

LANGUAGE EDUCATION I (Units 1 to 3)

UNIT 1

"Teaching by Principles" Brown, H. Douglas (2001)

CHAPTER 4

COGNITIVE PRINCIPLES

The first set of principles is called "cognitive" because they relate mainly to mental and intellectual functions.

Principle 1: Automaticity

Through an inductive process of exposure to language input and opportunity to experiment with output, children appear to learn languages without "thinking" about them.

The Principle of Automaticity includes the importance of:

- Subconscious absorption of language through meaningful use,
- Efficient and rapid movement away from a focus on the forms of language to a focus on the purposes to which language is put,
- Efficient and rapid movement away from capacity-limited control of a few bits and pieces to a relatively unlimited automatic mode of processing language forms, and
- Resistance to the temptation to analyze language forms.

The Principle of Automaticity may be stated as follows:

- Efficient second language learning involves a timely movement of the control of a few language forms into the automatic processing of a relatively unlimited number of language forms. Overanalysing language, thinking too much about its forms, and consciously lingering on rules of language all tend to impede this graduation to automaticity.

The principle says that adults can take a lesson from children by speedily overcoming our propensity to pay too much focal attention to the bits and pieces of language and to move language forms quickly to the periphery by using language in authentic contexts for meaningful purposes.

In classroom:

1. Being too heavily centered on the formal aspects of language can block pathways to fluency.