



# ENG504

**Mid-Term (Solved)**

## **ABSTRACT**

*This comprehensive collection of notes is accurately crafted to empower students to excel academically, ensuring they achieve a minimum of 80% marks in their examinations. The content is organized with clarity and precision, focusing on key concepts, critical analyses, and practical applications tailored to the syllabus. These notes serve as a reliable resource for both thorough preparation and last-minute revision. Designed to inspire confidence and mastery, this guide is an essential tool for students striving for academic excellence.*

## **Maha Malik**

**Second Language Acquisition**

**Q. What is a theory? (Lesson 01)**

A 'theory' is a more or less abstract set of claims about the significant units within phenomenon under study. It aims at explanation as well as description. Theories are produced collaboratively and evolve through a systematic enquiry. These are assessed through hypothesis testing and involve a reflexive process. A good theory is supposed to give clear and explicit statements about its claims. It must be testable or falsifiable in some way. The linguists view language as a complex communication which must be analyzed on different levels.

**Q. What is Property Theory? (Lesson 01)**

The linguists are more interested in 'property theory.' They are concerned with the structure of the language and how a language changes; how certain words become obsolete; how certain factors lead to the addition of new words and merge them in a language system. In property theory, the language system is important.

**Q. Transition theory (Lesson 01)**

- ✚ 'Transition theory' is more concerned with the developmental processes of language education.
- ✚ It is interested in finding out the different stages of learning in a second language learner.
- ✚ It can relate to the first language acquisition telling about the different learning stages in a child's life and how that learning is different or similar to second language learning.

**Q. Why Noam Chomsky prefer competence over performance. (Lesson 02)**

Noam Chomsky prefers competence over performance. By competence, he refers to the abstract and hidden representation of language knowledge held inside minds with its potential to create and understand original utterances in a given language. However, there are difficulties in studying competence as language performance data are believed to be imperfect reflections of competence. The competence can only be assessed indirectly, under controlled conditions, through wide-ranging tests.

**Q. Nature vs. nurture (Lesson 02)**

The best known controversy involves B. F. Skinner and Noam Chomsky. Skinner advocates behaviorist mechanisms; whereas, Chomsky emphasized the role of innate dispositions that expect natural languages to be organized in particular ways and

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support the role of Universal Grammar (UG). The phrase nature and nurture relates to the relative importance of an individual's innate qualities as compared to an individual's personal experiences (nurture i.e behaviorism) in causing individual differences, especially in behavioral traits.

**Q. What is Chomsky strong criticism on Skinner's behavior view? (Lesson 02)**

Chomsky strongly criticized Skinner's Behaviorist views on number of issues and rejected the idea that one can compare the behavior of rats in a laboratory, learning to perform simple tasks, to the behaviour of children learning language without direct teaching. Chomsky claimed that children have an innate faculty that guides them in their learning of language.

**Q. Errors in behaviourism (Lesson 02)**

When we talk about errors in SL utterances, Behaviorists view errors as a result of 'bad habits' which can be controlled through rote learning and pattern drilling using target language models. Recent studies contradict this view by claiming that errors and mistakes are patterned although some of them are caused by first language influence, yet this is not true for all of them. Learner's language system is unstable and characterized by high degree of variability which is a central feature of learner interlanguage.

**Q. NOTE ON LANGUAGE TRANSFER (Lesson 03)**

Learners' performance in SL is influenced by the language/languages they already know which are obvious in their accent as well as in certain characteristic mistakes in their utterances. This phenomenon is called language transfer. Behaviorists view it as an important source of error and interference in SLL; whereas, recent theorists find widely differing views on extent and nature of influences. Performing in a language involves speaking, making sense of data we hear, interpreting, and processing incoming language data. Language input is essential for normal language learning. Behaviorist theory saw regular (oral) practice as helpful in forming correct language 'habits' whereas the contemporary theorists put emphasis on 'practice' function. For instance, information-processing theorists argued that language competence consists of both a knowledge component and a skill component. They see a vital role of SL use or SL performance in developing the skill component.

**Q. Fossilization (Lesson 04)**

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Fossilization refers to the situation when a learner's SL system seems to 'freeze' or become stuck at some more or less deviant stage. When second language learner seems unable to get rid of non-native-like structure despite abundant linguistic input over many years, it is called fossilization. Fossilization in this model would arise as a result of a controlled process becoming automatic prematurely.

**Q. What is Negative evidence? (Lesson 04)**

Negative evidence means any kind of input that informs about unacceptable forms in the target language. It includes formal correction by teacher and informal paraphrasing by a nativespeaking conversational partner. However, corrections often seem ineffective; therefore, recent theorist put more emphasis on the provision of positive evidence.

