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# The Art and Science of Language Learning

Creative and Cognitive  
Capacities and Capabilities

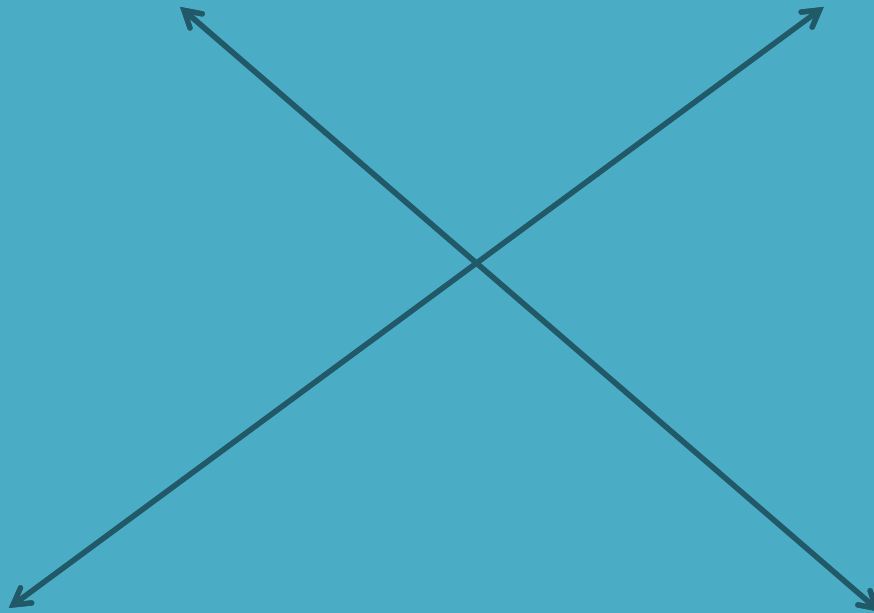
Language  
Learning

Language  
Teaching



Language  
Policy

Language  
Attitudes





“...I was under the assumption that when I arrived in France I would be able to converse fairly well, because I had had four years and I’d done fairly well and, grade-wise, and I remember being the last student to meet with my family in the airport, on arrival, because I didn’t understand what anybody was saying, and I couldn’t find my family... I had no idea what I was doing.”

# Deficiency in Foreign Language Competency: What Is Wrong with the U.S. Educational System?

November 9, 2010, 2:45 pm

By [Francisco Marmolejo](#)

Probably many readers of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* watched recently the unforgettable moment

“It doesn’t take much to realize that the U.S. trails far behind other countries on the second language issue. Moreover, we constantly receive clear signals of the need to more seriously discuss the appropriateness and feasibility of implementing a second-language education policy. At the same time, we hear voices telling us that such an idea is just another unnecessary notion. The rationale used by many who justify this widespread second-language deficiency is that English is today’s lingua franca.”

more serious efforts to go beyond mere lip-service to students by making sure that competency in a foreign language is really acquired at a functional level.

It doesn't take much to realize that the U.S. trails far behind other countries on the second language issue. Moreover, we constantly receive clear signals of the need to more seriously discuss the appropriateness and feasibility of implementing a second-language education policy. At the same time, we hear voices telling us that such an idea is just another unnecessary notion. The rationale used by many who justify this widespread second-language deficiency is that English is today's lingua franca.

(“Why bother? People around the world speak english, just call some help line and you will find out.”)\*

This is in reality just an easy excuse used to avoid seriously addressing an acute problem which affects future graduates and, in the long run, the entire society and its competitiveness. All educators know that to build new cadres of graduates of our higher-education institutions who are to be characterized as being internationally competitive, multiculturally aware, and able to work in a global context, much more needs to be done in translating the rhetoric and good intentions into concrete realities. This includes better work in areas such as internationalization of curriculum, mobility of students and, of course, mandating instruction in at least a second language to a competent degree. This is not an easy sell, however.

