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INPUT HYPOTHESIS AND THE BEHAVIOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The role of input and interaction in second language acquisition has become an unavoidable essential issue to discuss. Abundant research has examined what, how, when, and why input can keep up language acquisition. Many theories are proposed and to some extent implemented and proved to be effective. However, controversies around the role of input are also inevitable. This paper will propose the importance of input and interaction in second language acquisition as were put forward and necessitated by many researchers, how particular input might result in various intakes and how interaction could facilitate output.

Key words: input, interaction, second language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

Input, as well as interaction, is important to L1 as well as L2 acquisition. Research on input in L2 has significantly followed research on input in L1. Whereas the relationship between input and interaction has also received sufficient attention from researchers and how they are together facilitate output.

Both input and interaction play similar importance in second language acquisition process. It could be assumed that different treatment either to input or interaction might affect the process of second language acquisition. More frequent input without being followed by sufficient interaction may not help much the second language acquisition. On the other hand, input which is modified interactionally may result in better development of second language acquisition.
HOW INPUT INFLUENCES SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Input in L2 acquisition serves as 'an obligatory entry point' that consequently plays a very important role. Without it, L2 learners would not succeed in acquiring the language. Thus, various inputs of L2 acquisition will presumably result in different output. Ellis (2003) proposes two aspects of input that influence L2 acquisition: input frequency and comprehensible input. Input, which is accurate and intensive, will seem to result in better L2 acquisition. In comparison, less number and varieties might cause unsatisfactory L2 acquisition (p. 269). In other words, the more input to L2 learners, the more they will appear in the output (Ellis, 2003; Mitchell and Myles, 2004). Yet, in reality, many factors appear to influence L2 acquisition and to some extent become more complicated because input, output and interaction have cyclical cause and effect or 'chain reaction' one another. There is no certainty when one is done properly, the other will also be well obtained. Indeed, the process is not as simply as it seems.

An important theory of input in L2 acquisition proposed by Krashen (2004) is known as Input Hypothesis. The developed form of this input is that “exposure to comprehensible input is both necessary and sufficient for L2 learning to take place”. (p. 165). According to him, learners should be given a lesson which is “a little beyond their current level of competence”. Learners are also required to process the input through comprehension and one way to comprehend is through simplification (p. 273). It is important to note that input needs to be processed to become intake. The problem is that not all input can become intake. According to Corder (in Gass and Selinker, 2001), intake is the input which is “internalized” (p. 260). Similarly, Vanpatten and Cadierno (1993) propose that learners should convert input into intake and then again, change intake into acquired systems. In other words, input should be provided sufficiently in order L2 learning can progress. In particular, input should become intake in order to proceed to L2 acquisition. Besides, input should be comprehensible in that learners will not be able to improve when they find that the input is far beyond their mind. Conversely, when the input is too easy, has been well-comprehended and become the part of the acquired system in the learners, the input will be likely to be considered as 'rubbish' which will not make learners progress but could cause frustration. Besides, input should be given systematically in conformity with learners’ stage of knowledge. More importantly, input cannot exist alone, because it will not provide anything to language acquisition. Thus, interaction and output should follow the process.

The process of input to become intake is called the input processing in which strategies and mechanisms are involved to create “form-meaning connections” that will lead to acquisition. Input is considered as “the language that encodes meanings.” Besides, input should contain “meaning to which the learner attends for its propositional content” (Vanpatten and Cadierno, 1993, p.46). This may indicate that learners may be able to involve in the input-to-intake stage when they understand what they are learning, and then they restructure the input they get by making association of meanings which will lead them to the content of the learned materials.

In comparison, a research finding shows that the learners’ attention to form which is known as “visual input enhancement” (i.e. highlighting, bolding, capitalizing, underlining) seems to show different effects when implemented alone or modified with other forms such as semantic elaboration, a focused production task, or activation of prior knowledge. When alone, visual input enhancement merely results in “sensory detection” because of the highlighting but does not facilitate integrative processing (Izumi, 2002, p.543). These complex aspects of input in a particular step of language acquisition may give alternatives to various strategies to enhance effective input that promotes second language acquisition. From this research, it can be assumed that the strategies of ‘paying attention to form’ need to be accompanied with other productive and active activities. Accordingly, the process of converting input to intake will be eased by stimulus of input that becomes the stepping stage towards intake.

Other studies about various input are conducted by Pica, Young, Doughty, Loschky, Ellis, Tanaka and Yamazaki about baseline input (the input when Native Speakers listen to other Native Speakers), premodified input (simplified input), interactionally modified input (modified input as a result of meaning negotiation) (Ellis and He, 1999, p. 287). It is known that from various input, interactionally modified input seems to work best, but not as effectively as when implemented to young learners.

