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Language is at the center of human life. We use it to express our love or our hatred, to achieve our goals and further our careers, to gain artistic satisfaction or simple pleasure. Through language we plan our lives and remember our past; we exchange ideas and experiences; we form our social and individual identities.

Some people are able to do some or all of this in more than one language. Knowing another language may mean getting a job; a chance to get educated; the ability to take a fuller part in the life of one's literary and cultural horizons; the expression of one's political opinions or religious beliefs. A second language affects people's careers and possible futures, their lives and their very identities. In a world where probably more people speak two languages than one, the acquisition and use of second languages are vital to the everyday lives of millions. Helping people acquire second languages more effectively is an important task for the twenty-first century. (Second language learning and language teaching, 1-2p.) Therefore, a particular country, or indeed a particular individual, may decide to learn a second language for a purpose outside their own society, whether to be able to do business with other countries, to gain access to a scientific literature or to a cultural heritage, or to be able to work in other countries. In Israel, English is taught in schools as the language for wider communication and for access to

world commerce and culture, although it also serves as the language of English-speaking immigrants and English-speaking tourists. (Second language learning and language teaching 55-56 p.)

Students will find it difficult to learn a second language in the classroom if they have neither instrumental nor integrative motivation, as is probably often the case in school language teaching, and if they feel negatively about bilingualism or are too attached to monolingualism. Schoolchildren have no particular contact with the foreign culture and no particular interest in it, nor do their job prospects depend on it; their attitudes to L2 users may depend more on the stereotypes from their cultural situations than on any real contact. Only 36 per cent of pupils in England thought learning French would be useful to them, according to the Assessment of Performance Unit (1986). Teachers of French in England try to compensate for this lack by stressing the career benefits that knowledge of a second language may bring, or by building up interest in the foreign culture through

exchanges with French schools or samples of French food, i.e. by cultivating both types of motivation in their students. (Second language learning and language teaching 117 p.)

Language learning and teaching can be an exciting and refreshing interval in the day for students and teacher. There are so many possible ways of stimulating communicative interaction, yet, all over the world, one still finds classrooms where language learning is a tedious, dry-as-dust process, devoid of contact with the real world in which language use is as natural as breathing.

-Rivers 1987, 14

The aim of activities that focus on identifying linguistic features is to make students more aware of the linguistic features of spoken English. As such, they center on bottom-up processing. As the aim is to provide chances for students to develop their perceptual abilities, little attention is given to transactional or interactional purposes. One activity is to given to students practice in listening to the way sound blend in spoken English.(Teaching students to Comprehend spoken English 147 p.)

One important aspect of grammar in most languages is the order of words. Grammar is considered by many linguists to be the central area of the language around which other areas such as pronunciation and vocabulary revolve. However important the other components of language may be in themselves, they are connected to each other through grammar. Grammar is sometimes called the “computational system” that relates sound and meaning, trivial in itself but impossible to manage without.

Grammar is a unique aspect of language. It has features that do not occur in other mental processes and that are not found in animal languages. Furthermore, according to linguists, though often not to psychologists, grammar is learnt in different ways from anything else that people learn.

In some way grammar is easier to study in L2 learners than other aspects of language because it is highly systematic and its effects are usually fairly obvious in their speech. For these reasons, much SLA research has concentrated on grammar. This chapter first looks at different types of grammar and then selects some areas of grammatical research into L2 learning to represent the main approaches. (Second language learning and teaching 19 p.)

In some components of language – pronunciation, vocabulary and writing – and presents ideas about the learning of these components that can be related to language teaching. While the L2 acquisition of grammar has been exhaustively studied, these other components have been covered more patchily and are hardly referred to in most standard introductions to SLA research. Nor, despite their obvious relevance to teaching, has much yet been done to apply them to actual teaching.

What does this research show for teaching? Most language teachers use ‘ integrated pronunciation teaching’ , as Joanne Kenworthy (1987) calls it, in which pronunciation is taught as an incidental to other aspects of language, similar to the focus on from described in the previous chapter. The Pronunciation Book (Bowen and Marks,

1992), for example, describes ways of including pronunciation work within activities primarily devoted to other ends, such as texts and dialogues. Some teachers correct wrong pronunciation when they arise on an ad hoc basis . Such incidental correction does not probably do much good directly if it concentrates on a single phoneme rather than on the part the phoneme plays in the whole system; it may improve the students' pronunciation of single word said in isolation. (Second language learning and teaching 46 p.)

So some L2 learners do better than others because they are better motivated. The child learning a first language does not really have good or bad motivation. Language is one means through which all children fulfil their everyday needs, however diverse these may be. One might as well ask what the motivation is for walking or for being a human being. In these terms the second language is superfluous for many classroom learners, who can already communicate with people and use language for thinking. Their mental and social life has been formed through their first language.

The usual meaning of motivation for the teacher is probably the interest that something generates in the students. A particular exercise, a particular topic, a particular song may interest the students in the class, to the teacher's delight. Obvious enjoyment by the student is not necessarily a sign that learning is taking place – people probably enjoy eating ice-cream more than carrots but which has the better long-term effects? Motivation in this sense is a short-term affair from moment to moment in the class. Vital as it is to the classroom, SLA research has as yet paid little attention to it, as Crookes and Schmidt (1991) point out. (Second language learning and language teaching 115 p.)

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