Are you...

multilingual? (bilingual, trilingual, etc.)

something in between?

monolingual? (one language— your native language)



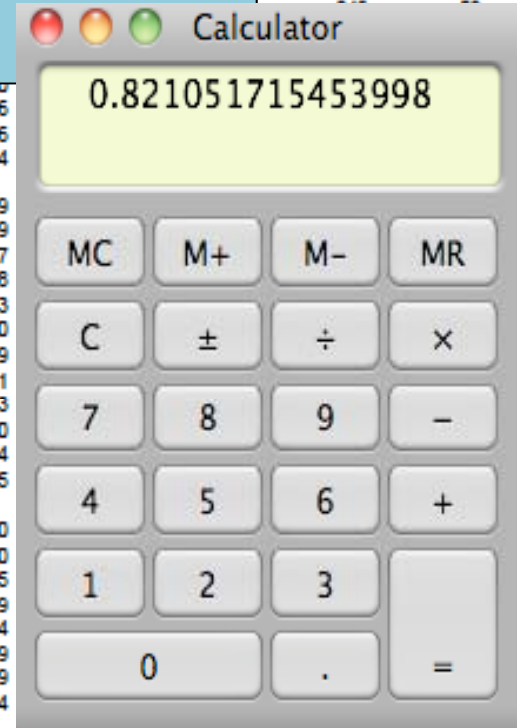
Table 5. Detailed List of Languages Spoken at Home for the Population 5 Years and Over by State: 2000

[Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/h3.pdf>]

Language	United States	Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California	Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware	Dist. of Columbia	Florida	Georgia	Hawaii
<b>5 years and over</b>	<b>262,375,152</b>	<b>4,152,278</b>	<b>579,740</b>	<b>4,139,724</b>	<b>2,452,205</b>	<b>31,416,629</b>	<b>4,006,285</b>	<b>3,184,514</b>	<b>732,378</b>	<b>539,658</b>	<b>15,043,603</b>	<b>7,594,476</b>	<b>1,134,351</b>
Speak only English	215,423,567	3,989,795	496,982	3,523,487	2,368,450	19,014,873	3,402,266	2,600,601	662,845	449,241	11,569,739	6,843,038	832,226
Speak other language	46,951,595	162,483	82,758	1,229,237	123,755	12,401,756	604,019	583,913	69,533	90,417	3,473,864	751,438	302,125
<b>Spanish or Spanish Creole</b>	<b>28,101,052</b>	<b>89,729</b>	<b>16,674</b>	<b>927,395</b>	<b>82,465</b>	<b>8,105,505</b>	<b>421,670</b>	<b>268,044</b>	<b>34,690</b>	<b>49,461</b>	<b>2,476,528</b>	<b>426,115</b>	<b>18,820</b>
<b>Other Indo-European languages</b>	<b>10,017,989</b>	<b>43,812</b>	<b>12,851</b>	<b>102,004</b>	<b>22,695</b>	<b>1,335,332</b>	<b>100,148</b>	<b>251,335</b>	<b>22,584</b>	<b>23,721</b>	<b>755,214</b>	<b>168,629</b>	<b>14,242</b>
French (incl. Patois, Creole)	1,543,838	13,656	2,197	15,663	7,312	135,067	18,045	42,947	4,041	9,085	129,118	43,428	3,310
French Creole	453,368	239	71	205	157	4,107	272	7,856	1,199	598	208,487	4,963	128
Italian	1,008,370	2,158	518	8,992	1,106	84,190	5,703	50,891	2,860	1,723	67,257	5,827	826
Portuguese or Portuguese Creole												6,915	1,238
German												32,777	3,900
Yiddish												496	41
Other West Germanic languages												3,434	558
Scandinavian languages												1,895	727
Greek												3,322	203
Russian												7,175	432
Polish												2,775	274
Serbo-Croatian												5,745	87
Other Slavic languages												3,258	118
Armenian												1,111	11
Persian												1,111	11
Gujarathi												1,111	11
Hindi	317,001	1,333	70	2,300	393	70,134	2,232	4,000	940				
Urdu	262,900	632	108	1,556	447	31,588	1,083	3,310	666				
Other Indic languages	439,289	1,293	156	3,168	421	112,119	2,053	5,750	1,186				
Other Indo-European languages	327,946	725	478	5,700	670	37,750	2,312	11,978	454				
<b>Asian and Pacific Island languages</b>	<b>6,960,065</b>	<b>22,122</b>	<b>22,186</b>	<b>62,204</b>	<b>15,238</b>	<b>2,709,179</b>	<b>63,745</b>	<b>47,993</b>	<b>9,359</b>				
Chinese	2,022,143	5,271	1,295	17,111	2,529	815,386	11,333	15,782	3,579				
Japanese	477,997	2,201	1,392	6,127	1,193	154,633	6,605	3,829	487				
Korean	894,063	4,029	4,369	7,689	1,250	298,076	12,045	4,528	1,598				
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	181,889	493	126	1,217	14	71,305	1,567	2,043	13				
Miao, Hmong	168,063	8	454	41	130	65,529	3,533	116	0				
Thai	120,464	817	742	1,587	356	39,970	2,214	781	319				
Laotian	149,303	635	1,137	921	2,502	41,317	1,852	3,038	111				
Vietnamese	1,009,627	4,561	756	9,999	3,467	407,119	12,499	6,598	543				
Other Asian languages	398,434	1,762	390	3,994	985	76,013	4,644	5,336	1,280				
Tagalog	1,224,241	1,702	8,934	10,049	1,627	626,399	5,013	5,038	1,284				
Other Pacific Island languages	313,841	643	2,591	3,469	1,185	113,432	2,440	904	145				
<b>Other languages</b>	<b>1,872,489</b>	<b>6,820</b>	<b>31,047</b>	<b>137,634</b>	<b>3,357</b>	<b>251,740</b>	<b>18,456</b>	<b>16,541</b>	<b>2,900</b>				
Nevajo	178,014	53	44	89,951	53	1,774	2,510	42	0				
Other Native North American languages	203,466	732	30,121	30,109	879	6,729	2,753	229	55				
Hungarian	117,973	185	77	1,747	251	19,231	1,284	3,969	259				
Arabic	614,582	2,620	188	7,622	955	108,340	4,998	5,172	774				
Hebrew	195,374	410	215	1,686	169	34,647	1,492	2,159	269				
African languages	418,505	2,306	221	3,452	807	45,471	4,273	3,656	1,289				
Other and unspecified languages	144,575	514	181	3,067	243	35,548	1,146	1,314	254				

