

The Role of the Native Language

An Historical Overview

An Historical Perspective

An Historical Perspective

◆ Psychological Background

Psychological Background

John B. Watson

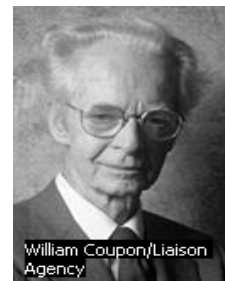


Psychological Background

- ◆ Behaviorism
 - The study of observable behavior (responses) in relation to the environment (stimuli)
 - Inner experiences cannot be studied
 - Complex behavior is reducible to simple stimulus-response patterns
 - Stimuli and responses can be observed and measured experimentally

Psychological Background

B. F. Skinner



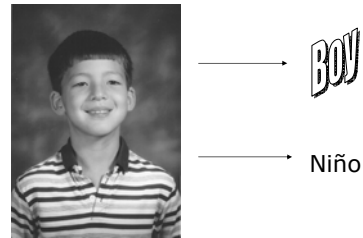
Psychological Background

- ◆ Behaviorist learning
 - Operant conditioning
 - Reinforcement of desired response to stimulus

7

Psychological Background

- ◆ Operant conditioning



8

Psychological Background

- ◆ The influence of behaviorism
 - Minimize the introspective study of mental processes and feelings.
 - Substitute the study of the objective behavior of individuals in relation to their environment by means of experimental methods.

9

An Historical Perspective

- ◆ Psychological Background
- ◆ Linguistic Background

10

Linguistic Background



- ◆ Ferdinand de Saussure
 - 1857-1913, Swiss linguist. One of the founders of modern linguistics, he established the structural study of language, emphasizing the arbitrary relationship of the linguistic sign to that which it signifies.

11

Linguistic Background

- ◆ Ferdinand de Saussure
 - After his death two of his students compiled his lecture notes and other materials into a seminal work, Cours de linguistique générale. The book explained his structural approach to language and established a series of theoretical distinctions that have become basic to the study of linguistics.

12

Linguistic Background

- ◆ LEONARD BLOOMFIELD (1887-1949)
- ◆ Bloomfield was one of America's foremost scientific linguists, concerned with theoretical, descriptive, and applied aspects of his field. A teacher of German and an accomplished Indo-European scholar, he also carried out research on the languages of non-literate peoples, including the Menominee of Wisconsin.

13

Linguistic Background

- ◆ Leonard Bloomfield
 - Promoted linguistics as an independent science using scientific procedures.
 - Based his work, especially his approach to meaning, on behaviorist principles.
 - His major work, *Language* (1933) is regarded as the classic text of structural linguistics, also called structuralism.

14

Structural Linguistics

- ◆ Speech is the primary form of language.
- ◆ Distinguish between actual instances of speech (performance) and what speakers know (competence).
- ◆ Language is a system or structure comprising elements at various phonological, grammatical, and semantic levels.

15

Contrastive Analysis

- ◆ Behaviorist psychology
- ◆ Structural linguistics
- ◆ The late 1950s

16

Sputnik 🇷🇺



17

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

1. Contrastive analysis is based on a theory of language that claims that language is habit and that language learning involves the establishment of a new set of habits.

18

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

- 1.
2. The major source of error in the production and/or reception of a second language is the native language.

19

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

- 1.
- 2.
3. One can account for the errors by considering differences between the L1 and the L2.

20

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
4. A corollary to Axiom 3 is that the greater the differences between L1 and L2, the more errors will occur.

21

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5. What one has to do in learning a L2 is to learn the differences. Similarities can be safely ignored as no new learning is involved. In other words, what is dissimilar between two languages is what must be learned.

22

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
6. Difficulty and ease of learning are determined respectively by differences and similarities between the two languages in contrast.

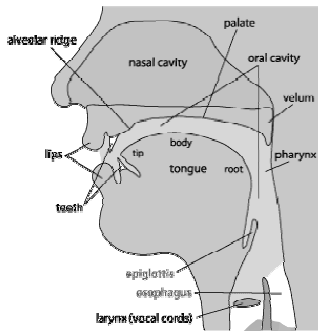
23

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

1. Learning is habit-formation.
2. L1 causes most errors in the L2.
3. Compare and contrast L1 and L2.
4. Bigger differences mean more errors.
5. Learn differences, not similarities.
6. Difficulty is caused by difference.

24

A Contrastive Analysis of Arabic and English Consonants



25

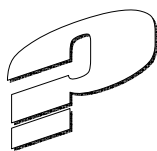
A Contrastive Analysis of Arabic and English Consonants

- ◆ In pairs, examine each cell of the consonant chart.
- ◆ Where are the differences between Arabic and English?
- ◆ Where are the similarities?
- ◆ What difficulties does the CAH predict for ...
 - English speakers learning Arabic?
 - Arabic speakers learning English?

26

Problems with the CAH

What is meant by difference?



27

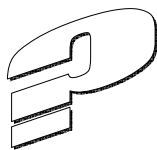
What is meant by difference?

