

# PRACTICE AND RESEARCH IN EFL

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*Cette étude est une critique des travaux les plus récents effectués par les chercheurs en didactique des Langues Etrangères. A cette fin, nous passons succinctement en revue les théories des méthodes et des techniques éducatives des langues en milieu multiculturel tel qu'envisagées par leurs auteurs. Nous concluons par une critique des programmes de formation des Langues Etrangères en RDC, et sur les modes d'évaluation de l'enseignement des Langues.*

## Abbreviations

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

SLA : Second Language Acquisition

L1 : First Language

L2 : Second Language

LTM : Long Term Memory

STM : Short Term Memory

## 0. INTRODUCTION

This work reviews the literature related to second language learning theories, EFL teaching methods, studies in multicultural education, EFL teacher preparation programmes, and modes of assessment in language teaching.

### 0.1. LANGUAGE LEARNING THEORIES:

#### CURRENT THEORIES OF L2 ACQUISITION

The field of SLA has for the last four decades been flooded with various theories of learning a language other than one's first language. These go from Skinner's behaviourism through Chomsky's LAD, Lado's contrastive analysis, Corder's error analysis, Selinker's interlanguage, Krashen's monitor model, Brown's acculturation, etc. to Lamendella's neurofunctional theory.

Larsen-Freeman & Long (1992) noted that there are at forty "theories", "model", "perspectives", "metaphors", "hypotheses" and "theoretical claims" in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature. There is often overlap among them, but equally often, areas of uniqueness. What makes them difficult to evaluate is the fact that they sometimes differ greatly in

- a) Scope, or the range of SLA phenomena they treat;
- b) The type of data to which they are implicitly or explicitly held accountable; and
- c) The degree of abstraction of the statements they contain (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1992).

They then grouped all the theories of SLA into three categories:

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1. Nativist theories of SLA purport to explain acquisition by positing an innate biological endowment that makes learning possible. The endowment can be language-specific involving substantive universals such as dependency, adjacency, precedence, continuity, etc. out of which grammatical principles and mechanisms used for all kinds of learning, including language learning are built. The innate endowment can also involve both linguistic principles and general cognitive notions (Chomsky, 2008; Cook, 2011; Krashen, 2008, Rutherford, 2006; Lightbown, 2004).
2. Environmentalist theories of SLA hold that an organism's nurture, or experience, are of more importance to development than its nature, or innate contributions. They thus deny that innate contributions play any role at all other than that of providing the animal with the internal structure which environmental forces can proceed to shape. The best known examples are the various forms of behaviourist and neo-behaviourist stimulus-response learning theories, such as those of Rivers (2008).
3. Interactionist theories of SLA are reconciliatory and invoke both innate and environmental factors to explain language learning (McLaughlin, 2007). In each category, all the theories of SLA differ greatly from one another.

According to Richard Amato (1988: 302-329) all the SLA theories roughly fall into seven current interrelated theories / models of L2 acquisition.

1. The Acculturation model (Brown 1990 : 129) views SLA as "the process of becoming adapted to a new culture". The new culture comes with such affective factors as language shock, culture shock, motivation and ego boundaries which justify the need for a "silent period" to allow the learner to establish his/her own meaning of what is going on. The learner only communicates when he is ready. Larsen-Freeman & Long (1992:257) noted that Schumann (2005 : 34) maintained that SLA is just like one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language. They go on to say that according to Schumann (2005) there are two types of acculturation. In Type One acculturation, learners are both socially integrated into the target-language group and psychologically open to the target language. The first factor means that they have enough contacts with speakers for them to acquire the L2; the second means that the input to which the contacts expose them become intake. In type two, acculturation, learners are socially integrated and psychologically open, but also consciously or unconsciously wish to adopt the lifestyle and values of the target language group (p. 258). This is what Schumann (2005) called assimilation to the target language; the learner makes the input conform to his L1. By attempting to reconcile the various views regarding pidgins/creoles, Andersen (1999) adopted a broader perspective. He believed creolization, pidginization and early SLA are processes involving the creation of independent linguistic system, at least partly autonomous from the input. This process he called nativization; Selinker (1992) called the independent linguistic system "interlanguage".
2. The Accommodation model (Giles, 1999); the learner makes what he learns in L2 conform to the native speaker's competence. It shares certain premises with the Acculturation model such as assimilation of new knowledge to old, the learner's adjustment of his interlanguage system in the direction of his mental picture of the target, or "external norm". This is

accommodation of new input by altering the interlanguage grammar to match it. Giles (1999) and Gardner (1999) agreed that motivation is the primary determinant of L2 proficiency.