Harrington and Dennis (2002) investigate the input-driven in second language learning by referring to previous research findings proposed by many scholars. They propose two regularities that can be extracted from the input that is called as “the simple statistical distribution of forms” such as collocations. The other regularity is indirect regularity that concern with “higher order of structural relations” from the input data such as “the long-distance dependencies governing
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Both input and interaction play similar importance in second language acquisition process. It could be assumed that different treatment either to input or interaction might affect the process of second language acquisition. More frequent input without being followed by sufficient interaction may not help much the second language acquisition. On the other hand, input which is modified interactionally may result in better development of second language acquisition.
One of the controversies that is against Krashen’s input hypothesis is the behaviorist theory stating that the acquisition process can be controlled by providing learners with “input in the right-sized doses” and also providing the reinforcement of the practices (Ellis, 2003, p. 26). This contrasting view on the role of input in second language acquisition has been widely discussed, yet there has not been an agreement on how far input plays an important role in second language acquisition.

Basically, the behaviorist theory accounts for the existence of stimuli and responses without paying too much attention to the cognitive process in the learners’ mind. They also emphasize on the feedback availability as the measurement of input manipulation, which is considered appropriate (Ellis, 2003, p. 243).

As the controversies go on, it can be assumed that behaviorism seems to emphasize on the reinforcement or providing stimulus to obtain response. This view sees the consistency of giving what is assumed to be sufficient or at the right dose input then providing the follow up in terms of interaction. Therefore, discussing on input only seems to be insufficient. To get better description and correlation, the discussion on interaction may also be posed as another important aspect in second language acquisition.

**INTERACTION: THE INPUT FOLLOW-UP OR THE INPUT POP UP**

Interaction can not be separated from input and output in that interaction acts as the mediator or tools between the two terms. Given that interaction may occur at the same time of input, the interaction process appears to be the practical tools for learners to contextualize the input they get. Furthermore, the terms of input, interaction and output may occur at a few distance of time that the process could be cyclical. A learner, for example, may get input because he/she interacts with either native speakers or non native speakers who speak a second language. Then, at no time at all he/she has to response the stimuli by using the immediate knowledge or way how to know the position of the learners’ level in order to know the right time to give them one step higher level of input (Mitchell and Myles, 2004, p. 48). Therefore, many theories that are proposed later seem to improve and give more alternatives on how second language can be acquired. Besides, controversies among the input processing and the output are still debatable.
input. The output, in this case, is the result of instant interaction which can be assumed as the 'activation of previous knowledge'. What is called by 'activation of previous knowledge' is that he/she might have known a little about the second language, and then it is activated. The previous input that he/she had might not be realized but it can emerge as a result of a sudden interaction.

In a more well-planned second language acquisition, just as that of the second language learning, the model of input can be presented and selected in order to meet the needs of the target learners. As the above example is an immediate input-interaction-output process, the well-prepared input-interaction-output may result in better second language acquisition. In comparison, the well-prepared process of giving input, facilitating interaction and thus producing output needs to be mapped and prior objective needs to be determined. This may be called the input follow up (my own term) that shows the possible further steps in second language acquisition. Whereas, the previous example can be called as the input pop up; this refers to the cyclical and immediate process of input, interaction and output.

Interaction or conversation seems to be an instrument to negotiate meaning. To negotiate means to respond properly to the questions which are given (Gass and Selinker, 2001, p. 272). A research finding shows that interaction that involves meaning appears to help learners in L2 acquisition (Loschky in Mitchell and Myles, 2004, p. 168). For example, nonnative speakers often produce inappropriate utterances. Native speakers, in this case, frequently modify the utterances in order to become understandable and it may make the interaction keeps on going. Such interaction is, indeed, helpful for L2 learners to get closer to the model language of the native speakers. Through interaction, L2 learners understand their competence in applying the knowledge they have learned.

INTERACTION HYPOTHESIS AND INTERACTIONIST

According to the interactionist theories, acquisition could be perceived as “a product of the complex interaction of the linguistic environment and the learner’s internal mechanisms, with neither viewed as primary” (Ellis, 2003, p. 243). While there are many interactionist theories, there are two views that are widely discussed: the cognitive interactionists and the social interactionist. The cognitive theory pays more attention to the cognitive processes in the learner's internal mechanisms, whereas the latter sees the importance of “verbal interaction” that is

References
attention to main features of pragmatic such as, social context, functional language use, and interaction, when they want to design and develop pragmatic teaching materials (Taguchi, 2011). Some materials and activities, such as: receptive-skill tasks (e.g. listening to video or audio with pragmatic features) and productive-skills tasks (e.g. structured conversations and Oral Discourse Completion Task (ODCT) are practically useful for teaching pragmatics. These tasks are available in textbooks focusing on the pragmatic skill development.

