

Form-Focused Instruction & Feedback on Error

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Instructional approaches

- Traditional structure-based teaching
 - Contrasts with
- Communicative language teaching (CLT)
- Content-based language teaching (CBLT)
- Task-based language teaching (TBLT)



CLT, CBLT, & TBLT

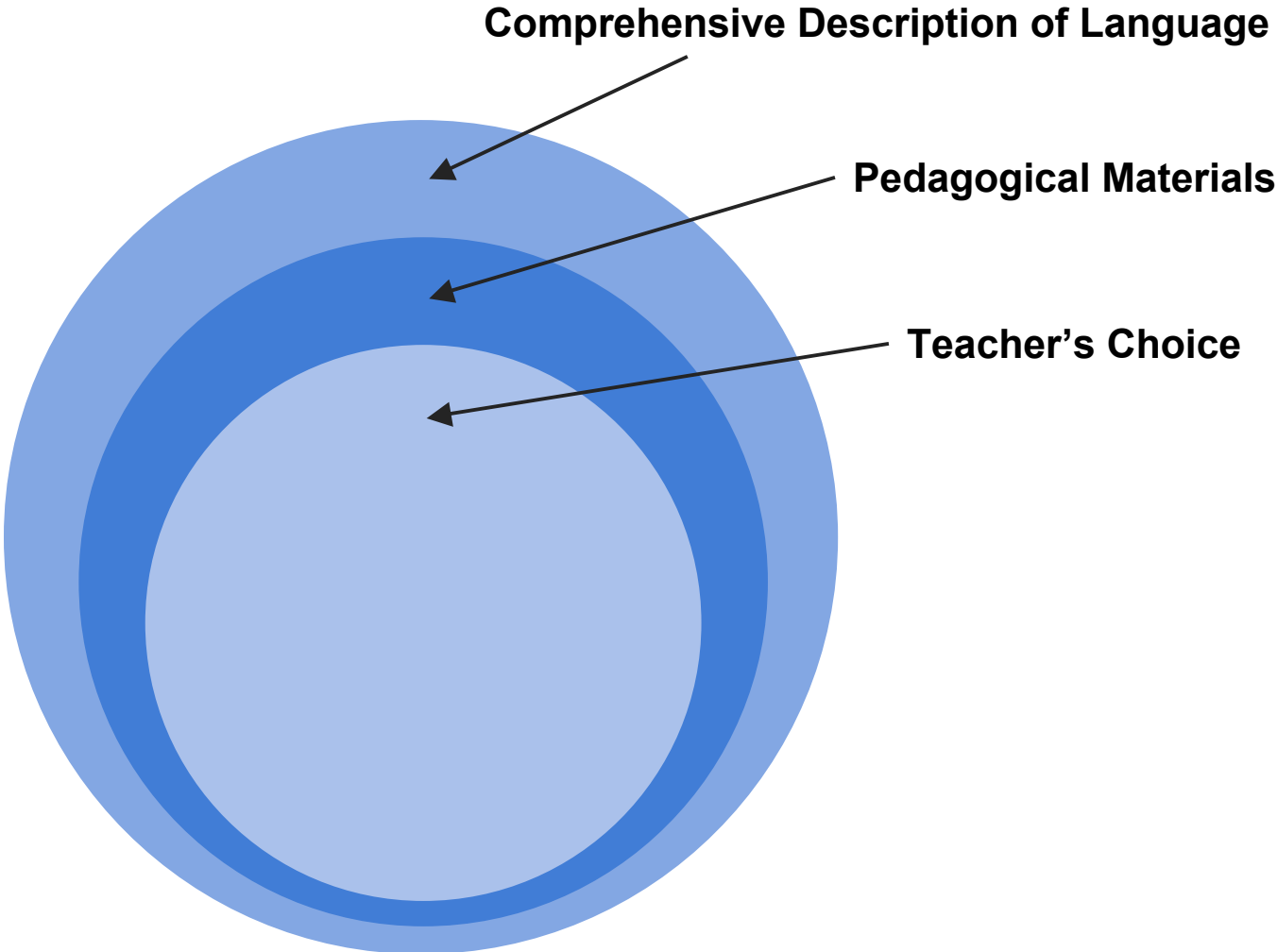
- Focus on meaningful interaction
 - Learn by *using language*, not just *learning about* language
- So, *how* and *when* do students attend to language form?
 - Grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics, pronunciation, etc.