3. Discourse Theory (Hatch, 2009) contends that L2 follows a natural route in syntactical development; native speakers usually adjust their speech in the negotiation of meaning with non-native (foreigner talk). The belief is that language development should be considered in terms of how the learner discovers the meaning potential of language by participating in communication. Language use is the primary determinant of discourse theory.
4. The Monitor Model (Krashen, 2008) with five central hypotheses :
  - (i) The Acquisition Learning Hypothesis : Acquisition occurs subconsciously as a result of participating in natural communication where the focus is on meaning. Learning occurs as a result of conscious study of the formal properties (rules) of the language. Acquired knowledge is available for automatic processing whereas learned knowledge is available by the monitor (but not always).
  - (ii) The Natural Order Hypothesis : SLA learners may follow a more or less invariant order in the acquisition of formal grammatical features. This order is predictable except for metalinguistic knowledge.
  - (iii) The Monitor Hypothesis : The monitor utilizes learned knowledge by acting upon and modifying utterances generated from acquired knowledge. For monitoring to occur there must be sufficient time, focus must be on form and not meaning, and the user must know the rule.
  - (iv) The input hypothesis : Acquisition takes place after the learner has understood the input that is a little beyond the current level of his/her competence (i.e. the  $i + 1$  level); comprehensible input to the learner will automatically be at the right level.
  - (v) The affective Filter Hypothesis : It covers the ground of the acculturation Model; the filter controls how much of the input the learner comes into contact with will be converted into intake depending upon the learner's motivation, self-confidence, or anxiety level. The Affective Filter influences the rate of language development. Some causative variables in the Monitor Model : aptitude, role of L1, routines and patterns, individual differences, and age.
5. The Variable Competence Model (Ellis, 2006) based on the distinction between the process of language use (competence and capacity) and the product (a continuum of type of discourse : planned and unplanned).
6. The Universal Hypothesis (Chomsky, 2008) : linguistic universals which determine the course of SLA are as follows :
  - (i) impose constraints on the form that interlanguage can take;
  - (ii) learners find it easier to acquire patterns to conform to linguistic universals;
  - (iii) where L1 manifests linguistic universals, it is likely to assist interlanguage development through transfer.
7. A Neurofunctional Theory (Lamendella, 2009) : considers the neurolinguistic information processing systems as responsible for the development and use of language. Lamendella distinguishes two basic types of language acquisition :
  - (i) primary languages acquisition found in the child's acquisition of one or more language from 2-5 years of age

- (ii) secondary language acquisition in foreign language learning at school, and second language acquisition, which is not learned after the age of 5.

While the above theories appear different, all L2 acquisition theorists agree that like L1, L2 develops globally and not linearly or piecemeal (Riggs et al., 1989). This brings the above discussion to the three necessary conditions for any language acquisition or learning to occur:

- (i) Models (parents at home and teacher in the classroom) must provide the learner with comprehensible input and give him/her time to establish his/her self-meaning of the input.
- (ii) Opportunity for the child/learner to practice what he has received from the model; the model should facilitate communication through a negotiation of meaning with the learner. This helps the learner enhance confidence and regulate performance; and
- (iii) Corrective feedback from the parents/teacher; this is to be accompanied by a word of encouragement as a sign of sympathy. Corrective feedback helps the learner to brush up and regulate his/her performance.

When referring to interactionist theories of SLA, we noted that they were reconciliatory and invoked both innate and environmental factors to explain language learning; and also that all the SLA theories roughly were interrelated theories/models of L2 acquisition. As just noticed, all consider the input as an important factor. Krashen and Rutherford (1982) are among those who discussed the input theory with reference to FL curriculum. The following lines are devoted to a few comments about both their theories.