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5 years and over  
Speak only English  
Speak other language

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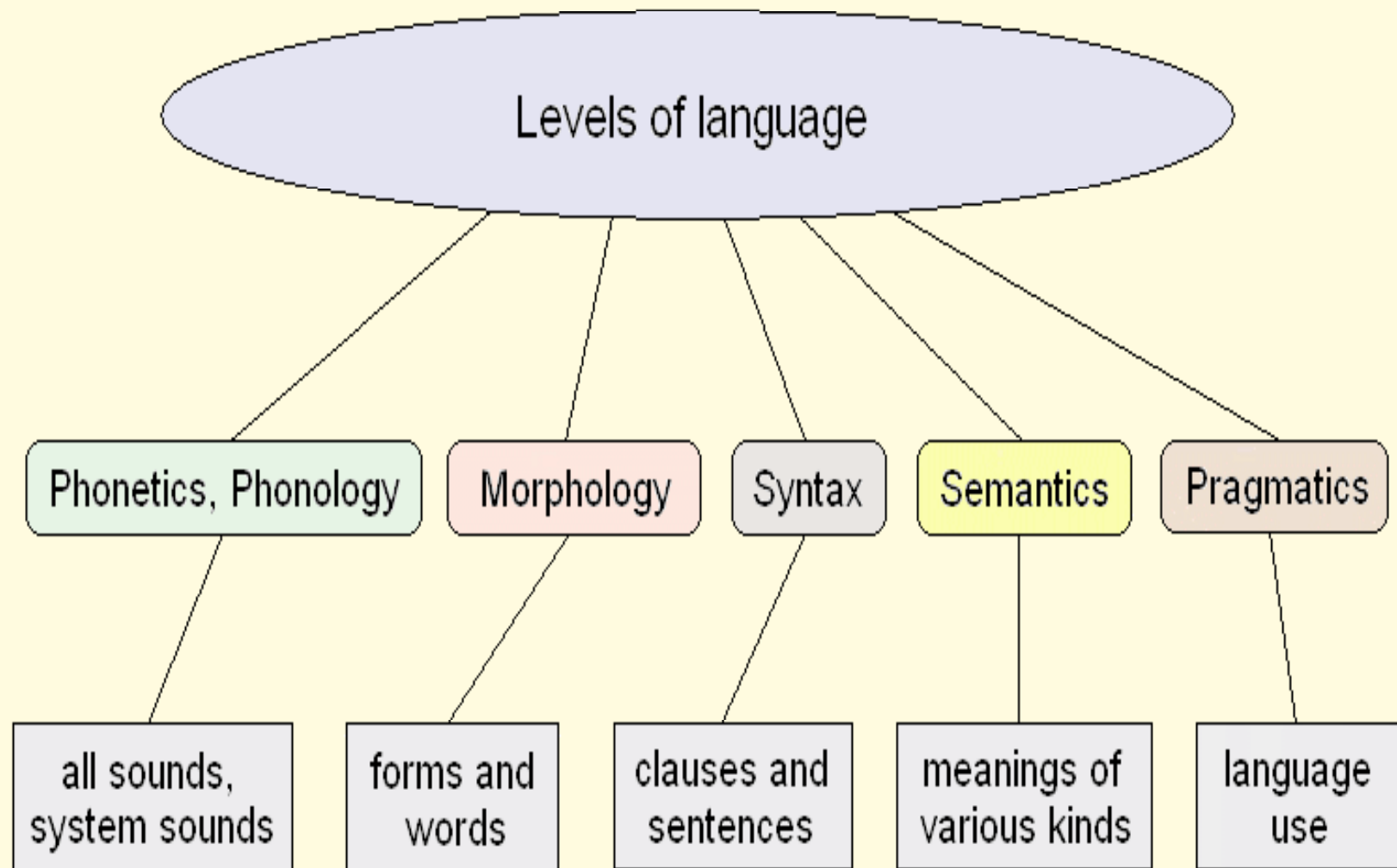