Form-focused instruction (FFI)

- Any pedagogical activity intended to draw students' attention to language itself
 - grammar, pronunciation, pragmatics, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation...
- Long's *focus on form* and *focus on forms*
- Nation's *language-focused learning*





Explicit vs Implicit

- *Explicit* FFI & feedback *tell* learners what to pay attention to.
- *Implicit* FFI & feedback leave learners to *discover* the language focus.



*PRO*active vs *Reactive* FFI

- **PRO**active : Plan focus feature before activity
 - or
- **RE**active: Wait for problems to come up?



Feedback

- By definition, *reactive*: a response to a learner's utterance



Feedback

- Feedback may be *reinforcing*
 - “Yes, I understand what you’ve said and you’ve said it correctly.”
- Feedback may be *corrective*
 - “I’m sorry. I didn’t understand you.”
 - “I understood you, but there’s something incorrect in what you’ve said.”

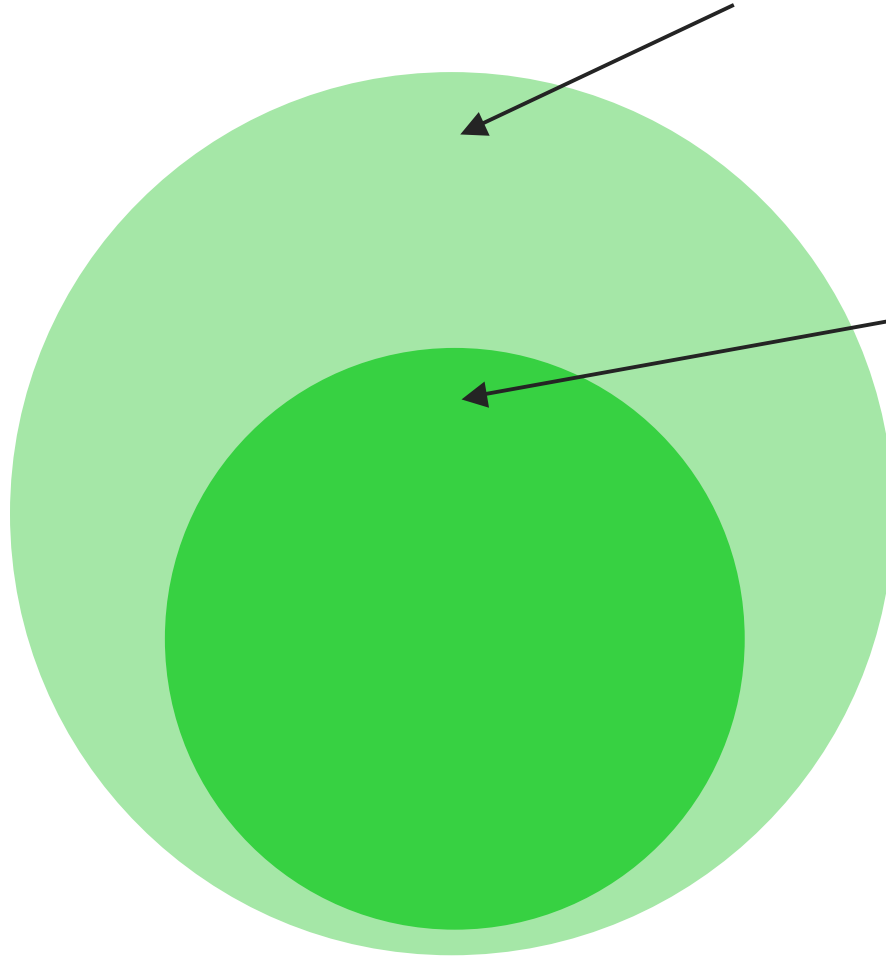


Corrective Feedback (CF)

- Any reaction to a learner's utterance that contains an error
 - grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, pronunciation
- Corrective feedback may be
 - Explicit or implicit