Furthermore, technology tools recently have provided interesting materials for pragmatic teaching. This might be due to the main instructional features provided by technology tools (e.g. multimedia environment, interactive input and simulation) which support the process of pragmatic teaching and learning in the classroom. For instance, implementing the feature of Computer-assisted language learning (CALL), Ward et al. (2007) developed a computer application for Arabic learners to record their utterances, and this application then analysed the timing and the frequency of recorded utterances and gave corrective feedbacks. Similarly, Utashiro and Kawai (2009) designed a computer-based course called 'DiscourseWare' and explored its effect on Japanese reactive tokens learning or backchannel signals, such as sodesuka ('I see') and honto ('really'). The results of these two CALL studies showed significant effects on learners' receptive and productive skills. Moreover, web sites that provide interactive multimedia lessons are also useful because EFL learners can watch video clips of conversations containing oral speech acts explanations, some cultural tips, and exercises.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, even though implicit instruction is more practical to draw EFL learners' initial attention to pragmatic features, the explicit pragmatic instruction is significantly more effective in both raising EFL learners' pragmatic awareness and developing their pragmatic performance. Some accessible potential instructional resources and materials are also available for teaching pragmatics in the classroom. Therefore, developing materials and activities to improve the learners' pragmatic performance is not a problem as long as the teachers are concerned on some key elements of pragmatic competence.

perceived to help learners proceed with the association of meanings. These two theories seem to point out the urgency of interaction in order to accomplish second language acquisition.

On the other hand, a well known hypothesis that relates to interaction is Interaction Hypothesis, which is proposed by Long. This hypothesis can be seen as the follow up of Krashen's input hypothesis. The interaction hypothesis concerns with the talk between native speakers-native speakers and native speakers-non native speakers. Accordingly, there could be many issues that emerge from the interaction. Native speakers-native speakers may be involved in a continuous talk without obstacles, while native speakers-non native speakers might create a problem of repetition, clarification, and confirmation (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). Thus, second language acquisition does require interaction as a means to proceed from the input the learners get in order to obtain maximum acquisition or commonly called as 'native-like'.

The intensive interaction between native speakers-non native speakers may result in better second language acquisition in that learners are sufficiently exposed to the target language. Moreover, the language learners who involve in conversational interaction could be said to build the building blocks of language development (Long in Gass and Selinker, 2001). Therefore, it may be indicated that learners can proceed to the interaction stage when they are certain that they have got the language meanings or associate meanings from the interlocutor. This is how an interaction may happen.

Intensive interaction, however, will seem to result in more automatic language learning that facilitates language acquisition. Learners who are exposed to particular language will build cognitive systems that can be activated any time when a stimulus is provided. This issue relates to the fundamental notion in second language acquisition: automaticity and restructuring (Gas and Selinker, 2001). While automaticity has something to do with the linguistic knowledge, the restructuring refers to the “internalized representations as a result of new learning”. The more intensive interaction that involves cognitive and social domains, the better the language performance and the closer to second language acquisition are.
CONCLUSION

The importance of input and interaction has been perceived to be necessary in second language acquisition. Theoretically, the 'right size and form' of input and the appropriate frequency of interaction will be likely to result in more effective second language acquisition.

However, this paper does not discuss output which is also considered as important as input and interaction. In practice, the three elements input, interaction and output support one another and may occur at the same time of learning. When alone, the elements provide nothing for learners to acquire language but passive information that will remain static. As has been discussed, many research findings still show various influences of input and interaction and the extent to which they promote L2 acquisition. Difficulties in providing sufficient representative data, limitation on particular potential influences on input and interaction have become the major obstacles in similar research. However, those two elements are, indeed, existent and have been proved prominent in L2 acquisition.

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Further claim is that the explicit pragmatic instruction can address certain EFL learners' repeated mistakes in their speech act production due to negative pragmatic transfer. For example, when Indonesian EFL learners get a compliment from their friend about their appearance or performance in English, they tend to respond it by saying 'Oh, that's okay!' It can lead to breakdowns and confusion in interaction with native speakers. Since negative pragmatic transfer results in confusion in EFL learners' communication, the teacher should directly clarify the negative transfers from the first language (L1) to the target language (L2). Otherwise, this makes EFL learners keep repeating the same mistakes. However, it should be noted that the teacher should use a good strategy to give direct correction in order not to make the EFL learners stressful and shy when they want to speak up. Some research studies have investigated the effect of explicit and implicit teaching by involving corrective feedbacks into the instruction (Takahashi, 2001; Tateyama, 2001; Nipaspong, & Chinokul, 2010). By giving feedbacks in the explicit instruction, the EFL learners find it useful since the teacher explicitly correct the mistakes they make while they are using the language. Hence, the explicit instruction can facilitate the teacher to correct EFL learners' mistakes in their language production.

Implicit Pragmatic Instruction

In contrast, some studies have also been conducted to show how the implicit instruction can be operationalised on pragmatic learning to focus on speech act forms (Fukuya, 1998; Fukuya and Clark, 2001; and Martinez-Flor, 2004). Fukuya (1998) investigated the use of recasts as implicit feedback on EFL learners' request acts production. The author implemented a technique of interaction enhancement, such as demonstrating a smiley face to reflect a correct response and a sad face to show an error response to some pragmatic elements like pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic errors. Besides showing a sad face to show an error response, this technique also included repetition of learners' inappropriate sentences with rising intonation. The results revealed that this technique was useful even though it was not significantly effective. In similar fashion, Fukuya and Clark (2001) applied a technique of input enhancement to get EFL learners' attention to the target forms of speech act. While explicit group learners received the explicit instruction on sociopragmatic elements of request mitigators, the request mitigator enhancements was provided to implicit group learners. The findings did not...