# What we know about the world's linguistics

1. The majority of human beings on Earth are multilingual/bilingual
2. Less common is monolingualism (something typical of the U.S.)
3. With simultaneous bilingualism, code switching is common
4. Sequential bilingualism often occurs when there is a heritage language or if parents send children to bilingual school
5. People who learn a second language after immigration or as adults are generally called L2 speakers (second language speakers)
6. There is a continuum (an imperceptible and controversial fine line) between being an L1 speaker and being an L2 speaker (what is “native”?)
7. Learning a second language is often not ‘natural’ or ‘innate’, but requires learning (as opposed to acquiring)

# L1 and L2 Speakers





# Infant Language Abilities

Age of Onset	Vocalizations and Language
18 months (Baby talking to Dad)	Knows up to 50 words Babbles with intonation patterns of several syllables Not frustrated with not being understood Little ability to combine words into spontaneous phrases
24 months (2 year old talking to Gramma)	50+ word vocabulary 2-word phrases (of own creation) Shows interest in language
30 months (2.5 year old talking about zoo)	Fast increase in vocabulary Frustrated if not understood 2+ word utterances Telegraphic grammar (missing function words)
3 years (3 year old talking about Star Wars)	~1000 word vocabulary More grammatical complexity
4 years (The 4 year old chatterbox)	Deviates from adult language mostly in style