## **KRASHEN'S THEORIES**

### **THE INPUT THEORY**

#### Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory

Krashen's theory is "probably the most ambitious and most influential attempt in recent years to construct an overall theory of second language acquisition" (Gregg, 2001: 79). In Western Europe, Krashen's influence is generally restricted to university language teaching centers and experiments conducted by university departments of education or applied linguistics. De Vriendt (1994-1995) criticized Krashen's theory of language acquisition and looked at its practical application in the classroom. He mainly discussed the acquisition learning hypothesis and the input hypothesis, which Krashen considers to be respectively "perhaps the most fundamental" and "the single most important concept in language acquisition theory today" (Krashen, 2008 : 10 and 9). In the following lines, we give a brief account of De Vriendt's elucidation, which, as an EFL teacher, we think is important, especially in its analysis and clarification of the issue of the dichotomies.

According to De Vriendt, these dichotomies are highlighted namely, in the acquisition learning hypothesis. The hypothesis "claims that adults have two distinct ways of development competence in second languages. The first way is via language acquisition, that is, by using language for real communication"... "The second way" ... "is by language learning". (Krashen & Terrell, 2007).

Krashen's extensive discussion of this hypothesis is summarized as follows in (Krashen 2008)

Acquisition	Earning
Similar to child first language	Formal knowledge of language
"picking up" a language	Formal knowledge of language
Subconscious	Conscious
Implicit knowledge	explicit knowledge
Formal teaching does not help	Formal teaching help

De Vriendt emphasizes that these dichotomies should not be considered as a simplified presentation of more subtle and balanced distinctions in the text. He illustrates this with a short quotation : "We will use the term learning" henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them. In non-technical terms, learning is "knowing about" a language, known to most people as "grammar", or "rules" (Krashen 2008).

Although De Vriendt finds exaggerated the criticism levelled at Krashen's hypothesis by some authors (e.g. Mc Laughlin, 1980, 1986 and 1988); Gregg, 1984; Brumfit, 1984; Widdowson, 1984), however, he suggests that what is wrong with Krashen's presentation is mainly the fact that he oversimplifies oppositions. As for the dichotomies conscious –subconscious and explicit-implicit he notes the difficulty, if not the impossibility, to know how conscious language acquisition or learning processes are : "appeals to conscious versus subconscious experience are notoriously unreliable" (Mc Laughlin, 2007). Yet, he observes, the concepts can be used when we talk about language acquisition and learning, provided we carefully avoid too sharp a distinction , since "Les critères de distinction entre des processus conscients et subconscients sont peu clairs, et en tout cas difficilement opérationnalisables", (Gaonach (2006) in De Vriendt op. cit). In De Vriendt's contention, it cannot be denied that when a grammar rule is taught explicitly, in the foreign language or in the student's mother

tongue, the student becomes conscious of some aspects of the foreign language; on the other hand we all accept the idea that students pick up elements of the foreign language (sounds, phonological oppositions, words, larger chunks, ect.) without “noticing”, shall we say without becoming conscious of the fact that they have acquired something. But he sees no objection to hypothesize together with Baetens Beardsmore, (1985), (with references to Lee, Felix and Selinker, Swain & Dumas) that between these two extremes other parts of the language are acquired more or less consciously, i.e. there are degrees of levels of consciousness.

Also, De Vriendt thinks that the same could be said more or less about the dichotomy explicit - implicit : he argues that there are degrees of explicitness ranging from maximally explicit to totally implicit.

Another important view, for De Vriendt, is Krashen’s contention that “learning does not become acquisition” (Krashen, 2008). De Vriendt echoes Gregg (1984) in that Krashen’s arguments uniquely emphasize the fact that “learning need not precede acquisition but, that what Krashen did not evidence is to show that “it cannot”. According to Krashen, if a student starts using fluently, i.e. has acquired forms or structures he had *learned* before, learning has in no way facilitated the acquisition process. It seems to De Vriendt that this proposition cannot be falsified ... or proved.

For De Vriendt, the Input Hypothesis may be the most important of Krashen’s hypothesis, not only because it states that we “acquire” (not learn) language by understanding input that is a little beyond our current level of (acquired) competence” (Krashen & Terrel, 2007), but also because of its many implications:

- optimal input is comprehensible, interesting, not grammatically sequenced and must be offered in sufficient quantity.
- It need not be finely tuned (i.e. “to aim only at I + 1, the next step along the natural order”), roughly tuned input is preferable.
- speaking ability is not “taught” directly, it “emerges”. Output takes an indirect contribution to language input : it triggers input, it affects the quality of the input (learners modify their speech) and it provides a domain for “error correction” (i.e. helps learning).

