CHAPTER FOUR: DISCOURSE PROCESSING & APPLICATIONS

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LECTURE OUTLINE

- Discourse processing

- Applications of DA (in language teaching)

DISCOURSE PROCESSING

BOTTOM-UP PROCESSING (starting from the smallest units up to higher units)

Bottom-up model in reading:

letter -> word -> phrase -> sentence -> paragraph -> text

Criticisms:

- The not-one-to-one correspondence between letters and sounds

- Slow down the reading

- Fluent readers read between the lines

DISCOURSE PROCESSING

TOP-DOWN PROCESSING (starting from the highest units to the lowest units)

Top-down model in reading:

Past experience (language and intuitions) -> Selective (aspects of print) -> Meaning -> sound (pronunciation if necessary)

Top-down strategies:

-Use background knowledge to assist comprehension

-Scan headings, sub-headings, and non-text materials

-Skim the text (what to expect from the text)

-Identify the genre

-Discriminate more and less important information

DISCOURSE PROCESSING

INTERACTIVE-COMPENSATORY PROCESSING (more than one level simultaneously)

Bottom-up model vs top-down model

APPLICATIONS OF DA (IN LANGUAGE TEACHING)

THE TEXT-BASED SYLLABUS
1. Design grammar syllabus -> write or find texts -> design tasks
2. Find texts -> extract grammar syllabus -> design tasks
Arguments for a text-based syllabus (2):
-Language happens as text, not as isolated words and sentences
-A familiarity with whole texts entails some kind of grammar competence, not as an end, but as a means.
-A text-based syllabus is suited to learners with specific needs -> more learner engagement, more motivation

APPLICATIONS OF DA (IN LANGUAGE TEACHING)

HOW TO DEVELOP CONVERSATION SKILLS

1. Talk as interaction:
   - Social function
   - Role relationship
   - Conversational conventions
   - Jointly structured
2. Talk as transaction
   - Focus on the message, not the participants
   - Linguistic accuracy may not be a priority
   - Focus in obtaining goods or services

APPLICATIONS OF DA (IN LANGUAGE TEACHING)

HOW TO DEVELOP CONVERSATION SKILLS

3. Talk as performance:

- Public talk (public announcements, speeches…)

- Generic structures

- Emphasis on both form and accuracy

- Monologue rather than dialogue

- Closer to written language than conversational language

- Impact on the listener