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NOTICING AS A WAY OF ENCOURAGING SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN THE CLASSROOM

Today's economy is increasingly globalized, and this means that people are interacting across cultures in a way they never did before. In such an economy, the importance of learning a second language becomes self-evident.

Learning a foreign language is a complex process, which is not necessarily connected with a classroom and a teacher. Krashen (1982) defines learning as 'a conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them'. It stands in contrast to acquisition, which is defined in the new ELT glossary as 'the way in which languages are learned unconsciously or 'picked up' by exposure to comprehensible input'. The acquisition-learning distinction has had a considerable influence on teaching foreign languages.

According to Ellis (1997), second language acquisition can take place in either a naturalistic or an instructional setting, but may not necessarily differ according to the setting. The goal of second language acquisition is the description and explanation of the learner's linguistic or communicative competence. Thus, it is important that future teachers should be aware of different ways of encouraging second language acquisition.

One of these ways is noticing. The noticing hypothesis is a concept in second-language acquisition proposed by Richard Schmidt in 1990. He stated that learners cannot learn the grammatical features of a language unless they notice them. Noticing alone does not mean that learners automatically acquire language; rather, the hypothesis states that noticing is the essential starting point for

acquisition. When learners "notice" new language, they pay special attention to its form, use, and meaning. That is why noticing is regarded as an important part of the process of learning a new language, especially in acquisition-driven accounts of language learning, when learners at some point in their acquisition, notice their errors in production. The essential thing about it is that noticing will only occur when the learner is ready to take on the new language. So, it's very important for teachers to help students notice target forms.

Cross (2002) summarizes factors that draw attention to certain features in input:

- Explicit (clear) instruction – instruction explaining and drawing attention to a particular form.
- Frequency – the regular occurrence of a certain structure in input.
- Perceptual Salience – highlighting or underlining to draw attention to a certain structure.
- Task Demands – constructing a task that requires learners to notice a structure in order to complete it.

Thus, through noticing teachers can draw students' attention to certain language features. Form-salient strategies such as 'repetition', 'imitation', and 'previewing' are viewed as effective noticing strategies that promote accuracy. So noticing is an important teaching and learning strategy which can promote the acquisition of declarative knowledge of the foreign language's rule system.

Literature

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