The consequence is that in the methodology particular attention is devoted to listening and reading, the importance of vocabulary is stressed (“with more vocabulary, there will be more comprehension and with more comprehension, there will be more acquisition” (Ibid, 55), “whereas” grammar instruction has a limited role. Only certain rules need be taught even for optimal monitor use” (Ibid., 57). As for the role of production in the theory, De Vriendt notes that the Natural Approach does “not recommend any specific activities for pronunciation ” (Ibid, 90).

### **STEVICK AND KRASHEN’S MONITOR MODEL**

Stevick (1987) has looked at practice Krashen’s Monitor model in the hope of clarifying what has happened, and learning from it, and preparing to deal more effectively with what may happen in the future. He has called it “to a bit of theory which ... will bear some very practical fruits in years to come” (Stevick, 1987).

We would therefore like to turn, in the following lines, to Stevick’s analysis of the interpretation by Krashen and others of research on the relationship between “learning” and “acquisition” of foreign languages by adults. This interpretation has sometimes gone by the name The Monitor Model. In this

part we shall begin by summarizing very briefly the conclusions that the term Monitor Model stands for and the evidence on which those conclusions are based. Then we will go on to outline some of Stevick's own reactions to the theory. Finally, we will explore the relationships among the Monitor Model, Stevick's reactions to it and three FL learning approaches.

The Monitor Model rests first of all on the assumption that there are two distinct processes through which we may gain more or less control of a language. The process which everyone uses to gain control of the first language is "acquisition". In "acquisition", one meets the sounds, the words, and the sentences along with the sights and actions and smells that are their meanings. The persons from whom one acquires a first language are parts of the social network that uses the language as one of its vehicles of communication. At the same time, one also "acquires" other vehicles of communication : body language and all the rest, and in the process one comes to be a member of the social network. Some people "acquire" two or more languages, of course, either simultaneously or one after another.

In later childhood, we become able to do something that we were not able to do when we were small. We can now focus on single elements in what is going on around us, and pull them out ("abstract" them) from the undivided web of experience, and hold onto them and move them around and pass them back and forth among us. In the realm of language, this means that we can compare words and classify them *as words*, and that we can see how the sentences in one list of examples are like one another but different from the sentences in another list. We can take what we have seen in this way and put it into a new sentence of its own: a "grammatical rule." We even come to where we can begin with a "rule" and use it to make up (or to understand) new examples which also fit the rule. Some of us are much better at this than others are, of course at picking out and holding onto and shuffling bits of language - but this is for all of us a new ability which infants do not have. We also become able to think about the thoughts of others, and about their expectations. When a word that we had yesterday does not come to our tongue today, we nod to those who say have "forgotten" it, and when our new sentence fails to fit the rules, we humbly agree it was an "error. In common speech, this process of picking out, and holding onto, and shuffling words is one kind of "learning", and "acquisition" is another. Krashen et al however, use the word "learning" in contrast to "acquisition". For them, "learning" refers only to the linguistic form and when there is plenty of time for thinking. Then, for example, a nonnative user of English who had time to think might make very few errors in the third person singular present tense ending of verbs : goes, sees etc. The rules for this ending are relatively simple to understand and to put into words. Some things, on the other and, are almost impossible to put into rules and to learn : When should one use *a*, when *the*, and when no article at all ? When does it sound better to use the future tense with *will*, and when the future with *going to*? Errors in matters of this kind follow the natural order of first language acquisition, even for people who came to the language as adults. Moreover, these adults "control of these matters does not change much even when their attention is directed to form and they are given plenty of time.

According to the Monitor Model the "acquisition " process remains available, and also its results, may be obscured by the "learning" process, particularly when the new language is met in a conventional classroom. Nevertheless it is there. Not only is it there; it is the only path that can lead to control of those features of language that cannot easily be reduced to rules or to translation equivalents.

What we have “acquired” and what we have “learned” differ not only in how we got them into us. They differ also in how we get at them, to bring them out and use them when we need them. The Monitor Model holds that for the purpose of “creative construction” of what we want to say, we can draw only on what we “acquired”. We then run this new utterance past the Monitor, which includes what we have “learned”. “Then the Monitor, if it is in operation and if it has time to do its work may make corrections in whatever come out of the “creative construction process”.

In Stevick’s view, “the distinction between adult” “learning” and “acquisition” of language is potentially the most fruitful concept for language teachers that has come out of the linguistic sciences. (Stevick, 1987).

