

# Noticing hypothesis

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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.

There is debate over whether learners must consciously notice something, or whether the noticing can be subconscious to some degree (Schmidt, 1990, 2001) Noticing is a complex process: it involves the intake both of meaning and of form, and it takes time for learners to progress from initial recognition to the point where they can internalize the underlying rule. This argues for teachers to provide recurring opportunities for learners to notice, since one noticing task is most unlikely to be sufficient. More specifically, we may want to work with different kinds of noticing task in future in order to serve different psycholinguistic factors.

Schmidt (1990), identifies three aspects of consciousness involved in language learning: awareness, intention and knowledge. The first sense, consciousness as awareness, embraces noticing . According to Schmidt (1995, p. 20), " the noticing hypothesis states that what learners notice in input is what becomes intake for learning. " Schmidt also states that a) whether a learner deliberately attends to a linguistic form in the input or it is noticed purely unintentionally, if it is noticed it becomes intake; and b) that noticing is a necessary condition for L2 acquisition.

In his noticing hypothesis, Schmidt (1990, 1993, 1995; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) shed light on focal attention, or noticing, as a necessary and sufficient condition for input to become intake in SLA, by claiming "intake is that part of the input that the learner notices" (1990, p. 139). According to Schmidt (1993), second language (L2) learners need to not only comprehend the input but also notice "whatever features of the input are relevant for the target system" (p. 209).

Although these definitions of noticing differ in the degrees or levels of awareness that are deemed necessary for SLA, the researchers all agree on the importance of noticing in SLA. In both the strong version of the Noticing Hypothesis (noticing is necessary and sufficient for second language acquisition) and the weak version of the Noticing Hypothesis (noticing is a necessary but not sufficient condition for second language acquisition), noticing is considered to play a significant role in SLA.

In Gass and Selinker's (2001) view, noticing or selective attention is "at the heart of the interaction hypothesis," (p. 298) and is one of the crucial mechanisms in the negotiation process. Conclusion Attention and noticing (the subjective correlate of attention are crucial concepts for attention - becoming conscious of some material - seems to be the sovereign remedy for learning anything. It is the universal solvent of the mind" (Baars 1997, P. 04). For SLA, the allocation of attention is the pivotal point at which learner external factors (including the complexity and distributional characteristics of input, the discursive and interactional context, instructional treatment, and task characteristics) and learner internal factors (including motivation,

aptitude, learning styles and strategies, current L2 knowledge and processing ability) come together.