

# Second- and foreign language acquisition



When you as teacher has to teach your class a foreign- or second language, it is important to create a learning environment that supports the students in their acquisition of the target language.



Important things for the teacher are:

- Being organized.
- To have knowledge of how to teach second- and foreign language.
- And choices of teaching resources and tasks are important.

# Behaviorism

The traditional behaviorists claimed that language acquisitions is the result of:

- Imitation
- Repeat and practice
- Feedback
- Habit-forming

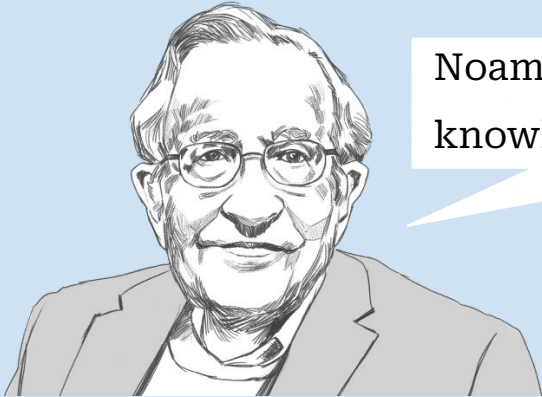
After repeated linguistic input from the student surroundings – the student forms associations between the linguistic input and what it points to in the world.



# Innatism

- is a theory that have come about after behaviorism

Noam Chomsky introduced this theory and claims that humans are born with innatism. Which enables the human to acquire something as complex as language.



Noam calls this form for ability and knowledge UG (Universal Grammar)

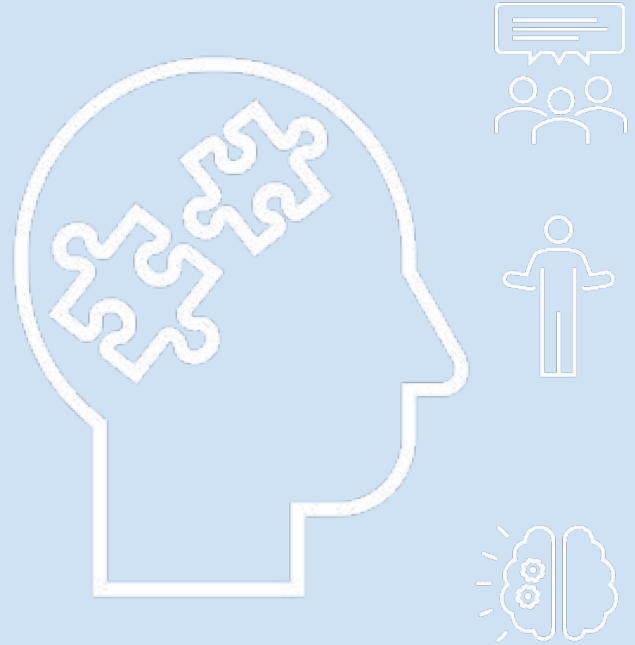
- Until the student has acquired the mother tongue, the parameters of the UG are still empty.
- But by being exposed to input from a certain language, the UG parameter will rise.
- And thus, the student develops knowledge of the underlying rules that the language system contains.

# Information processing

The information processing theory is one of the theories that tries to explain the language acquisition process.

The basis of this theory is input and with a focus on how input is processed mentally.

The process of understanding is therefore important to language acquisition.



# The process of understanding

According to current theories of understanding, the understanding process takes place in such a way as to match the input you are faced with, to the knowledge you already have.

The background knowledge the student uses to understand an input is linguistic as well as non-linguistic.

The linguistic knowledge of the target language that the student have is a variation of the target language and is called interlanguage.

The non-linguistic knowledge is knowledge about the world.

Example: Knowledge about the target language and the culture and social conditions.

# Sources of error

- **Potential sources of error**
- **Non-linguistic errors**
- **Linguistic errors**
  - Interference
  - Generalization

# Processing capacity

- Short-term memory
- Long-term memory



# Interactionism

- Like Krashen's theories of input + 1, the interactionists take baseline from simplified input.
- The incomprehensible input must not be modified before the interaction takes place
- The individual himself helps to control what needs to be modified

# Receptive and productive hypothesis testing

- In productive hypothesis testing, the individual tries to test his hypotheses by producing a linguistic output and then interprets the interlocutor's reaction to the output
- Not understood: The individual must revise his hypothesis
- Understanding: The individual considers the reaction as a confirmation of his hypothesis

# Summarizing the development of the language acquisition theories

- The focus on learning processes has put the student at the center and has made him/her more responsible for their own learning.
- The teacher's role has simply become a different one
- It is extremely important that students gain responsibility for and insight into their own processes
- This responsibility and insight requires students to be more active than has been the case in the more traditional classroom teaching

# Chapter 2

# What is communicative competence?

“To be able to communicate what you wish to communicate”

- different situations
- to use the language in the right way
- spoken and written language



## **Grammatical competence:**

- Grammatical competence has the following elements;
- Phonetics - pronunciation and sound
- Orthography - spelling
- Morphology - word formation or how the word is build
- Syntax - forming sentences
- Semantics - the meaning of words or texts

## **Discourse competence:**

- combine elements
- produce a text
- coherence and cohesion

## Pragmatic competence:

- what is the situation?
- context
- example; ‘It is a bit cold, don’t you think?’



## **Strategic competence:**

- use the skills you have
- limited vocabulary



# Fluency:

- pronunciation
- difficult communication
- written and spoken

# The meaning?

- grammatical competence
- discourse competence
- pragmatic competence
- strategic competence
- fluency
- equally important
- exist only together

# Communicative competence: Knowledge and/or skill

- What is “competence”?
- How do you become communicative competent

## Communication

