Teaching Language Skills - reading & writing

Week 12

Ch 20. Teaching Reading

Research on Reading a Second Language

1. Bottom-up and top-down processing: cornerstone of reading methodology

   - bottom-up processing: data-driven operations from linguistic signals to meaning

   - top-down (conceptually driven) processing: drawing on our own intelligence and experience to understand a text

   - interactive reading

2. Schema theory and background knowledge

- a text does not itself carry meaning - the reader brings schemata to the printed word

- example of the role of schemata in reading (p. 359 - "where were you?" "somewhere between tenor and bass, sir")

- **Content** schemata vs **Formal** schemata

- Nassaji (2002): "construction-integration" model

3. Teaching strategic reading:

- William Grabe (2004): stressed the coordinated use of multiple strategies while students are reading

- David Eskey (2005): pre-reading, while reading, post-reading, follow-up strategies for reading

4. Extensive reading

- reading for pleasure, reading w/o looking up all the unknown words - important!

- Krashen called it Free Voluntary Reading: a key to student gains in reading ability

5. Fluency and reading rate

   - skimming, scanning, predicting, and identifying main ideas

6. Focus on vocabulary

7. The role of affect and culture

   - the "love of reading", high self-esteem, autonomy gained through the learning of reading strategies, culture - motivates ppl

8. Adult literacy training (for immigrants)

Genres of written language

- nonfiction

- fiction

- letters

- greeting cards

- diaries, journals

- memos

- messages

- announcements

- newspaper "journalese"

- academic writing

- forms, applications

- questionnaires

- directions

- labels

- signs

- recipes

- bills

- maps, manuals, menus,

- schedules, advertisements

- comic strips, cartoons

Characteristics of written language

1. Permanence

2. Processing time: fast readers do not necessarily have an advantage over slow readers

3. Distance

4. Orthography

5. Complexity: writing has longer clauses and more subordination than spoken language

> *Because of the frequent ambiguity that therefore is present in a good deal of writing, readers must do their best to infer...*
>
> *There's frequent ambiguity in a lot of writing. And so, readers have to infer a lot.*

6. Vocabulary: lower-frequency words often appear

7. Formality: prescribed forms that certain written messages must adhere to (e.g., menus, rhetorical formality in essay writing)

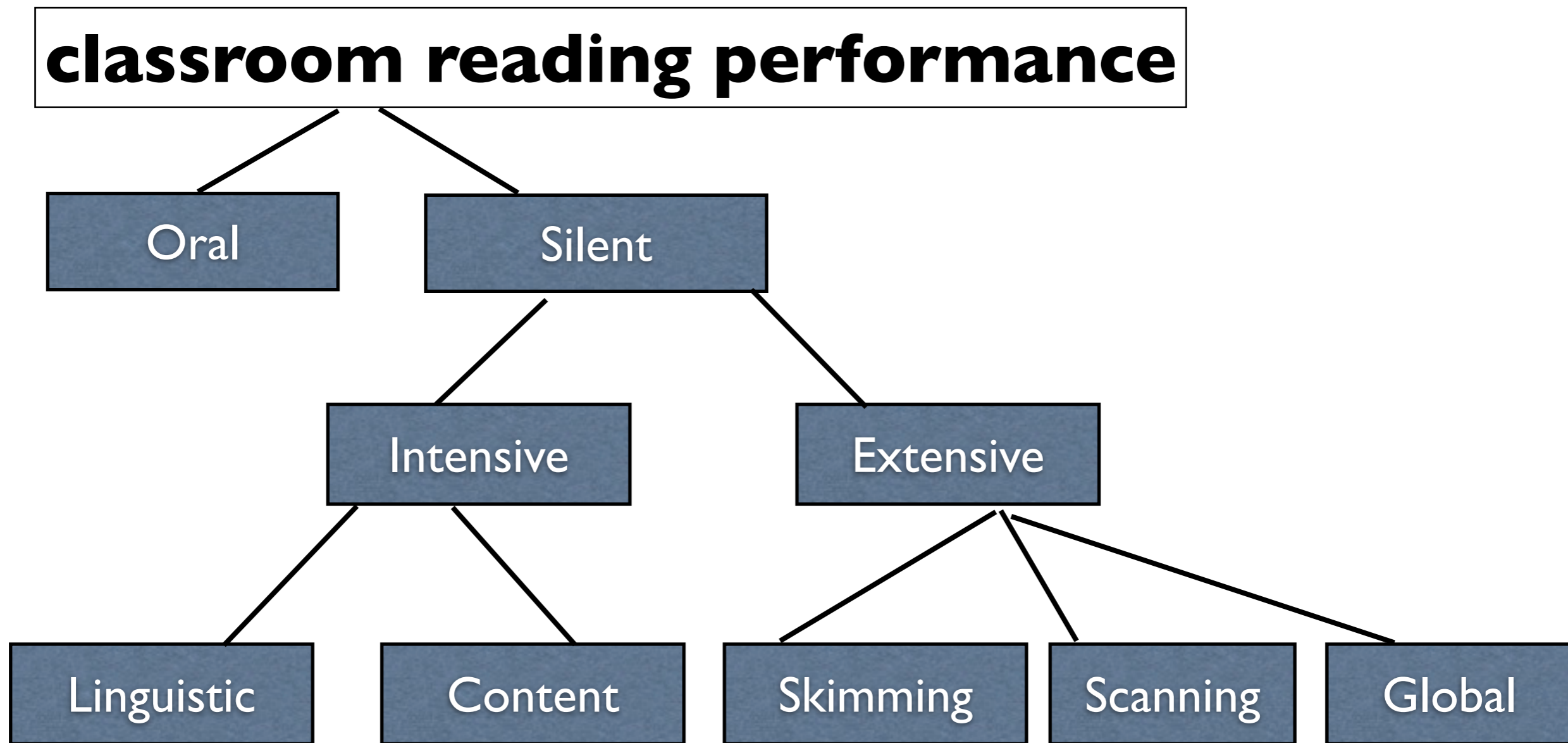# Micro- and Macroskills for reading comprehension (p. 367)