Nontarget Utterances



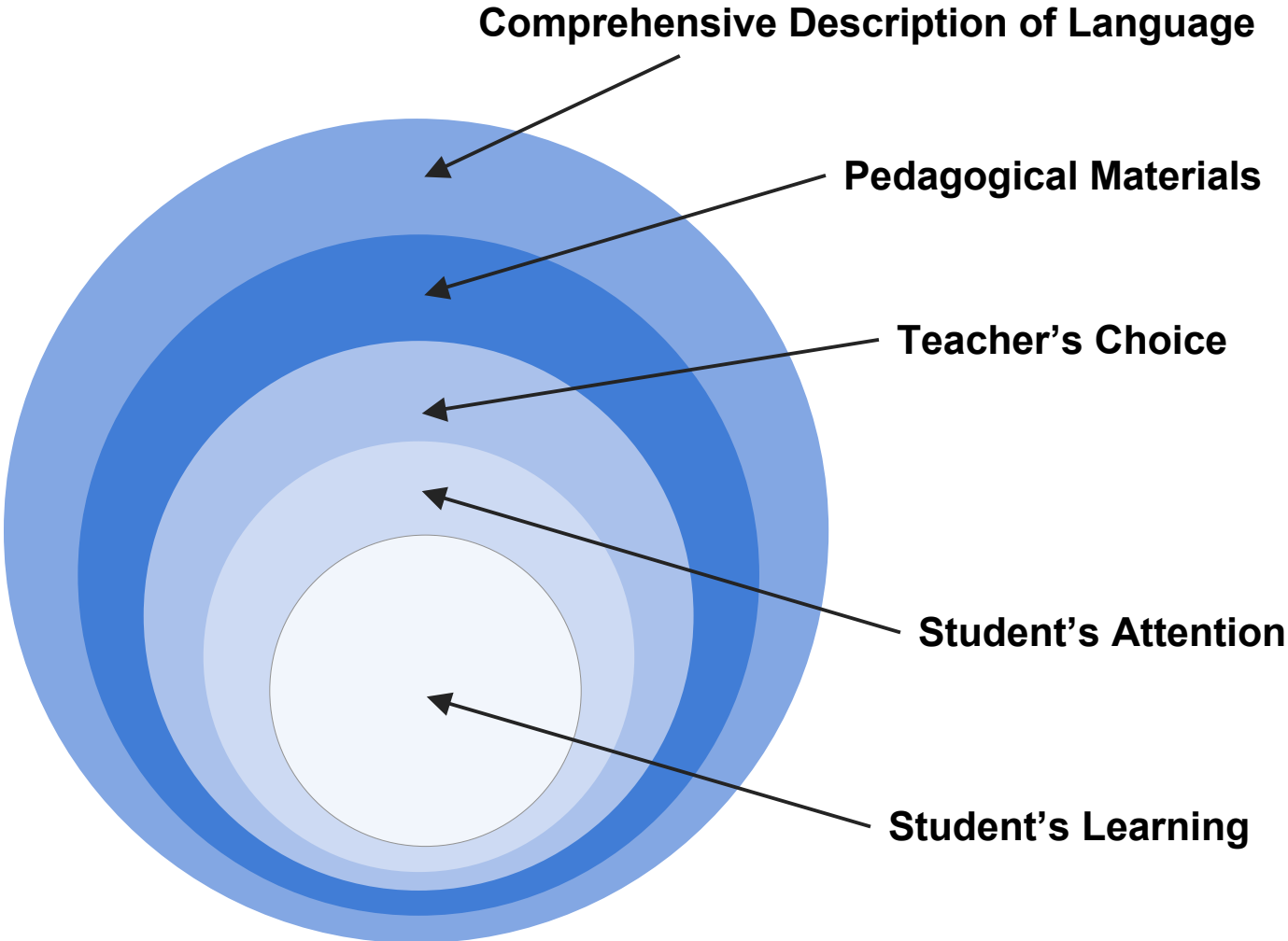
Feedback Provided

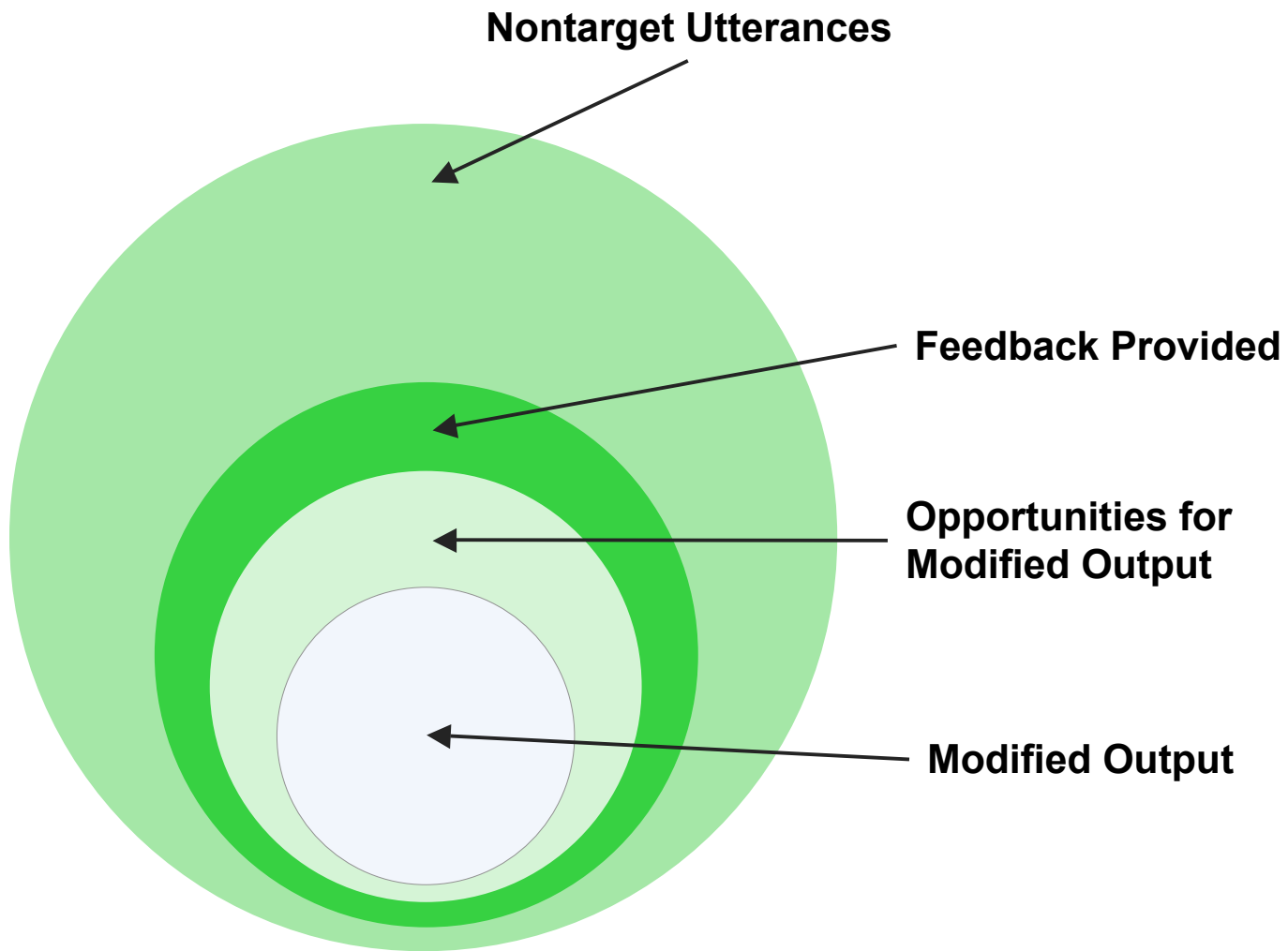


The question

How do FFI and CF affect SLA?







Mackey, Oliver, & Leeman 2003



The question

How do FFI and CF affect SLA?



No “interface”

- *ACQUISITION* and *LEARNING*
 - Acquisition = incidental
 - Learning = intentional, metalinguistic
 - Different cognitive processes
 - Therefore, FFI and CF have little effect on SLA
 - Krashen, Schwartz, Young-Scholten, et al.



Strong “interface”

- SINGLE COGNITIVE PROCESS
 - Declarative knowledge becomes procedural knowledge
 - Procedural knowledge becomes automatized performance
 - Traditional pedagogy, skill learning
 - De Keyser, Hulstijn, Laufer



Weak “interface”

- Influenced by cognitive psychology, cognitive linguistics
- Varying views as to “modularity”
 - Learner-internal and external influences
- Classroom and lab-based research
 - Doughty, N. Ellis, R. Ellis, Gass, Long, Lightbown & Spada, Lyster, Mackey, Schmidt, VanPatten...



FFI has limited effect on “route”

- Interlanguage sequences
- Error patterns
- Underlying competence



FFI can have important effect on

- Metalinguistic knowledge
- Rate of acquisition -- faster
- Ultimate attainment -- better



What's the problem?

...explicit instruction can too simply result in students having explicit knowledge that is dissociated from, and which fails to affect, their fluent implicit performance... what is needed next is to determine the conditions which optimize the interface (Nick Ellis)



What do students hear?

