

THE POWER OF FICTION

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An adventure at the supermarket

SOME FUNDAMENTALS

The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis:

ACQUISITION – subconscious = "picking up" a language - While it is happening, we are not aware that it is happening.

- Acquired knowledge is stored in our brains subconsciously.

Acquisition - What the brain does well.

LEARNING – conscious = "rules," "grammar"

Error correction helps learning. When we are corrected, we are supposed to change our conscious version of the rule.

Learning – What the brain does poorly.

The Natural Order Hypothesis: acquisition, not learning. (1) You can't change it (2) not simple to complex. (3) not the syllabus

The Monitor Hypothesis: Consciously learned language only available as Monitor, editor - before we say/write or after.

Conditions for Monitor use: (1) Know the rule; (2) Be thinking about correctness (focus on form) (3) Time.

Conditions fully met: When we take a grammar test.

The Comprehension Hypothesis: We acquire language only when we understand messages.

AMAZING FACTS about language acquisition: (1) Effortless:

(2) Involuntary: Given comprehensible input, you must acquire.

Corollary: **Talking/writing is not practicing**

1) we acquire language by input, not output: more output does not result in more language acquisition

2) ability to speak: the RESULT of language acquisition

Krashen, S. 2018. Down with forced speech! <http://tinyurl.com/y8tvmn73>

Forced speech = involuntary output that requires unacquired language

Hypotheses: (1) uncomfortable (2) does not help language acquisition

I. OUR NEIGHBOR and her Spanish class.

II. Studies of FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Price, 1991: greatest source of anxiety = having to speak the language in class.

Loughrin-Sacco (1992): for EVERY student in beginning French class “speaking was the highest anxiety-provoking activity.”

- (1) indigenous people of Vaupes River area Columbia & Brazil-24 languages (10,000 people). Not all languages mutually intelligible.

Required to marry someone who does not speak the same language.

During adolescence, an individual “actively and almost suddenly” begins to speak the two or three other languages he or she has been exposed to..”

“The Indians do not practice speaking a language they do not know well yet. ... They may make an occasional attempt to speak a new language .. if it does not come easily, they will not try to force it.”

“at least one to two years to learn a new language fluently” (Sorensen)

- (2) Nida (1957): “I have .. inquired of a number of African polyglots just how they learned the language of neighboring tribes. Almost without exception, the story is the same: they went to live in a neighboring village ... they were working with people who spoke another language. But instead of trying hard to learn the language, they seemed to just take it for granted that after listening to the language long enough, they would find that they could ‘hear’ it. ‘We just live there and listen, and before we know it, we can hear what they say. “

Input must be INTERESTING. Best is COMPELLING comprehensible input: so interesting you forget it is in another language.

Language acquisition is GRADUAL.

Each time you encounter a new item in a comprehensible context you acquire a small amount (5 to 10%) of the meaning (and form) (eg Nagy, W., Herman P., & Anderson, R. (1985). Learning words from context. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 20(2), 233-253.)

Can we trust context? YES. Beck, McKeown and McClaslin, (1983) 61% provide clues to the meanings of unfamiliar words, 31% of no help, only 8% were “misdirective.” Beck, I., McKeown, M. & McCaslin, E. (1983). Vocabulary development: Not all contexts are created equal. *Elementary School Journal* 83: 177-181.

Should we teach along the natural order? If input is compelling, comprehensible and there is a lot of it, i+1 is present in the input.

APPLICATION: THE CONDUIT HYPOTHESIS. STORIES!!!

Driving on Pacific Coast Highway in California – the high quality of best-sellers... AND the quality of movies, or, how to improve your social life.

CONDUIT HYPOTHESIS: each stage a passageway/conduit to the next

STAGE ONE: STORIES

L1 (a) positive impact on language (b) children like it (c) leads to reading
24 parents of 3rd graders interviewed. Children in a remedial reading program.
83.3% love to be read to. 16.7% do not want to be read to. Anderson, S. 2000.
Reading Improvement 27, 2: 61-86.

They do more reading on their own (Krashen, 2004; Power of Reading); better gains in vocabulary, reading.

L2 (storiesfirst.org): Story Listening (Beniko Mason): stories of universal interest; made more comprehensible with context, drawings, gestures, occasional translation. Krashen, S., Mason, B., & Smith, K. 2018. beniko-mason.net
Students NOT responsible for remembering the words; goal = enjoy the story: BUT better than direct instruction: More vocabulary acquired per minute.
IMPLICATION: Don't do vocabulary exercises, tell another story!

STAGE TWO:

The application: Reading stage begins with GUIDED SSR (B. Mason): Mason, B. 2019. <http://beniko-mason.net/content/articles/2019-GSSR-before-SSR.pdf>

Compelling, comprehensible stories for beginners to read.

Self-selected with teacher guidance, gradual movement to full self-selection.

Students start from the lowest level of graded readers; Eventual goal - authentic reading" after several years.

RESEARCH on the effect of self-selected pleasure reading.

1. The effect of GSSR

one hour = .6 points on TOEIC! Mason, B., & Krashen, S. 2017. Self-selected reading and TOEIC performance: Evidence from case histories.

<https://tinyurl.com/yc9tc8ha>

2 years of relaxed self-selected reading, 2 hours a day = 1200 hours @ .6 points per hour = gain of 720 points, nearly at the top of the test, starting at 250.

