shops, and when you're going to the shops you use polite language to the shopkeeper.

Nicole then reminds the students of some of the phrases that they might find useful in performing this activity. These include: 'Tiene usted . . .?' (Do you have . . .?), 'Necesito' (I need) and 'Déme' (Give me).

She then gives some information about 'déme':

This is actually the high-level 'you' form. This is 'give me', we're using the formal 'you'; it is polite in Spanish.

In this example she is reminding students that there are two verb forms when using a command in the singular in Spanish and that in a context where you are shopping (as opposed to amongst friends) you need to use the polite, more formal form. After this reminder, the students play the game that she has set up for them and Nicole goes around the class answering questions, giving help and rewarding students who are speaking Spanish with frijoles (beans) that they can later redeem for prizes.

Why might this sort of attention to language form be particularly useful in helping students acquire language form? Researchers would say that it allows learners to make 'form-meaning mappings'. When students have the opportunity to pay attention to language form in a context where they are actually using the language to communicate something, then they can make a connection between *what* they want to say and *how* to say it.
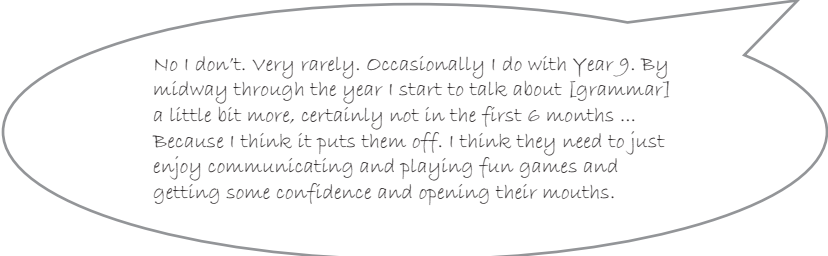
> **Form-Meaning Mapping**
> A connection between a language form and the meaning it encodes (VanPatten et al., 2004). For example, understanding that in English, a verb ending in -ed refers to something that happened in the past.

In this section we have presented two main approaches to focusing on language form: Focus on FormS, where the attention is on 'isolated' or discrete aspects of language; and Focus on Form, where the attention is on aspects of language in the context of meaningful communication. In actual fact, as Spada and Lightbown (2008) point out, these two approaches are not completely distinct but rather at opposite ends of a continuum. There can be a place for both types of attention to form in the classroom (Ellis, 2012), as we will see from examples that we will examine in greater detail below. Teachers may decide to allocate time out of the lesson to explain and focus attention on specific language forms that students might not otherwise notice, followed by opportunities (not necessarily in the same lesson) to use these forms in meaningful

communication. There may also be times when either one of these two approaches might be more effective than the other.

One argument, however, against an isolated focus on form (i.e. Focus on FormS) is that it can be demotivating for some students, especially for those who are younger and at the beginning stages of learning. This was highlighted in an interview reported in Erlam and Ellis (2018). A teacher was asked whether she provided isolated explicit instruction about new grammatical structures for her Year 9 students. She commented:

> No I don't. Very rarely. Occasionally I do with Year 9. By midway through the year I start to talk about [grammar] a little bit more, certainly not in the first 6 months ... Because I think it puts them off. I think they need to just enjoy communicating and playing fun games and getting some confidence and opening their mouths.

The students this teacher was talking about were beginner language learners. There would be a greater need for them to understand language structure as they progressed further with the language.

Having established the importance of having a focus on form in the language classroom, in the next part of this chapter we will look at some of the many different ways in which a teacher may do this.

## The Power of Corrective Feedback

In recent years there has been a lot of interest in the research literature on corrective feedback and on the potential for learners to benefit in their learning from this type of focus on form (e.g. Li, 2020; Mackey & Goo, 2007; Russell & Spada, 2006). Example 5.5 is from Jessica's classroom.

> **Corrective Feedback**
>
> Corrective feedback is given in response to learners' errors. It provides them with information about what is not possible in the target language. It often, but not always, involves providing the correct language form.
> (Lyster & Saito, 2010)

**Example 5.5**

|          |                                       | Translation              | Explanation                                       |
|----------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Chanelle | **Parce qu'elle c'est bizarre.**      | Because she it's weird.  | Chanelle uses two subject pronouns in this utterance. |
| T        | **Elle est bizarre.**                 | She's weird.             | Teacher corrects the error.                       |
| Chanelle | **Elle est bizarre.**                 | She's weird.             | Chanelle repeats the correction.                  |

In the above example Chanelle is taking part in a conversation where she has the chance to give her opinion about the singer Lorde. When she makes a mistake, the teacher notices it, corrects it, and Chanelle repeats the correction. The reason that this type of focus on form is considered to be so powerful is that the corrective feedback gives Chanelle the opportunity to notice the gap between what she says and what should be said, and so learn how the language works (see Chapter 4). Researchers claim (e.g. Loewen, 2005) that learning is likely to happen in this type of integrated focus on form where the learner is using language to communicate.

Corrective feedback need not be restricted to something that the teacher does. In Example 5.6, also from Jessica's classroom, we have an instance of a student correcting another student. There has been some concern in the past (e.g. McDonough, 2004) that students may provide incorrect feedback for each other and that this could lead to them learning inaccurate or incorrect language forms. The feedback that the student in Example 5.6 gives is correct and, in actual fact, this might not be as unusual as some have predicted. Erlam and Pimentel-Hellier (2017) examined all the feedback and language help that students gave each other during three lessons in Jessica's classroom and found that out of a total of forty-six instances, in only seven (fifteen per cent) did students receive feedback that was not correct. Another interesting thing to point out about Example 5.6 is that the aspect of language form that is focused on is pronunciation.

**Example 5.6**

|    |                          | Translation | Explanation                                          |
|----|--------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| S1 | **Pas de probl/ɒm/.**    | No worries. | S1 mispronounces *problème* [problem].               |
| S2 | **Pas de probl/ɛm/.**    | No worries. | S2 corrects the error.                               |

Erlam and Pimentel-Hellier (2017) suggest that one really positive aspect of teaching languages to adolescents is that they may be more prepared to correct one another when they make errors than, say, the adult learner who is perhaps less willing to want to appear more expert than their fellow classmates (Philp, Walter, & Basturkmen, 2010). This

would appear to be the case especially in classrooms where adolescents have spent a lot of time together and know each other well.

In both Examples 5.5 and 5.6, the focus on form was what we would call 'reactive' in that it was in response to an error that had already taken place. It also involved an exchange that was directed, in each case, to one student only. In the following example Jessica decides during a lesson to briefly take time out to deal with a language feature that she had not previously intended to focus on, but that she decided during the lesson it would be advantageous to do so. This is because she has noticed a gap in the students' knowledge; that is, that they don't know the word in French to use to refer to a 'sportswoman'. She therefore decides to give them some feedback to help with this, during a task, with the attention of the whole class. (This lesson is explained in greater detail in Chapter 6.)

**Example 5.7**

|  |  | Translation | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| T | Now I just wanted, I just heard one thing and I also saw it in the marking that I did. When you talk about **un sportif préféré** are you talking about a sport or a sportsman? |  | The teachers' reason for stopping the class seems to be that she realises that students know the word for sportsperson in French when referring to a male, but not the form to use when talking about a woman. |
| Students | Sportsman. |  |  |
| T | Sportsman so **maintenant dites-moi mon sportif préféré. Comment faire ça avec la version feminine, mon sportif pour un garçon, ma** . . . | Sportsman so now tell me, my favourite sportsman. How do you put that in the feminine form 'mon sportif' for a male, 'ma . . .' |  |
| S | ma | my |  |
| T | **sport*ive* pour une fille, oui.** | 'Sport*ive*' for a female, yes |  |

In Example 5.7, the feedback that Jessica gives in response to noticing that students are making errors because they don't know how to use the word for 'sportswoman' in French, is very similar to an explanation. In the next section, we will look at explanations in more detail and at how they can be used to focus learner attention on language form.

## Giving Explanations and Rules

Explanations aim to help students understand specific aspects of language. One issue that teachers may have to think about is how much metalanguage to use when giving explanations, that is, how many technical terms to use in talking about language. Learners can be given explanations in simple, non-technical language, and in fact, there is evidence to suggest that this is how they may best remember them (Elder, Erlam, & Philp, 2007). In the example given below, Jessica gives an explanation that will help her students understand how they might extend and develop their ideas, going beyond giving just simple answers to questions they are asked. However, notice that rather than using technical language like 'conjunctions' or 'text connectors', she uses the simpler term 'developing words'. Another interesting feature to notice with this example is that, rather than just telling students what the options are, Jessica tries to elicit these from the students themselves.

**Example 5.8**

| T | . . . one thing that you will need to do in your assessment is to, um, think about how to develop [your ideas]. What are some developing words? . . . | |
| Charlotte | **Mais** | But |
| T | **Mais,** . . . what might you follow **mais** with? **Mais?** | But [ . . . ] |
| S | **Je n'aime pas** | I don't like |
| T | **Mais, je n'aime pas, exactement, oui.** What are some other developing words? . . . | But, I don't like, exactly, yes. [ . . . ] |
| S | **Aussi.** | Also. |
| T | **Aussi** is a good one, **oui, bien**. What are some other developing words? | Also is a good one, yes, good. [ . . .] |
| S | **Parce que.** | Because. |
| T | **Parce que** (pause) uh hum. So . . . you make yourself more interesting by developing what you're saying, | Because |

In this example, it was Jessica, the teacher, who initiated the explanation and language focus. However, explanations are not always teacher-initiated. In Example 5.9 it is the student who asks for an explanation and so initiates a focus on language. We would argue that the potential for the student to learn from this brief focus in Example 5.9 is high, because

they have noticed that they don't know this particular form that is essential for what they want to communicate (e.g. Swain, 2005; Gass, 1997). That is, they have noticed the gap between what they want to say and can say (see Chapter 4). This is another example of integrated focus on form because it occurs in a context where the student is focused on conveying meaning.

**Example 5.9**

| | | Translation | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| S | Is reading **'livres'**? | Is reading 'livres'? | The student is asking if the word for reading is the same as the word for books. |
| T | **Ah livres, les livres sont des** books, **oui. Mais lire, si tu veux dire** I like reading, **lire.** | Ah livres, livres are books, yes. But to read, if you want to say I like reading, 'lire' | |
| S | I know | | |
| T | read | | |
| S | I know | | |
| T | **Les livres,** so they're linked – which is funny 'cause in English they're not are they? | | Jessica helps the student to see that the word for read and book are lexically related in French (lire, livre), while they aren't in English. |

Something else to notice in Example 5.9 is that Jessica makes a comparison for her student between the English and French. Comparing language features between either a learner's first language, or another language which they know, and the language that they are learning is one way of drawing attention to and explaining how language 'works'. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, it is a way of developing learners' metalinguistic awareness.

Giving explanations can include helping students understand rules about language. We have an example below, in Figure 5.1, from a Year 11 Japanese language classroom. The teacher, Shona, wants her students to learn the rule for 'before' sentences in Japanese. However, Shona has designed the activity so that the students have to induce, or work out for

themselves, what the pattern is. She has given students the following instructions for how to do this activity:

**Before Sentences Starter Sheet**
You need to translate these sentences into English according to what you think makes the best sense. Each sentence is a 'before' sentence. Once you have translated the sentences, see if you can figure out the formula for this structure, and write a sentence of your own with its appropriate translation.

The formula is . . .

Notice that, in the exercise in Figure 5.1, the students first had to translate the 'before sentences' into English. In translating these sentences, the students would realise that in Japanese you need to mention the action that you 'did before' last. So, for example, the second sentence is translated as 'Before I go to school, I brush my teeth' but it actually reads, in the Japanese, something like: 'go to school before brush my teeth'. In Figure 5.2, we have one student's version of the rule that she wrote in her book after completing the exercise shown in Figure 5.1.

In deciding to have her students work this rule or pattern out for themselves, Shona took an inductive approach. She may have felt that it was likely that they would learn it more effectively than if she took a deductive approach and just told them what the rule/pattern was. It is generally believed that 'people learn more by doing things themselves rather than being told about them' (Scrivener, 2005, p. 3). This approach also fits with the 'levels of processing' hypothesis (Craik & Lockhart, 1972).

> **Levels of Processing Hypothesis**
> The most important factor in learning is the quality of mental activity in the mind of the learner at the moment that learning takes place.
> (Craik & Lockhart, 1972)

1. シャワーを　あびる　まえに　おきます。

2. 学校に　いく　まえに　はを　みがきます。

3. ばんごはんを　たべる　まえに　スポーツを　します。

4. テレビを　みる　まえに　しゅくだいを　します。

**Figure 5.1** Worksheet from Year 11 Japanese classroom

Before:

With a verb — verbs must be in the plain form.
(verb – in plain form) まえ に... Before(doing verb)...
e.g. ばんごはん を たべる まえ に しゅくだい を します。
I do my homework before eating dinner.

**Figure 5.2** Student's written version of the rule for 'before' sentences

Having to think about and analyse language is likely to lead to deeper processing than just being told about it. It is for this reason that Annabel says she takes an inductive approach to teaching grammar. Annabel is a teacher of Year 11 Chinese students in a co-educational private school.

> I would get them to look at sentences and notice stuff first and then maybe come up with their own formula for a sentence. I won't just say, 'this is how you do [it] and away you go'. But I get them to think about it themselves, if they come up with it themselves they can better remember it and deeply understand it.

One possible disadvantage of an inductive approach, however, is that students may not induce or 'get' the rule at all, or they may induce it incorrectly. A solution is for teachers to give the rule or pattern at the end of the lesson where students have had time to try and establish it for themselves. In fact, Shona's students were told that when they had completed the 'Before Sentences Starter sheet', they had to explain to Shona 'how before sentences are formed'. It is easy to imagine that, if a student had induced the incorrect rule/pattern, Shona would help them establish what the correct one was.

There may be a place for both deductive and inductive approaches to focus on form in the language classroom (Ellis, 2006). In fact, these approaches are not completely distinct but exist at opposite ends of a continuum. Simple rules that are not too difficult for students to work out may be best taught inductively (as in the example seen in Shona's classroom in which students were able to correctly establish the rule for

'Before sentences' in Japanese). Complex rules and those features that are non-salient (not obvious) may be best taught deductively. That way the teacher can explicitly draw learners' attention to connections between form and meaning. Individual learner differences may also need to be taken into consideration when making decisions about how to approach teaching features of language. Learners who are more skilled in grammatical analysis (for example, students who may already be familiar with a language other than their first language) may benefit more from an inductive approach than those who are less skilled or who have specific learning differences (see Chapter 2).

The type of language exercise that students worked at as they completed the 'Before Sentences Starter Sheet' (see Figure 5.1) looks like an example of an isolated type of focus on form (i.e. Focus on FormS). This is because it would seem that students worked at this exercise in a context where they were not using the language communicatively (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). However, this is not entirely the case. Shona's students were busy solving a murder mystery and, in order to be able to understand and establish a timeline of events leading to the murder, they had to learn about 'Before sentences'. In other words, they had a real reason to need to know this language. We will look, below, at some other ways that Shona and other teachers have created exercises that helped students understand and learn about different aspects of the language and that were also motivating.

## A Focus on Learning Vocabulary

The language-focused learning strand of a language curriculum must allocate time for deliberate attention to learning vocabulary (Nation, 2011), as well as to other language features. In classes that we observed, we saw teachers making time for this. In one beginner Japanese classroom, we saw the teacher starting the lesson with revision and the learning of katakana symbols, holding up cards and asking the Year 10 students to name the symbols. At the end of this same lesson, she again made time for students to test each other in pairs, using coloured cards. On the back of each card there was a mnemonic or an explanation of each katakana symbol aimed to help learners remember it. For example, to help them remember the katakana symbol for 'ku', the students were given the mnemonic 'ku' for 'kuchi' (or mouth) with a picture on the reverse of a card to help them think of a mouth from a side profile talking (see Figure 5.3). Interestingly, when we asked students what they enjoyed about this lesson, a number said that the katakana practice was a
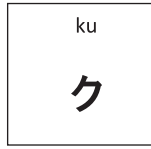
**Figure 5.3** A card with the katakana symbol for 'ku'

Grab a set of flashcards from the Police Chief.

Create a table in your book with four columns and twenty-one rows under the heading 'Daily Routine Verbs'. Label the top of each column with the following:

English, ます form, verb type (ichidan, godan, irregular) and plain form.

Complete the table using the flashcards. Beware the ninja verbs that look like godan verbs but are actually ichidan ones – they are clearly marked.

**Figure 5.4** Japanese classifying exercise[1]

highlight of the lesson for them. We wondered if, in particular, they enjoyed the competitive nature of it, seeing who could name the most symbols correctly.

In Shona's classroom, we saw students extending their knowledge of vocabulary. They had learnt, using word cards, a series of common daily routine verbs such as to talk, wash, shower, and so on (see Figure 5.5). In order to be able to use these verbs correctly they had to learn what type of verbs they were, so that they would know how to conjugate them, that is, how to use them with different pronouns and tenses. Shona gave them a classifying exercise (see Figure 5.4 for the instructions the students received) so that they could identify the categories they belonged to, which had implications for how they would be used. This exercise was part of the highly motivating Murder Mystery unit that Shona's students worked at and which we have already referred to. Note that Shona, during this unit, no longer referred to herself as the teacher, she had become the Police Chief.

Figure 5.5 shows an extract from a student's exercise book as this student worked at the exercise in Figure 5.4. When the students had completed the exercise, they worked at another exercise aimed to practise, consolidate, and test their learning (see Figure 5.6).

---

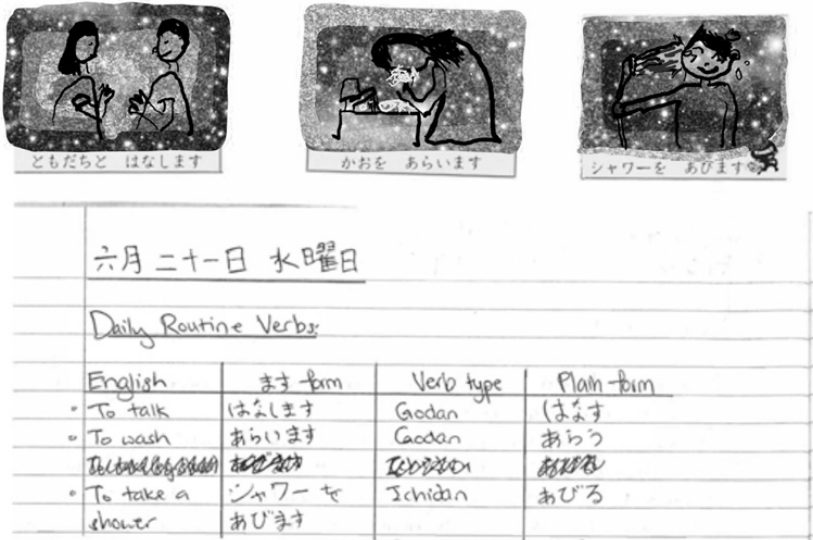[1] Ichidan and godan verbs are two different verb classifications in Japanese.

**Figure 5.5** Word cards and excerpt of a student's work from classification exercise (Figure 5.4)

Work with your partner to test how well you can turn the verbs on the flashcards into the plain form.

When both of you think you know them, get the Police Chief to test you.

Each detective will have to conjugate ten verbs at random and get at least eight correct to be able to move on.
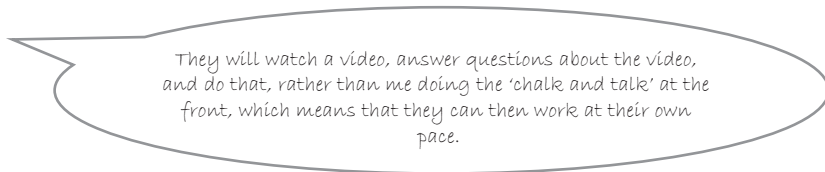
**Figure 5.6** Testing verb conjugations

Another way to have a focus on language form in the classroom is to have learners complete grammar exercises. There is a risk that grammar exercises could be tedious and demotivating for the adolescent language learner, but we found examples that appeared to be very engaging for these students!