**Q. Progressive learning pedagogy (Lesson 05)**

Progressive' language pedagogy (1950s) drew on a version of structuralism developed by British linguist Palmer. This approach is summed up as follows:

1. The conviction about finite set of 'patterns' or 'structures' in language systems
2. The belief that reception and practice result in accuracy and fluency in foreign language habits
3. Methodology to teach 'the basic' first before encouraging learners to communicate their own thoughts and ideas

**Q. What is Behaviorists Approach (Lesson 06)**

View language learning (like any other kind of learning) as a formation of habits; that is creation of stimulus-response pairing which becomes stronger with reinforcement. In case of first language learning, the process is relatively simple as we have to learn a new set of habits. Second language learning involves replacing those habits by a set of new ones, which is complicated. If SL structures are similar to the learners' first language then learning will easily take place but in case they are different, learning will be difficult.

From a teacher's point of view, this approach had two-fold implications.

- 1) Learning takes place by imitating and repeating (practice makes perfect).
- 2) Teachers needed to focus their teaching on structures which were believed to be difficult, which would be, the areas of differences.

**Q. DEFINE CHARACTERISTICS OF 2ND LANGUAGE. OR WHAT ARE 3 FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES CARRIED FORWARD FORM 1170 IN SLL (Lesson 07)**

From the brief and oversimplified account of 1970s first language acquisition research, following characteristics emerge:

- ✚ Children go through stages
- ✚ These stages are very similar across children for a given language, although individual progress rate varies
- ✚ These stages are similar across languages.
- ✚ Child language is rule-governed and systematic, and their rules do not necessarily correspond to adult ones
- ✚ Children are resistant to correction.
- ✚ Their processing capacity limits the number of rules they can apply at any one time

**Q. What are three fundamental issues carried forward from the 1970s in SSL? (Lesson 07)**

- ✚ Children go through stages.
- ✚ These stages are very similar across children for a given language, although individual progress rate varies.
- ✚ These stages are similar across languages.

**Q. LEARNING ACQUISITION HYPOTHESIS/ KRASHEN MODEL (Lesson 07)**

Language acquisition and learning are separate processes. Acquisition is the subconscious process that is a result of natural interaction with language via meaningful communication. Whereas, learning is a conscious process that results in 'knowing about' language. This hypothesis has been criticized for its vague definition of what constitutes conscious versus subconscious process, and for Krashen's claim that learning cannot turn into acquisition.

**Q. What is Krashen's Monitor Model based on? (Lesson 07)**

It is based around five basic hypotheses:

1. The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis
2. The Monitor hypothesis

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3. The Natural Order hypothesis
4. The Input hypothesis
5. The Affective Filter hypothesis

**Q. Critic on input hypotheses (Lesson 08)**

- ✚ Major criticism on this hypothesis claims it to be vague and a-theoretical.
- ✚ It is impossible to verify the theory as no independently testable definitions are given.
- ✚ The theories specify the internal workings of the 'Language Acquisition Device' where acquisition actually takes place.
- ✚ Just comprehensible input is not enough; learners also need to 'let that input in' as it is.
- ✚ Affective Filter supposedly determines how receptive to the input a learner is going to be.

**Q. What is Comprehensible input? (Lesson 08)**

Comprehensible input is a critical concept for second-language development for students with and without learning difficulties. Comprehensible input means that students should be able to understand the essence of what is being said or presented to them. This does not mean, however, that teachers must use only words students understand. In fact, instruction can be incomprehensible even when students know all of the words. Students learn a new language best when they receive input that is just a bit more difficult than they can easily understand. In other words, students may understand most, but not all, words the teacher is using.

**Q. Schumann's Acculturation Model It was related to pidginization or Acculturation. (Lesson 08)**

According to Schumann:

- ✚ Acquiring a new language is part of a general process of Acculturation.
- ✚ Success is determined by the extent to which they can orient to the target language culture.

In acculturation model, two important factors play a role on acquisition:

- a. **Social distance:** Means the learner's interact with the SL native group (in term of time as well as how often), the degree of their interaction, closeness and openness to each other.

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- b. **Psychological Distance:** It means that SLL is related to motivation and attitude of a person towards learning the SL and the beliefs he has for that language and the culture. Language learning is also related to an individual's Language anxiety. The less it is the better learning will take place.

