

All in good time

Making classroom minutes count

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SPEAQ* 1985

ESL: Time to teach

*** Québec English Teachers Association**

TESOL Quarterly 1999

Time and the distribution of time in second language instruction

TESOL Quarterly 2001

L2 Instruction: Time to teach

Language Awareness 2014

Making the minutes count in L2 teaching

SPEAQ 2015

It's about time

- What language(s) do you speak?
- What language did you speak at home when you were a preschool child?
- Are you teaching (or have you taught) a language that you learned as a second-language learner? If so, does that fact affect your teaching? How?

Time for L2 Learning

- How much time is needed?
- How much time is available?
- What is the time that matters?
- How do we make the best use of the time we have?

Time and Learning

John Carroll found learning time is positively correlated with learning success

– In general education:

A Model of School Learning (1963)

– In L2:

The Teaching of French as a Foreign Language in Eight Countries (1975)

Carroll's "mathematical formula"

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Degree of} \\ \text{Learning} \end{array} = \frac{\text{Time spent learning}}{\text{Time needed to learn}}$$

I have always cautioned that time as such is not what counts , but what happens during that time.

(Carroll 1989, p. 27)

How much time is needed?

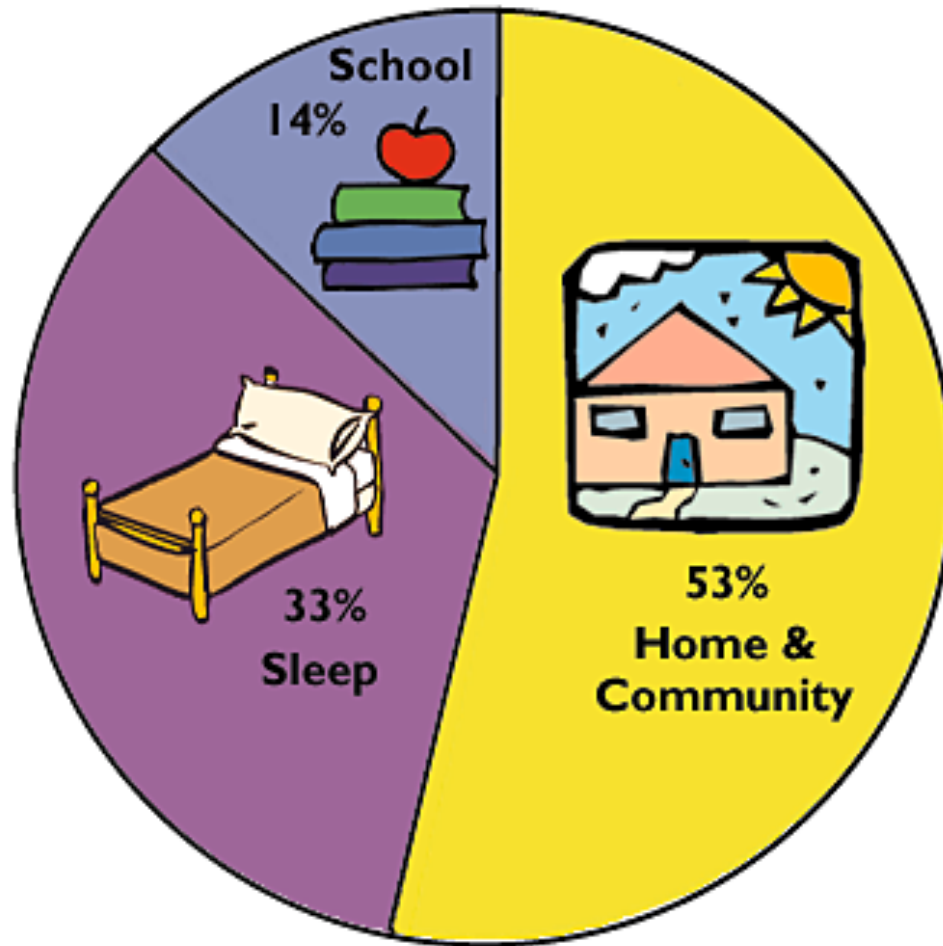


- Calculate the time you have spent learning languages.



- Calculate the time your students have available for learning language(s) at school.





From Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000, p26

How many hours?

Home language(s)

– Birth to 6 15,000-20,000

School language(s) at school

– K-12 13,000-17,000*

– **in principle for full school days*

How many hours?

Foreign language learning

1 hr/day = 180 – 200 hrs/year

Immersion

3-5 hrs/day = 540 – 900 hrs/year

Ben Johnson, Edutopia blog, 2013

In Texas...

180 school days

-30 days for state testing

= **150 days for instruction**

-21 days for teacher/school testing

= **129 days for instruction**

-18 days teacher in-service, assemblies,
holiday events, emergency drills, etc.

