structural syllabus (scope and sequence) & the weak interface position

"A **structural syllabus** employs a synthetic teaching strategy, defined by Wilkins (1976) as "one in which the different parts of the language are taught separately and step-by-step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of the parts until the whole of the language has been built up" (p. 2)" (Ellis, 1993, p. 99).

The **weak interface position** "then, envisages that explicit knowledge can convert directly into implicit knowledge under certain, fairly stringent conditions related to the learner's stage of development. It also allows for explicit knowledge to have an indirect effect on acquisition by helping to facilitate the processes of noticing and noticing-the-gap. It is hypothesized that learners who know about a grammatical feature because they have learned about it through grammar instruction are in a better position to heed this feature when it subsequently occurs in the input and also are better able to notice the difference between the input and their own production. (Empirical evidence in support of the claim that explicit knowledge facilitates subsequent noticing is provided by Fotos, 1992). Explicit knowledge functions as a kind of "acquisition facilitator" (Seliger, 1979) by providing "hooks" on which to hang subsequent acquisition (Lightbown, 1985)" (Ellis, 1994, p. 99).

Ellis, Rod. 1993. The structural syllabus and Second Language Acquisition. TESOL Quarterly. Vol. 27. No. 1. Philadelphia: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language, Inc.

FIGURE 3
A Model of L2 Acquisition Incorporating a Weak Interface Position

[a]IL = interlanguage.