BOOK REVIEW: PAIVA, V. L. M. O. (2014). *AQUISIÇÃO DE SEGUNDA LÍNGUA*. SÃO PAULO: PARÁBOLA.

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Second language researchers who desire to be acquainted with the myriad of theories that encompass the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and, at the same time, perceive practical evidence of these theories taking place in learners' language development, have at their disposal the book *Aquisição de Segunda lingua,* written in Portuguese by Vera Lucia Menezes de Oliveira e Paiva, a professor at the Faculdade de Letras at UFMG (Federal University of Minas Gerais). Each chapter of the volume discusses a different second language theory including its main tenets as well as the main criticism raised in the field towards its theoretical aspects. Moreover, for each theory, the author offers a section with narratives from learners themselves that aim to illustrate the theoretical issues under scrutiny.

Organized into 10 Chapters plus a glossary, the goals of this piece of writing are twofold, namely: 1) providing SLA researchers with a clearer understanding of the main SLA theories; and 2) demonstrating that, even though most of the theories do not consider some of the Brazilian contexts, still many theoretical assumptions can be found valid within this very same environment. Each chapter focuses on a singular theory (with the exception of chapter 10 that summarizes fifteen theories) and is structured as follows: first, a brief introduction is provided, in which the author highlights the main aspects that underlie the theoretical background being reviewed. Then, the main criticisms made in the field towards the theory are reported. After that, narratives of learners (mainly Brazilians) are explored so as to corroborate to the discussion.

Additionally, a concluding section is provided aiming at restating the foremost tenets combined with the given practical examples.

Chapter 1, entitled *Teoria Behaviorista-Estrutural* reviews the basis of the behaviorist theory by discussing behaviorist psychology and structural linguistics. Departing from the theoretical standpoints brought by Watson (1930) and Skinner (1992), the author starts by stressing that learning a language is seen, from the behaviorist perspective, as a synonym to habit formation. Paiva, then, mentions that a similar view is shared by structural linguists who believe that language could be understood as a combination of structures that must be practiced so as to be learnt. The author, then, contrasts the theory to the main criticisms brought by some linguists who say that what matters is not the structure being learnt but actually how the learner deals with it while comprehending and producing language. Finally, she presents some empirical evidence from narratives of Finnish, Japanese and Brazilian second language learners and concludes the chapter by pointing that although the behaviorist theory did not succeed in explaining SLA, it had significant influence (and it still does nowadays) on language teaching.

In Chapter 2, entitled *Modelo Monitor, Hipótese do Input ou da Compreensão,* Paiva addresses Krashen's (1978) monitor model which encompasses five hypotheses: 1) the learning x acquisition hypothesis, 2) the natural order hypothesis, 3) the monitor hypothesis, 4) the comprehensible input hypothesis and 5) the affective filter hypothesis. According to the author, Krashen's hypotheses had much criticism mainly for its lack of empirical evidence, misinterpretation of the scientific data presented, lack of clear explanations for how acquisition takes place and also lack of clear definitions for the discussed constructs. On the other hand, the author also presents Krashen's own responses to the received criticism in which he highlights five possible

counterarguments to his own model. After having discussed the main tenets proposed in the Monitor Theory, Paiva makes use of narratives from learners that can be seen, according to the author, as empirical evidence to the ideas presented by Krashen. The narratives, that can be found in the corpus of the project AMFALE, refer to Brazilian learners of English and Spanish and two foreigners learning Portuguese in Brazil. At last, the author ends the chapter by emphasizing that "Krashen revolutionized the SLA studies" (p. 49), however, "the acquisition seems to be something much more complex than what was described in the [monitor] model" (p. 50 – my translation).

Chapter 3, *Modelo da Aculturação,* is where Paiva attempts to "present the acculturation model as described by Schumann (1978a)" (p. 51 – my translation). In it, language learning happens in a natural setting, without formal instruction. As detailed by the author, within this model, SLA turns into an aspect of acculturation and "the degree of acculturation a learner has in relation to a target-language group may control the degree of language acquisition" (p. 55 – my translation). According to Paiva, Schumann's research concentrated major efforts on a single participant which brought much criticism to the findings. The author also mentions other negative appraisals towards the model, such as lack of comprehension data in the analysis and the fact the model does not bring claims to acquisition in non-natural contexts. As partial evidence to acculturation, Paiva cites the narratives of two Brazilian learners of English who are also part of the AMFALE project. In her conclusion, the author takes a stand affirming that SLA cannot be attributed solely to matters of acculturation even though the cultural integration of a learner to the target culture may play a significant role.