## Exercises to Encourage Students to Understand and Learn Language Form

These examples, and the ones that we will consider below, came from Shona's Japanese classroom where, as we have seen, students were

working at a series of lessons in a 'Murder Mystery' unit. The ultimate aim of the unit was for the students (referred to as 'detectives') to identify who in the school had murdered the deputy principal. Along the way, students had to establish a number of facts, including the identity of the victim, the timeline of events, the motive, and so on. In order to be successful in establishing all the information they needed to be able to solve the Murder Mystery, students had to be introduced to a number of language structures. The grammar practice exercises that students worked at, and which we will look at below, were preceded by explicit grammar explanations to help students understand the specific grammatical features in question. This is important to point out because there is evidence that explicit instruction plus practice leads to learning, but less evidence for the effectiveness of practice alone. For Shona's students, some of the grammar explanations were provided for them on a video which they accessed via their class learning platform. Shona explained:

> They will watch a video, answer questions about the video, and do that, rather than me doing the 'chalk and talk' at the front, which means that they can then work at their own pace.

In Figure 5.1, we saw how Shona's students had to formulate a rule to help them learn about 'Before Sentences' in Japanese. Later, Shona's students completed a 'sentence construction' exercise (Simard & Jean, 2011), to give them lots of practice with these 'Before' sentences. Notice from Figure 5.7, however, that this exercise was in the form of a game.

In order to play this game, students were given a game board and a pile of 'verb' cards (as in Figure 5.5) depicting different actions. It is interesting to notice that, in this game, students would not only be working at formulating sentences. They would also be keen to ensure that their teammates were correct, so they would also be involved in listening to input and in checking that it was correct. If it wasn't correct, the student in question couldn't roll the dice and move forward.

At a later stage of the Murder Mystery unit described above, Shona's students needed to know language used for descriptions, in particular language used to describe clothing, to help them establish the identity of the murder suspects. They were given information about how to talk about what one 'wears', which is complicated in Japanese because different verbs are used, according to where the clothing is worn. The students

---

**Before Sentences** すごろく

すごろく is a Japanese version of Snakes and Ladders.

- This game can be played either as teams or individuals – your choice.
- Shuffle all the verb cards and put the pile face down.
- Roll dice or do 'paper, scissors, rock' to see who starts.
- On your turn, roll a dice and move forward that number of squares.
- Turn over the top two cards on the deck and use them to make a 'before sentence'. Say the sentence in both English and Japanese (if you don't feel confident about doing this then work together as a team).
- If you form the sentence correctly, you get to roll the dice and move on your next go. If you form the sentence incorrectly, then on your next go, turn over two more cards and have another try.
- The winner is the person or team who gets to the finish first.
  Special Squares
- Some squares have instructions already on them. If you land on one of these squares you do the instruction rather than answer a question.

---

**Figure 5.7** The 'Before sentences' game

were given a 'sentence completion' exercise requiring them to provide the missing 'wear' verb in each sentence (Figure 5.8).

In another 'structured output/guided sentence' exercise (see Figure 5.9), Shona gave her students further practice with descriptions, this time encouraging them to write a complete description in Japanese.

It is important to note that these exercises, on their own, might not have been very motivating for students and thus not very effective in terms of promoting learning of the different language forms they targeted. However, in designing a murder mystery unit, Shona ensured that students needed to learn these forms so as to be able to establish who had murdered their deputy principal. We therefore observed Shona's students working conscientiously and enthusiastically at these exercises that otherwise might have been considered dull and boring. This underscores a key point that we want to make in this chapter, which is that learning about language form will be much more effective in a context where students are using this language communicatively (i.e. using it as a *tool* to find something out or to convey a message).

## What Language to Focus on in the Language Classroom

Teachers may have choices not only in how to focus on language, but also on what aspects of language to focus on. On the other hand, some

To Wear

In Japanese, the verb 'to wear' must specify where the item is worn – on the head, above the waist, or below the waist. There is also another verb to use if the item is a pair of glasses and another for items such as belts and ties. Supply the correct 'wear' verb in the following sentences.

| 1. | ぼ う し　を | … … … … … … ． | い ま す 。 |
|----|------------|----------------|------------|
| 2. | う わ ぎ　を | … … … … … … ． | い ま す 。 |
| 3. | サ ン グ ラ ス　を | … … … … … … ． | い ま す 。 |
| 4. | ス カ ー フ　を | … … … … … … ． | い ま す 。 |
| 5. | ス ニ ー カ ー　を | … … … … … … ． | い ま す 。 |
| 6. | ベ ル ト　を | … … … … … … ． | い ま す 。 |
| OR | ベ ル ト　を | し て | い ま す 。 |

**Figure 5.8** Sentence completion exercise

Here is a bullet point description of Kate. Write up a description of her in Japanese using full sentences.

- Tall
- Short, brown hair
- Blue eyes
- Wearing a white shirt, purple skirt, black shoes, green hat, glasses

**Figure 5.9** Structured output/guided sentence exercise

teachers may be following a syllabus and so feel that they have less freedom. For those teachers that do have some choice, Nation (2011) says that in making selections about vocabulary, the priority should be words that occur with high frequency in the target language. In terms of language structures, instruction should focus on those which students need in order to be able to use language in the ways they would want to. Ellis (2012) also suggests that it might be best to focus on structures that learners find difficult and on those which are partially acquired, as learners may be developmentally more ready to learn these.

As we have already pointed out, the method of having a focus on language form is another consideration. Some forms are complex and perhaps best learnt incidentally, whereas others which are simpler may be more appropriate for a classroom focus. Whatever the choice of language form is, and whatever the method that the teacher chooses for drawing learner attention to this form, it is important to remember that the effects of language-focused instruction may be more evident over time than straightaway. As we emphasised in Chapter 3 where the focus

was on input, students need continual exposure to language forms in order to acquire them and so that they will be able to use them spontaneously in communication.

Finally, we finish this chapter with two messages of caution, taken from Nation and Macalister (2010). They point out that some language classes need to reduce, rather than increase, the amount of language-focused learning they plan for, so that it takes no more than twenty-five per cent of classroom time. They also point out that language-focused learning must be seen as a support, rather than as a substitute, for learning through meaning-focused activities.

## Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter, we have explored why a focus on language and on language form may be important in the language classroom, especially for the adolescent who becomes increasingly analytic, able to think abstractly and to benefit from explicit teaching.

## Key Points

- Language form includes vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, register, discourse features, and so on.
- There is evidence that a focus on form speeds up the rate of language learning for the classroom learner.
- A focus on form is more effective in a context where the learner is focused on meaning and on using the language communicatively. This may help learners make form-meaning mappings.
- The corrections and feedback that learners get from each other and from the teacher when they are using language communicatively are a type of focus on form that may be particularly effective for their learning.
- Teachers can take a deductive or an inductive approach to explanations about language. In the latter, learners work out patterns and rules for themselves and the depth of processing involved may foster learning.
- Acquiring the structures and patterns of language takes time and students need large amounts of exposure to them.

## Reflection and Discussion

1 This chapter argues that adolescent learners are particularly able to benefit from opportunities to focus on language form. Why is this? To what extent does your experience with adolescent learners support this idea?

2 The chapter explains shifts in perspective on the importance of having a focus on form in the classroom. What was/were the prevalent belief(s) in terms of your own language learning experience? What is your perspective now?

3 Think of a classroom context you are familiar with. Is the approach more that of Focus on FormS or Focus on Form? What are the advantages/disadvantages of this approach? And the alternative approach?

4 What types of feedback do you give learners when they make errors? What are the benefits/disadvantages of this type of feedback?

5 Do you use metalanguage or technical terms when you give students explanations about language? Why or why not? Or, what was the approach taken in your experience of learning a language?

6 In your experience as a teacher or language learner, are you more familiar with a deductive or inductive approach to having students establish rules and patterns in language? What are the advantages/disadvantages of each approach? What type of learner may benefit from each?

7 How motivated are students you know to work at focus on form exercises? How possible would it be for you to take an approach like Shona did, as described in this chapter?

8 What ways as a teacher or learner have you found effective for vocabulary acquisition?

9 In a context with which you are familiar, would you say that language-focused learning is around twenty-five per cent of class time, as Nation (2007) recommends? Discuss/reflect on the amount of focus it receives.

## Further Reading

Erlam, R., and Pimentel-Hellier, M. (2017). Opportunities to attend to language form in the adolescent near-beginner foreign language classroom. *Language Awareness*, 26(2), 59–77. DOI:10.1080/09658416.2017.1314487

In this study, Erlam and Pimentel-Hellier (2017) set out to investigate to what extent there were opportunities for beginner adolescent learners of French and Spanish to incidentally focus on language form when they were interacting in the target language. In this study they call these opportunities to focus on language form 'language related episodes'.

## For Reflection and Group Discussion

(a) In classroom contexts you are familiar with, to what extent are there:

- opportunities for students to interact in pairs and groups as they did in this study? How feasible would it be to set these up?
- opportunities for incidental focus on form? How might these opportunities be promoted?

(b) To what extent do the LREs in this study demonstrate noticing? What tended to be the characteristics of the learners' attention to language form?

(c) The authors suggest that adolescents may feel less constraint than adult learners in commenting on and correcting the language used by their peers. To what extent is this true in your experience? What might be the implications for the teacher?

# A Place for Practice in the Language Classroom

## Introduction

We have all heard the old saying 'practice makes perfect'. Perhaps, for some of us, the images evoked by this expression are rather dreary ones, maybe from childhood, of trying to perfect some skill that we had little interest in learning. On the other hand, others of us may think positively of the rewards that came our way as a result of devoting time to practise something that we enjoyed doing.

In this chapter, we consider the place that practice might have in the language classroom. We will address these three questions:

> Why practise?
> How to practise?
> How much practice?

When we talk about practice in language learning, we need to remember that practice can and should involve any and all of the language skills. We can practise improving our receptive language skills, for example, by listening to songs or by reading magazines in the language we are learning. In this chapter, however, we are mainly concerned with practice as it refers to the use of oral productive language. One reason for this is that, while it may be possible to set up opportunities for students to practise other language skills outside of the classroom (we have referred to ways that this might happen in other chapters), it is often difficult to arrange ways for students to practise speaking and interacting in a foreign language outside of the language classroom. In fact, the lack of opportunities for students to practise and use the language they are learning has been identified as the key characteristic that distinguishes the foreign language classroom from the second language classroom (Ortega, 2007). The challenge for the language teacher, then, is how, in the classroom, to compensate for this lack of opportunities.

## Why Practise?

To answer our first question as to why practice might be useful in the language classroom, we need to understand something of skill acquisition

theory (Carlson, 2003), first used within the area of cognitive psychology to explain general learning processes.

> ## Skill Acquisition Theory
> Skill acquisition theory explains how learners might proceed from basic to more advanced proficiency in a given skill. DeKeyser (1998, 2007) has found this theory useful to explain how language learners, over time and with practice, become more proficient until eventually they may be able to produce language without thinking explicitly about the language they are using.

> ## Declarative Knowledge
> Factual knowledge that a learner might have about a language. (DeKeyser, 2007)

This theory helps us understand why repetitive practice of a skill helps develop mastery. It is fundamental to many of the abilities we develop, from learning to eat, tying a shoelace, learning to read and write, playing an instrument, learning to play a sport, riding a bicycle, and driving a car. Our early attempts are clumsy and full of errors, but we can achieve a measure of mastery through trying over and over again. The same applies to language learning. Classroom

> ## Procedural Knowledge
> Knowledge of how to use language without having to think explicitly about it. (DeKeyser, 2007)

language learners often first depend on 'declarative knowledge' when something is new to them (see Figure 6.1 for a summary of the processes of skill acquisition theory).

> ## Automatisation
> Language is used spontaneously, fluently, and without effort or error. (DeKeyser, 2007)

That is, they depend on information but are unable to make use of that knowledge yet. For example, they might have information about, and even be able to explain, how past action is expressed in a particular language, but they are not able to use this knowledge to communicate about past action. Through practice, however, they will develop 'procedural knowledge' and this type of knowledge will manifest itself in language *behaviour*, so that, using the previous example, they will now be able to *use* verbs in the target language to communicate about events in past time. At first, using this procedural

declarative knowledge ➡ procedural knowledge ➡ automatisation

**Figure 6.1** The processes of skill acquisition theory

knowledge might take up quite a lot of their attentional resources, so that they will need to be very focused on the new language that they are using. They probably won't have the capacity to be aware of much else. They will probably also be slow at using the new language and liable to make errors.

Here is an example of this in action from a high school French class. The students are learning to use negation, or how to say that they don't or didn't do something. Here they practise by reporting what they 'did not do' on the weekend. The teacher gives a model, and explicitly directs them to use 'ne … pas' around the verb. However, this requires some trial and error. Notice how much the teacher corrects and guides them at this stage (the sections of the text that are examples of negation or attempts at negation in French are underlined).

**Example 6.1**

| | | Translation | Comment |
|---|---|---|---|
| T | I want to know what you did not do on the weekend. **D'accord?** Remember last week **on a discuté** the **passé composé,** the negative **dans le passé composé. Moi, moi, je n'ai pas fait mes devoirs** pendant le **weekend. Je n'ai pas fait mes devoirs. Qu'est-ce que vous n'avez pas fait ?** What did you not do? So putting in '**ne pas**' in the **passé composé.** [Names a student] | . . . ok? Remember last week we talked about the passé composé, the negative in the passé composé. I, I did not do my homework during the weekend. I did not do my homework. What didn't you do [. . .] | |
| S | Umm, **je n'ai regardé pas la télé** | Umm, I did watch not TV | The student uses the negative but not completely correctly |
| T | Ok. Where does '**ne pas**' go in the **passé composé** negative? Around which part? You said it all the right way except one | | |

| S | **Je n'ai** | I did | |
| T | Right, you said **'Je n'ai regardé pas'** . . . | Right, you said 'I did watch not' . . . | The teacher repeats what the student said previously so that they can hear their mistake |
| S | **Je n'ai pas regardé [la télé]** | I did not watch [TV] | The student uses the negative correctly |
| T | **Je n'ai pas regardé [la télé]. C'est** ça | I did not watch [TV]. That's right | |
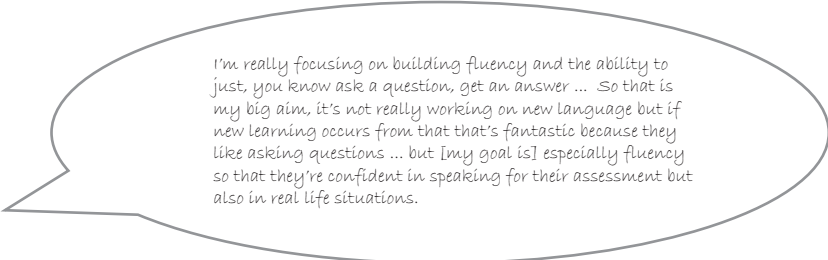
(Data adapted from Tognini, 2008, p. 161)

These students have to consciously think about where to put the 'ne pas' to indicate negation. As we continue to practise, however, our procedural knowledge can become 'automatised' (DeKeyser, 2007). With automatisation, our use of the new language will be spontaneous, effortless, fast, and without error. DeKeyser explains that the word 'automatisation' can be used narrowly to mean the speeding up of performance at a task (as in developing fluency) or more widely, as it is understood here, to refer also to the restructuring of knowledge that happens as learners become more proficient. For the language teacher it is important to understand that all these processes of skill acquisition theory require a considerable amount of practice and take place over time.

There is, however, another very compelling reason for incorporating opportunities for practice in the language classroom. Ortega (2007) claims that the right type of practice, where there are opportunities for learners to use the language to communicate, can help learners notice aspects of language, and even reflect on and test out these aspects of language. This noticing, reflecting, and experimenting with language can promote language learning and contribute to the development of declarative knowledge. In other words, there could be times when practice could also act as a catalyst at the *beginning* of the sequence to set in motion the processes in Figure 6.1, alongside its more fundamental and crucial role in helping advance language learning processes *along* the sequence. For example, in the classroom we describe below, Amelia is asked the question

'What don't you like doing?' ('Qu'est-ce que tu n'aimes pas faire?') and realises that she doesn't know how to say 'do athletics' in French. This realisation is the catalyst for her to seek help from the teacher, who tells her that it is 'faire de l'athletisme', and who helps her construct the sentence she wants to say. Three days later, when we interview her, Amelia uses this expression, demonstrating that she is at least partway along the process of learning it (though we can't be sure whether she has learnt it well enough to be able to use it spontaneously in a conversation).

The examples of practice that we will look at in this chapter come from Jessica's classroom of Year 9 students of French who are towards the end of their first year of learning the language. The context is that they are practising for an oral language assessment, the following week. Notice how, in an interview, when asked about her goals for the lesson, Jessica refers to both the idea of increasing fluency and also the possibility that practice may lead to new learning for her students; she suggests that her students will be noticing what they don't know and asking questions.

> I'm really focusing on building fluency and the ability to just, you know ask a question, get an answer … So that is my big aim, it's not really working on new language but if new learning occurs from that that's fantastic because they like asking questions … but [my goal is] especially fluency so that they're confident in speaking for their assessment but also in real life situations.

## How to Practise?

In recent times, getting students to practise may have become rather 'out of vogue' in some language teaching contexts. This is often a reaction to the type of meaningless drills and exercises that were characteristic of an audio-lingual approach to language teaching (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). 'Drills' have been 'alternately advocated, demonised, derided and resuscitated' (DeKeyser, 2007, p. 10). DeKeyser (2007) describes three types of drills: (1) mechanical, (2) meaningful, and (3) communicative. He makes a case for almost, but not quite completely, discarding type (1) and for incorporating the other two inside the classroom. This brings us, of

course, to the second question of the types of practice that might be helpful, and not so helpful, in the language classroom.

## 1  Mechanical Drills

Paulson and Bruder (1976, p. 3) describe mechanical drills as involving 'complete control of the response and only one correct way of responding'. DeKeyser (1998, p. 53) goes on to explain that in mechanical drills, learners are only practising 'language-like behaviour' and 'shuffling forms around' rather than conveying meaning. The problem with drills is that it is possible to carry them out without understanding what is being said at all. This type of practice was very common in the audio-lingual classroom and has been criticised for not helping learners learn to use language in communication.

For proceduralisation, and therefore learning, to occur, language forms need to be associated with meaning. In this way, form-meaning links or mappings are built up in long-term memory (we discussed the importance of these in Chapter 5). For example, when a learner of English realises that when someone says they are 'going to do something' (form), they are talking about a future intention (meaning), they have made a form-meaning mapping. As we have already mentioned, drills can be carried out without understanding the language being used at all, and so don't help these form-meaning mappings to be established.

However, DeKeyser (2007) doesn't go as far as saying that there is NO place for mechanical drills inside the classroom. He mentions that drills can be helpful for some learning, for example, pronunciation and verb forms. Harmer (2012) also explains that drills help students 'to get used to new language' (p. 109). In discussing opportunities for 'language-focused learning' in the classroom, Nation (2007) talks about the importance of including 'pronunciation practice, using substitution tables and drills [and] learning vocabulary from word cards' (p. 6) in the classroom. An example from Jessica's classroom is when Rosie and her game partners are busy playing the snake game (see Figure 6.2). In Example 6.2, Ruby and Chanelle focus on the question 'Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire en hiver?' ('What do you like doing in winter?'). However, Rosie has noticed the form 'en été' ('in summer') from the preceding question 'Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire en été?' ('What do you like doing in summer?') and she has decided to 'take time out' to repeat 'en été' to herself. In this way she can practise the pronunciation of this expression, which presumably is one that is new to her.

**Example 6.2**

| | | Translation | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ruby | What do you like doing when it is winter? | | |
| **Rosie** | **Et en été et en été en été** | And in summer and in summer in summer | Rosie takes 'time out' while Ruby and Chanelle continue playing the game to practise, on her own, pronunciation of 'en été', thus developing fluency. |
| Chanelle | **En hiver je regarder la télé** | In winter I to watch TV | Chanelle uses the incorrect form of the verb 'watch'. |

Of course, here Rosie takes the initiative to do this on her own, but the teacher could also have had the whole class practise their pronunciation of this and similar phrases. What the teacher, Jessica, did do during the lesson was to stop the whole class so that they could recite together the conjugation of the verb 'être' (je suis, tu es, etc.) to the tune of 'The Pink Panther'.