2. Sophia's reading scores went DOWN during the school year, but went UP over the summer! Why? Hint: The library.

Lin, S-Y, Shin, F., & Krashen, S. 2007. Sophia's choice: Summer reading.

Knowledge Quest 35(4), 52-55.

http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/articles/sophias_choice_kq.pdf

3. The effect of increasing writing versus increasing reading.

DeVries (1970): reading vs. "mere writing" (output); 5th graders:

(1) 2 themes a week for 9 weeks

(2) "were excused from practically all composition work ...and made use of the time ... for an increased amount of reading, in and out of class"

Results: essays – reading group better in content, mechanics, organization, and grammar.

4. Lee (2005): EFL students in traditional course in Taiwan. Amount of leisure reading predicted writing quality, amount of "leisure writing" did not.

5. Malcolm X: What's your alma mater? "My prison studies...". "You couldn't have gotten me out of books with a wedge."

For more: Krashen, S. 2004.. The Power of Reading. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited. http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/the_power_of_reading.pdf (second edition)

FICTION! UK study: fiction best predictor of vocabulary knowledge. Sullivan, A. & Brown, M. (2014). Vocabulary from adolescence to middle age. London: Centre for Longitudinal Studies, University of London.

What about “academic language”? McQuillan (Reading in a Foreign Language, 2020): Reading all seven Harry Potter novels predicts acquisition of 204 academic words, assuming 12 repetitions > acquisition. Three times as time efficient as direct instruction.

McQuillan (Reading Matrix, 2019) analysis of 22 novels for young people (e.g. Nancy Drew, Twilight): 85% of 485 “academic” words on academic word list. 44% appear 12 times or more (213). Predicts that in one year, reading 30 minutes/day, readers will acquire 37% of the core academic vocabulary needed for school.

Rolls & Rogers: one million words of reading science-fiction/fantasy > 92% of 318 science words that appear in different areas of science.

READING and KNOWLEDGE: Those who read more, know more. Stanovich, K. and Cunningham, A. 1993. Where does knowledge come from? *Journal of Educational Psychology* 85, 2: 211-229. College students tested on wide variety of subjects: science, social studies, current events, personal finance, health, “daily living technology,” cultural knowledge, “multicultural literacy.”

In what part of the body does the infection called pneumonia occur?

What is the term for the amount of money charged for a loan and calculated as a percentage of that loan?

Where is the Panama Canal?

Recognition of Linus Pauling, Isaac Newton, Bertrand Russell

Best predictor of combined tests: “print exposure” = familiarity with current authors (Stephen King, Maja Angelou), magazines (Forbes, Ladies Home Journal)

Weak predictors: knowledge of math, reading comprehension

Insignificant: Knowledge of TV shows, Test of analytic intelligence, problem-solving (Raven), high school GPA

predictor	Beta
High School GPA	0.2
Raven Matrices	0.16
Mathematics	.165 **
Reading Comp	.112 **

Television	-0.039
Print exposure	0.72*

Compare this to the effect of homework: Kohn, A. 2006. *The Homework Myth*. Da Capo.

The positive effects of homework are largely mythical: "... there is absolutely no evidence of any academic benefit from assigning homework in elementary or middle school. For younger students, in fact, there isn't even a correlation between whether children do homework (or how much they do) and any meaningful measure of achievement. At the high school level, the correlation is weak and tends to disappear when more sophisticated statistical measures are applied. Meanwhile, no study has ever substantiated the belief that homework builds character or teaches good study habits."

<https://www.alfiekohn.org/article/rethinking-homework/>

Published in 2012: <https://www.alfiekohn.org/blogs/homework-unnecessary-evil-surprising-findings-new-research/>

Habits of Mind: Readers and

(1) capacity to empathize. Kidd, D., & Castano, E. (2013). *Science*, 342 (6156), 377-380.

(2) Greater tolerance for vagueness. Djikic, M., Oatley, K. & Moldoveanu, M. (2013).

Creativity Research Journal, 25(2), 149-154. Avoid simple solutions.

"When I think about how I understand my role as citizen, ... the most important stuff I've learned I think I've learned from novels. It has to do with empathy. It has to do with being comfortable with the notion that the world is complicated and full of grays, but there's still truth there to be found ..it's possible to connect with some[one] else even though they're very different from you." Barack Obama.

".... when you're learning to read fiction ... what you're learning, in part, is empathy. You're learning to be somebody else, learning to see the world through their eyes." Terry. Gross of "Fresh Air" (<https://tinyurl.com/y8d3cdoz>)

The importance of ACCESS!!!! Libraries and Librarians!!! B. Mason: access to 5000 graded readers in English for 500 students.

Keith Curry Lance: Schools with good collections in library, credentialed librarians > higher reading achievement. <https://keithcurrylance.com/school-library-impact-studies/>

The importance of SELF-SELECTION:

Gift books = assigned reading: "As a former English major I am a sitting duck for gift books, and in the past few years I've gotten Dickens, Thackeray, Smollett, Richardson, Emerson, Keats, Boswell, and the Brontes, all of them Great, none

of them ever read by me, all of them now on my shelf, looking at me and making me feel guilty.” Garrison Keillor. (

“No single practice inspires my students to read as much as the opportunity to choose their own books does.” Donalyn Miller, *Creating a Classroom Where Readers Flourish*. (*Reading Teacher*, 66,2, p. 90. 2012).

MY SECONDARY SCHOOL SELF-SELECTED READING: Science-fiction and baseball stories. = my language arts curriculum.