- ***Models***

- Language forms that are present in the input

- ***Corrective feedback***

- Information about what is *not* correct or appropriate in the language



Corrective feedback can...

- Tell learners they've made an error
- Provide a model of the correct form
- Encourage *retrieval* of language forms learners “know” but don't always use



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What kind of feedback do students get?

- *Communicative success*
 - *Motivates continued development*
 - *Promotes incidental learning and fluency*
 - **May also reinforce interlanguage features, especially where students share L1**



What kind of feedback do students get?

- *Communicative failure*
 - *Can lead to negotiation of meaning and “noticing the gap”*
 - *But note: in student-student interaction*
 - *Students may “pretend and hope” when they don’t understand (Foster 1998).*
 - *Negotiation is rare where L1 is shared.*



Teacher-provided FFI & feedback

- Nation's four strands
 - Meaning-focused input
 - Meaning-focused output
 - Fluency development
 - Language-focused learning



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- Nation's four strands
 - Meaning-focused input
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 - Fluency development
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Empirical studies of FFI & feedback

- Research in communicative and content-based classes
- Research in lab settings



Characteristics of FFI

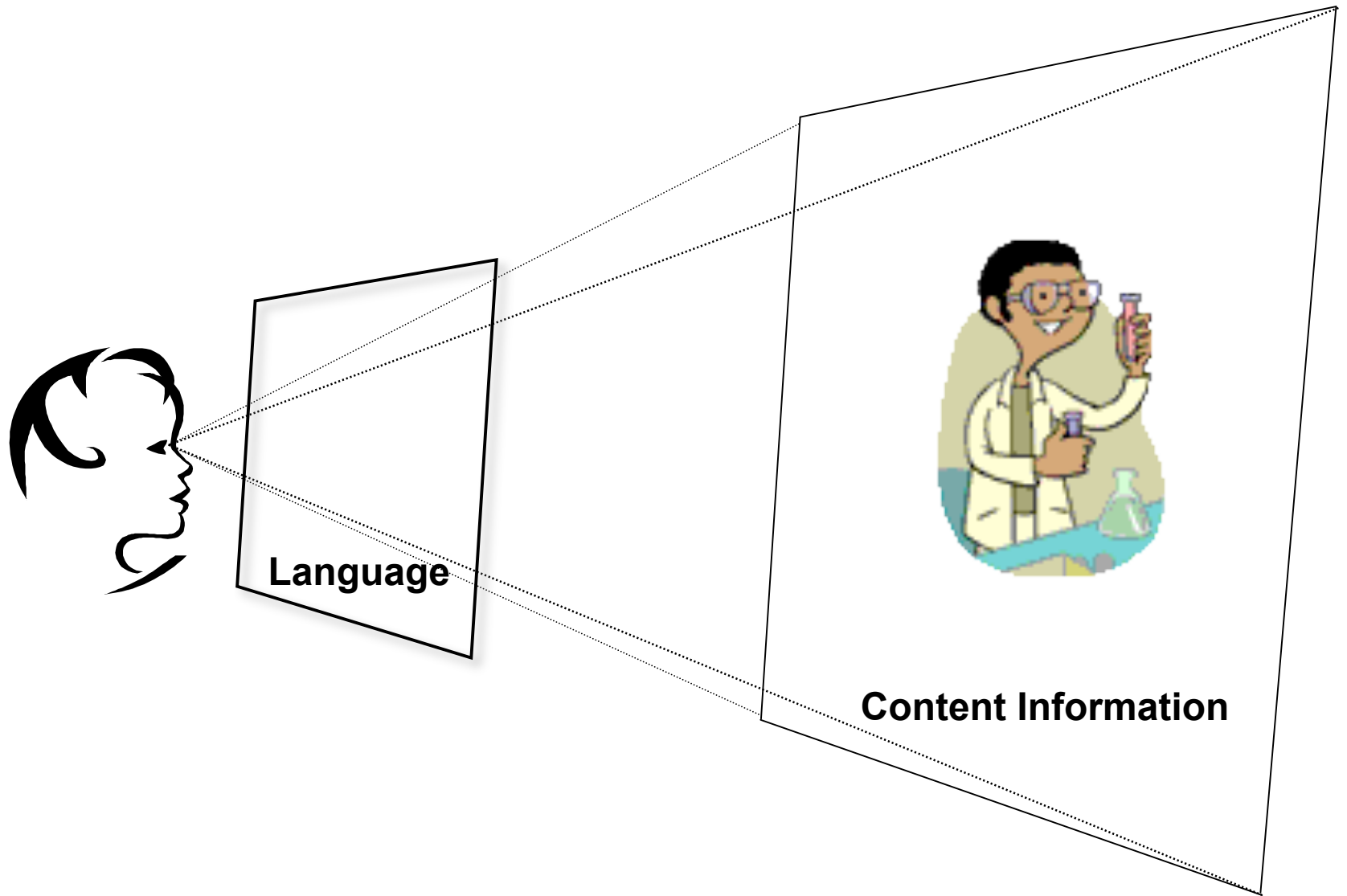
- Proactive or Reactive?
- Explicit or Implicit?