In an interview Jessica talks further about the type of mechanical drills that she has her students work on in the classroom and how useful they are for teaching verb conjugations. She explains how for '-er' verbs she teaches a 'little rhyme; "e, es, e, ons, ez, ent" you know for the endings' and how her students respond positively 'they absolutely loved the "e, es, e, ons, ez, ent"' and said "we want more of that"'. She also describes a song (a round), to the tune of 'Frère Jacques', that she uses for teaching the conjugation of 'avoir' (to have):

> j'ai tu as, j'ai tu as,
> il/elle a, il/elle a,
> nous avons vous avez,
> nous avons vous avez,
> ils/elles ont, ils/elles ont.
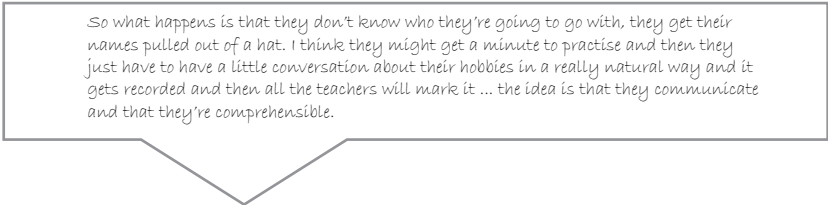
Such short drills and songs can help learners retain formulaic knowledge and explicit (declarative) knowledge that they can draw on in production. But, where input and opportunity for communicative use is limited, the danger is that students become dependent on this declarative knowledge and never progress beyond it.

## 2 Meaningful Practice

We argue, as DeKeyser (2007) and others note, that mechanical drills are of limited benefit in the language classroom. They can be useful as an early aid to memory, as we have seen in the previous section. They can also be helpful for aspects of the language which are less noticeable, or which are less meaningful, and so, therefore, are harder for learners to pick up. In foreign language contexts where input and time are limited, however, DeKeyser (2007) argues strongly in favour of the inclusion of meaningful and communicative drills. This is because the latter allow learners to make connections between a language form and its meaning and, therefore, do allow for the process of proceduralisation. In this chapter we are going to refer rather to meaningful and communicative '*practice*', because we consider that the term '*drill*' does little to describe the way that language is used in these types of practice. Meaningful practice can be understood as practice that a student cannot complete without understanding what is being said (Paulston & Bruder, 1976).

Jessica had her twenty-seven Year 9 students work at meaningful practice as they prepared for an oral assessment. We have had glimpses into Jessica's classroom elsewhere in this book; Jessica teaches in a single-sex, state-run girls' school. Her students have three fifty-minute lessons a week throughout the year. In Year 11 they will sit a national exam, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). One of the components of NCEA, the 'Interact Standard', requires students to 'interact using spoken French to communicate personal information, ideas and opinions in different situations' (www.nzqa.govt.nz). Jessica's school decided that at the end of Year 9, their first year of learning French, all students would have the opportunity to take part in a mock 'Interact Standard'.

Jessica gives some information about how her students will be assessed as they interact in pairs.

> So what happens is that they don't know who they're going to go with, they get their names pulled out of a hat. I think they might get a minute to practise and then they just have to have a little conversation about their hobbies in a really natural way and it gets recorded and then all the teachers will mark it ... the idea is that they communicate and that they're comprehensible.

To prepare for this assessment Jessica devised a game (see Figure 6.2; see also an English version of the game in the Appendix). It was played
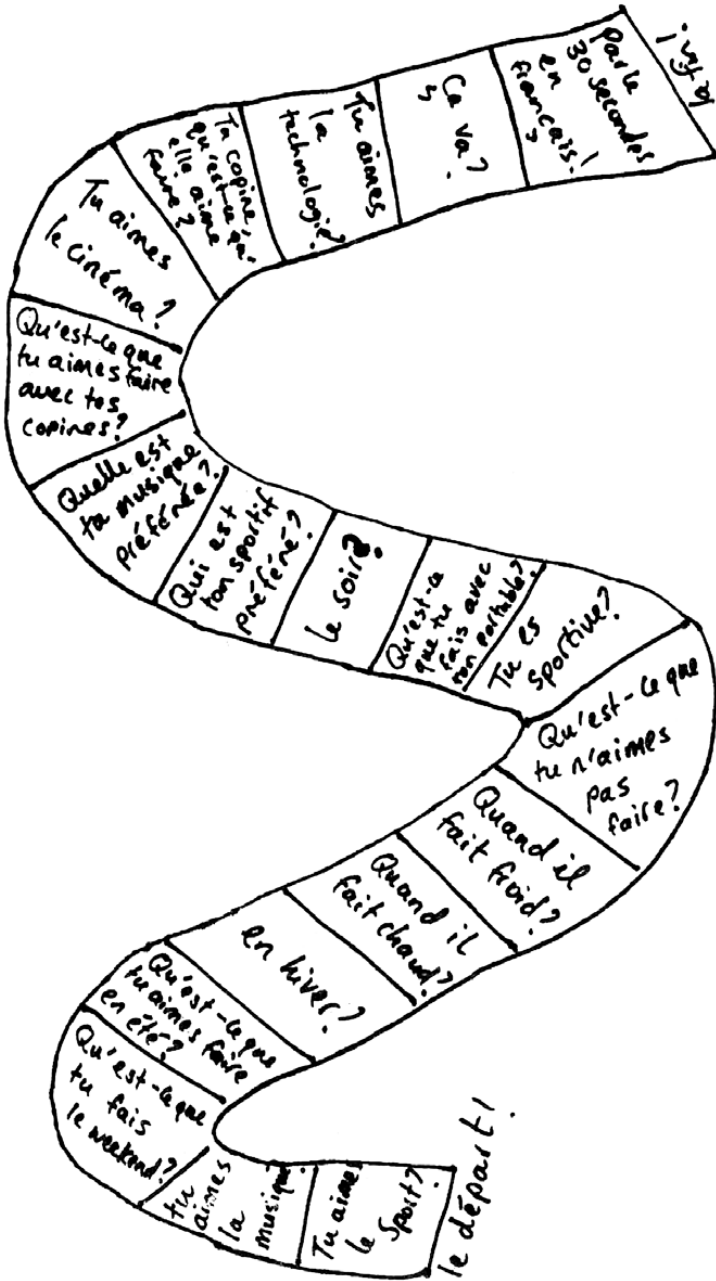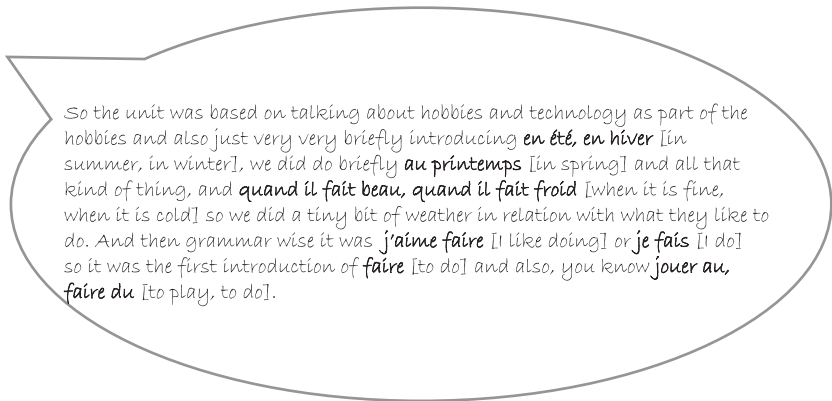
**Figure 6.2** The 'snake game'
(See an English version of this game in the Appendix)

with a dice and counters, and as students landed on the different sections of the snake shape, they had to answer specific questions. An answer in French meant they could advance, a response in English meant they had to go backwards. The language that Jessica chose to include in the game was language that the students had already been introduced to. This is an important point. Nation (2007) claims that in developing fluency, the language that students work with should be largely familiar to them. In an interview, Jessica describes the language work (we highlight the target language and include translations) that predated the practice described in this chapter. This was, firstly, a unit that the students had previously completed and, secondly, a poster they had written about themselves using the language of the unit.

> So the unit was based on talking about hobbies and technology as part of the hobbies and also just very very briefly introducing **en été, en hiver** [in summer, in winter], we did do briefly **au printemps** [in spring] and all that kind of thing, and **quand il fait beau, quand il fait froid** [when it is fine, when it is cold] so we did a tiny bit of weather in relation with what they like to do. And then grammar wise it was **j'aime faire** [I like doing] or **je fais** [I do] so it was the first introduction of **faire** [to do] and also, you know **jouer au, faire du** [to play, to do].

In this chapter we describe the lesson that Jessica taught to allow her students to consolidate and revise this language work, described above.

Jessica allowed students to work in groups of approximately three as they played the game. They were able to choose which groups they worked in (something that adolescents say is important to them, see Chapter 2). When students had completed the game, they were given the choice of either playing it again outside in the corridor or doing some writing. They were told that, in the writing, they should develop their ideas based on the language they had practiced.

That this type of practice was meaningful is evident from the fact that the students had to understand what each question was asking and then find the French to construct an answer that was an appropriate response. We can see in Example 6.2 that Ruby has actually translated the question 'Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire en hiver?' Perhaps the fact that she has done this indicates that she and/or Chanelle were not entirely familiar with the

language of the question and needed the English to help her/them. Chanelle has responded appropriately by saying she watches television ('En hiver je regarder la télé'), albeit without conjugating the verb 'regarder', to watch.

We can hypothesise that the kind of meaningful practice provided by this game presented students with opportunities for language proceduralisation, as seen in Example 6.2, and automatisation, as seen in Example 6.3. In Example 6.3, the two students, Hannah and Francesca, appear more at ease with the meaning of the question forms and with answering them. This may be because they are playing this game for a fourth time, at this stage of the lesson. These students elected for a second practice in the corridor outside of the classroom, rather than doing written work inside, and during each of the two practice sessions that the teacher made time for in this lesson, they played the game twice.

### Example 6.3

| Hannah | **Tu es sportive?** | Are you sporty? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Francesca | **Oui, je suis assez sportive.** | Yes, I am fairly sporty. |
| Hannah | **Qu'est-ce que tu fais avec ton portable?** | How do you use your mobile? |
| Francesca | **Avec mon portable je chat sur facebook. Qu'est-ce que tu fais avec ton portable?** | I use my mobile to chat on Facebook. How do you use your mobile? |
| Hannah | **Avec mon portable j'envoie des SMS et les emails.** | I send texts and emails with my mobile. |

The increased practice that these two students had may have served to develop automatisation, resulting in an improvement in language fluency. This is suggested by Hannah and Francesca's responses to a written questionnaire filled out at the end of the lesson. When asked what they thought they had learnt in the lesson, Hannah noted 'coming up with answers on the spot' and Francesca 'answering questions on the spot'.

## 3 Communicative Practice

> Is Jessica's game an example of communicative practice as well as meaningful practice?

To answer this question, we need to establish what is meant by communicative practice. In communicative practice activities, the actual

exchange of information is the goal of the communication and the information that is exchanged is something that the listener (or reader) does not already know (DeKeyser, 2007). In other words, there has to be some sort of communicative gap that is bridged as the practice takes place. It is hard to be sure if there was a gap for Jessica's students and whether, as they played this snake game, they were learning something new about their conversation partners. They may have already had a reasonable amount of knowledge about their classmates and there may have been little that was new for them to find out (especially as students self-selected their partners and tended to interact with their friends). This exchange of new information or 'gap' is important because it motivates learners to pay attention to each other as they communicate. Listening to each other is also important for learning; it is an opportunity for learners to be exposed to language input (as we saw in Chapter 3).

One simple way that this game could be made into communicative practice is to tell the students that, as they played the game, they had to tell one lie and that their partner had to correctly specify, at the end of the game, what that lie was. That would ensure that students attended to each other's answers and that there was a focus on the information being exchanged.

## Ortega's Optimal Practice

We have already referred to Ortega's (2007) claim that practice has the potential to drive language learning, to act as a catalyst for acquisition. In a chapter that deals with practice in the foreign language classroom, she argues that optimal practice needs to respect three principles (Ortega, 2007, pp. 182–186). These are:

1 Language practice needs to be interactive.
2 Practice needs to be meaningful.
3 There should be a focus on task-essential forms.

We will discuss each of these in turn and look at how they might be facilitated in the classroom with examples from Jessica's lessons.

### The First Principle Is that Language Practice Needs to Be Interactive

Fortunately, it may be relatively easy to facilitate 'interactive practice' in the language classroom where adolescents are the learners, for two main reasons. Firstly, the adolescent language learner prefers cooperative

learning over teacher-fronted learning; this means that learners are more likely to be attending to language in exchanges initiated by peers than those initiated by the teacher (Williams, 1999). Secondly, relationships with peers are very important, as we saw in Chapter 1.

There are several reasons why language practice needs to be inter-active, the most obvious being that there are far more opportunities for learners to use language when they are interacting in pairs or groups than when the teacher is directing the interactions. Another reason why interactive language practice is important is that, during practice, learners have opportunities to negotiate for meaning, to identify problems and to seek solutions. We will look at these in Examples 6.4 and 6.5 from Jessica's classroom where we argue that, through the interactions that took place as the students worked in groups of three, students could have had opportunities to expand their language competence.

**Example 6.4**

Playing the game in Figure 6.2, Ruby throws a five on the dice and together with Rosie counts up to five in French. Ruby's counter lands on the question – 'qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire en hiver?' (what do you like doing in winter?)

| | | Translation | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ruby | **En hiver, ah, j'aime regarder le télé?** | In winter, ah, I like watching TV? | From the rising intonation it is evident that Ruby is not sure about her answer and asks for confirmation. |
| Rosie | **Le télévision** | television | Rosie reformulates télé to télévision (should be **la** télé/ télévision) |
| Ruby | (pause) **Le télé** same (pause) **le télévision** | (pause) TV same (pause) television | Ruby thinks for a moment and then maintains it is the same |
| Rosie | **En hiver j'aime** yep yep so when it is winter you like to watch TV | In winter I like [. . .] | Rosie then checks that she has understood correctly by giving Ruby the English for what she has just said |
| Ruby | **oui** | yes | Ruby verifies that this is correct |

It is obvious from the rising intonation Ruby uses at the beginning of this interaction that she was not sure that her message was clear. However, through the interaction that follows she receives positive feedback that she had communicated what she intended. Both students paid attention to the meaning of what was said.

In Example 6.5 Amelia realises that she does not know or remember the word for Saturday in French. Her conversation partner provides it for her.

**Example 6.5**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Amelia | **Quand il pleut je télécharge le musique et en hiver j'aime faire de la natation . . . le weekend le weekend; comment dit-on** Saturday | When it rains I download music and in winter I like swimming . . . at the weekend at the weekend; how do you say Saturday |
| S | **samedi** | |
| Amelia | **Samedi, le samedi quand il chaud mais dimanche quand il pleut quand il fait pleut** | Saturday on Saturday when it hot but Sunday when it rains when it makes rains |

Three days later Amelia was able to give the correct word for Saturday in French; this is some evidence that this exchange during language practice had led to vocabulary development for Amelia.

Having a classroom environment where students are able to work together collaboratively, as they do in these examples, is something that is unlikely to happen by chance (see Chapter 1). The teacher may need to train students to work together in ways so that they are able to encourage and support their peers and give them the type of feedback that will promote learning (Philp, 2016; Sato & Bollinger, 2012). Building an environment where the relationships are positive and where there is a high degree of trust may take time. At the same time, as students work together in these ways, it will be important that the teacher monitors group work and provides support and scaffolding as necessary (Philp et al., 2013).

## The Second Principle Is that Practice Needs to Be Meaningful

Ortega's (2007) principle that practice needs to be meaningful reinforces DeKeyser's claim that only meaningful or communicative practice can help learners 'proceduralise' knowledge so that it is available for use. Ortega argues, as we have already discussed, that meaningful practice may do more than facilitate proceduralisation, it can be 'competence-expanding', that is, it can act as a catalyst for new language learning. For example, she claims that learners may have the opportunity to realise that they need language that they do not have and may ask for help from a teacher or from a peer (we have an example of the latter in Example 6.5). Example 6.6 is an example of a student asking the teacher for a word they do not know and then using this word in a sentence, pushing their language (see Chapter 4) output to attempt a grammatical structure that

they haven't yet mastered (note that we have already explained in the 'Meaningful Practice' section how the game that the learners in Jessica's classroom played required a focus on meaning).

**Example 6.6**

| | | Translation | Explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ruby | **Quelle est ta musique préférée?** | What is your favourite music? | |
| Rosie | **Mon musique préférée c'est Lorde** | My favourite music is Lorde | |
| Chanelle | I don't like her | | |
| Ruby (or Rosie?) | **Pourquoi . . . pourquoi** | Why . . . why | It is not possible to determine exactly who asks Chanelle why she doesn't like Lorde |
| Chanelle | **Parce que c'est** weird **oh Madame** | Because it is weird oh Madame | Chanelle doesn't know the word for weird in French |
| Chanelle | <u>**Madame comment dit-on weird?**</u> | Madame how do you say weird? | She asks the teacher |
| T | **Bizarre.** | Bizarre | The teacher gives her the French word for weird |
| Chanelle | <u>**C'est biz parce que elle c'est bizarre**</u> | It's wei because she it's weird | She tries using this in a sentence but makes a mistake |
| T | **Elle est bizarre** | She is weird | The teacher says it correctly (recasts it) |
| Chanelle | **Elle est bizarre** | She is weird | Chanelle repeats it |
| T | **Ta copine, elle est bizarre** | Your friend is weird | The teacher thinks Chanelle is talking about her friend |
| Chanelle | **Non, ah Lorde** | No, ah Lorde | Chanelle corrects her |
| T | **Oh Lorde est bizarre. Elle est bizarre.** | Oh Lorde is weird. She is weird. | |
| Chanelle | <u>**Elle est bizarre**</u> | She is weird | Chanelle correctly repeats again the sentence she had difficulty with before |
| T | **Elle est un peu bizarre, je suis d'accord.** | She is a bit weird, I agree | |

Example 6.6 is part of the same conversation as Example 6.4, a little further on in the practice activity and this time Chanelle joins the interaction along with Ruby and Rosie. This is an instance where the students are focused on really communicating a message (we could say that at this point the students 'step outside' the meaningful practice activity, so to speak, and that it becomes an actual conversation) as either Ruby or Rosie (not

possible to distinguish exactly who from the recording) asks Chanelle why she does not like Lorde. Chanelle needs the word for 'weird' in French and so asks for assistance from the teacher. That this exchange was competence-expanding and led to new language learning for Chanelle is attested by the fact that three days later she was able to say what the word for 'weird' was in French and was also able to demonstrate that she could correct 'parce qu'elle c'est bizarre' to 'parce que c'est bizarre'.

The examples given here come from a unit of work taught over three lessons. Examples 6.7 and 6.8 come from the lesson following the one (on a Monday) that has so far been described. This next lesson, on a Wednesday, also had the aim of giving learners practice in using language they were already familiar with. As Jessica says in the interview:

> Ok, so at the moment, my aim, for basically now until this time next week, is to build fluency.

In Wednesday's lesson she gave each student a whiteboard and asked them to write as many questions as they could remember. She then asked them to find someone and ask them the questions on their whiteboard. A little later in the lesson she asked students to find someone new and ask their questions again. Many of the questions that the students wrote were similar to the ones they had worked with during the game the previous day. In Example 6.7, as Rosie formulates her answer, she has the opportunity to notice a 'hole' or gap in her own language competence (see Chapter 4).

**Example 6.7**

|  |  | **Translation** | **Explanation** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rosie | **En hiver hiver je joue le hockey non je joue au hockey or is it le hockey** . . . mmm **tout le tout tout le temps** all the time | In winter winter I play the hockey no I play hockey or is it the hockey . . . mmm all the all all the time | Rosie realises that she doesn't know whether she should say 'jouer le hockey' or 'jouer au hockey' |
| Chanelle | **Et en hiver je joue au underwater hockey tous les jours** | And in winter I play underwater hockey every day | Chanelle does not directly answer Rosie's musings, but she uses the correct form herself in talking about what she likes doing in winter (je joue au underwater hockey). |

Chanelle uses the correct form for the structure that Rosie is not sure about. We do not have the data to know whether Rosie noticed this or learnt from it, but potentially, the opportunity to realise what she didn't know could have been a catalyst for learning.

In Example 6.8 Rosie is now talking with a new conversational partner. She has the opportunity to try out a language form that she is not sure about – 'd'accord'. Having used it, she then queries whether it was appropriate in the context in which she used it.

