

Linguistic Explanation of ELLIS

Explanation of How Learners Best Learn Languages Found in ELLIS (Psycholinguistic Explication of Theory)

ELLIS is broadly based on a **cognitive model of language learning**. The following conditions are thought to be necessary for second language acquisition to take place effectively:

A. Comprehensible input

- Language learners must have access to large amounts of **comprehensible input**
- For acquisition to occur, learners must be exposed to and understand the content of language which is just above their current proficiency level

ELLIS does this in two ways:

- It provides the learner with **authentic samples of spoken English** in its full-motion video clips that focus on situations and topics of general interest and usefulness.
- It creates a multimedia environment in its script pages that provides a range of **learning supports** (slow audio, on-line vocabulary help, native language translation, text with graphics and audio, culture notes), all of which increase the comprehensibility of the input for the learner.
- These features allow learners to interact with the input at their own pace, and according to their own **learning style**. This process plays a key role in **converting input into intake**.

B. The role of noticing in converting input into intake

- In addition to understanding what the input means, learners must attend to key features of its form (input processing).
- Research studies have shown that learners who are exposed only to comprehensible input without receiving any focus-on- form instruction fail to develop accuracy in speaking and writing.

How does ELLIS do this?

- It highlights grammatical and phonological features in its script pages.
- These features are explained in a series of **inductive, interactive tutorials**.
- These tutorials present **contextualized samples of language** from the video clips.

- Flash animations draw learner's attention to key features of the language (**input enhancement**).
- They guide the learners towards a **discovery of the rules and patterns** involved.
- They probe their understanding through **interactive quiz items** with **specific feedback**.
- They provide extensive, focused opportunities for practice.

C. Dual processing to promote fluency and accuracy

- Understanding the content as well as the forms of the language is necessary, but not sufficient for fluency.
- Second language learners use **two different processing systems** when producing language:
 - a **rule-based system** that focuses on **form** to promote **accuracy**
 - a **memory-based system** that draws on prefabricated **chunks** of language to achieve **fluency** (the lexical approach)
- **ELLIS helps learners to develop both systems:**
 - **Inductive** grammar and pronunciation **tutorials**, summary pages, and practice sections develop an understanding of the rules and patterns for **accuracy**.
 - **Highlighted phrases** in the script pages, communication and vocabulary tutorials to teach **speech acts** and **idiomatic expressions** for **fluency**.

D. Output

- Learner must also have opportunities to produce the language that they have converted from input to intake.
- Without such opportunities, learners typically fail to achieve acceptable levels of fluency or accuracy, even with exposure to large quantities of comprehensible input.
- **How does ELLIS do this?**
 - It uses its unique **role play and smart recorder features**.
 - This gives learners the confidence to move eventually from **controlled to automatic processing**.

E. Focusing on learners' individual needs

- ELLIS allows the instruction to be adapted to the individual learner's **learning style, language background, interests, skill level, and on-line performance.**
- Such a high level of **individualization** results in increased motivation and enhanced productivity from the learner.
- **ELLIS meets the needs of individual learners in the following ways:**
 - It allows for different **learning styles.**

Learning styles

- *Auditory, visual, and kinesthetic* sensory preferences are all catered to.
 - *Linear learners* are encouraged to access the material by working through the units and lessons **sequentially.**
 - *Exploratory learners* can use the **skill path** to navigate through the materials, or make use of the extensive network of **hyperlinks** to create their own path
 - *Inductive learners* can access the tutorials that use a **discovery approach** to learning.
 - *Deductive learners* can use the **summary pages** for each skill.
 - *Global learners* enjoy the communication and vocabulary tutorials that rely on the **memory-based system.**
 - *Analytic learners* appreciate the **rule-based** grammar and suprasegmentals **tutorials.**
- It caters to different **language backgrounds.**

Language background

- Learners receive directions, tutorial instruction, and feedback in their **native language.**
- Pronunciation **is customized** to focus on problematical features of their language.
- Learners can focus on the areas of the language that they need help with.