Specifically, it may eventually prove to be of even more value to us than the phonemic principle or the principle of contrastive analysis. What has been “learned ” and what has been “acquired” perhaps differ also in where or how they are stored, and in how we have access to them. (We are all familiar with the person who has had four years of English in school, but who arrives in England and is unable to use the language. This is a case of “learning” leading to (academic) performance, but no “acquisition ” and therefore no practical use).

To the distinction between “learning ”and “acquisition”, Stevick adds the claim which most clearly sets the Monitor Model apart from conventional thinking : that what has been “acquired” can be used directly in creative construction of utterances, but that what has been “learned ” cannot be so used . A person who appears to be communicating through use of what he has “learned” but has not “acquired” is, in this view, assumed to be originating his utterances in his native language (or in some other language which he has “acquired”), and then transposing it more or less successfully into the target language by running the utterances through the Monitor and applying what he has “learned”. That a person’s command of a new language is built up of things that come in from the outside world. “Acquisition” comes from experience (which includes language), while “learning” comes through deliberate study, most often guided by “teaching”. (I use “teaching” here in the narrow sense of singling out one item at time, presenting it clearly, and correcting students errors).

What is most interesting in the present research is the contrast Stevick makes between acquisition/learning theory with studies of human memory. The distinction between “short-term memory” (STM) and “long-term memory” (LTM) has been frequently cited and widely researched. STM is assumed to last only about 15 to 30 seconds, and to be able to hold only a relatively few “of information which are not somehow parts of larger storable configurations. In the experimental literature, material that is retained for two minutes or longer is generally assumed to have passed into LTM. This is certainly true for material that a subject can reproduce after two hours or two days. A few writers on memory speak also of “tertiary” memory. Material in LTM (sometimes called “secondary memory” ) is gradually lost with the passage of time unless it is used occasionally. By contrast, material in “tertiary” memory is not lost, even if it is not used. Curran (2001) has been talking about the same distinction when he contrasted “memorizing” (temporary) with “psychizing” (permanent). Gattegnon (1992, 1996) also has distinguished between “memorizing ” and the establishment of “inner criteria”.

What is tempting in the present study, of course, is to match up mere LTM with “learning” and “tertiary” memory with “acquisition”. “Acquisition” comes through experience, as has been said. But

“experience” can make use of whatever is lying around handy, including *what has recently been memorized*. So it may prove very profitable to investigate, not only how to get new material from STM to LTM, but also how to structure and also to time “acquisitive” experiences so that they will derive maximum profit from “learning” activity.

Let us now see how Stevick explores the relationship among the Monitor Model, three FL learning approaches - the Silent Way, The Community Language Learning and Suggestopedia.

The Silent Way begins by presenting one small point at a time, guiding students through a variety of activities that it hopes will lead to retention, and (silently) pointing out errors (places where the student needs to do more work). It thus “sensitizes” the student to a whole series of sharply delineated features, and in such a tightly organized way that there is no “undifferentiated background”. All of this sounds like a description of purified, distilled, and concentrated “learning” and so it is.

Yet at the same time the Silent Way meets many of the conditions for “acquisition”. In its insistence on never saying anything in the absence of the “truth” of what is said, it ensures that the beginning student will always be talking about (some sharply defined feature of) the “here and now”. In emphasizing that the teacher must constantly be learning the students and staying “with” them, it guarantees that the level of new input will be right. Vocabulary is starkly simple, yet sufficient for endless creativity. Mistakes are dealt, but not as “mistakes”. Each new pattern is repeated a number of times.

There is one condition which is normally present during first-language acquisition but which is absent in Krashen’s list. This is the existence of a full, warm human relationship between speaker and acquirer. Stevick notes : “The most highly qualified Silent Way teachers that I have observed have come across as brilliant but remote and impersonal. Their teaching has appeared to concentrate on a highly cerebral presentation of the skeleton of the language, with little or no warm flesh to reassure the new acquirer. After the opening stages with the charts and the rods, the student meets pictures, printed sentences, and stories which make fuller communication possible. Even so, the steadfast concentration on one new language point at a time preserves an atmosphere in which “learning” seems to predominate”. (Stevick, 1980 : 263). And Stevick concludes “But perhaps a perceptive and imaginative teacher can build “acquisitive” opportunities on the foundation provided by these achievements of “learning” (Stevick, *ibid*)”.