**Example 6.8**

| S | **Salut** | Hi |
|---|---|---|
| Rosie | **Ça va?** | How are you? |
| S | **Ça va. Très fatigué** | Alright. Very tired. |
| Rosie | <u>**D'accord.**</u> Like does that make sense? I am pretty sure it does. It is meant to be like I agree because like can I just check that? I just want to check that so that I don't say it in the test. | Ok. [. . .] |

A little later in the lesson the teacher asks for questions and Rosie seizes this opportunity in Example 6.9.

**Example 6.9**

| Rosie | Does **accord** mean ok or does it also mean I agree? |
|---|---|
| T | **D'accord** – ok. **Je suis d'accord** – I agree. |

We can see from Examples 6.5 to 6.9 that Jessica had intended the practice that students were engaged in to promote fluency and to allow them to work with the language that they had already been introduced to in class. Yet, it also provided opportunities for students to push their language output, to notice what they did not know, to try out and experiment with language and to get feedback and help from each other. All of these processes could have contributed to new language learning because on these occasions students were working at a level slightly beyond what they could cope with, as Ortega (2007) describes (see Chapter 4), at 0 + 1, or output plus one level (in a mirror image of Krashen's input + 1 metaphor, see Chapter 3).

In Chapter 1 we discussed the importance of environmental support in promoting learning in the classroom. In this section we see good examples of environmental support in the trust and support that students experienced from and gave each other as they practised language together. The positive and collaborative ways in which they worked led to opportunities for language learning.

## The Third Principle Is that There Should Be a Focus on Task-Essential Forms

Ortega claims that there is a need for intensive practice of specific aspects or forms of a language. When a teacher knows what particular language structure, or language structures, they think that their students need to practise, it can be a challenge to design a practice activity or task that requires them to use this structure or structures. In other words, this/ these structure(s) need(s) to be essential, so that it is not possible to complete the task/activity without using it/them. The 'task essential' form in the snake game would appear to be the expression 'aimer faire' ('to like doing'). In the interview, Jessica identifies this expression as one that is prominent. As we see in Example 6.10 where Francesca and Hannah play the game during the first lesson, the game succeeds in having students practise this structure intensively (as underlined).

**Example 6.10**

| Francesca | **Qu'est-ce que tu n'aimes pas faire**? | What do you not like doing? |
| Hannah | Mmm **je n'aime pas faire** de la danse | Mmm I don't like dancing |
| Francesca | **Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire avec ton portable?** | What do you like doing with your mobile? |
| Hannah | **Avec mon portable j'envoie des SMS** | I send text messages with my mobile |

[then 4 turns later the exchange continues]

| Francesca | **Qu'est-ce que tu aimes faire avec tes copines?** | What do you like doing with your friends? |
| Hannah | **Avec mes copines j'aime faire . . . j'aime faire le danse.** | With my friends I like . . . I like dancing |

This structure was salient or obvious to at least one learner, Rosie, as she played the game during the lesson. This is evident from her response to the following question in the written questionnaire that she filled out at the end of the lesson:

What did you learn today in your French lesson? Please think of as many things as possible and write them below.

– how to answer/respond to questions/phrases
– what I like to do and how to tell people about it
– Rosie
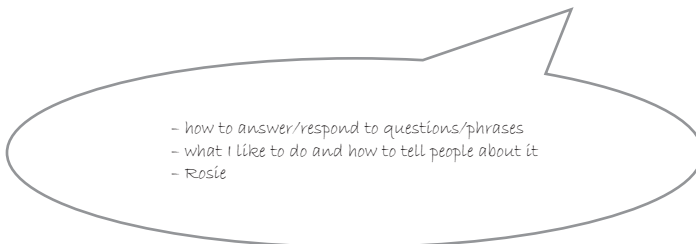
To summarise, in this section we've illustrated features of optimal practice activities. They are interactive and meaningful, and they provide opportunities for learners to focus on form or on specific language structures. These three features are important because they have the potential to help learners notice, reflect on, and experiment with language. When learners have these opportunities, they are more likely to acquire language.

In this next section, we return to the idea of Nation's four strands and focus on what Nation says about language practice.

## Nation's 'Fluency Development' Strand

As we have already seen, Nation (2007) argues that a well-balanced language course should consist of four strands.

**Nation's Four Strands**

Nation's Four Strands.

1. Meaning-focused input
2. Meaning-focused output
3. Language-focused learning
4. Fluency development
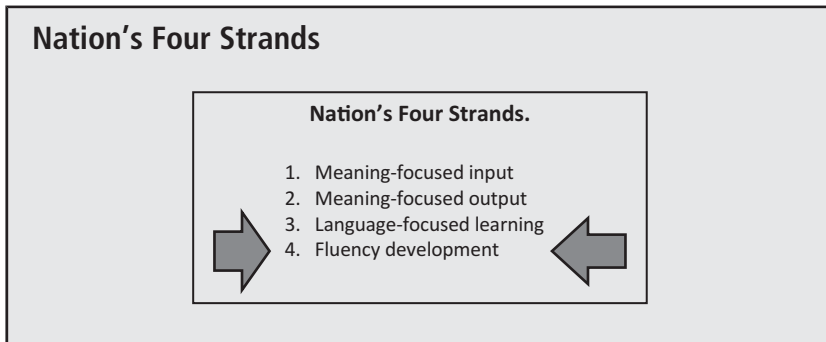
Practice allows for the development of 'fluency'. However, Nation (2009, p. 2) paints a negative picture of the attention that is given to this strand: 'there are courses that give useful attention to language features, but that do not provide opportunities for the learners to become truly fluent in using what they know'.

As well as emphasising the need for adequate practice time, Nation outlines what he considers are the essential conditions. Two of these we have already discussed in this chapter; that is, firstly, the need for students to be working with language that is largely familiar to them and, secondly, the need for a focus on receiving or conveying meaning.

Two other requirements for building fluency are the need for some pressure or encouragement to perform at a faster than usual speed, and the need for a large amount of input (for the receptive skills of listening and reading) and output (for the productive skills of speaking and writing). In other words, time on task is important to building fluency. We could argue that in Jessica's classroom, there was evidence of a large amount of

output in that the students spent the major part of two fifty-minute lessons either interacting in pairs or using the language they had practiced orally to write about themselves. In the lessons we observed in Jessica's classroom, there was no mention by the teacher that students should increase their speed at any stage of the practice. However, it seems that at least one student was aware that this was the aim. In a written questionnaire at the end of the lesson, Rosie wrote in response to the question:

Please write one thing that you liked about today's lesson. If there was nothing, that is ok.

> The board game really helped me to be able to respond quickly.
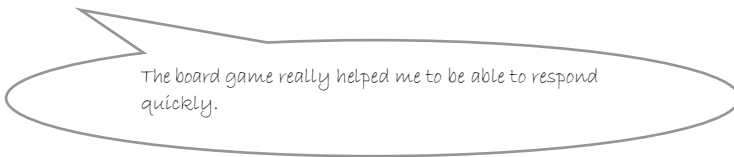
Another very effective way of promoting fluency in oral language that makes use of time pressure is the 4/3/2 technique (Nation & Macalister, 2010). In this activity, learners work in pairs, with one acting as speaker and the other as listener. The speaker talks for four minutes on a specific topic, then moves to another pair and gives the same information to a new partner, but this time in three minutes. Lastly, the speaker gives a two-minute talk on the same topic to another new partner.

Nation (2011) makes another important point about language practice, although this advice need not only apply to the 'language practice' context. He says that in language practice, the students need to be doing the work. In other words, there should be relatively little 'teacher-fronted' classroom focus.

## And What Did the Students Think?

Eight students gave permission for their exchanges to be audio-recorded as they participated in Jessica's lessons. Five students in this class filled out a questionnaire of their perceptions at the end of each lesson. On the first lesson, they were all positive, ticking enjoyable or very enjoyable (the top two from a choice of five descriptions). In the second lesson, three remained positive, but one ticked 'neutral', stating that she was tired and found it hard to concentrate and the other ticked, 'not very enjoyable', explaining 'I didn't get to sit with my friends'. This comment underscores the importance of peer relations for the adolescent language learner (see Chapter 1).

This student feedback suggests that overall students found the practice activities a positive experience, but enthusiasm wasn't sustained for all, over the two lessons. A difficulty in practice is that it requires persistent effort, and quite a deal of creativity on the teacher's part to encourage students when interest or confidence flags.

## Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter we've argued for the importance of making time for language practice in the language classroom. The emphasis has been on the practice of oral language, because it is usually hard for learners of foreign languages to get opportunities to use spoken language outside of the classroom.

## Key Points

- The most effective type of practice has learners understanding the language that they are using.
- Practice should have students using language that they are already familiar with, that is, that they have already been taught and had the opportunity to learn.
- Practising language in interaction creates more opportunities for students to use language and caters to the adolescent's preference for working collaboratively with peers.
- Meaningful and communicative practice can help learners restructure their existing language knowledge and, eventually, use language spontaneously, effortlessly, quickly, and without error.
- Meaningful language practice can also help learners acquire new language knowledge.
- There can be a place for mechanical drills, especially in helping students learn, for example, pronunciation and verb conjugations.
- Practice that helps learners develop fluency is often neglected but should make up approximately a quarter of the time spent in the classroom (Nation, 2007).

## Reflection and Discussion

**1** Do you agree with Ortega's claim (2007) that opportunities for learners to practise and use the language they are learning is what differentiates the foreign from the second language classroom? Why/ why not?

**2** Do you agree with DeKeyser (2007) that opportunities for mechanical practice should be limited in the language classroom? Why/why not? Why does he say this? What might be the uses for this type of practice?

**3** What is the difference between meaningful and communicative practice? Do you think that this difference is important for language learning? Why/why not?

**4** What types of practice (mechanical/meaningful/communicative) are typical of contexts you are familiar with as either teacher or learner?

**5** The authors say that it may be relatively easy to facilitate interactive practice for adolescent learners in the classroom. In your experience how true is this? What factors could account for difficulties setting up opportunities for interactive work and is there any way these difficulties might be addressed?

**6** Practice may help learners develop fluency in language use but it may also be a catalyst for new learning. Can you give examples of each?

**7** There is an emphasis in this chapter on oral language practice (and to some extent, written). How might opportunities for practice of the receptive language skills (listening, reading) be set up for learners?

## Further Reading

Al-Homoud, F., & Schmitt, N. (2009). Extensive reading in a challenging environment: A comparison of extensive and intensive reading approaches in Saudi Arabia. *Language Teaching Research*, 33(4), 383–401.

This is a study investigating another type of practice, that of extensive reading. In extensive reading the focus is on getting learners to read as much as possible at a level which is appropriate for them. This study is conducted with university learners but there are some similarities with the types of context we profile in this book – the learners are of low proficiency and they are limited in the amount of exposure they have to the foreign language, English, they are learning. In this study, the researchers compare the effects of extensive reading with intensive reading.

## For Reflection and Discussion

(a) What are the characteristics of extensive reading and how is it different from intensive reading?

(b) Discuss the benefits for extensive reading that the study highlights.

(c) To what extent might you be able to implement an extensive reading programme in a context you are familiar with? What might be the challenges?

# Digital Media in the Language Classroom

## Introduction

The twenty-first century has seen digital technology have a huge impact on almost all spheres of life, including, of course, on education. Ongoing technological innovations seem to provide teachers with new and endless opportunities for the use of yet another digital tool or application in the classroom.

In this chapter, we show why digital media has great potential for teaching languages to adolescents. We address some of the challenges that there are for language teachers as they seek to make the best use of this technology, in order to facilitate learning. What is digital competence and what is its relevance to language learning? How can digital technology be used to facilitate the type of teaching practices that we have highlighted as outstanding in the previous chapters? How can teachers make best use of digital technology to motivate and to create learning opportunities for students? How might teachers know which device or software to choose for their classroom and/or to recommend to their students? As we address some of these questions, we include examples showcasing how some of the teachers we observed were making use of these technologies in their language classrooms.

## The 'Digital Age' and the Adolescent

Adolescents in so-called 'developed countries' almost certainly own a smartphone (in Germany this is estimated to be as high as ninety-seven per cent; MPFS, 2018), have a computer or laptop in their household, and access the Internet through at least one of these devices. They also use video or music streaming services, such as YouTube, Netflix, or Spotify, play digital games (boys twice as much as girls), and communicate or follow others through apps such as WhatsApp and Instagram (the latter being more popular amongst girls) (MPFS, 2019). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that this so-called 'net generation' (Tapscott, 2008) is not a homogenous group. Even developed countries still face what is called the 'digital divide' where access to, and use of, computers, mobile devices, and the Internet may be linked to geographical or socio-economic background.

The widespread use of digital media is the culmination of a trend that started with the expansion of the Internet in the 1980s. For some time now, we have seen generations growing up who have no experience of a world without the Internet. This phenomenon has led to the coining of the term 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001), referring to 'native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet' (Prensky, 2001, p. 1). On the other hand, the teachers of these digital natives might be so-called 'digital immigrants' (Prensky, 2001, p. 1) who have had to acquire digital literacy as adults.

The use of digital media in language classrooms is not a new phenomenon either! However, we can observe a shift from traditional computer-assisted language learning (CALL) within specifically established computer labs in schools to mobile-assisted language learning (MALL or MLL). This is because mobile devices such as laptops or smartphones are both multifunctional and, as we have seen, omnipresent. For students, the use of digital media for language learning can be motivating, especially if the digitally supported activities meet their needs and interests, and if they correspond to the way that they use digital communication in their daily lives. There are obvious challenges for schools, however, given that this 'disruptive' technology has fundamentally changed the way that users and learners operate (Feser, 2015). Schools need to deal with issues such as ownership, privacy, misuse, and, furthermore, develop appropriate policies to both support the benefits and also regulate the challenges that come with mobile technologies in educational settings.

> **Mobile (Assisted) Language Learning (MALL)**
>
> 'MALL is the use of smartphones and other mobile technologies in language learning.' (Kukulska-Hulme, 2020, p. 743)

Whilst it might seem that digital technologies offer big advantages for teaching, it is important to point out that they are not an end in themselves. They need to be incorporated into established language teaching approaches, such as task- or project-based learning, so that they can be of maximum benefit for young language learners.

In the next section of this chapter, we explore the notion of digital competence and show how it is related to the communicative competence that students acquire as they learn another language. We explain why digital competence and digital media have great potential for teaching languages to adolescents. We introduce (a) framework(s) for (critical) digital competency. In this (these) framework(s) we consider the digital competency that may be expected both of language teachers and of their students.

## Critical Digital Competency/Literacy

The so-called 'digital natives', to whom we referred in the previous section, might be competent in surfing the Internet or using applications on their smartphones, but this does not mean that they are fully proficient users of digital technologies and/or critical consumers of information that they access through digital media. They need training in digital competency, and in knowing how to make use of this competency in language learning. Digital competency includes the creative-productive and the critical-reflexive uses of digital media. The following comment from Nathaniel, a German teacher, demonstrates that he thinks that learners need to become tech-savvy, 'that is, skilled in using the same technologies for academic and professional purposes, and able to view these technologies with a critical eye' (Pegrum, 2014, p. 39). Nathaniel makes the comment that students can, unfortunately, leave school without obtaining this competence.

> I dislike the term 'digital natives' because of how it's used in common language. People go 'Ah! Digital natives', when in reality, they're just really good at using things that have been designed to be very user-friendly ... A lot of students have a very surface-level understanding of technology ... And that can be a problem, because if that's all that they can do, by the time that they leave high school you don't have people that can engage on that higher level with technology and actually use it for really valuable purposes ... One of these [areas for upskilling] is going to be how to use data in any job, how do you collect data, how do you use it efficiently, how does it influence your decisions.

Education needs to prepare students for a globalised world and digital competence is part of the skill set of a twenty-first-century global citizen. This citizen needs to be able to think critically, problem-solve, communicate, collaborate, be an autonomous and lifelong learner, be creative, innovative, entrepreneurial, culturally competent, and digitally literate (Pegrum, 2019). In its

> **Critical Digital Literacy**
> The 'critical and practical understanding of digital technologies in different socio-cultural settings' (Alexander et al., 2016, p. 4)

narrower sense, literacy can be understood as the ability to read and write. However, digital literacy is a concept that expands far beyond this understanding. The framework depicted below sets out the particular set of skills that comprises digital literacy (Pegrum, Dudeney, & Hockly, 2018, p. 5).

> ## Framework of Digital Literacies
> Digital literacy includes:
>
> 1  *communication-related literacies* (e.g. texting literacy, multimodal literacy, gaming literacy, mobile literacy);
> 2  *information-related literacies* (e.g. tagging literacy, search literacy, information literacy, filtering literacy);
> 3  *collaboration-related literacies* (e.g. security literacy, intercultural literacy, ethical literacy);
> 4  *(re)design-related literacies* (e.g. critical literacy, remix literacy).
>
> (Pegrum et al., 2018)

To this framework we can add the skills of digital problem solving and the responsible use of digital technologies (Redecker & Punie, 2017). Teachers will need to establish how to foster the development of different 'digital literacy' subskills, using the framework to ascertain how the subskills might be applied in their specific teaching contexts. As students develop skills in digital literacy, they can be developing, at the same time, communicative competency in the target language. The foreign language classroom is an ideal vehicle for the learning of the skills that are associated with digital literacy.

Another digital literacy framework, the *European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators* (Redecker & Punie, 2017) describes the digital competences of teachers (see Table 7.1).

---

**Table 7.1** Digital competency subskills for the teacher

1  **Professional Engagement:** Using digital technologies for communication, collaboration, and professional development.
2  **Digital Resources:** Sourcing, creating, and sharing digital resources.
3  **Teaching and Learning:** Managing and orchestrating the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning.
4  **Assessment:** Using digital technologies and strategies to enhance assessment.
5  **Empowering Learners:** Using digital technologies to enhance inclusion, personalisation, and learners' active engagement.
6  **Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence:** Enabling learners to creatively and responsibly use digital technologies for information, communication, content creation, wellbeing, and problem-solving.

(Redecker & Punie, 2017, p. 16)

---

Digital competencies have not yet been specifically determined for language teachers. However, language subject-specific competencies are closely linked to digital competencies. For example, a language lesson sequence may aim at teaching skills for online communication in the target language. Nicole, a German teacher, set up a bilingual email exchange project with a partner school in Germany to help her senior students develop skills in digital writing. She was careful to establish boundaries with her students around how the digital communication would take place in order to allow maximum opportunity for language learning.

> We have established a rule of not allowing personal media contact, such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. This is because we have realised that with these they would be using very little language – exchanging mainly pictures, video or anime links, and most likely any communication would be in English … they can use social media outside of the class.
>
> (author's translation from German)

In this project, Nicole determined that the students would use email, rather than social media, to communicate with their exchange partners in order to ensure that they produced output in German, the target language (see Chapter 4), and to limit the use of English.

Nicole's approach, at lesson level, is an example of one of the four different levels at which there are possibilities for students to develop skills in critical digital literacy. These levels show that students can be helped to develop critical digital literacy skills both in more general and in more subject-specific ways:

1 *Curriculum level:* A national or regional curriculum that lists, e.g. key competencies on digital citizenship, which inform the course curriculum.
2 *School level:* The schools' general ICT policy and/or code of conduct, e.g. a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) policy, equipment with soft and hardware, administering the internal network, regulating the (mis)use of digital technology and online communication, 'netiquette', regulating data protection, and privacy.
3 *Subject level:* School-specific subjects or training for digital literacy, e.g. Digital Visual Communication, school-run e-learning workshops.

4  *Lesson level:* The language lesson content, e.g. digital media as a lesson topic, media-related tasks, technology-enhanced project-based language learning, critical awareness-raising activities.

Helping students to develop communicative competence in the language that they are learning is an excellent context for them to, at the same time, develop critical digital literacy.

A positive consequence of integrating digital literacy into the language classroom is that any digital skills that are acquired are highly transferable. Learning the 'dos and don'ts' of online communication, for example, maybe as part of a virtual exchange project, will be of benefit to students outside of, as well as inside, the language classroom.

In this section, we have emphasised that language teaching can, and should, incorporate the development of digital literacies, without making them an end in themselves. The following section describes different types and functions of digital media, introducing the SAMR model (Puentedura, 2006) as a way of classifying them. At the same time, it shows how teachers have incorporated digital technologies into their classrooms.