The Universal Grammar (UG) is the model approached in Chapter 4. The author begins by laying emphasis on Chomsky's theories about language acquisition and reviews the most relevant aspects of his works, starting with his first book (Syntatic

Structures) and ending with the minimalist program. Next, Paiva directs her focus to the UG model for SLA which is based on Chomsky's theories and stresses its main tenets. According to her, the UG model assumes that the human brain is born with a LAD – language acquisition device – which is activated by input. However, there are different positions in the field towards deciding when and how the device acts in relation to L2. After detailing the most relevant explanations to SLA given by UG theoreticians, Paiva makes use of a few learners' narratives to exemplify the UG in practice. The author, however, calls attention to the fact that finding evidence to the UG model is rather difficult since "the theory deals with internal language which is not noticeable to the learner" (p. 80 – my translation). Next, the author lists the main criticism towards the model and also positions herself in relation to them. Lastly, she closes the chapter synthesizing the UG approach and pointing the main aspects of the theory nowadays.

Chapter 5 tackles the Connectionist Model. While describing the major concerns of the theory and its arguments for SLA, Paiva clarifies that, unlike innatist theories, the connectionism "tries to explain SLA via cognition" (p. 85 – my translation). As for the negative appraisals given to the model, the author mentions that because the connectionism is associated to behaviorism and to associationism, it receives similar criticism. In relation to the empirical evidence found in learner's narratives, the author presents some examples of connections established in terms of vocabulary, first and second language and repetition of the same kind of input in different activities. Paiva finishes this chapter highlighting the lack of a connectionist theory that encompasses SLA as a whole since, as she puts, most research carried out in the area focus on "the acquisition of specific syntactic aspects and of vocabulary" (p. 97 – my translation).

The impact of interaction in SLA is the topic discussed in chapter 6 which is entitled *A Hipótese da Interação*. Paiva summarizes the contributions brought by Hatch

(1978) and the main issues raised by Long (1996) who proposed the interaction hypothesis. Long claims that both input and output must be accounted as important elements of SLA development. As posed by Paiva, Long also brings out the relevance of feedback which appears during interaction. Bearing in mind the aspects presented, Paiva compiles the predominant criticism towards the interaction hypothesis, mostly focusing on the ones made by Ellis (1991). She also exposes the responses given by Long. Japanese and Brazilian narratives are brought as evidence to the proposal. The author concludes the chapter stating that "interaction seems to be one of the basic premises for SLA, but other elements brought by other theories must also be considered" (p. 111 – my translation).

In chapter 7, Paiva examines the output hypothesis and goes over the essential constructs tackled by Swain (1985). By covering the issues of noticing of the gap, testing hypothesis and making use of metalanguage, the author details the three functions of output and converses them with the importance of collaborative dialogue for SLA. Krashen (1998) is cited as the main critic to the model and five narratives are presented as samples. The author ends the chapter by mentioning some research in the area that has been developed in Brazil.

Chapter 8 and 9 deal with Sociocultural Theory and Complexity Theory respectively. In both chapters, Paiva explores the basic concepts that underline the two theories. In case of the Sociocultural Theory, the author uncovers the main views on mediation, zone of proximal development, scaffolding and private and inner speech. In relation to the Complexity Theory, Paiva explains how language can be viewed as a complex system. Both chapters do not have a separate session in which the author presents narratives to serve as evidence. However, some narratives are mentioned within the theoretical explanations given. The received criticisms are also presented

within the chapter. In her conclusion to chapter 8, Paiva lays emphasis on the social function of the language and makes use of a narrative of a learner of Spanish as a second language so as to illustrate the main concepts discussed. On the other hand, in the end of chapter 9, Paiva brings claims to the importance of understanding language as "a process of transformation, change and which involves many factors, among them the autonomy and the identity" (p. 151 – my translation). She stresses the fact that no approach to L2 teaching contemplates the complexity of SLA.

In her last chapter, Paiva attempts to summarize fifteen other SLA theories, namely: ACT model, Information Processing Theory, Functional-Typological Theory, Concept Oriented Approach, Competition Model, Neurofunctional Theory, Interlanguage Theory, Cognitive-Interactionist Theory, Variable Competence Model, Multidimentional Model, CREED Theory, Accommodation Theory, Identity Approach, Activity Theory and Dialogic Model. After presenting the main tenets of each theory in a nutshell, the author declares to be conscious of the great amount of theories in the area, explaining that her choices for the book were made so as to offer the reader a panorama of the most known. Finally, at the end of the book, Paiva proposes a glossary of the major constructs tackled in each chapter as a way to ensure the reader's familiarity with the concepts discussed.

All things considered, one could say that the book hereby briefly reviewed - *Aquisição de Segunda Lingua* – can be seen as an insightful material for researchers interested in better understanding the main SLA theories. The book offers a well-written and detailed summary of the most relevant aspects of each discussed theory. Additionally, Paiva's contrast of the theories to their criticism gives the reader a clearer theoretical perspective. Moreover, one of the highest points in the book is when the author offers the reader the opportunity to perceive the presented elements in practice

by making use of learners' narratives that serve as evidence to the theories. Finally, the organization of the book as well as the glossary are extremely helpful, making it relatively easy for language researchers to find what they might be looking for. All in all, Paiva's book provides readers with a range of important theories in the area of SLA and may serve as an essential source for those looking for a basic understanding of the major aspects discussed in the area.