In CLT, CBLT, TBLT

- Meaning-focused learning predominates





Ambiguity of Focus

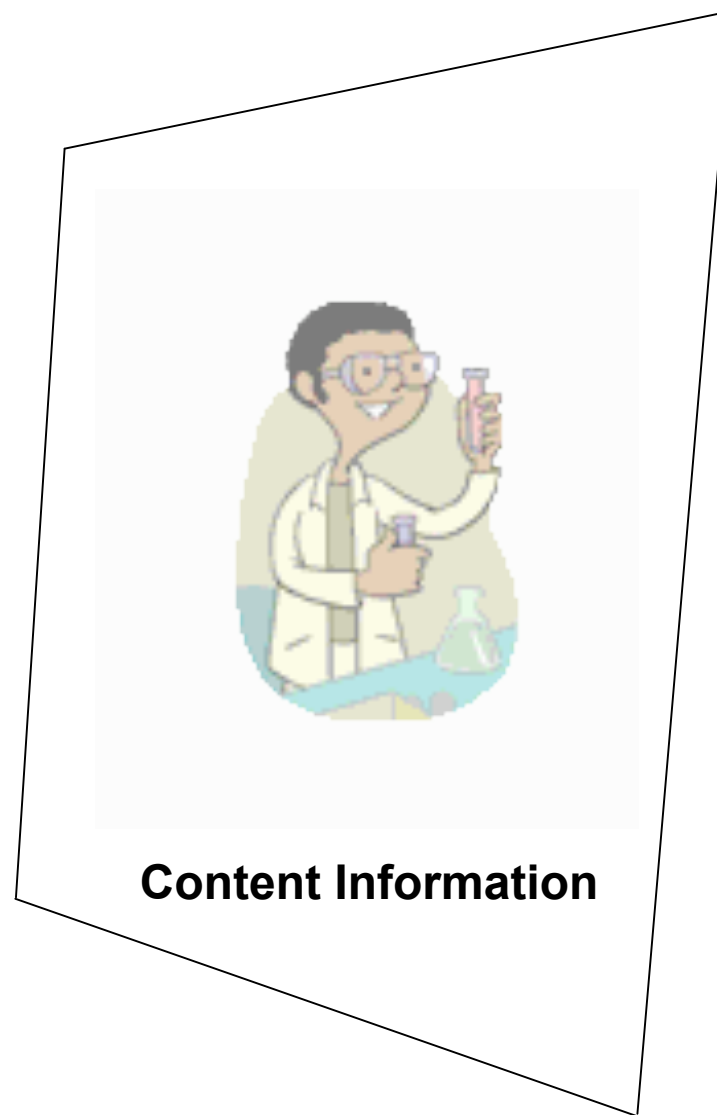
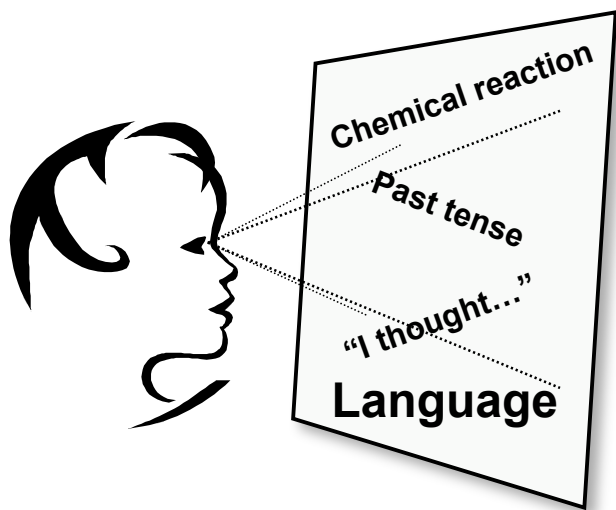
- In CLT, CBLT, TBLT students may not recognize feedback that is focused on form rather than meaning.
 - *S: I think that the liquid will turn green.*
 - *T: You thought the liquid would turn green?*
 - *S: Yes.*