## The Different Functions of Digital Media for Language Learning

Of the different classifications for ways in which digital media may be used in the language classroom, we have chosen a functional perspective. The SAMR model (Puentedura, 2006) is a four-level model representing (1) **S**ubstitution, (2) **A**ugmentation, (3) **M**odification, and (4) **R**edefinition (i.e. SAMR). It divides the purposes of digital technology into (a) *enhancement* and (b) *transformation*, with the latter being the ultimate end goal of technology-based education.

For *enhancement* purposes, technology represents either a **substitute** for, or an **augmentation** of, non-digital media:

For language teachers, digital media play an important role for *enhancement* purposes. At the **substitution** level, tools can be used for digital writing, reading digital texts, and listening/watching digital
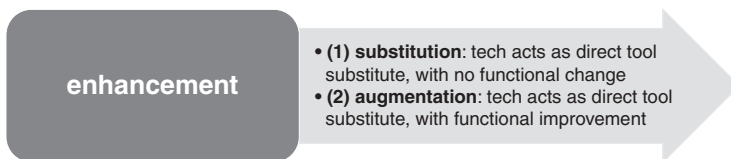


**Figure 7.1** Enhancement level of SAMR model (Puentedura, 2006)

resources. Digital means of communication can allow for interaction. This technology may come with a functional improvement (**augmentation**). Examples include when writing software contains a spellchecker, an online dictionary provides an audio recording of a word, or an online text contains hyperlinks to other relevant information. All interactive features of digital media have the potential for functionally improving, or augmenting, language teaching and learning processes, since they can:

- incorporate multimodal forms of representing information;
- generate automatised feedback; and
- be personalised and adaptive.

An example of technology used at the substitution level comes from Nathaniel's classroom. He points out that some of his students are quite shy when it comes to speaking in a foreign language, so he uses a digital classroom management tool, the name wheel, to regulate speaking turns in the classroom in a playful way. Used like this, technology helps teachers create routines and rituals that promote students' willingness to speak.

> A big part of it is convenience, that it's easier to teach with a lot of these tools because as a teacher it makes your job easier … The name wheel is really just a substitution, there's not really much that's added to that. Or the random team generator. That's again, just substitution.
> – Nathaniel

Tools such as these which don't generate additional costs (i.e. no sign-ups) and which are intuitive and user-friendly are particularly attractive. Other examples, at the substitution level, are tools used for online translation; these are increasingly replacing printed dictionaries in classrooms. Using them successfully requires additional digital skills along with the ability to be critically reflective. Nathaniel explains his approach for training his students in digital dictionary literacy:

> So again … taking the time to say 'well why don't we use [online translator]? Why do we use a dictionary instead? And if we do use [online translator], what do we use it for?' So identifying that tools have different purposes. I'll encourage them to use [online translator] for pronunciation … but not to translate whole paragraphs of things. You might do it for gist if you were really lost and it's a complicated text … [Online translator] can be great for comprehension when you're stuck, but it's not for creating. Then you would not be writing in your own words, you would be plagiarising now, that's not what we want.

Returning to the **augmentation** level, we will explore some of the other functional improvements that might be provided by digital technologies. These can be of particular benefit to language teachers in promoting the development of different language skills.

## Listening

Technology can give learners access to huge amounts of oral input (Chapter 3). Online video sharing or streaming platforms allow for an almost unlimited choice of authentic video resources adapted for use with learners. These platforms often include features that support comprehension, such as repetition, reduction in the speed of the video, or the inclusion of subtitles in the target language (allowing for the integration of listening and reading).

## Reading

Students can have online access to countless texts and target-language specific resources, again increasing the amount of input in the target language that they can access (Chapter 3). At the same time, students will need support so that they can develop digital reading strategies (Li, 2020), especially given research findings demonstrating that the effects of digital reading on foreign language learning are inconsistent (Cobb, 2018).

## Writing

Digital features like 'grammar checks' or 'text commenting' functions are useful for revision and (peer) feedback processes. Nicole, for example, found that her students appreciated these feedback tools, although they actually wrote better and more freely with pen and paper. The teachers we talked to also mention the immediacy and targeting of the feedback that these tools provide, which makes the writing process more efficient.

## Speaking

Digital recordings can give students feedback about their oral output (Chapter 4). Students can (self-)record their spoken output so that their teacher and/or peers can later listen to, and comment on it. Listening back can also allow them to self-reflect on their performance, perhaps

allowing them the opportunity to notice aspects of language they have not yet mastered (see Chapter 5).

## Pronunciation

Teachers can use specific software with automated speech recognition of the target language which provides immediate feedback or opportunity for self-evaluation. Another possibility, also beneficial for improving pronunciation, could be giving orders to, or asking questions of, a personal virtual assistant. The response generated by the artificial intelligence of the assistant would indicate to students whether what they had said was comprehensible or not. This latter feature is not possible without digital technology, so is an example of technology used for *transformation* purposes (**modification + redefinition**), according to the SAMR model (Puentedura 2006).
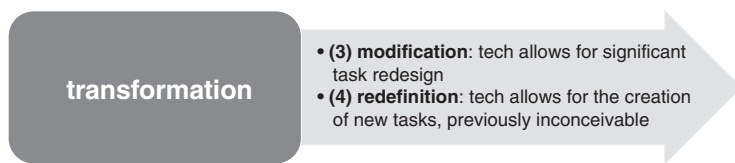


**Figure 7.2** Transformation level of SAMR model (Puentedura, 2006)
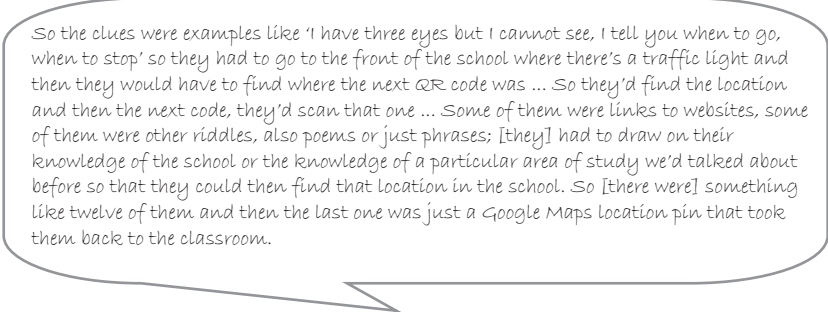
We will now look at some other examples of how teachers used digital technology for *transformation* purposes. Nathaniel asked his Year 7 (aged approximately 11 years) beginner students of German to create a meme to highlight what they found challenging about learning German.

One notable example was the use of the 'Tuxedo Winnie the Pooh' meme, where an image of Winnie the Pooh sitting in an armchair in his trademark red shirt is accompanied by the caption 'The'. In the panel below, Winnie the Pooh is depicted wearing a tuxedo and a smug face, accompanied by the caption 'der/die/das', suggesting that the German article system is the 'fancier' or 'superior' option. In another example, commonly called 'Surprised Pikachu', the Pikachu character from the Pokémon franchise is depicted with a shocked face. The student added the caption 'When the teacher says rhabarberbarbara perfectly', referring to challenging German pronunciation using a common tongue-twister. A final example is a 'Daily Struggle' meme in which the top panel is typically two red buttons and a hovering hand, with the lower panel showing a man sweating with the strain of having to choose between

the depicted options. In this iteration of the meme, the student included three buttons, labelled 'der', 'die', and 'das', a humorous take on the difficulties students sometimes have in selecting the correct gender-specific article in German. The interested reader can find many further examples of these memes by simply putting their assigned names into a search engine, or into dedicated databases such as knowyourmeme.com.

Drawing on the SAMR model, this task can be placed at the **modification** level (= significant task redesign), because a relatively new digital text type, normally only used in the digital space, represents a modification of a traditional non-digital writing task. One could argue that this type of image could be drawn conventionally by hand, but a meme is a unique digital text type. It is used particularly in social media, where it has its own creation specifications (iconic picture + short text) and usage patterns, like other digital text types (e.g. text messages, chats, emails, blogs). The fact that students of this age group are usually familiar with this text type (more so as 'sharers' than as 'creators') means that in a language class, it is particularly suited to adaptation for learning purposes. It allows for combining production of a multimodal short text with reflection on language and on language learning.

At the **redefinition** level of Puentedura's model, we have innovative technologies that allow for the design of previously inconceivable tasks. Examples are virtual or augmented reality, as in the example of the personal virtual assistant we gave earlier. Nathaniel created a QR code hunt as a form of out-of-class learning. It went beyond the traditional scavenger hunt since students used their mobile devices to access, through QR codes, relevant information in the target language from the Internet.

> So the clues were examples like 'I have three eyes but I cannot see, I tell you when to go, when to stop' so they had to go to the front of the school where there's a traffic light and then they would have to find where the next QR code was ... So they'd find the location and then the next code, they'd scan that one ... Some of them were links to websites, some of them were other riddles, also poems or just phrases; [they] had to draw on their knowledge of the school or the knowledge of a particular area of study we'd talked about before so that they could then find that location in the school. So [there were] something like twelve of them and then the last one was just a Google Maps location pin that took them back to the classroom.

As mentioned at the beginning of this sub-section, the SAMR model is only one way of classifying the functions of digital media in the language classroom. There is extensive research in the fields of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) (overview in Reinders & Stockwell, 2017), mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) (e.g. Kukulska-Hulme, 2020) and e-, blended, or online learning of languages (e.g. Hockly & Dudeney, 2017). There is also research in the field of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in language learning contexts (e.g. Sauro, 2012; Bekar & Christiansen, 2018). In this next section, we will draw on some of these different theoretical approaches to consider how digital media can be used to promote learning in language classrooms. In particular, using examples from language classrooms, we will look at how digital media may be used for individualising learning, creating opportunities for interactional, collaborative, and game-based language learning, as well as expanding learning beyond the language classroom.

## Affordances of Digital Media

In this chapter, instead of the word 'opportunity', we prefer to use the word 'affordance'. The two are similar in meaning, but what is helpful about the term affordance is that it emphasises the unique relationship that the learner has with their learning environment.

> **Affordance**
> The opportunity that a learning environment provides for the learner to learn. A key idea is that the learner is an active participant in the learning process. (van Lier, 2004)

### Individualisation and Differentiation

Digital technologies provide affordances for language teaching at an *organisational* level and a *pedagogical* level. The types of benefits that digital media may offer at an *organisational* level are as follows (Reinders & Stockwell, 2017, p. 363):

- improved access,
- storage and retrieval of learning behaviour records and outcomes,
- sharing and recycling material, and
- cost-efficiency.

Nicole and Sandra (teachers of German at Years 8 and 9, respectively), report significant benefits for their teaching and class(room)

management after implementing (commercial) learning management systems (LMS) or learning platforms:

> To be honest: I'm really thrilled. It means I can plan my classes. It is absolutely transparent, what is expected in class, what is planned, what is being done. This means that for students who are absent, who maybe need to repeat the material again, everything is there. And if I as a teacher am absent too, it means that the class still can go on. No matter where, no matter when. – Nicole
>
> (translated by the author)

One of the pedagogic affordances of digital technologies is the way they enable the evaluation and assessment of language learning. Teachers, in resource-rich contexts, increasingly use language learning software that provides them with ongoing insight into their students' online learning behaviours. This software also gives automated information on if and how successfully students perform online tasks (also known as learning analytics). The information that teachers obtain from these tools can inform assessment, understanding about student progress or proficiency, and the need to offer individualised support (see Chapter 2).

> I have much more access, actually daily, to information about the progress of the student. This means if we do a [digital learning game] I immediately can see afterwards who has learned what and who had problems where. This means I can directly intervene. I know exactly who needs help where or who has achieved certain skills and can move on. — Nicole
>
> (translated by the author)
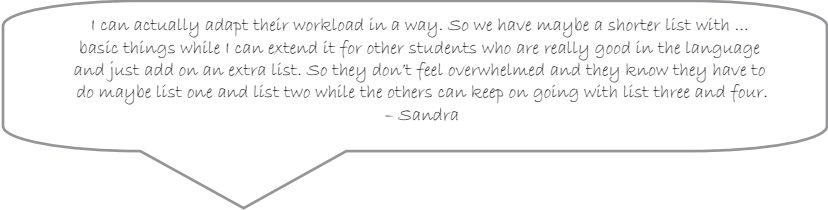
> I really like [language learning software] because you can communicate with the students, you can encourage them, you [see their] progress because you can log in, you can see who is distracted, who hasn't done any work. So it gives you, especially for bigger classes, it gives you a good overview of what they are doing at the moment. And if they are working at home, I can give them feedback in the evening, and if they are working during class time, I can actually see different students and talk to them or help them with their grammar.
> — Sandra

Another pedagogic affordance of digital technologies is their contribution to the individualisation and differentiation of language learning. Individualisation involves making learning more relevant to learners' interests, needs, and goals and, at the same time, adapting it to individual learning styles or learner types (see Chapter 2). For example, teachers can give personalised feedback, using digital tools, on their students' writing or recorded speaking tasks. According to Nathaniel, digital feedback is both more immediate and more targeted.

Differentiation is necessary if learners with different strengths and competencies are learning together in one classroom; for example, foreign language learners with no previous knowledge along with heritage learners of the same language who usually have better developed receptive and oral skills. Nicole specifically chooses language learning software or online resources that allow her to give different tasks to different students according to their current level, since she teaches combined classes (Years 12 and 13 at the same time) which include heritage speakers and exchange students. More advanced language learning software can adapt learning materials to the level of the student based on a proficiency assessment which is embedded in the tool. This feature helps teachers match learning activities to different pathways or rates of learning (see Chapter 2). Sandra appreciates the fact that the software she uses allows her to adapt the use of vocabulary lists to her students' abilities:

> I can actually adapt their workload in a way. So we have maybe a shorter list with … basic things while I can extend it for other students who are really good in the language and just add on an extra list. So they don't feel overwhelmed and they know they have to do maybe list one and list two while the others can keep on going with list three and four.
> – Sandra

The use of digital flashcards is also useful for vocabulary learning. These can be provided in topic-related sets linked to certain material and created by the teacher or student. With some tools other helpful features are added: an auditory and visual representation of the word/ structure, paraphrased explanation in the target language, example sentences, translation or linked exercises.

Other pedagogic affordances of digital media are the improved authenticity of target language input and the fact that learners can be empowered to make independent choices about their own learning (Reinders & Stockwell, 2017). Teachers can, for example, locate

authentic sources of input and encourage their students to choose online materials themselves according to their interests. Nathaniel mentions an online streaming platform that provides him and his students with an appealing variety of authentic video input:

> … the engagement and the motivation that students develop by having access to these materials, this wealth of material, is something I would not want to teach without because if the student is interested in soccer, football, or they love music or whatever it is, there is something in German for them … So from a teacher's viewpoint, for example going through [online streaming service] and saying 'these are the ones that I would recommend' helps narrow down the choice but students still have agency and voice and can pick what they want.

Nicole uses an online tool, where students can choose a song that they like and play an audio comprehension game where they have to fill in the gaps of missing words of the song's lyrics while listening to it. Since music is a very popular topic for adolescents, this game increases the students' level of engagement and usually leads to follow-up activities, such as reading and/or writing about their favourite music. With opportunities such as these, students' active choices of the resources they engage with can be aligned with their personal habits of media consumption. On a pedagogical level, students are accorded greater agency and autonomy and have increased control over their own learning processes (see Chapter 2).

To summarise, we can see that teachers of adolescent language learners highlight the following benefits of using digital technology (Reinders & Stockwell, 2017, p. 363):

- evaluation and assessment,
- giving feedback,
- individualisation and differentiation of language learning,
- authenticity and choice of L2 input, and
- empowerment of learners to make independent choices.

Obtaining these benefits from the use of digital technologies depends, of course, on each learning and teaching context, and the possibilities and constraints that teachers are dealing with. Therefore, the challenge for each teacher is to adapt available digital technologies to their own teaching environment, and successfully doing this is usually a continuous work-in-progress. In this next section we will continue to explore other pedagogic affordances of digital media.

## Social Language Learning and Game-Based Language Teaching and Learning

Two pedagogic affordances that are very relevant for adolescent language learners are social language learning and game-based language learning and teaching. Ideally, in teaching, they are in combination, but we will introduce them separately here.

'Social language learning' can be understood as being facilitated by interaction between learners, teachers, and sometimes also other speakers of the target language. It can further be classified as collaborative or cooperative learning and is grounded in the sociocultural theory of language learning (see Chapter 4). In collaborative learning scenarios, students work jointly on the same task whilst, in a cooperative setting, they subdivide tasks and work on them independently, assembling their individual sub-products towards a joint outcome. The important point is that the final product only results from joint effort and, ideally, is only achieved through use of the target language. Digital media tools or publication platforms can be used for these language learning projects where students are involved in working together towards a final project/outcome. Creating creative online texts (e.g. fan fiction) or video clips (using a mobile phone) in the target language in spoken and/or written form are examples which may help develop audio-visual literacy (Wilden, 2013) or provide a space for the development of plurilingual writing skills (Franceschi, 2017). Adolescent language learners, given these opportunities, which may be self-directed or teacher-led, increasingly function as so-called 'produsers' – where they are users and produsers of digital media content at the same time (Wilden, 2013). An example is when Nicole's students worked collaboratively on a digital storytelling project, writing a fairy tale with the help of online animation software. In another example, Nathaniel´s students jointly created a video report in the target language on sustainability in their home country.[1]

Social media can facilitate social learning through spoken or written interaction, also referred to as computer-mediated communication (CMC) (see Reinhardt, 2019 for an overview). We distinguish between synchronous (e.g. voice or text chat) and asynchronous (e.g. text message, blog) communication. While studies show benefits for the development of learners' writing skills (e.g. Zheng, Yim, & Warschauer et al., 2018) or intercultural competence (e.g. Wu & Marek, 2018), in a high

---

[1] www.goethe.de/ins/au/en/spr/eng/pas/umw.html

school context there seems to be a more nuanced approach towards the use of these technologies in the classroom. Nicole, for example, considers social media as part of her students' private, out-of-class learning activities, rather than something she sets up for them.

> Our senior students use [chat app] groups. They have pen pals in New Zealand, Switzerland, Germany. This means that everything that happens outside class is in social media. I often have no knowledge of this or I don´t have access. … The groups are not used by me, so I count myself lucky that I may participate. … My participation is minimal because I´ve learned that as soon as it is perceived as part of class, they lose interest. – Nicole
>
> (translated by the author)

Some teachers consider the private accounts that students have on social media as their own personal space and are reluctant to make use of them for language teaching activities. A feasible solution would be to create accounts that could be used exclusively for language classes, but teacher-initiated chat interactions might be perceived as less authentic and so less acceptable to students. Zheng et al. (2018) recommend the careful design of meaningful online collaboration tasks so that they include clear goals and guidelines for CMC collaboration, incorporating planning for diverse phases (from initiation to co-construction) and forms of collaboration (e.g. joint writing or parallel writing).

The other relevant field where digital media may produce pedagogic affordances is digital game-based language learning and teaching. Game-based language learning and teaching includes serious (or educational) games, gamification, and playful interaction (Deterding et al., 2011). Serious games incorporate a real question or problem as the main focus and learners enter a kind of (virtual) playing field; gamification only uses game mechanisms, such as time pressure, points, levels, rewards, missions, role-play, leader-boards, or risk-taking. These are transferred into a non-gaming context and the learner remains in the reality of, for example, the classroom.

Adolescent learners enjoy game-based learning because they learn holistically through, for example, action or role play. They usually like the tension and competitiveness that is associated with these games; these features can improve their ability to concentrate. Digital games also provide a safe space for practice and failure (see Cornillie et al., 2012 and Gee, 2012, for further benefits). Serious (video or online) games that are appropriate for language learning are increasingly being developed

and research on their implementation is steadily growing (e.g. Meyer & Sørensen, 2009; Reinders, 2012). As well as 'in-game' communication, language learning can be facilitated through in-game texts, online gaming platforms and discussion forums (Chik, 2012). Nevertheless, the high school language teachers we had contact with seemed to prefer to integrate aspects associated with gamification, rather than with serious games, into their classrooms. This might be explained by the easy availability of free online games that use simple mechanisms like multiple-choice quizzes. These are designed to assess learning playfully and competitively. Students can use their mobile devices to participate and the questions and answers are projected on the whiteboard (see Figure 7.3).