= **111 days.....**

...and then it gets worse

=111 days x (385 min – 70 min) = 91
“days”

91 days x 315 minutes = 478 hrs/yr

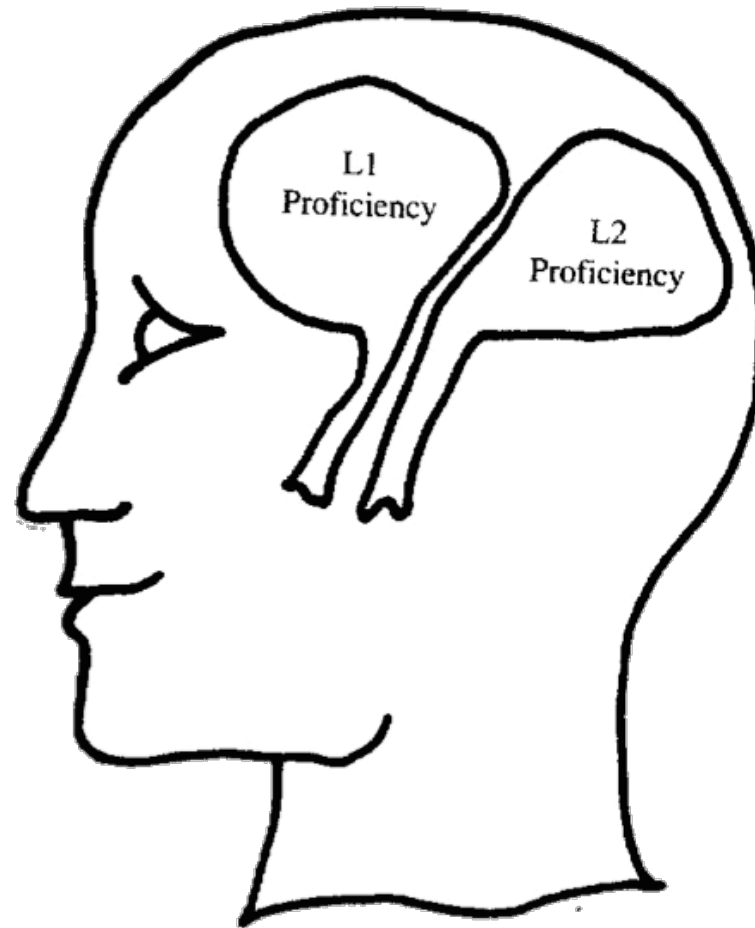
FOR EVERYTHING

Take away?

- Facts:
 - Language learning takes *thousands* of hours
 - Time is scarce & precious at school
- Questions:
 - How to maximize learning time?
 - How to use the time we have?

To maximize time for learning

- Limit use of L1 and use only L2?
 - Majority language students
 - 50-50, 90-10 immersion
 - Minority language students
 - “submersion”



Cummins: The notion of “competing” languages

- ...the research demonstrates that more time in English does not result in better English language outcomes in immersion programmes. (Tedick & Weseley, 2015, p. 27)

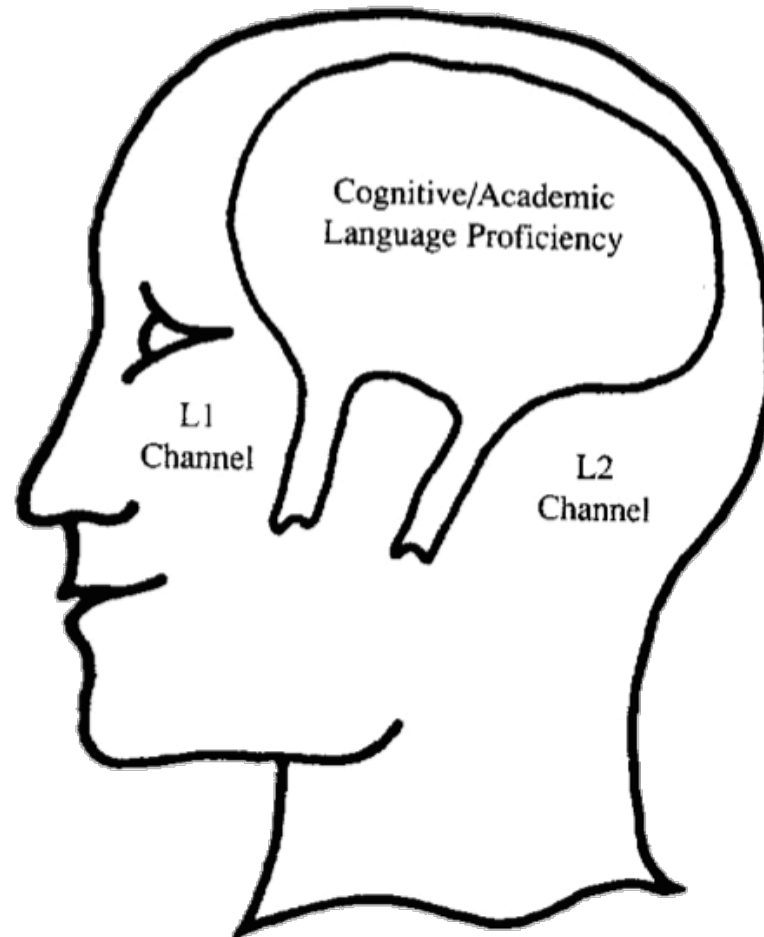
What the research shows

Additive L2 learning ***enhances*** L1 development.