**Q. Functionalist view of the transition theory (Lesson 09)**

A transition theory describes the process of language learning. UG is also a transition theory as it is interested in describing the language transition process or learning process that occurs during the learning of the second language. In that sense, it does answer the two main questions that Chomsky said the learners must know or the language theory must answer: it describes the knowledge of the language (property theory) and also moves on to explain how that knowledge is acquired by the learners (transition theory).

**Q. UG APPROACH (Lesson 10)**

On the basis of messy input, children create mental representation of language which goes beyond the input they are exposed to and is very similar to that of other native speakers of the same language variety. Language is the most abstract piece of knowledge. Second language learners are cognitively mature and presumably much more resourceful in problem solving and dealing with abstract concepts. From a theoretical point of view, different possible scenarios are open to consideration; for example,

- ✚ SL grammars are constrained by universal grammar (UG)
- ✚ UG does not constrain SL grammar or UG is impaired

UG approach is concerned with knowledge of language called 'competence.' It is not about performance, about how language is used in real life. A complete theory of language also has to define how we access our knowledge base and how it relates to a number of sociolinguistic and psychological variables. Chomsky acknowledges this and has been concerned almost exclusively with addressing the first two issues. Notion of an innate language faculty in children argues that children go through developmental stages which are very similar across children of given language though progress rate varies.

**Q. Cognitive deficit impact on language learning (Lesson 10)**

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Many children with cognitive deficit develop language normally. As there are numerous examples of people with cognitive disabilities or difficulties who performed well in language(s), evidence of opposite is also found. There are many cognitively 'normal' children with impaired language condition known as 'specific language impairment.' A study suggests that some aspects of language at least might be genetically controlled. Damage to left hemisphere of the brain also results in language deficit. Language and cognition seem to be largely separate but they do interact.

**Q. What is Cross linguist variation (Lesson 11)**

The term linguistic variation (or simply variation) refers to regional, social, or contextual differences in the ways that a particular language is used. Variation between languages, dialects, and speakers is known as interspeaker variation. Variation within the language of a single speaker is called intraspeaker variation.

**Q. UG Scope and Achievement (Lesson 11)**

- 1) UG theory aims to describe and explain human language.
- 2) It is nonetheless directly relevant to the study of SL.
- 3) It is a linguistic theory, not a learning theory.
- 4) It has been hugely influential in drawing up sophisticated hypotheses regarding SLA.
- 5) It helps exploring interplay between the first and second language learners and facilitates understanding of linguistic knowledge learners bring to the task of SLA.

**Q. Emergentist / Constructionist (Lesson 12)**

Emergentist or Constructionist does not consider separation between property and transition theories as legitimate. They believe that you can explain both the nature of knowledge and how it is processed through general cognition principles. Constructivists consider that the complexity of language emerges from associative learning processes being exposed to a massive and complex environment. Many of them believe that the language develops as learners move from the learning of exemplars that are committed to memory. They claim that children pick up frequent patterns they hear around them and slowly make more abstract generalization as the database of related utterances grow.

**Q. Names of cognitive theorists (Lesson 13)**

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1. McLaughlin
2. Anderson
3. O'Malley and Chamot

**Q. There are three methods in children in second language acquisition Please explain third. (Lesson 14)**

The third method is the autonomous stage: the skill becomes more and more rapid and automatic. When the learner actions become increasingly automatic after practicing any rule for some time and become their second nature.

**Q. TOWELL AND HAWKINS EXPLAINS ABOUT GRAMMAR KNOWLEDGE IN A LANGUAGE SLA? (Lesson 14)**

Towell and Hawkins reject the idea that Anderson's model can account for all aspects of SLL. They use models of natural language processing in order to explain how grammatical knowledge transforms into fluent performance in second language. In order to explain why certain grammatical structures appear before others and why learners go through rigid stages in acquisition of SL, they resort to Universal Grammar approach. In order to understand how learners use this grammatical knowledge in increasingly efficient ways, Towell and Hawkins appeal to an information-processing account.

**Q. Note on Anderson's active Control of Thought (ACT) Model (Lesson 14)**

Anderson's Active Control of Thought (ACT\*) model is more wide-ranging, and the terminology is different but practice leading to automatization also plays central role. It enables declarative knowledge. Anderson suggests three kinds of memory:

- ✚ a working memory
- ✚ a declarative long-term memory
- ✚ a procedural long-term memory.

This model has been criticized for insisting that all knowledge starts out in declarative form, which is clearly problematic in case of first language learner as Anderson has accepted in answering to the criticism. Anderson's model is a general cognitive model of skill acquisition. It can be applied to those aspects of SLL that require proceduralization and automatization. According to Anderson, the move from declarative to procedural knowledge takes place in three stages.