Nicole states that she uses these digital quizzes mainly to revise grammar and vocabulary taught in class and to replace traditional paper and pen vocab quizzes. In addition, she sometimes also integrates audio and video features into the quiz, so that listening skills can be assessed as well. One of the features of the tool that Nicole most appreciates is that she can see immediately what students are still struggling with and so give them direct feedback as a follow-up activity. Nicole also asks her students to not only select the right answer but also articulate it, thus incorporating



**Figure 7.3** Year 11 students playing a digital quiz on the topic of 'At the Doctor's'

oral language skills. Some of these quizzes also have a 'team mode', where students have to interact with each other to decide upon the right answer. This is an example of where social learning meets digital game-based learning. In best case scenarios, working in 'team mode' encourages learners to use the target language for their negotiations, so further contributing to language learning.

> If properly prepared it's fantastic. Because I don't only use [digital quiz] for vocabulary. I often use just German for the lower levels with pictures and sentences, encouraging reading comprehension, the deepening of vocab through visual learning and at a more advanced level also sentence structure and grammar, without making it explicit. And students are simply enthused and have fun. – Nicole
>
> (translated by the author)

Despite obvious benefits for engagement and motivation, research also points out some of the challenges of assessing students' learning through online quizzes. In their standard form, these quizzes are mostly limited to written receptive skills, often rely on translations, and credit is given for speed, rather than for other more relevant aspects of language learning (Erlam, 2017). We can see from Nicole's example, however, how some of these challenges can be addressed.

In conclusion, we would like to point out that digital games, in the sense of serious games, are usually not as integrated into the high school language classroom as gamification. This is mainly because they are mostly understood or appropriated as out-of-class activities and/or as a form of autonomous, informal language learning, rather than being seen as suitable for incorporation in classroom instruction (Chik, 2012).

The following section will look at the question of how digital media can open up the language classroom.

## Out-of-Class Learning

The third pedagogic area where digital media can create new and improved language learning opportunities for secondary students is out-of-class learning. This is the opening up of learning beyond the classroom, making use of other physical or virtual

> **Situated Learning**
> Also called contextual learning. Learners co-construct knowledge within a particular physical, social, and cultural context through activities that draw on this specific context (Pegrum, 2019)

learning spaces that create new possibilities for engagement with the target language. Out-of-class learning is understood here as learning which is beyond the walls of the classroom and less formal (e.g. not assessed), but which still has some connection to the lesson/course content of the language classroom. Examples are debating competitions or drama performances. While here the focus is on the ways in which teachers successfully integrate technology-based out-of-class learning activities with their classroom instruction, we acknowledge that a lot of these activities can be initiated by students themselves. The latter, examples of autonomous learning, might be carried out in parallel with the classroom environment. The concept of out-of-class learning is closely connected with theories of situated and mobile (assisted) language learning. Mobile language learning is one way of making out-of-class learning 'situated', that is, placing it into a specific context and making it relevant for a specific teaching and learning situation.

---

### The Advantages of Mobile (Assisted) Language Learning (MALL)

[The advantages] are immediate access to information, social networks, and situation-relevant help; flexible use of time and space for learning; continuity of learning between different settings; good alignment with personal needs and preferences; easy creation and sharing of simple content like photos, videos, and audio recordings; and greater opportunity for sustained language practice while carrying out activities such as walking, waiting, or commuting.

(Kukulska-Hulme, 2020)

---

Digital (mobile) technologies provide opportunities for language learning to be context-sensitive and location-specific. Examples of simple context-sensitive tasks are a photo safari or a sound rally where students collect visual or audio examples of the target language that they might be able to encounter in their everyday life and that serve as the basis for further (creative) activities and tasks in a more formal classroom setting.

> So the things that we're asking students to do outside of class ... they're mostly 'go and take a photo of four different things in this category knowing that you'll have to describe them in class the next day' or 'can you make a video of your habits in a certain environment? Can you just take a quick look around your house and take a video of four different things that you think harm the environment in your house? And then come into class and we're going to discuss them.' – Nathaniel

The following three classroom examples of increasing complexity illustrate different forms of situated learning using digital (mobile) technologies with adolescent language learners of German.

## Example 7.1  German Preposition Challenge

Nicole designed this task as an opportunity for learners to focus on one aspect of language form (see Chapter 5) that she had previously drawn their attention to in class: that is, prepositions. Students had to leave the classroom and explore their surroundings to take pictures of themselves and/or objects on the school campus that could illustrate prepositions. They then assembled their pictures in a PowerPoint presentation, wrote captions in German, and presented these to the class.

This example shows how students produced a description that combined a focus on both language form and meaning, using the context and location of their school. Co-constructing a product in the target language in this way is a holistic experience for the students.

## Example 7.2  Digital Scavenger Hunts

Earlier on in this chapter (in the discussion of the redefinition level of the SAMR model), we gave the example of Nathaniel's scavenger hunt using QR codes. For this type of activity, the principles are that teams or individual players use their mobile devices to compete for finding objects, reaching locations, or solving riddles in the target language. Digital scavenger hunts are an ideal example of situating language learning through the use of MALL. This allows for



Wir sind hinter einem Zaun

Mein Fuss ist über einer Blume
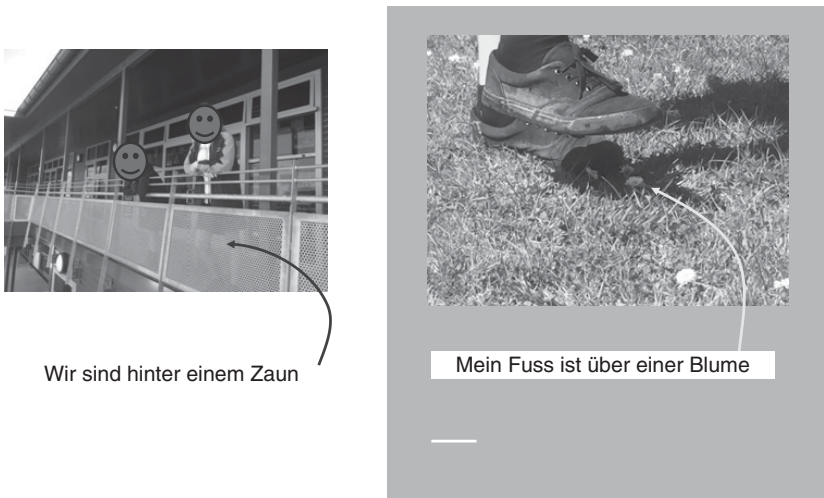
**Figure 7.4** Example slide from preposition challenge

a synthesis of both mobility- and context-sensitive and location-specific learning. Nicole points out that she primarily restricts the use of MALL to out-of-class activities:

> For most things we do in class we don´t use mobile phones. Students have to ask for special permission if they want to use their mobile phones. If we do a modern form of a scavenger hunt, then we use them. Everything that requires the use of devices outside the classroom is easier with smartphones.
>
> (translated by the author)

## Example 7.3 'Enterprise German'

Nathaniel's school participated in a larger project which had a professional orientation, and which combined project-based learning with content and language integrated learning (German and Economics).[2] The aim was to profile a German company which was based in their own country, to develop a business idea, and to conduct an advertising campaign to promote this product. Students were encouraged to choose different digital media formats (text, photo, music, video, brochure, poster, etc.) to present the results of the different sub-tasks of the project. These were, for example, to explore their local industrial context, profile their partner company, and develop their product. Digital technologies served as tools for the creation of these sub-tasks and also for communication with project members and partners. The most successful group designed an app that helped to locate lost glasses or mobile phones. In this project, as part of the out-of-class learning experience, students had to connect the task context with local industry and practice. It was situated in a specific environment that was meaningful for the students because it provided insight into the vocational, industrial, and social contexts of their city and country.

As we have seen in these three examples, digital technologies can open up the classroom in different ways and to different extents. The common feature of all is that they combine the interlinking of local places, spaces, and situations to create more meaningful and holistic learning opportunities.

## Summary of This Chapter

In this chapter, we have discussed the concept of critical digital literacy and the role it plays in language classrooms. We have also investigated the many different ways in which digital technologies may open up learning opportunities for language students.

---

[2] Project video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT1qmGErIiw&feature=emb_rel_end

## Key Points

- Being digitally literate (in any language) is not just being a competent user of digital media but involves a range of skills including the critical-reflective and productive use of these technologies.
- Teachers' digital competence is crucial for facilitating learners' critical digital competence.
- Technology can substitute for, or augment, non-digital media, but it can also modify or redefine classroom activities and tasks.
- (Mobile) digital technologies can be integrated meaningfully into language classrooms as part of communicative and awareness-raising language learning activities.
- Digital media can be used to make instruction more appropriate to learners' individual interests and learning needs.
- Digital media can be used to create affordances for social language learning with opportunities for learning through interaction.
- Adolescent learners may appreciate the types of learning experiences that digital games create.
- Digital technologies can open up opportunities for learning outside of the classroom and for situated learning within specific physical, social, and cultural contexts.

## Reflection and Discussion

1 What do you consider important in chapter 7 that you would like to implement in your own context? What would you have to adapt and how?
2 From your own experience, how do adolescents react to the use of digital media in the language classroom?
3 Which factors do you consider might facilitate or constrain the use of digital media in your own teaching context (include external as well as internal factors)?
4 How has the use of digital media changed the language teaching and learning in your context? How might greater use of digital media be made in this context?
5 If you (or teachers you have observed) use digital media for language teaching: What for/what is the goal? At which level of the SAMR model would you place these activities?
6 Which digital tools could you use to support creative and collaborative writing? If you have experience using digital media in these ways, what benefits and limitations did you observe? How could a teacher support students to deal with these limitations?

**7** How do or might you (or teachers you have observed) foster interaction in the foreign language through the use of digital media? Does gamification play a role in your context and if so, how?

**8** Do your learners (or learners you have observed) use digital media (outside the classroom) and with what goals? Which advantages and disadvantages of using digital media for language learning outside the classroom have you observed? Compare your experiences and perspectives.

## Further Reading

Kaliampos, J., & Schmidt, T. (2014). Web 2.0 tasks in action: EFL learning in the U.S. Embassy school election project 2012. *American Studies Journal*, 58. Online: www.asjournal.org/58–2014/efl-learning-in-the-u-s-embassy-school-election-project–2012/

This paper describes a project where 1,400 German students learning English as a foreign language in Grades 11 and 12 produced an election forecast for an assigned US state. This 'U.S. Embassy school election project 2012' allowed for the use of Web 2.0 applications in the language classroom. It provides an example of how computer assisted language learning (CALL), intercultural learning, and a task-based project can be implemented in the classroom to explore a topic that is personally relevant and interesting to young language learners. The paper investigates in detail how three young learners responded to the project and also presents the products for learners that resulted from the project.

## For Reflection and Discussion

(a) How do you think the project task and digital media influenced the learners' motivation to engage with the target language online?

(b) How would you monitor and support learners' performance in an online learning environment like the one in the article?

(c) Can you think of a topic that would be of interest for your context, where students could explore the target language and culture digitally? Which digital platforms/tools would you use and what guidance would you give?

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# Conclusion

We have made, we hope, a strong argument throughout this book for the value of teaching languages to adolescents. We, ourselves, learnt at least one foreign language as adolescents, and for us, these experiences contributed to shaping the professional directions that our lives took! Having recounted the stories and expertise of the teachers in this book, we add below brief accounts of our own adolescent experiences of learning languages (we think that it is largely coincidental that we all learnt French!). As you read about our language learning experiences and the reasons we give for our success, see if you can recognise some of the themes that run through this book.

> I started learning French and Latin at High School when I was 13. They quickly became my favourite subjects. Looking back, I think that I had quite an analytical mind as I enjoyed working out the structure and grammar of these languages, however my French teacher never seemed hundred per cent happy with my accent. But, more importantly, I had teachers who believed in me and had high expectations of my ability to achieve. My French teacher was unusual perhaps, for the times, because he gave us opportunities to speak French, and, realising that I could, was very empowering. Although it seemed impossible at the time, I dreamed of going to France!
> – Rosemary
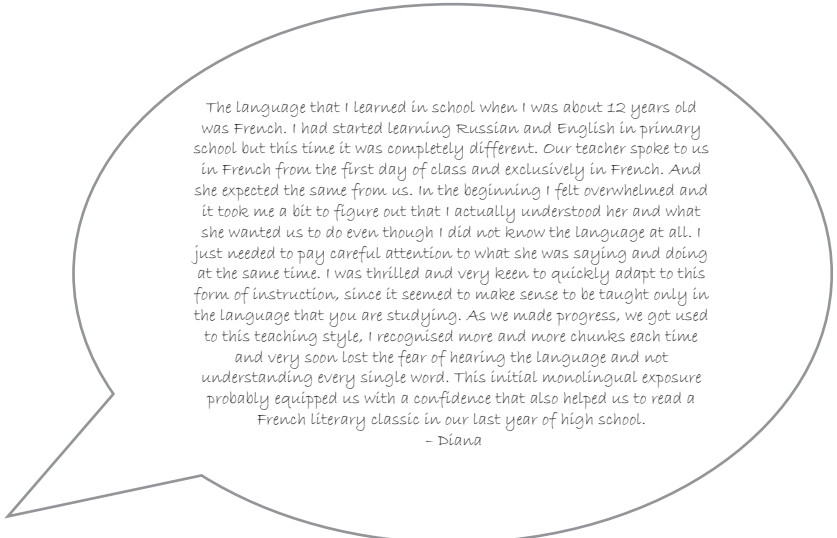
Rosemary highlights how her teachers had high expectations for her achievement, an example of how a classroom needs to provide *environmental challenge*, along with, of course, *support* (Shernoff et al., 2017). She also refers to the importance of having opportunities to speak French, that is, produce *output*, and to how motivating the experience of success was for her. She had an image of an

'*ideal L2 self*' (Dörnyei, 2005), that is, that one day she would speak French in France. This was very motivating for her. Interestingly, in terms of *language aptitude*, she seems to think that she may have had good '*language analytic ability*' because she enjoyed seeing the patterns in languages (an example of how adolescents develop metalinguistic awareness). At the same time, she did not feel so confident in her ability to 'sound' French. However, she still made good progress! (Here and below, we italicise some of the main terms and concepts we have written about elsewhere.)

> I learnt French at High School. In our last 2 years of school. I had a very enthusiastic teacher, Beverly, who keenly tried out the latest methods in language teaching at the time – we did oral pair work, we listened to audio recordings of French, she invited her French speaker friends so we could try talking and listening to a native speaker. Her approach to learning included implicit learning of how French worked: she would give us sentences and we had to work out the meaning and the grammar. When my family moved to another country in my final year, my experience was totally different. On my first day in French, the students were writing a text dictated by the teacher and my homework consisted of long word lists to be memorised. Next day they wrote two paragraphs, carefully written with correct grammar. I had no formal grammar, no idea of what past historic or subjunctive were but I could write stories pages long (with many errors). The combination of my two experiences meant that in the end I was able to write stories that were both long and correct!
> – Jenefer

Jenefer recounts two very different experiences, in two different schools with two different teachers. Her first teacher, Beverly, gave her lots of opportunities to hear language *input* and to produce language *output* in interaction with classmates. There was less of a *focus on form* and the approach was *inductive*, that is, they had to work grammar patterns out for themselves. The second school was a shock because the approach was so different. This time, the primary emphasis seemed to be on the teaching of *language formS* (Long, 1991), that is, on the *explicit* teaching of vocabulary and grammar. Being creative with language and using it *communicatively* was less important than writing accurately. Nevertheless, it is very interesting to note that Jenefer's overall conclusion is that each approach had some merit and contributed to her learning. We will return, below, to the notion of how ideas about successful language teaching have changed and evolved over time.

The language that I learned in school when I was about 12 years old was French. I had started learning Russian and English in primary school but this time it was completely different. Our teacher spoke to us in French from the first day of class and exclusively in French. And she expected the same from us. In the beginning I felt overwhelmed and it took me a bit to figure out that I actually understood her and what she wanted us to do even though I did not know the language at all. I just needed to pay careful attention to what she was saying and doing at the same time. I was thrilled and very keen to quickly adapt to this form of instruction, since it seemed to make sense to be taught only in the language that you are studying. As we made progress, we got used to this teaching style, I recognised more and more chunks each time and very soon lost the fear of hearing the language and not understanding every single word. This initial monolingual exposure probably equipped us with a confidence that also helped us to read a French literary classic in our last year of high school.

– Diana

Diana had a teacher whose approach seems to be the most progressive of the three, in that she realised just how powerful it is to expose learners to large amounts of language *input*. She literally submerged the learners in the language, at the same time obviously being able to ensure that students could understand what they heard. Notice that Diana mentions how she needed to *attend* very carefully to this input and work to decipher it. This is a very good example of Krashen's (1985) Input + 1, that is, language that is within the learner's reach but which they have to work at to understand. Diana mentions the insecurity that she initially felt (something that adolescents often struggle with), but this approach also helped her overcome this, not least because she realised how much progress she was making, and she was also able to see the reason for why the teacher taught as she did.

## Changes in Approaches to Language Teaching

Our respective language learning experiences (about which we give only brief information here) represent, to some extent, different approaches to language teaching. These approaches are reflective of certain time periods and sets of beliefs about language learning that characterised those time periods. The way that beliefs about what constitutes effective language teaching have changed is highlighted in a conversation Rosemary had with a friend. Lee described the experience of her 12-year-old son, Ben, beginning to learn another language; in this case, it was French again! What was

interesting about this conversation was that the boy's mother, Lee, described, with an element of mistrust, how different the modern methods of teaching seemed to be. Different, that was, to her experience of learning back in the 1970s. She spoke with some enthusiasm of the memories of the series of books she had: one for grammar, one for vocabulary, another for reading, and so on. This conversation with Lee highlights, indeed, just how much language teaching has changed and how potentially confusing and, perhaps, even worrying that can be for parents and for non-experts. The reason for this, of course, is that understanding about learning another language, that is, the field of second language acquisition (SLA) has grown enormously during recent times. With that understanding has come a growing awareness of what effective language teaching should 'look like' in terms of classroom practice. This understanding is informed by a huge research literature in the field of second language learning and teaching. In writing this book, we drew, of course, on this research evidence. We were helped enormously by one document, written by an eminent scholar in the field, Distinguished Professor Rod Ellis.

In 2005, the Ministry of Education in New Zealand asked Ellis to write a synthesis from the research literature of theory and factors underlying the effective instruction of foreign languages in the classroom context. This report, entitled, *Instructed Second Language Acquisition: A Literature Review*, coincided with the development of a new curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007), and informed the professional development of language teachers (Erlam, 2008). Ellis (2005) came up with ten principles, which he gleaned from a very extensive research literature investigating what makes for effective language teaching in classroom contexts. We list them in Table 8.1. Ellis was very careful to say that teachers needed to see these principles as provisional and to try them out in their own teaching contexts. We would endorse that. Good teachers are continually trying out and modifying understanding about language teaching in relation to their own learners and classroom contexts. Ellis's ten principles informed the writing of this book and our view of what successful language teaching would 'look like' in the language classroom. As you read them, see if you can make links to themes that you have encountered in other chapters.

If we look at these principles, which represent common understanding from second language acquisition literature about what constitutes effective language teaching/learning, we can see how they might account for some of the differences between the experiences that adolescent language learners may have today, and those their parents and/or their grandparents may have had. We present a number of scenarios below of an activity as it might have played out in a 'conventional' classroom

> **Table 8.1** Principles of instructed second language acquisition (SLA)
>
> 1. Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.
> 2. Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.
> 3. Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.
> 4. Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge.
> 5. Instruction needs to take into account learners' 'built-in syllabus'.
> 6. Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input.
> 7. Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.
> 8. The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency.
> 9. Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.
> 10. In assessing learners' L2 proficiency it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.
>
> (Ellis, 2005)

and of how it might be taught, as informed by understanding of good principles of language teaching and learning. As you read each scenario, see if you can identify how what we describe in the more progressive classroom may constitute 'language teaching' practice which could lead to opportunities for learning. Then you might like to read our comment and see how we establish links with the themes that we have written about in this book (we put key words in italics).

## Scenario 1

The students are working through a unit on clothing. As part of this they have been learning the vocabulary and language to talk about clothes they might wear.

| In the conventional classroom | In the more progressive classroom |
|---|---|
| They describe to each other the clothes that they are wearing or talk/write about clothes in pictures they are given. | They have a fashion parade at the end of their unit on clothing, as a teacher describes in East (2012). They describe, in the target language, what their classmates are wearing as they walk down the fashion runway. |

**Our comment:** Students in the progressive classroom may have to *push their output* to be able to use the type of language that the fashion world uses for describing clothes. Their language use will be more *meaningful* and *authentic* in

that it relates to the way language is used in the real world. This task might be more *motivating.*

## Scenario 2

The students are working on a unit that focuses on animals. They are also learning to make comparisons such as X is shorter than Y, and so on.