L1 development **contributes positively** to L2 proficiency.

It's not a “zero sum game”

Both L1 and L2 contribute to a
**common underlying language
proficiency.**



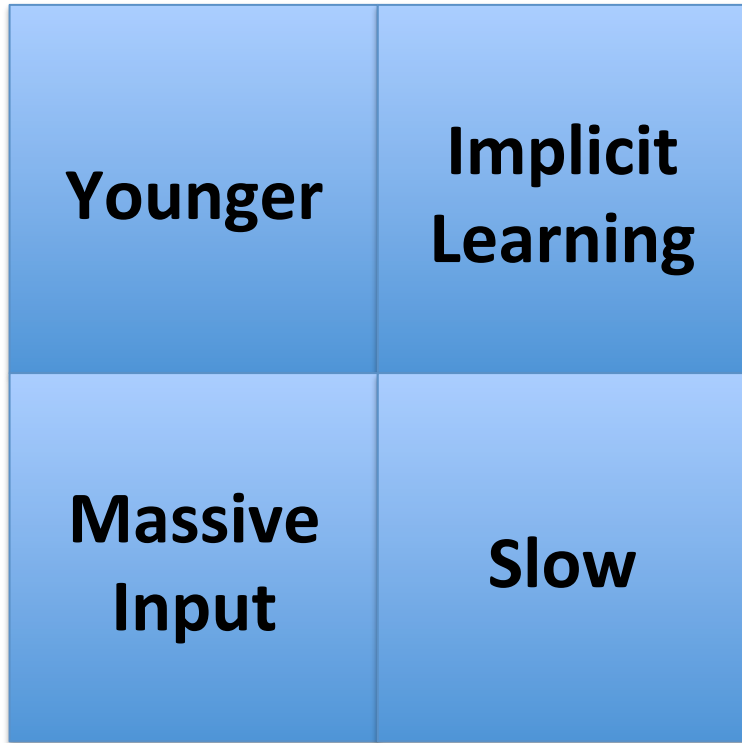
Cummins: Common underlying proficiency (linguistic interdependence)

- Bialystok: Bilingualism is a lifetime benefit
 - IF languages are developed to a certain level of proficiency
- Loss of L1 can have cognitive and social consequences

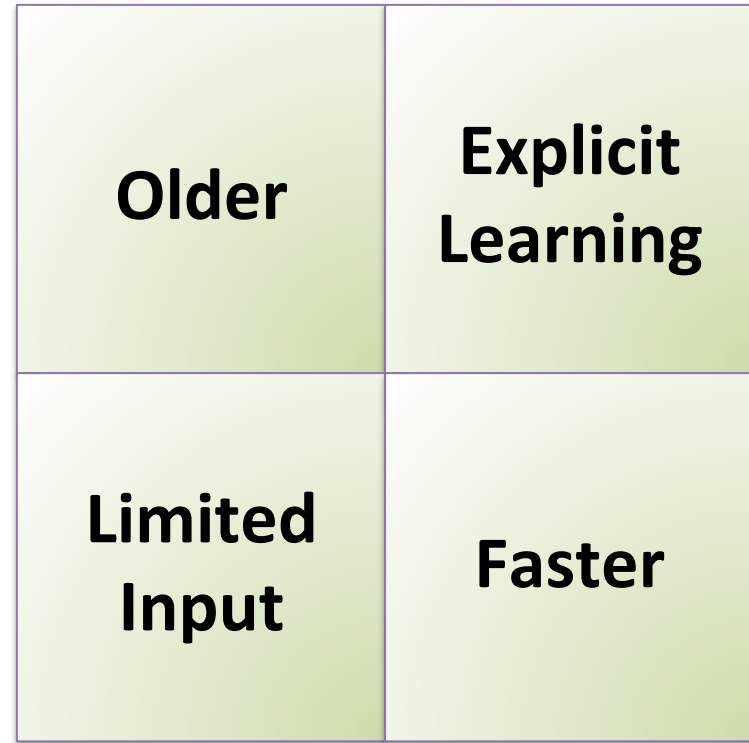
To maximize time for learning

- Start as early as possible?
- “Because younger learners are better learners”

Younger learners are not **BETTER**
learners; they're **DIFFERENT** learners.