1. The cognitive stage: a description of the procedure is learnt.

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2. The associative stage: a method for performing the skill is worked out.
3. The autonomous stage: the skill becomes more and more rapid and automatic.

**Q. Processability Theory: (Lesson 15)**

- ✚ It claims that we need both theory of grammar and a processing component to understand SLA.
- ✚ It focuses on the acquisition of the procedural skills required for processing the formal properties of second languages.
- ✚ Pienemann believes that language learning is gradual acquisition of computational mechanisms.
- ✚ Limitations in processing skills in early stage of learning prevent them from attending to some aspects of SL.
- ✚ The processing challenge within this framework is that learners must learn to exchange grammatical information across elements of a sentence.

**Q. The two approaches of Cognitive theorists of SLA are: (Lesson 15)**

**a. Processing Theorists**

Those who believe that language knowledge might be ‘special’ in some way, but they are concerned to develop transition or processing theories to complement property theories.

**a. Perceptual Saliency Approach:**

The Perceptual Saliency approach argues that human beings perceive and organize information in certain ways, and it is perceptual saliency of linguistic information that drives the learning process forward; rather, than an innate language-specific module. We find similarity in linguistic development across children and across languages because human beings are programmed to perceive and organize information in certain way. Slobin (1979) has devised operating principles which guide children in their processing of the linguistic strings which they encounter. These principles are based on the claim that certain linguistic forms are more ‘accessible’ or more ‘salient’ to the children than others.

**Q. TWO ASPECTS OF LONG REFORMED HYPOTHESIS (Lesson 15)**

According to Pienemann, learners can only operate within their Hypothesis space, constrained by available processing resources. It led him to develop “teachability

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hypothesis” in which he considers the pedagogical implications of the learnability or processability model. It predicts:

- ✚ Stages of acquisition cannot be skipped through formal instructions
- ✚ Instruction will be beneficial if it focuses on structures from ‘the next stage

**Q. General benefits of applying cognitive theory to SLA (Lesson 15)**

- ✚ Learning is an active and dynamic process in which individuals make use of a variety of information and strategic modes of processing.
- ✚ Language is a complex cognitive skill in terms of how information is stored and learnt.
- ✚ Learning a language entails a stage wise progression from initial awareness, active manipulation of information and learning processes to full automaticity in language use.
- ✚ Learning strategies parallel theoretically derived cognitive processes and have the potential to influence learning outcomes in a positive manner.

**Q. What connectionist says about language? (Lesson 15)**

- ✚ It claims that learners are sensitive to regularities in the language input and extract probabilistic patterns on the basis of these regularities.
- ✚ Learning occurs as these patterns become strengthened or weakened through repeated activation or non-activation.
- ✚ Connectionism strikingly differs from other approaches as it does not believe that the learning of rules underlies the construction of linguistic knowledge rather it happens through associative process. According to them learning is not rule-governed.
- ✚ Connectionism is seen as an alternative to symbolic accounts of language acquisition. It is a transition theory that explains how associative patterns emerge in learners.

**Q. Who were connectionists? (Lesson 16)**

Connectionists are primarily concerned with individual; they do not see learner as a social being. They are interested in mind as a processor of information rather than in specificity of the linguistic information it contains. The link they build up with neurology and neurobiology is also important. The advantages of these models over traditional symbolic models are:

- a. They are neurally inspired.

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- b. They incorporate distributed representation and control of information.
- c. They are data-driven with prototypical representations.
- d. They show graceful degradation as do humans with language disorders.
- e. They are models of learning and acquisition rather than static description.

**Q. Functional Research (Lesson 17)**

Functionalist research with social orientation is interested in relationship between the development of child's formal language system and aspects of their social world. Some of this work examines children's speech acts and their relationship with lexical or grammatical choices. Other work looks more broadly at the social context in which children interact and types of speech events they are engaged in. It also seeks to link these influences to linguistic development. The functional approaches pay attention respectively to the relations between grammatical development and prototype events, between grammar, pragmatics and text organization, and between grammar and the social world. The functional tradition is well established in SLL theory. It claims that language development is driven by pragmatic communicative needs and that the formal resources of language are elaborated to express more complex patterns of meaning. Functionalist research takes form of naturalistic case studies, mostly of adults in early stages of SLL. These studies have offered numerous rich accounts of both rate and route of naturalistic SLL. They vary in their scope of enquiries. Some adopted a 'patch' approach, studying evolution of forms or development of SL within 'time' or 'space' domain. Whereas others proposed SL 'basic variety' that represents a proto-grammar stage that all learners should pass through.