In Classical Community Language Learning, Stevick observes that the emphasis is in quite the opposite direction. The warm and supportive manner of the counselor teacher provides a close approximation of a loving and attentive parent and an excellent backdrop for “acquisition”. The teacher provides as many models as the student needs. Mistakes are not treated as “mistakes”, but (if at all) as occasions for further communication with the student.

The technique also provides ample opportunities for short, simple sentences, within restricted vocabulary, about the here and now. This is where the teacher needs all her skills both as a pedagogue and as a counselor. When the students are uneasy with one another or with the teacher or with the method, they tend to sit in awkward silence or simply to make up sentences to appease the teacher – this instead of the self-invested conversation with which the technique is supposed to begin. Then their sentences become dead linguistic objects instead of being parts of themselves. The “here and now” is

lost. The teacher sees this as her cue to work patiently to restore Security and so to improve the quality of Assertion. Otherwise, a key element of the “acquisitive” environment is missing.

But when the students do begin to chatter happily about their “here and now”, a new danger arises. The teacher must now know how to use their conversations in such a way that the unrestricted syntactic patterns and vocabulary, which come out of the student’s full control of his native language, do not accumulate so rapidly that the student gets in over his head. When this happens, two of the conditions for “acquisition” (b and c in Krashen’s list) are lost. At the same time of course, the student’s feeling of Security is reduced.

Students in CCLL have access to conventional grammar books. Otherwise, however, “learning” activities are definitely subordinated to - are in fact developed out of - “acquisitive” activities. This calls for constant creativity on the part of the teacher. Without a certain amount of “learning”, students become confused about what is going on and uncertain about what they are responsible for. When the teacher is able to guide the class through a suitably balanced course, however, CCLL can provide almost unrivalled opportunities for “acquisition” both of the rudiments and of the nuances of a language.

With regard to Suggestopedia, Stevick point, out that its most conspicuous characteristic is the degree to which students do respond in an “acquisitive” way. At first glance it might appear that Suggestopedia violates the first three conditions (a, b, c) for “acquisition” : talk is not about the here and now, but about a fictitious world; sentences are short, but structural gradation is very steep compared to most language courses; vocabulary is limited but again, by the standards to which we are accustomed, it is huge. Stevick is fairly well convinced, however, that Suggestopedia does in fact meet those three criteria. The structures and the vocabulary are on a level that is suitable for the student, except that Suggestopedia sees in the student more readiness and greater power sooner than the rest of us have seen. The dialogues by their length and their life provide a new “here and now” which is perfectly serviceable, and which at the same time is free of many of the conflicts and impediments that we find in the real world. The “learning” activities in Suggestopedia are always conducted in the manner of other activities – activities which are not usually associated with the “learning” atmosphere of a conventional classroom. The “concert sessions themselves are another example of this principle”. (Stevick, 1987).

## CONCLUSION

To conclude this study, we say that both “learning” and “acquisition” are possible for all of us. We also believe that the two can support each other; that except in the short run, “acquisition ” is more important than “learning”; that “learning ” needs “teaching” (in the narrow sense), but that “acquisition” does not need “teaching” and does not profit by it; that premature emphasis on “learning” may stifle the ability to “acquire”; that premature ” emphasis on “learning” may stifle the ability to “acquire”; that while “acquisition” may not need “teaching”, it does require more than merely being set down in a country where the language is spoken.

Stevick contends that Krashen’ conclusions fit well with his own experience. They certainly apply to the three approaches discussed, but they can apply equally to any other.

In the same vein with Krashen and Stevick, Rutherford (2006) also discussed language acquisition in FL context. Rutherford focused his practical analysis on a grammar-centered curriculum – as is the case in Democratic Republic of Congo. The starting point of the discussion of Rutherford’s theories lies in calling into question how Language Acquisition has often been viewed by a number of language teaching professionals. For Rutherford, one cannot learn a language without direct contact with that language. No one could ever learn English, for example, given a vocabulary list and sets of rules for syntax-morphology, phonology, etc. no matter how accurate or how it is learned, the learner should be provided with only some representative samples of “real” language.

In other words, we assume, to end with, that what is necessary for the learner’s contact with the language is exposure only to some subset of the L2 formal range. From this subset of grammatical properties the learner is thus able to project to grammatical phenomena that may not themselves have been present in the data to which he was exposed.

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