Highest Proficiency



Communicative Competence & Confidence

Best time to start L2?

- As early as possible?
- After L1 literacy is established?
- When learners have cognitive skill & metalinguistic awareness?

For L2 learning at school, quality of input and instruction are more important than starting age.

... increasing or intensifying instructional time “merely provides an opportunity for learning.” (Stern, 1985)

The time that matters is the time spent
learning and using language.

The time that matters

- Allocated time
 - Hours in the classroom
 - “20% of an adolescent’s waking hours are spent in the classroom”

The time that matters

- Time on task
 - Time spent in class, when instructional activities are being offered

The time that matters

- Academic learning time
 - Students are actively engaged in learning activities that are appropriate to their developmental level

Time as *quantity/frequency*

- How much language do students actually hear, read, understand in a class hour?
- How many times do students produce meaningful language in a class hour?

How much time “per student”?

- How many opportunities to repeat a model just heard?
- How many opportunities to create new sentences?
- How many opportunities to negotiate for meaning in interaction?
- How much individual feedback on error?

Make the best use of the time we have

– Incorporate content and language goals

“My whole goal in math is getting my students to understand math concepts... [to incorporate language] I would have to take the time to figure out what are my [language objectives]... it just doesn't come like that... I'm multiplying fractions ... but when the school day starts, it's so quick, and the time that I have with each class is so short ...”

(Camarata & Tedick 2012)

Make the best use of the time we have.

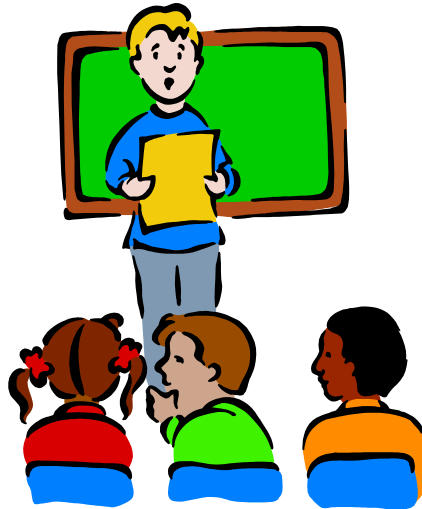
Paul Nation's

“Four Strands” for Language Teaching

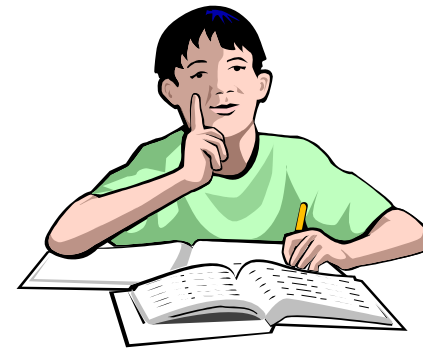
Meaning-focused input



Meaning-focused output



Language-focused learning



Fluency development



- How should learning/practice time be distributed?

Which do you remember?

- Terminology studied for a test?
- Terms that were used repeatedly throughout a course of study?
- A poem learned for a class recitation?
- A poem heard throughout childhood?

The spacing effect

- *Spaced* practice sessions are more effective than a single intense session
 - *even if overall time is held constant*
 - especially for *delayed* recall (long-term retention)

Pimsleur's (1967) “graduated interval recall”

- “The principle advanced here argues against massing large numbers of repetitions when the word is first presented (except...for pronunciation purposes), and in favor of spreading them out...” [by gradually increasing the interval between practice opportunities]

Spacing is especially beneficial for

- Vocabulary
- Routinized language patterns
- Explicit rules
- Factual/cultural information

- Massed meaning-focused practice is also needed for fluency development, comprehension and interaction skills, pragmatics.

- We get better at what we practice
- We more easily retrieve what we learned if the retrieval context and processes resemble the learning context and processes (transfer-appropriate processing)

The *type* of processing -- not merely
the amount of processing --
contributes differentially to successful
encoding and using linguistic
resources

We get better at what we practice.

How long does it take?

- Far longer than most people think
- *Thousands*, not hundreds, of hours
- More than anyone gets in a classroom

Ideal learning conditions?

The greatest *amount of time* in the
greatest *variety of contexts* using the
greatest *variety of processing types*

The hallmarks of a classroom where
time is put to best use

Classroom routines are familiar.

The target language is used for
“normal” communication, not just for
“instruction”.

Students work together on well planned activities that have both content and language objectives.

There is a bank of activities students can engage in when they are not “busy”.

Classroom experiences prepare students to keep learning outside class time.

Content learned in one language is reinforced in the other language.

The importance of “a sense of urgency”

Silence is not golden.