**In the conventional classroom**

Students do exercises to practise comparisons. Later, they write a description of different animals. The teacher puts these descriptions on the wall, or pastes them into a book.

**In the more progressive classroom**

One teacher, Elizabeth, gave her students riddles where they had to work out what animal she was describing. In these riddles she made comparisons (e.g. I am smaller than an elephant but bigger than a dog). She then got the students to notice the comparative forms in the target language and she explained them. When her students had worked to solve a number of her riddles, she got them to write riddles for each other. They had to check that they used the comparative forms correctly before they could read these out in class and get their classmates to guess them (Erlam, 2013).

**Our comment:** Elizabeth first gave her students lots of aural language *input*, before she got them to produce language *output*. She introduced the language focus (comparatives) in a *meaningful* context, and got students to *notice* these before giving *explicit instruction* about them. Then she got students to produce written *output*. They had to *pay attention* to the comparative forms to make sure they were correct. Finally, when the riddles were ready to be read out, students had to listen (they got additional *input* from listening to each other) in order to work out the riddles.

## Scenario 3

Beginner learners have been learning numbers and months; they are able to say when their birthday is.

**In the conventional classroom**

They have to tell a classmate when their birthday is.

**In the more progressive classroom**

One teacher of Samoan, Eleanor, told the class that they were going to conduct a survey to find out what was the most popular month for birthdays. Each student had to ask every other student in the class when their birthday was, and to keep a record of this information, so that they could establish the month with most birthdays. At the end of the lesson the class worked together to make a graph to depict what they had established (see Figure 8.1) – that May had the most birthdays!

**Our comment:** Students in Eleanor's class were likely to be *motivated* to have a real purpose to ask their peers about their birthdays. In completing this task, the students had a lot of opportunity to *interact* with each other and to develop *fluency* in Samoan as they *practised* the same language forms over and over again. Most importantly, they were using the language to *communicate* with each other and to find out something they didn't know (when each other's birthdays were).

## Scenario 4

The class topic has been 'parties' and the teacher would like the students to use the language and vocabulary they have encountered.

| **In the conventional classroom** | **In the more progressive classroom** |
|---|---|
| Students act out a role play of their 'party' experience that the teacher has given them. | A teacher of Japanese put students into pairs or small groups to plan a party together. They had to discuss and agree on the type of music and food they would like, when and where it would be held, etc. |

**Our comment:** This task allowed students the *autonomy* to use their own language and to decide what sort of party they wanted! It also allowed them to *push their language output*, to ask each other or the teacher for words and expressions they might not know. As they *interacted* in the target language together, they would have had opportunities to learn (e.g. *negotiate meaning*
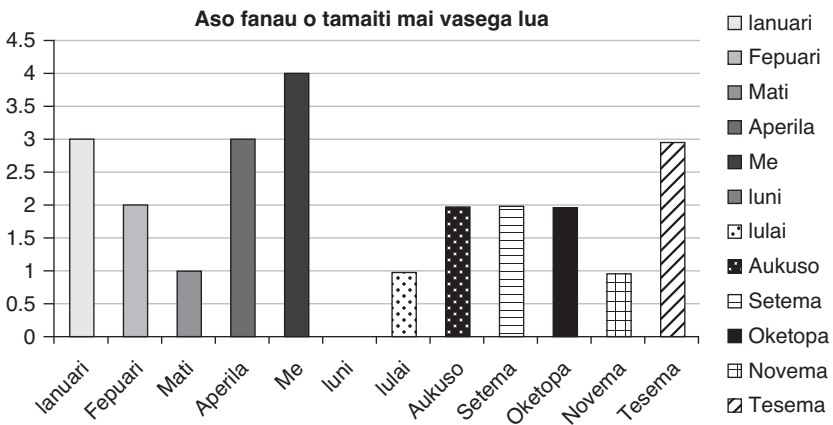


**Figure 8.1** Birthdays of the children in the class

together, give each other *corrective feedback* etc.) that they might not have had in just acting out a scripted role play.

In considering all these scenarios, it is too simple to say that the traditional classroom 'had it all wrong' and that the more modern classroom is the only one that will lead to learner success. After all, some of our own language learning experiences typified approaches that were more characteristic of the traditional classroom, and yet we have all been successful in our language learning. Jenefer's story is particularly interesting because she seems to have had experiences that were very contrasting and the differences between the two classrooms she describes is one that stands out to her years later. In the first classroom, she had opportunities to hear a lot of language input, to use it in interacting with her classmates and to challenge herself to produce language output as she wrote long stories in French. If we look once again at Nation's four strands, it would seem, from what Jenefer says about what she remembers, that this first classroom learning experience incorporated strands 1, 2, and 4. Jenefer was fortunate to be able to learn this way because research has demonstrated consistently that students need to have extensive exposure to meaningful language input and opportunities to produce language output for communicative purposes. This is especially true of adolescent learners, who wants authentic encounters with the language they are learning, the chance to test their language abilities in the real world. In the second classroom, Jenefer had more opportunity

> ## Nation's Four Strands
>
> Nation (2007) argues that a well-balanced language course should consist of four roughly equal strands:
>
> 1 Meaning-focused input
> 2 Meaning-focused output
> 3 Language-focused learning
> 4 Fluency development

to learn about language form, to gain explicit knowledge of the French language and to use that knowledge to produce language output which was more accurate. Here it would seem that there was a focus on strand 3.

In conventional classrooms, language-focused learning (strand 3), characterised by an explicit focus on the language, tended to dominate, and in some classrooms was the only or main aspect of language learning that the teacher considered important. This was unfortunate as students who learnt with this approach tended to do well at translation and reading in the target language, but often had difficulty using it communicatively. However, as Jenefer concludes, there is need for some emphasis

on 'language-focused' learning. Her second classroom experience made up for an imbalance in the previous experience, where explicit attention to language form was missing. In this book, we have very much argued for balance in terms of classroom focus. The challenge for the teacher today is to ensure attention to all of Nation's four strands, and not repeat some of the mistakes that different approaches to language teaching have taken in the past, that is, to overemphasise some and/or ignore others.

In this book, we have not endorsed any one approach to language teaching. However, as Ellis (2005) concludes from his literature review, one approach is particularly helpful for teachers who want to embody the ten principles in their classroom practice. This approach is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). We refer those who would like to know more about TBLT to an excellent book, *Doing Task-Based Teaching*, by Willis & Willis (2007). Many of the lessons that we have referred to, in our book, contain examples of tasks. However, we want our readers to see beyond the notion of task, or a particular approach to teaching, and to understand principles that account for good language teaching. It would be possible for a teacher to teach a task where none or few of the principles were in evidence, and conversely for a teacher to use an activity in a classroom which would not be classified as a task and yet which embodied the principles likely to promote successful acquisition.

In reading this book, you will have noticed that there is a chapter that does not directly 'speak to' Ellis's principles. This is Chapter 7, on digital media. We have included this chapter because we are excited by how this technology may open up opportunities (or affordances, the word we use in the chapter) for language learning. In other words, digital media may be used to help teachers find ways to successfully implement principles of language learning in their classrooms. As you look back over the four scenarios we described above, you might like to think of how this technology might also have been used to enhance the learning experiences for students.

In this conclusion, we have focused on Ellis's (2005) principles and we have referred again, as we do throughout the book, to Nation's (2007) strands. Neither of these, however, are enough to account for language learning success. Ellis (2005) was the first to say that the principles are not exhaustive. One crucial dimension that is lacking is understanding about the importance of establishing the type of classroom environment where students are willing to put in the effort that they need to make in order to learn. A language teacher might be an expert in implementing an approach which 'ticks all the boxes' in terms of the principles characteristic of the effective language classroom. However, if teachers are unable

to establish positive relationships with their students and to set up inclusive and supportive learning environments, their efforts will be in vain. We have drawn from the field of education to incorporate a focus on how language teachers might do this. In particular, we have explored those features of the classroom environment that are important for adolescent language learners. Once again, we think that adolescence is a prime time for language learning!

We would like to conclude this book by paying tribute to the teachers to whom we talked, and in particular to those who allowed us inside their classrooms to observe their language teaching practice. We consider that this was a tremendous privilege and we were humbled by their hard work, their dedication, and their professional expertise. In writing this book, we are excited to share with you the wonderful ways in which we saw them implementing the theory and principles of what we, as academics, know, from the literature, account for success in language learning, in particular for the adolescent learner.

# APPENDIX

## Jessica's snake game

In winter?

What do you like to do in summer?

When it's hot?

What do you like doing with your friends?

Do you like the cinema?

What do you like to do at the weekend?

When it's cold?

How about your friend, what does she like to do?

What don't you doing?

Do you like music?

Are you sporty?

What's your favourite music?

Do you like technology?

Do you like sport?

What do you do on your mobile?

In the evening?

Who is your favourite sports person?

How are you?

Talk in French for 30 seconds!

START!

FINISH!

# References

Abeysekera, L., and Dawson, P. (2015). Motivation and cognitive load in the flipped classroom: Definition, rationale and a call for research. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 34(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.934336

Abrahamsson, N., and Hyltenstam, K. (2008). The robustness of aptitude effects in near-native second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 30(4), 481–509. https://doi.org/10.1017/S027226310808073X

Alegria de la Colina, A., and del Pilar García Mayo, M. (2009). Oral interaction in task-based EFL learning: The use of the L1 as a cognitive tool. *IRAL – International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 47(3–4), 325–345. https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.2009.014

Alexander, B., Adams Becker, S., and Cummins, M. (2016). Digital literacy: An NMC Horizon Project strategic brief. *Horizon Project*, 3(3). Austin, TX: New Media Consortium.

Al-Homoud, F., and Schmitt, N. (2009). Extensive reading in a challenging environment: A comparison of extensive and intensive reading approaches in Saudi Arabia. *Language Teaching Research*, 33(4), 383–401.

Allen, J. P., Swain, M., Harley, B., and Cummins, J. (1990). Aspects of classroom treatment: Towards a more comprehensive view of second language education. In B. Harley, J. P. Allen, J. Cummins, and M. Swain, eds., *The Development of Second Language Proficiency* (pp. 57–81). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aston, G. (1993). Notes on the interlanguage of comity. In G. Kasper and S. Blum-Kulka, eds., *Interlanguage Pragmatics* (pp. 224–250). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Auerbach, E. R. (1993). Reexamining English only in the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(1), 9–32. https://doi.org/10.2307/3586949

Baars, B. J. (1997). In the theatre of consciousness: Global workspace theory, a rigorous scientific theory of consciousness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 4(4), 292–309.

Baddeley, A. (2003). Working memory and language: An overview. *Journal of Communication Disorders*, 36(3), 189–208. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0021-9924(03)00019–4

Batstone, R., and Philp, J. (2013). Classroom interaction and learning across time and space. In K. McDonough and A. Mackey, eds., *Second Language Interaction in Diverse Educational Contexts* (pp. 109–128). Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Bekar, M., and Christiansen, M. S. (2018). Computer-mediated communication (CMC). In J. I. Liontas and M. DelliCarpini, eds., *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0816

Berman, R. (2007). Language knowledge and use across adolescence. In E. Hoff and M. Shatz, eds., *Blackwell Handbook of Language Development* (pp. 347–367). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., and Cocking, R. R., eds. (1999). *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, School*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467–1770.1996.tb01246.x

Breen, M., ed. (2001). *Learner Contributions to Language Learning: New Directions in Research* . Harlow: Pearson Education.

Brown, H. D., and Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*, 2nd ed. New York: Pearson Longman.

Bygate, M., and Samuda, V. (2009). Creating pressure in task pedagogy: The joint roles of field, purpose and engagement within the interaction approach. In A. Mackey and C. Polio, eds., *Multiple Perspectives on Interaction: Second Language Research in Honor of Susan M. Gass* (pp. 90–116). New York, NY: Routledge.

Carlson, R. A. (2003). Skill learning. In L. Nadel, ed., *Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science* (Vol. IV, pp. 36–42). London: Macmillan.

Chik, A. (2012). Digital gameplay for autonomous foreign language learning: Gamers' and language teachers' perspectives. In H. Reinders, ed., *Digital Games in Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. 95–114). London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137005267_6

Chung, K. K. H., and Lam, C. B. (2020). Cognitive linguistic skills underlying word reading and spelling difficulties in Chinese adolescents with dyslexia. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 53(1), 48–59.

Cobb, T. (2018). Technology for teaching reading. In J. I. Liontas and M. DelliCarpini eds., *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235 .eelt0444

Collins, L., and Muñoz, C. (2016). The foreign language classroom: Current perspectives and future considerations. *The Modern Language Journal*, 100 (S1), 133–147. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12305

Cook, T. D., Deng, Y., and Morgano, E. (2007). Friendship influences during early adolescence: The special role of friends' grade point average.

*Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 17(2), 325–356. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532–7795.2007.00525.x

Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(3), 402–423. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.57.3.402

Cornillie, F., Clarebout, G., and Desmet, P. (2012). Between learning and playing? Exploring learners' perceptions of corrective feedback in an immersive game for English pragmatics. *ReCALL*, 24(3), 257–278. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344012000146

Craik, F. I. M., and Lockhart, R. S. (1972). Levels of processing: A framework for memory research. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 11(6), 671–684. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-5371(72)80001-X

Crone, E. (2011). *Das pubertierende Gehirn. Wie Kinder erwachsen werden*. Munich: Droemer.

Crookes, G., and Schmidt, R. (1991). Motivation: Reopening the research agenda. *Language Learning*, 41(4), 469–512. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467–1770.1991.tb00690.x

Cummins, J. (2015). Inclusion and language learning: Pedagogical principles for integrating students from marginalized groups in the mainstream classroom. In C. Bongartz and A. Rohde, eds., *Inklusion im Englischunterricht* (pp. 95–116). Frankfurt: Peter Lang Edition.

Dawes, L. (2004). Research report: Talk and learning in classroom science. *International Journal of Science Education*, 26(6), 677–695. https://doi.org/10.1080/0950069032000097424

De Bot, K. (1996). The psycholinguistics of the output hypothesis. *Language Learning*, 46(3), 529–555. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467–1770.1996.tb01246.x

Deci, E., and Ryan, R. (1985). *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behaviour*. New York, NY: Plenum.

DeKeyser, R. (1998). Beyond focus on form: Cognitive perspectives on learning and practicing second language grammar. In C. Doughty and J. Williams, eds., *Focus on Form in Classroom Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 42–63). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

DeKeyser, R. (2000). The robustness of critical periods in second language acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 22(4), 493–533. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100004022

DeKeyser, R. (2007). Situating the concept of practice. In R. DeKeyser, ed., *Practice in a Second Language: Perspectives from Applied Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology* (pp. 1–18). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Deterding, S., Khaled, R., Nacke, L., and Dixon, D. (2011). Gamification: Toward a definition. *CHI 2011 Gamification Workshop Proceedings* (pp. 12–15). Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Dewaele, J., Witney, J., Saito, K., and Dewaele, L. (2018). Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety: The effect of teacher and learner variables. *Language Teaching Research*, 22(6), 676–697.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and motivating in second language learning. *Modern Language Journal*, 78(3), 273–284. doi:10.2307/330107

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Teaching and Researching Motivation*. London: Longman Pearson.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z., and Maldarez, A. (1997). Group dynamics and foreign language learning. *System*, 25(1), 65–81. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(96)00061–9

Dörnyei, Z., and Ryan, S. (2015). *The Psychology of the Language Learner Revisited*. New York/London: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z., and Ushoida, E., eds. (2009). *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Dotterer, A. M., McHale, S. M., and Crouter, A. C. (2009). The development and correlates of academic interests from childhood through adolescence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(2), 509–519. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013987

Doughty, C., and Williams, J., eds. (1998). *Focus-on-Form in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Duchesne, S., and McMaugh, A. (2016). *Educational Psychology for Learning and Teaching*, 5th ed. Melbourne, Australia: Cengage Learning.

East, M. (2012). *Task-Based Language Teaching from the Teachers' Perspective*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins.

Edstrom, A. (2006). L1 use in the L2 classroom: One teacher's self-evaluation. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(2), 275–292. doi:10.1353/cml.2007.0002

Elder, C., Erlam, R., and Philp, J. (2007). Explicit language knowledge and focus on form: Options and obstacles for TESOL teacher trainees. In S. Fotos and H. Nassaji, eds., *Form-Focused Instruction and Teacher Education: Studies in Honour of Rod Ellis* (pp. 225–240). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elkind, D. (1967). Egocentrism in adolescence. *Child Development*, 38(4), 1025–1034.

Elley, W. B., and Mangubhai, E. (1981). *The Impact of a Book Flood in Fiji Primary Schools*. Wellington, New Zealand: NZCER.

Ellis, N. C. (1996). Sequencing in SLA: Phonological memory, chunking and points of order. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18(1), 91–126. doi:10.1017/S0272263100014698

Ellis, N. C. (2005). At the interface: Dynamic interactions of explicit and implicit language knowledge. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27(2), 305–352. https://doi.org/10.1017/S027226310505014X

Ellis, N. C., and Wulff, S. (2015). Usage-based approaches in second language acquisition. In B. VanPatten and J. Williams, eds., *Theories in Second Language Acquisition*, pp. 75–93. New York, NY: Routledge.

Ellis, R. (2005). *Instructed Second Language Acquisition: A Literature Review*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40, 83–108.

Ellis, R. (2008). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (2012). *Language Teaching Research and Language Pedagogy*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Ellis, R., and Shintani, N. (2014). *Exploring Language Pedagogy through Second Language Acquisition Research*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Erlam, R. (2005). Language aptitude and its relationship to instructional effectiveness in second language acquisition. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(2), 147–171. https://doi.org/10.1191/1362168805lr161oa

Erlam, R. (2008). What do you researchers know about language teaching? Bridging the gap between SLA research and language pedagogy. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 2(3), 253–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501220802158958

Erlam, R. (2013). Listing and comparing tasks in the language classroom: Examples of Willis and Willis's (2007) taxonomy in practice. *The New Zealand Language Teacher*, 39, 7–14.

Erlam, R. (2017). Is it ok to use Kahoot for assessment in the language classroom? *Language Assessment Matters*, 8, 3–5. Retrieved from www.altaanz.org/uploads/5/9/0/8/5908292/altaanz_newsletter_issue_8_october_2017.pdf

Erlam, R., and Ellis, R. (2018). Task-based language teaching for beginner-level learners of L2 French: An exploratory study. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 71(1), 1–26.

Erlam, R., and Pimentel-Hellier, M. (2017). Opportunities to attend to language form in the adolescent near-beginner foreign language classroom. *Language Awareness*, 26(2), 59–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2017.1314487

Feser, J. (2015). The disruptive nature of mobile learning. In C. Udell and G. Woodill, eds., *Mastering Mobile Learning: Tips and Techniques for Success* (pp. 21–30). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Firth, A., and Wagner, J. (1997). On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81(3), 285–300. doi:10.2307/329302

Firth, A., and Wagner, J. (2007). Second/foreign language learning as a social accomplishment: elaborations on a reconceptualized SLA. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(1), 800–819. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540–4781 .2007.00670.x

Franceschi, V. (2017). *Exploring Plurilingualism in Fan Fiction: ELF Users as Creative Writers*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Fredericks, J., Blumenfeld, P., and Paris, A. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109.

Frederikson, N., and Cline, T. (2002). *Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Diversity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gardner, M., and Steinberg, L. (2005). Peer influence on risk taking, risk preference and risky decision making in adolescence and adulthood: An experimental study. *Developmental Psychology*, 41(4), 625–635. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.41.4.625

Gass, S. M. (1997). *Input, Interaction and the Second Language Learner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Gass, S.M., and Mackey, A. (2006). Input, interaction and output: An overview. *AILA Review*, 19, 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.19.03gas

Gass, S.M., and Selinker, L. (2001). *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*, 2nd ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Gee, J. P. 2012. Foreword. In H. Reinders, ed., *Digital Games in Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. xii–xiv). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gibbons, P. (2007). Mediating academic language learning through classroom discourse. In J. Cummins, and C. Davison, eds., *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp. 701–718). Boston, MA: Springer.