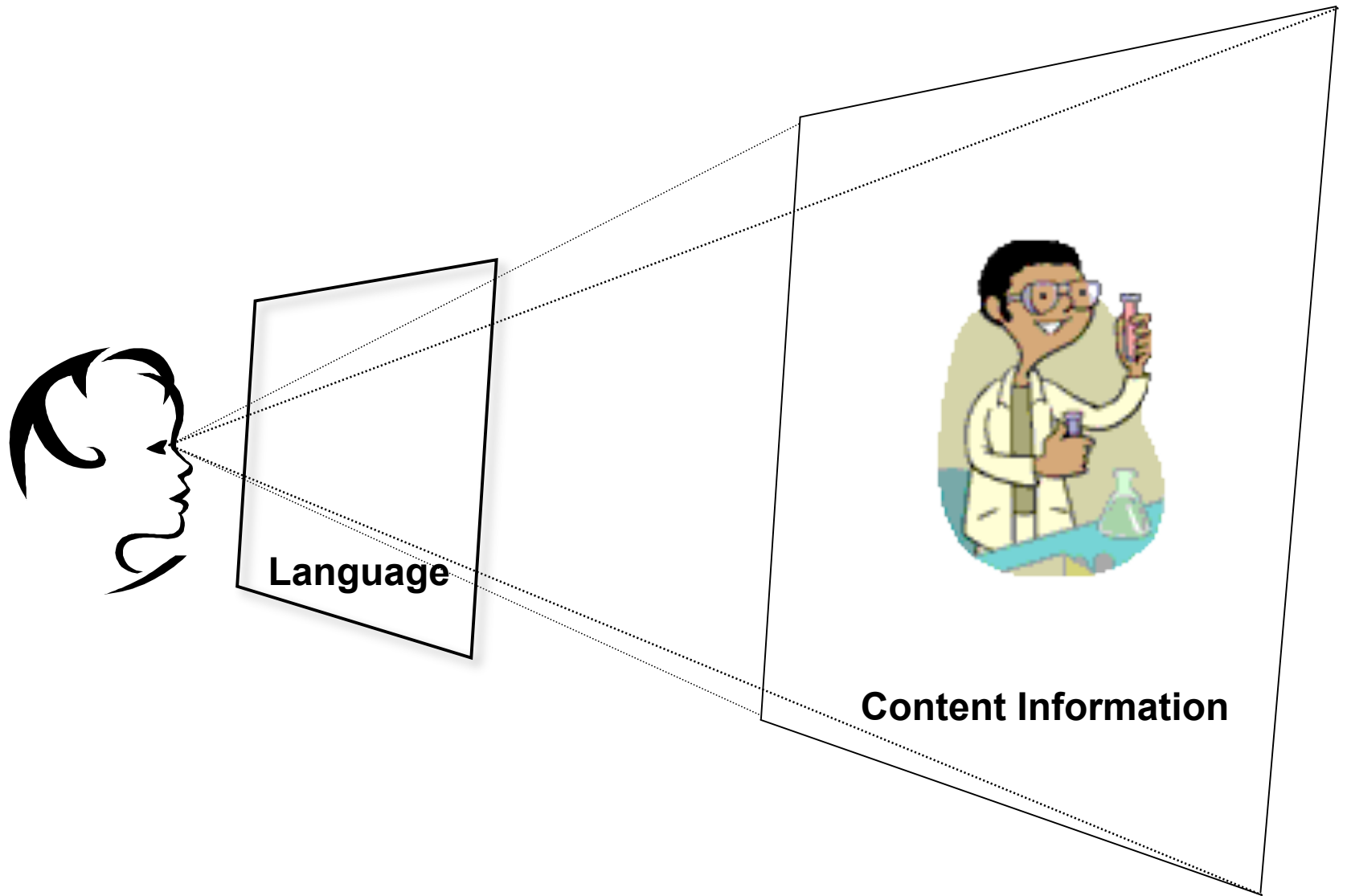


Clarity of focus

- More explicit focus may be required:
 - *S: I think that the liquid will turn green.*
 - *T: I beg your pardon. You think...?*
 - *S: Oh. I ... thought it will turn green.*
 - *T: I see. You thought that the liquid...*
 - *S: ...would turn green.*
 - *T: Uh-huh. But what colour was it?*







A challenge for implicit FFI & feedback

Ensuring that students recognize responses and comments that focus on *form*



What kind of feedback do students get?