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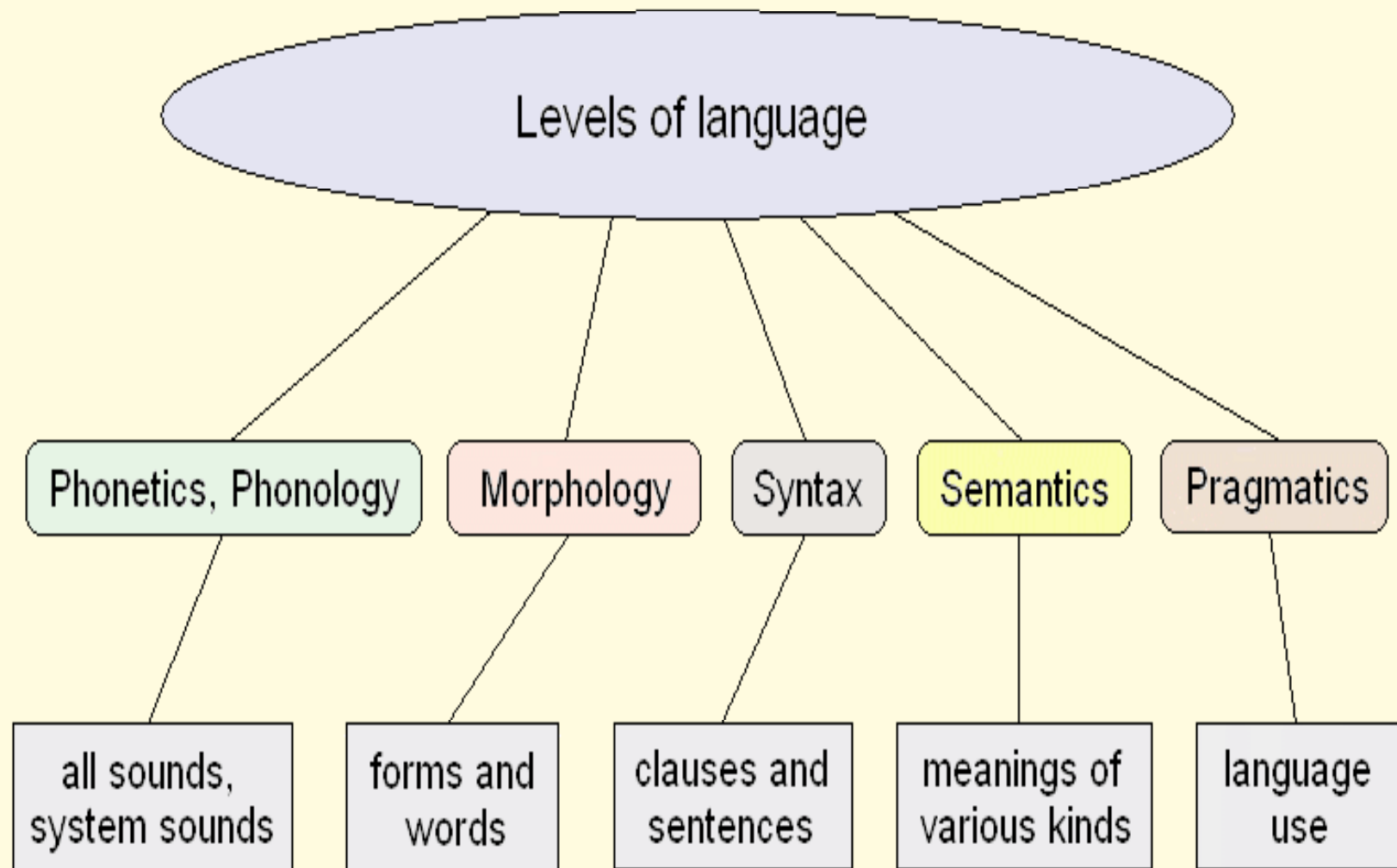