Goetz, T., Ludtke, O., Nett, U. E., Keller, M. M., and Lipnevich, A. A. (2013). Characteristics of teaching and students' emotions in the classroom: Investigating differences across domains. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 38(4), 383–394. https://doi.org/10.1016/j .cedpsych.2013.08.001

Gray, S. (2012). Inclusive academic language teaching in New Zealand: History and responses. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 32(3), 317–332.

Green, A. (2014). *Exploring Language Assessment and Testing: Language in Action*. New York: Routledge.

Hadfield, J., and Dörnyei, Z. (2013). *Motivating Learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Hallahan, D. P., Kauffman, J. M., and Pullen, P. C. (2009). *Exceptional Learners: An Introduction to Special Education*, 11th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Harley, B., and Swain, M. (1978). An analysis of the verb system used by young learners of French. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 3, 35–79.

Harmer, J. (2012). *Essential Teacher Knowledge: Core Concepts in English Language Teaching*. Harlow: Pearson.

Harmer, J. (2015). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Harlow: Pearson.

Hartup, W. W. (1989). Social relationships and their developmental significance. *American Psychologist*, 44(2), 120–126. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.2.120

Hartup, W. W. (2009). Critical issues and theoretical viewpoints. In K. H. Rubin, W. M. Bukowski and B. Laursen, eds., *Handbook of Peer Interactions, Relationships and Groups* (pp. 3–19). New York, NY: The Guildford Press.

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible Learning*. New York/London: Routledge.

Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Ltd.

Hockly, N., and Dudeney, G. (2017). Digital learning in 2020. In M. Carrier, R. M. Damerow, and K. M. Bailey, eds., *Digital Language Learning and Teaching: Research, Theory, and Practice* (pp. 235–246). New York/London: Routledge.

Hornberger, N. H., and Link, H. (2012). Translanguaging and transnational literacies in multilingual classrooms: A biliteracy lens. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 15(3), 261–278. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2012.658016

Kaliampos, J., and Schmidt, T. (2014). Web 2.0 tasks in action: EFL learning in the U.S. Embassy School election project 2012. *American Studies Journal*, 58. Online: www.asjournal.org/58–2014/efl-learning-in-the-u-s-embassy-school-election-project–2012/

Kang, S.-J. (2005). Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language. *System*, 33(2), 277–292. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2004.10.004

Keenan, J. M., and MacWhinney, B. (1987). Understanding the relationship between comprehension and production. In H. W. Dechert and M. Raupach, eds., *Psycholinguistic Models of Production* (pp. 150–155). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Kormos, J., Kiddle, T., and Csizér, K. (2011). Systems of goals, attitudes and self-related beliefs in second language-learning motivation. *Applied Linguistics*, 32(5), 495–516. doi:10.1093/applin/amr019

Kormos, J., and Smith, A. M. (2012). *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Krashen, S. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. London: Longman.

Kukulska-Hulme, A. (2020). Mobile assisted language learning. In C. A. Chapelle, ed., *The Concise Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0768.pub2

Kurth-Buchholz, E. (2011). *Schülermitbestimmung aus Sicht von Schülern und Lehrern: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung an Gymnasien in Brandenberg und Nordrheim-Westfalen* . Munster: Waxmann.

Lambert, C., Philp, J., and Nakamura, S. (2017). Learner-generated content and engagement in second language task performance. *Language Teaching Research*, 21(6), 665–680.

Landrum, T. J., and McDuffie, K. A. (2010). Learning styles in the age of differentiated instruction. *Exceptionality*, 18(1), 6–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/09362830903462441

Lantolf, J. P., and Beckett, T. G. (2009). Sociocultural theory and second language acquisition. *Language Teaching*, 42(4), 459–475. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444809990048

Larsen-Freeman, D., and Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*, 3rd ed. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

Laufer, B., and Hulstijn, J. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: The construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics*, 22(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/22.1.1

Laursen, B. (2010). Capturing the peer context: The paradox of progress. *Journal of Adolescence*, 33(6), 897–902. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2010.08.008

Laursen, B. and Hartup, W. W. (2002). The origins of reciprocity and social exchange in friendships. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 95, 27–40. doi:10.1002/cd.35

Lee, Y.-A. (2006). Respecifying display questions: Interactional resources for language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(4), 691–713. doi:10.2307/40264304

Legutke, M. (2012). Teaching teenagers. In A. Burns and J. Richards, eds., *The Cambridge Guide to Pedagogy and Practice in Second Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lemke, J. L. (2002). Language development and identity: Multiple time-scales in the social ecology of learning. In C. Kramsch, ed., *Language and Language Socialization Acquisition* (pp. 68–87). London: Continuum.

Lerner, R., and Steinberg L., eds. (2009). *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology*, 2nd ed., Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, vi–vii.

Leung, C. (2016). English as an additional language: A genealogy of language-in-education policies and reflections on research trajectories. *Language and Education*, 30(2), 158–174.

Li, J. (2020). Development and validation of second language online reading strategies inventory. *Computers and Education*, 145, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.103733

Lightbown, P. M. (2014). Making the minutes count in L2 teaching. *Language Awareness*, 23(1–2), 3–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416 .2013.863903

Lightbown, P., and Halter, R. (1989). *Evaluation of ESL Learning Regular and Experimental Programs in Four New Brunswick School Districts: 1987–88* (Vol. 2). Research report prepared for the Ministry of Education of New Brunswick.

Lightbown, P. M., Halter, R. H., White, J., and Horst, M. (2002). Comprehension-based learning: The limits of 'do it yourself'. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 58(3), 427–64. doi:10.3138/cmlr.58.3.427

Lightbown, P. M., and Spada, N. (2006). *How Languages Are Learned*, 3rd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Liu, Y., Fisher, L., Forbes, K., and Evans, M. (2017). The knowledge base of teaching in linguistically diverse contexts: Ten grounded principles of multilingual classroom pedagogy for EAL. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 17(4), 378–395.

Loewen, S. (2005). Incidental focus on form and second language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27(3), 361–386. https://doi.org/10 .1017/S0272263105050163

Loewen, S., and Reinders, H. (2011). *Key Concepts in Second Language Acquisition*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Long, M. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. de Bot, R. Ginsberg, and C. Kramsch, eds., *Foreign Language Research in Cross-cultural Perspective* (pp. 39–52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie and T. K. Bhatia, eds., *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 413–468). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Lyster, R., and Saito, K. (2010). Oral feedback in classroom SLA. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 32(2), 265–302. https://doi.org/10.1017 /S0272263109990520

Mackey, A., and Goo, J. (2007). Interaction research in SLA: A meta-analysis and research synthesis. In A. Mackey, ed., *Conversational Interaction in Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 407–452). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Martin-Beltrán, M., Chen, P.-J., Guzman, N., and Merrills, K. A. (2016). How adolescents use social discourse to open space for language learning. In M. Sato and S. Ballinger, eds., *Peer Interaction and Second Language Learning: Pedagogical Potential and Research Agenda* (pp. 319–348). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/lllt.45.13mar

Martínez-Alvarez, P. (2017). Language multiplicity and dynamism: Emergent bilinguals. Taking ownership of language use in a hybrid

curricular space. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 11(4), 255–276. doi:10.4018/978-1-4666-5982-7.ch010

McColl, H. 2005. Foreign language learning and inclusion: Who? Why? What?– and How? *Support for Learning* 20(3), 103–108.

McDevitt, T. M., and Ormond, J. E. (2013). *Child Development and Education*, 5th ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

McDonough, K. (2004). Learner–learner interaction during pair and small group activities in a Thai EFL context. *System*, 32(2), 207–224. https://doi .org/10.1016/j.system.2004.01.003

Meyer, B., and Sørensen, B. H. (2009). Designing serious games for computer assisted language learning – A framework for development and analysis. In M. Kankaanranta and P. Neittaanmäki, eds., *Design and Use of Serious Games. Intelligent Systems, Control, and Automation: Science and Engineering* (pp. 69–82). Dordrecht: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/ 978–1-4020–9496-5_5

Ministry of Education, New Zealand (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Miyake, A., and Friedman, D. (1998). Individual differences in second language proficiency: Working memory as language aptitude. In A. F. Healy and L. E. Bourne, eds., *Foreign Language Learning: Psycholinguistic Studies on Training and Retention* (pp. 339–364). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

MPFS: Medienpädagogischer Forschungsverbund Südwest, eds. (2018). JIM-Studie 2018: Jugend, Information, Medien. Accessed from www.mpfs.de /fileadmin/files/Studien/JIM/2018/Studie/JIM2018_Gesamt.pdf

MPFS: Medienpädagogischer Forschungsverbund Südwest, eds. (2019). JIM-Studie 2019: Jugend, Information, Medien. Accessed from www .mpfs.de/fileadmin/files/Studien/JIM/2019/JIM_2019.pdf

Muñoz, C. (2006). The effects of age on foreign language learning: The BAF project. In C. Muñoz, ed., *Age and the Rate of Foreign Language Learning* (pp. 1–40). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Nakahama, Y., Tyler, A., and Van Lier, L. (2001). Negotiation of meaning in conversational and information gap activities: A comparative discourse analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(3), 377–405. https://doi.org/10.2307 /3588028

Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1), 59–82. doi:10.1353/ cml.2006.0049

Nation, I. S. P. (2007). The four strands. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), 2–12. https://doi.org/10.2167/illt039.0

Nation, I. S. P. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Nation, I. S. P. (2011). My ideal vocabulary teaching course. In J. Macalister and I. S. P. Nation, eds., *Case Studies in Language Curriculum Design* (pp. 51–62). New York, NY: Routledge.

Nation, I. S. P., and Macalister, J. (2010). *Language Curriculum Design*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Noels, K. (2001). New orientations in language learning motivation: Towards a model of intrinsic extrinsic and integrative orientations and motivations. In Z. Dörnyei and P. Robinson, eds., *Motivation and Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 43–68). Honolulu, HI: The University of Hawaii: Second Language and Curriculum Centre.

Noels, K., Pelletier, L. G., Clement, R., and Vallerand, R. J. (2000). Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and self-determination theory. *Language Learning*, 50(1), 57–85. doi:10.1111/0023-8333.00111

O'Donnell, A. M. (2006). The role of peers and group learning. In P. A. Alexander and P. H. Winnie, eds., *Handbook of Educational Psychology*, 2nd ed. (pp. 781–802). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ortega, L. (2007). Meaningful L2 practice in foreign language classrooms: A cognitive-interactionist SLA perspective. In R. DeKeyser, ed., *Practice in a Second Language: Perspectives from Applied Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology* (pp. 180–207). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Paulston, C. B., and Bruder, M. N. (1976). *Teaching English as a Second Language: Techniques and Procedures*. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop.

Pegrum, M. (2014). *Mobile Learning: Languages, Literacies and Cultures*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pegrum, M. (2019). *Mobile Lenses on Learning: Languages and Literacies on the Move*. Singapore: Springer.

Pegrum, M., Dudeney, G., and Hockly, N. (2018). Digital literacies revisited. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics and TEFL*, 7(2), 3–24.

Philp, J. (2016). Epilogue. In M. Sato and S. Ballinger, eds., *Peer Interaction and Second Language Learning: Pedagogical Potential and Research Agenda* (pp. 319–348). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. https://doi.org/10.1075/lllt.45

Philp, J., Adams, R., and Iwashita, N. (2013). *Peer Interaction and Second Language Learning*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Philp, J., and Duchesne, S. (2016). Exploring engagement in tasks in the language classroom. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 36, 50–72. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190515000094

Philp, J., Walter, S., and Basturkmen, H. (2010). Peer interaction in the foreign language classroom: What factors foster a focus on form? *Language Awareness*, 19(4), 261–279.

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1108/10748120110424816

Puentedura, R. (2006). Transformation, technology, and education [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://hippasus.com/resources/tte/

Randler, C., and Wicke, R. (2014). Von Eulen und Lerchen – Zum Sclafverhalten von Jugendlichen. *Fremdsprache Deutsch*, 51, 15–17. https://doi.org/10.37307/j.2194–1823.2014.51.05

Redecker, C., and Punie, Y. (2017). *European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators: DigcompEdu* (No. JRC107466). Publications Office of the European Union. http://dx.doi.org/10.2760/159770

Reinders, H., ed. (2012). *Digital Games in Language Learning and Teaching*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Reinders, H., and Stockwell, G. (2017). Computer-assisted SLA. In S. Loewen and M. Sato, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Instructed Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 361–375). New York/London: Routledge.

Reinhardt, J. (2019). Social media in second and foreign language teaching and learning: Blogs, wikis, and social networking. *Language Teaching*, 52 (1), 1–39. https://doi:10.1017/S0261444818000356

Riemer, C. (2010). Motivierung. In H.-J. Krumm, C. Fandrych, B. Hufeisen, and C. Riemer, eds., *Deutsch als Fremd- und Zweitsprache: Ein internationales Handbuch (Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft [HSK] 2)* (pp. 1152–1157). Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Robins, R. W., Trzesniewski, K. H., Tracy, J. L., Gosling, S. D., and Potter, J. (2002). Global self-esteem across the life span. *Psychology and Aging*, 17 (3), 423–434. https://doi.org/10.1037/0882–7974.17.3.423

Roffwarg, H. P., Muzio, J. N., and Dement, W. C. (1966). Ontogenetic development of the human sleep dream cycle. *Science*, 152(3722), 604–618. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.152.3722.604

Roseth, C. J., Johnson, D. W., and Johnson, R. T. (2008). Promoting early adolescents' achievement and peer relationships: The effects of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic goal structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134(2), 223–246. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033–2909.134.2.223

Rubie-Davies, C. M. (2007). Classroom interactions: Exploring the practices of high- and low-expectation teachers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77(2), 289–306. https://doi.org/10.1348/000709906X101601

Rubie-Davies, C. M. (2015). *Becoming a High Expectation Teacher: Raising the Bar*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Rubie-Davies, C. M., Peterson, E. R., Sibley, C. G., and Rosenthal, R. (2015). A teacher expectation intervention: Modelling the practices of high expectation teachers. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 40, 72–85. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2014.03.003

Russell, J., and Spada, N. (2006). The effectiveness of corrective feedback for the learning of L2 grammar. In J. Norris and L. Ortega, eds., *Synthesizing Research on Language Learning and Teaching* (pp. 309–365). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Saito, K., and Hanzawa, K. (2016). Developing second language oral ability in foreign language classrooms: The role of the length and focus of instruction and individual differences. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 37, 813–840. Doi:10.1017/S0142716415000259

Salomo, D. (2014). Deutschland, Deutschlernen und Deutschunterricht: Aus der Sicht von Jugendlichen und Lehrkräften in verschiedenen Ländern weltweit, eine empirische Studie. Retrieved from www.goethe.de/resources/files/pdf31/deutschlernen_18_12_2014_web.pdf

Sato, M., and Ballinger, S. (2012). Raising language awareness in peer interaction: A cross-context, cross-methodology examination. *Language Awareness*, 21(1–2), 157–179. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2011.639884

Sauro, S. (2012). Computer-mediated communication and second language development. In C. A. Chapelle, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0180

Saville-Troike, M. (1988). 'Private speech': Evidence for second language learning strategies during the 'silent period'. *Journal of Child Language*, 15(3), 567–590. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305000900012575

Schmidt, R. (1995). Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning. In R. Schmidt (ed.), *Attention and Awareness in Foreign Language Learning* (pp. 1–65). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.

Schmidt, R. (2001). Attention. In P. Robinson, ed., *Cognition and Second Language Instruction* (pp. 3–32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scrivener, J. (2005). *Learning Teaching: A Guidebook for English Language Teachers*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

Shernoff, D. J. (2013). *Optimal Learning Environments to Promote Student Engagement*. New York, NY: Springer.

Shernoff, D. J., Ruzek, E. A., and Sinha, S. (2017). The influence of the high school classroom environment on learning as mediated by student engagement. *Psychology International*, 38(2), 201–218. https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034316666413

Simard, D., and Jean, G. (2011). An exploration of L2 teachers' use of pedagogical interventions devised to draw L2 learners' attention to form. *Language Learning*, 61(3), 759–785. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2011.00656.x

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

Spada, N. (2007). Communicative language teaching: Current status and future prospects. In J. Cummins and C. Davison, eds., *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp. 271–288). New York: Springer.

Spada, N., and Lightbown, P. (2008). Form-focused instruction: Isolated or integrated? *TESOL Quarterly*, 42(2), 181–207. doi:10.2307/40264447

Stern, H. H. (1985). The time factor and compact course development. *TESL Canada Journal*, 3(1), 13–29. https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v3i1.471

Storch, N. (2002). Patterns of interaction in ESL pair work. *Language Learning*, 52(1), 119–158. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467–9922.00179

Sumter, S., Bokhorst, C., and Westemberg, P. M. (2009). Social fears during adolescence: Is there an increase in distress and avoidance? *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 23(7), 897–903. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2009.05.004

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass and C. Madden, eds., *Input in Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 235–253). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook and B. Seidhofer, eds., *Principles and Practice in the Study of Language: Studies in Honour of H. G. Widdowson* (pp. 125–144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf, ed., *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning* (pp. 97–114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (2005). The output hypothesis: Theory and research. In E. Hinkel, ed., *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 471–483). London: Routledge.

Tapscott, D. (2008). *Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation Is Changing Your World*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tognini, R. (2008). *Interaction in languages other than English classes in Western Australian primary and secondary schools: Theory, practice and perceptions*. https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/26

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners*, 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Tomlinson, C. A., Brighton, C., Hertberg, H., Callahan, C. M., Moon, T. R., Brimijoin, K., Conover, L. A., and Reynolds, T. (2003). Differentiating instruction in response to student readiness, interest and learning profile

in academically diverse classrooms: A review of literature. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 27(2–3), 119–145. https://doi.org/10.1177/016235320302700203

Toth, P. D. (2006). Processing instruction and a role for output in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 56(2), 319–385. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0023–8333.2006.00349.x

UNESCO (2009). *Policy guidelines on inclusion in education*. Retrieved from www.scribd.com/doc/37626440/UNESCO-Education-Inclusion-Policy-Guidelines

Ushoida, E. (2009). A person-in-context relational view of emergent motivation, self and identity. In Z. Dörnyei and E. Ushoida, eds., *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 215–228). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

van de Pol, J., Volman, M., and Beishuizen, J. (2010). Scaffolding in teacher–student interaction: A decade of research. *Educational Psychology Review*, 22, 271–296. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10648-010–9127–6

van Lier, L. (2000). From input to affordance: Social-interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In J. P. Lantolf, ed., *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*, pp. 245–260. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

van Lier, L. (2004). *The Ecology and Semiotics of Languages Learning: A Sociocultural Perspective*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

VanPatten, B., Williams, J., Rott, S., and Overstreet, M. (2004). *Form–Meaning Connections in Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Routledge.

Vatansever, A. (2018). A comparison of the influence of teacher-generated and learner-generated content on learner engagement in oral tasks: A Turkish EFL high school context. Unpublished Master's dissertation, Lancaster University, Lancaster, UK.

Vötter, S. and Treter, C. (2009). Die deutsche Sprache in China und die PASCH-Initiative. *Fremdsprache Deutsch Sonderheft 1: Schulen: Partner der Zukunft* [Special issue: Schools: Partners of the future], 33–36.

Wei, L. (2018). Investigating the influence of age and language aptitude on the implicit and explicit knowledge of ESL learners. Unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Auckland.

Wentzel, K. R., Barry, C. M., and Caldwell, K. A. (2004). Friendships in middle school: Influences on motivation and school adjustment. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 96(2), 195–203. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022–0663.96.2.195

Wilden, E. (2013). Handcrafting video clips to foster audio-visual literacy in the EFL classroom. WorldCALL Glasgow 10–13 July 2013 Papers, 369–372.

Williams, J. (1999). Learner-generated attention to form. *Language Learning*, 49(4), 583–625. https://doi.org/10.1111/0023–8333.00103

Willis, D., and Willis, J. (2007). *Doing Task-Based Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wu, P.-H. N., and Marek, M. W. (2018). Developing intercultural competence via social media engagement in a language learning framework. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 46.

Zheng, B., Yim, S., and Warschauer, M. (2018). Social media in the writing classroom and beyond. In J. I. Liontas and M. DelliCarpini, eds., *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0555

# Index