**Q. WHY SLA LEARNERS MOSTLY REMAINS NOTICABLE DIFFERENT FROM NATIVE SPEAKER. (Lesson 19)**

Various studies during 1970s and 1980s demonstrated that the talk addressed to learners was typically grammatically regular but somewhat simplified linguistically. The degree of simplification reported in many descriptive studies was puzzlingly variable. Also, these studies stopped short at description of distinctive features of 'Foreigner Talk Discourse

**Q. Negative feedback and recast in SL classrooms (Lesson 20)**

Observational studies examined the occurrence, and apparent effects of negative feedback in SL classroom. For instance, Lyster and colleagues (1997) noted that recasts were the most common type of feedback. However, recasts were much less

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likely to lead to immediate self-correction by the students. A further analysis reported that feedback provided by the teachers varied according to the type of error that had been made. Teachers were more likely to respond to lexical errors with negotiation (e.g. clarification requests), whereas they respond to grammatical and phonological errors with recasts. Recasts were seen as an effective strategy in case of phonological error. However, recasting was much less effective for repair of grammatical mistakes. The study suggested that more interactive feedback modes would be more effective in pushing learners to amend their hypotheses about SL grammar as well as vocabulary.

**Q. Role of intake... Input processing theory (Lesson 21)**

1. Linguistic data is actually processed from the input.
2. It is held in working memory for further processing.
3. Input processing theory does not offer a complete model of successful processing input.
4. It offers a set of principles.
5. It explains the apparent failures of learners to process the input.

**Q. Autonomous Induction Theory (Lesson 21)**

Autonomous Induction theory by Suzanne Carroll (2000) offers a much more complete and ambitious model of the above mentioned processes. According to Carroll, understanding of SLA processes requires an adequate theory of the following phenomena:

1. Representation of language in the mind
2. How the language is processed both receptively and productively?
3. How our mental representations of language can be changed to process the environmental language we encounter?

Carroll rejects parameter (re)setting as a totally inadequate metaphor. Instead, she proposes inductive learning (i-learning). Inductive learning refers to learning by generalization from examples. Carroll challenges the claim that increased comprehension can lead to identification and acquisition in a sequential manner. According to her, it is logically impossible. Unless enough formal analysis is done so that elements are identified in the speech stimulus, there is no way of generating interpretation of its meaning. Carroll's model is complex. It's been criticized for its neglect of the detail of language processing which converts language stimuli into interpretable input.

**Q. Three phenomena proposed by Suzanne --- in 2000 autonomous induction theory (Lesson 21)**

1. Representation of language in the mind
2. How the language is processed both receptively and productively?
3. How our mental representations of language can be changed to process the environmental language we encounter?

**Q. Input, Output, and Interaction hypotheses (Lesson 22)**

Input, Output, and Interaction hypotheses have led to very active strands of empirical research. The first phase of research was inclined toward documenting phenomenon of meaning negotiation. The second phase developed in the following ways:

- a. Relating environmental factors in language learning to linguistic theory, particularly to Universal Grammar
- b. Interest in the significance of negative evidence
- c. Increased attention to information processing theory and the complications involved in conversion of environmental language firstly into input and subsequently into intake

Achievements of this tradition, it has been shown that:

- ✚ Native speaker and non-native speaker interlocutors can and will work actively to achieve mutual understanding.
- ✚ Negotiations involve both linguistic and interactional modifications, which together offer opportunities to ‘notice’ aspects of target language form, whether from positive or negative evidence.
- ✚ Non-native speaker participants in ‘negotiations for meaning’ can’t attend to, take up, and use language items made available to them by native speaker interlocutors.

**Q. Vygotsky’s Leading Supporters (Lesson 22)**

Following were the leading supporters of the Soviet theorist Lev Semeonovich Vygotsky:

1. Jerome Bruner
2. James Wertsch
3. Barbara Rogoff
4. James Lantolf

5. Mercer
6. Wells

### **Q. INTERLANGUAGE**

An interlanguage is an idiolect that has been developed by a learner of a second language (or L2) which preserves some features of their first language (or L1), and can also overgeneralize some L2 writing and speaking rules. These two characteristics of an interlanguage result in the system's unique linguistic organization.

### **Q. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FORMS AND FUNCTIONS**

Form and function are two different things. The form is related to the structure, the architect of something whereas a function is the product of a structure which plays any specific role. For example, a building has a form, bricks, wood, a map and a design. It is form or structure of that building. Now, the complete well-furnished building serves a purpose of living that is the 'function' of that building.

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