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# Stages of L2 Learning

Stage 1: Pre-productive stage

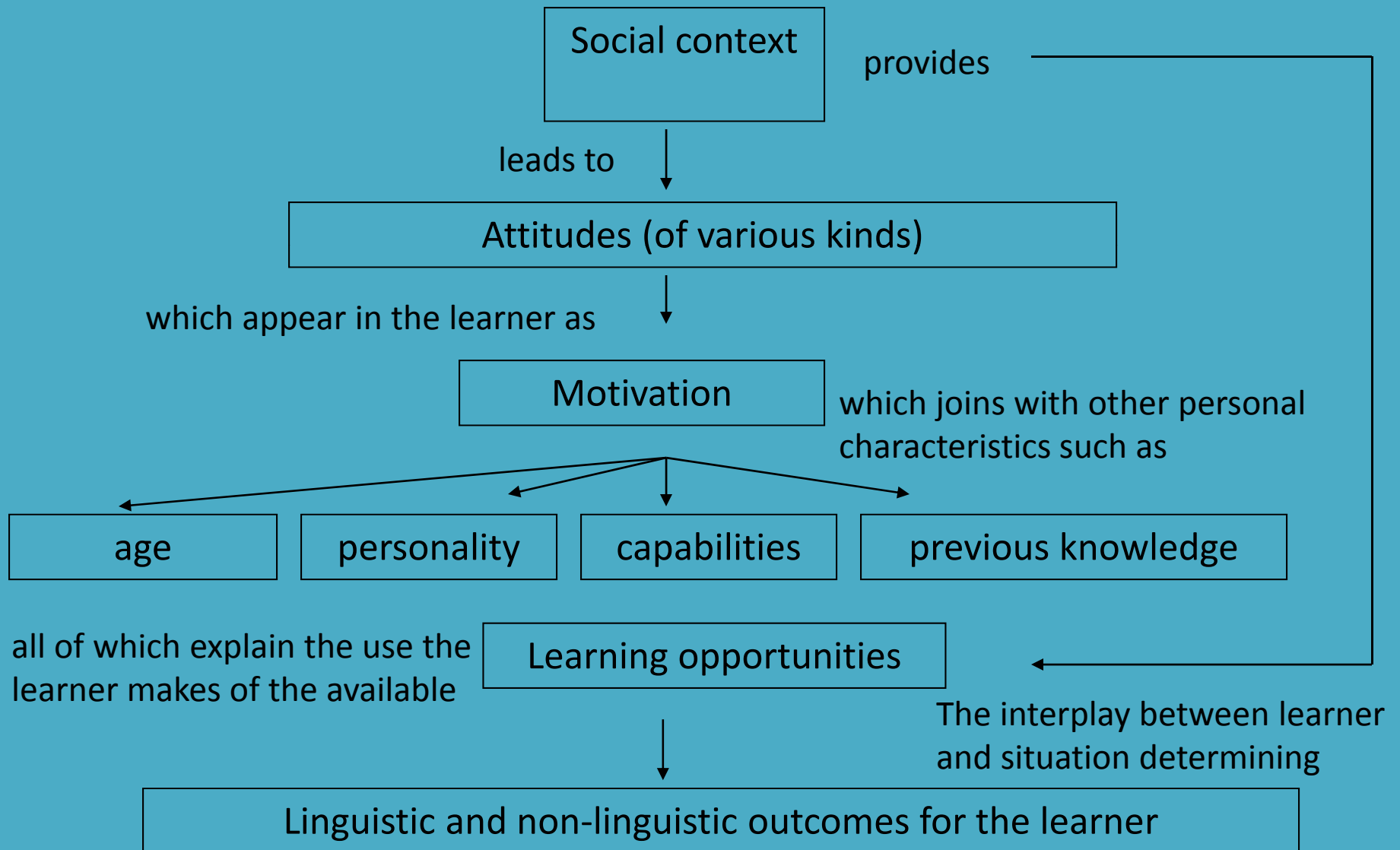
Stage 2: Early production

Stage 3: Speech Emergence

Stage 4: Intermediate Fluency

Stage 5: Advanced Fluency

# Spolsky's General Model of Second Language Learning (1989, p. 28)





**WE WANT YOU!**

to positively influence language attitudes and  
educational policy

# Social Contexts and Learning Opportunities

- In your home country
- In a host country (abroad)
- Classroom-based learning (high school, university, community college, community center, continuing education courses)
- Private and group tutoring, conversation partners
- Videos, audio CDs, Podcasts
- Computer software programs

# Social Contexts and Learning Opportunities

1. Does my computer meet the minimum specifications and do I have the correct hardware (speakers, sound card, microphone, etc.)
2. Is there video as well as audio?
3. Are the four skills presented and practiced? (Listening, speaking, reading, writing)
4. Is there a placement test? How many levels are included in the software?
5. Is there portable audio/video?
6. Are there motivational tools such as graphs, charts, and checklists
7. What is the role of translation?

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Websites that Review Language Learning Software

<http://www.language-learning-advisor.com/language-learning-product-reviews.html>

<http://www.givemeareview.com/Language-Learning-Software/reviews.html>

<http://www.consumersearch.com/second-language-software>

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- Computer software programs
- **Language Learning Journal**

“Language is power, life and the instrument of culture, the instrument of domination and liberation. “

--Angela Carter (English writer and novelist)

“If the Romans had been obliged to learn Latin, they would never have found the time to conquer the world.”

--Heinrich Heine (German journalist, essayist, literary critic)



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Capacities and Capabilities