- Implicit feedback -- from peer or teacher
- Explicit feedback
- Self-monitoring
- Text comparison (e.g., dictogloss)



- *Explicit feedback* may be needed for revising incorrectly encoded knowledge
 - Especially if the error is based on an overgeneralization
 - or
 - Where there is misleading L1 / L2 similarity



Types of Feedback

- Lyster & Ranta, 1997
 - Recast
 - Explicit Correction
 - Elicitation
 - Metalinguistic Information
 - Clarification Request
 - Repetition



Recast

S: My mother don't like fish

T: Oh? Your mother doesn't like fish?

S: No, she don't eat it.



Explicit correction

S: The dog run fastly

T: 'Fastly' doesn't exist. 'Fast does not take -ly.
That's why I picked 'quickly'.



Elicitation

1) Teachers use questions to elicit correct forms

T: How do we say X in English?

2) Teachers ask students to reformulate their utterance.

S: My father cleans the plate.

T: Excuse me, he cleans the ...?

S: Plates?



Metalinguistic information

S: We look at the people yesterday.

T: What's the ending we put on verbs when we talk about the past?

S: Oh. We looked at the people.



Clarification request

T: How often do you wash the dishes?

S: Fourteen

T: Excuse me?

S: Fourteen

T: Fourteen what?

S: Fourteen for a week.



Repetition

S: He don't like spaghetti.

T: He *don't*?

S: No. And he don't like pizza either.



Retrieval effect?

- Which feedback techniques lead learners to “retrieve” the correct form?
 - Not recasts
 - Not explicit correction



Retrieval effect?

- Which feedback techniques lead learners to “retrieve” the correct form?
 - Clarification request
 - Elicitation
 - Metalinguistic cue
 - Repetition?



Frequency of Feedback Types

- Recasts predominate
 - In structure-based instruction such as audio-lingual pattern practice
 - In content-based and communicative language teaching
 - In foreign and second language learning contexts



Effectiveness of Feedback

- Measured as uptake
 - Immediate reaction to feedback
- Measured as long term performance
 - Ability to use the form later in L2 production



Effectiveness of Recasts

- Targeted recasts effective in lab studies
- Non-targeted recasts *sometimes* effective for adult learners in small classes



Effectiveness of Recasts

- Recasts are less effective in meaning-focused instruction (CLT, TBLT, CBT).
- Recasts are more effective when brief, relatively explicit, and *stressed (explicit?)*.
- Recasts are more effective for pronunciation and vocabulary than for morphosyntax.



Types of Feedback, Lyster 2004

- ***Reformulation***
 - Explicit correction
 - Recasts
- ***Prompts***
 - Clarification requests
 - Metalinguistic cues
 - Elicitation
 - Repetition (with emphasis on error)



Types of Feedback, Ranta & Lyster 2007

- “More input [including recasts] is not going to make a difference; learners need to be pushed when their focus is on academic content to use target forms which are in competition with highly accessible interlanguage forms.” (p.153)



Differences in Feedback

- Reformulations (e.g., recasts)
 - May provide salient models
 - May allow comparisons of interlanguage and target language forms
- Prompts
 - Create opportunity for effortful retrieval, proceduralization of declarative knowledge
 - Allow time to make comparison of interlanguage and target language forms



Differences in Learners

- 'Language analytic ability' is associated with success, even in the most 'communicative' language learning settings.
– Ranta 2002
- Ability to 'switch' from focus on form to focus on meaning...and back again, may be good predictor of language learning success.
– Segalowitz 2000



Differences in Learners

- Aptitude
- Attitude
- Proficiency
- Developmental readiness



Differences in Contexts

- Structure-based instruction
 - Students expect error correction and may even interpret the teacher’s “conversational” interventions as corrective.



Differences in Contexts

- CLT, CBLT, TBLT
 - In meaning-focused activities
 - Feedback may be overlooked or misinterpreted.
 - It may also be rare.
 - In language-focused activities
 - Feedback is usually more explicit.
 - It is also more frequent & more focused.



Feedback: Summary

- Reformulations (models) are not effective for eliminating persistent errors.
- Explicit CF helps learners “spot the difference”
- Prompts encourage learners to retrieve “effortfully” and can enhance long term retention.



- Questions? References?
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