Quant-?	How much? How many?
Qualche Nessun- Qualsiasi	Any
Più	Several More
Quale?	Which?
Ogni	Each Every

28

Problems with the CAH

Language learning is habit-formation



29

Language Learning is Not Habit-Formation

- ◆ Child: My teacher holded the rabbits and we patted them.
Adult: Did you say your teacher held the rabbits?
- ◆ Child: Yes.
Adult: What did you say she did?
- ◆ Child: She holded the baby rabbits and we patted them.
Adult: Did you say she held them tightly?
- ◆ Child: No, she holded them loosely.

30

Language Learning is Not Habit-Formation

- ◆ Child: Nobody don't like me.
Mother: No, say "nobody likes me."
- ◆ Child: Nobody don't like me.
(Eight repetitions of this dialogue)
Mother: No, now listen carefully;
say "*nobody likes me.*"
- ◆ Child: Oh! Nobody don't likes me.

31

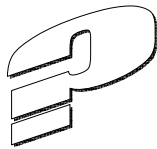
Language Learning is Not Habit-Formation

- ◆ Child: I don't see no trees.
Mother: I don't see any trees. Not
no trees, any trees.
- ◆ Child: No any trees. No any trees.
Mother: I don't see any trees.

32

Problems with the CAH

Differences between L1 and L2 cause
errors in learning L2



33



Do Differences Always Mean Errors?

- ◆ Word order in English
 - John ate an apple.
 - John can speak English.
 - I saw him yesterday.
 - The boy hit the dog with a stick.
 - Mary took me there.
 - The boy who hit the dog is my brother.

35

Do Differences Always Mean Errors?

- ◆ Word order in French
 - Jean a mangé une pomme.
 - Jean peut parler anglais.
 - Le garçon a frappé le chien avec un bâton.
 - Le garçon qui a frappé le chien est mon frère.

36

Do Differences Always Mean Errors?

- ◆ What errors in French L2 does the CAH predict?
 - I like Mary.
 - I like her too.
 - The dog ate the apple.
 - It ate it.
 - I went to Paris.
 - Mary's going there.

37

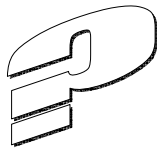
Do Differences Always Mean Errors?

- ◆ What errors in English L2 does the CAH predict?
 - J'aime Marie.
 - Je l'aime aussi.
 - Le chien a mangé la pomme.
 - Il l'a mangé.
 - Je suis allé à Paris.
 - Marie y va.

38

Problems with the CAH

The bigger the differences between L1 and L2, the more errors in the L2



39



Do Bigger Differences Mean More Errors?

- ◆ Compare Czech learners of English and Russian
- ◆ Which L2 is closer to Czech?
- ◆ Does the CAH predict more errors in L2 English or L2 Russian?

41

Do Bigger Differences Mean More Errors?

- ◆ *Czech (L1) → English (L2)*
 - Czech learners do not transfer Czech declensional or conjugational endings into English

42

Do Bigger Differences Mean More Errors?

- ◆ *Czech (L1) → Russian (L2)*
 - Nominative Plurals:
 - ◆ učitelé → * učitele (instead of Russian *učitelja*, "teachers")
 - Imperatives:
 - ◆ jez → * ez (instead of Russian *eš'* "eat")
 - ◆ jezte → * ez'te (instead of Russian *eš'te* "eat")
 - Gender:
 - ◆ adresa (feminine) → * tvoju (feminine) adres (masculine) (instead of Russian *tvoj adres* "your address")

43

Do Bigger Differences Mean More Errors?

- ◆ *Czech (L1) → English (L2)*
 - Lexical transfer from Czech into English is conceivable only in the case of international words that are distinctly felt as foreign in Czech.

44

Do Bigger Differences Mean More Errors?

- ◆ *Czech (L1) → Russian (L2)*
 - *Lexical equivalents in L1 and L2:*
 - ◆ *doma* - *doma* "at home"
 - ◆ *škola* - *škola* "school"
 - ◆ *bratr* - *brat* "brother"
 - ◆ *sestra* - *sestra* "sister"
 - *Lexical distortions:*
 - ◆ *dnes* → * *dnes* (instead of Russian *segodnja* "today")
 - ◆ *věda* → * *veda* (instead of Russian *nauka* "science")

45

Error Analysis

A Solution to the Problems of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis?

The CAH and EA Compared

Contrastive Analysis

Error Analysis

Strong
Predictive
A priori

Weak
Explanatory
A posteriori

47

Error Analysis

1. Collect the data: written or oral
2. Identify errors in the data
3. Distinguish between systematic errors and nonsystematic mistakes
4. Classify the errors you find
5. Quantify the types of errors
6. Evaluate the seriousness of the error
7. Design a pedagogical intervention

48

Learning Activity

- ◆ Do an error analysis of the three compositions on pages 90-91.
- ◆ What are the difficulties that you encounter doing this?
 - Are there ambiguities?
 - How could you resolve them?
- ◆ Do you know what the NLs are of these writers?
 - What features determine your choice?

49