Microskills	Macroskills

Strategies for reading comprehension

1. Identify the **purpose** in reading

2. Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding

3. Use efficient **silent reading** techniques for improving fluency

4. **Skim** the text for main ideas

5. **Scan** the text for specific information

6. Use semantic mapping or clustering: grouping ideas into meaningful clusters (e.g., p. 369)

7. Guess when you aren't certain: **compensation** strategies

8. Analyze Vocabulary: look for prefixes, suffixes, roots, contexts for clues

9. Distinguish between literal and implied meaning

10. Capitalize on **discourse markers** to process relationships (e.g., Table 20.2 p. 372)

Types of classroom reading performance

classroom reading performance
- Oral
- Silent
  - Intensive
    - Linguistic
    - Content
  - Extensive
    - Skimming
    - Scanning
    - Global

Principles for teaching reading skills

1. In an integrated course, don't overlook a specific focus on reading skills

2. Use techniques that are intrinsically motivating (e.g., language experience approach, success oriented readings)

3. Balance authenticity and readability in choosing texts

4. Encourage the development of reading strategies

5. Include both bottom-up and top-down techniques

6. Follow the 3Q3R sequence: *Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review*

7. Plan on prereading, during-reading, and after-reading phases

8. Build an assessment aspect into your techniques

Two reading lessons (pp. 377-385)

- Figure 20.3 - "rain forests," for beginners

- Figure 30.4 - "genetic engineering and DNA," for advanced students

Assessing reading

- Perceptive reading (recognition of symbols, letters, words)

- Selective reading (focus on morphology, grammar, lexicon)

- Interactive reading (e.g., discourse-level cloze tasks, comprehensive questions, short answer responses, scanning...)

- Extensive reading (e.g., skimming, summarizing, short essays, note taking...)

Group work

- Skim the reading selection "Gene Mapping May Foster Discrimination" in Figure 20.4 p. 380) and draw a **semantic map** (e.g., p. 369) of it. Then compare maps with others and talk about why you drew yours in that way.

Ch 21. Teaching Writing

Research on second language writing

1. Composing vs writing

   - the composing process of writing

2. Process versus product

   - In the past, the final written *product* was important -> Now a bigger focus on the *process* approach to writing instruction

   - Process is not the end; it is the means to the end

3. Contrastive rhetoric

- Robert Kaplan (1966): different languages (and their cultures) have different patterns of written discourse
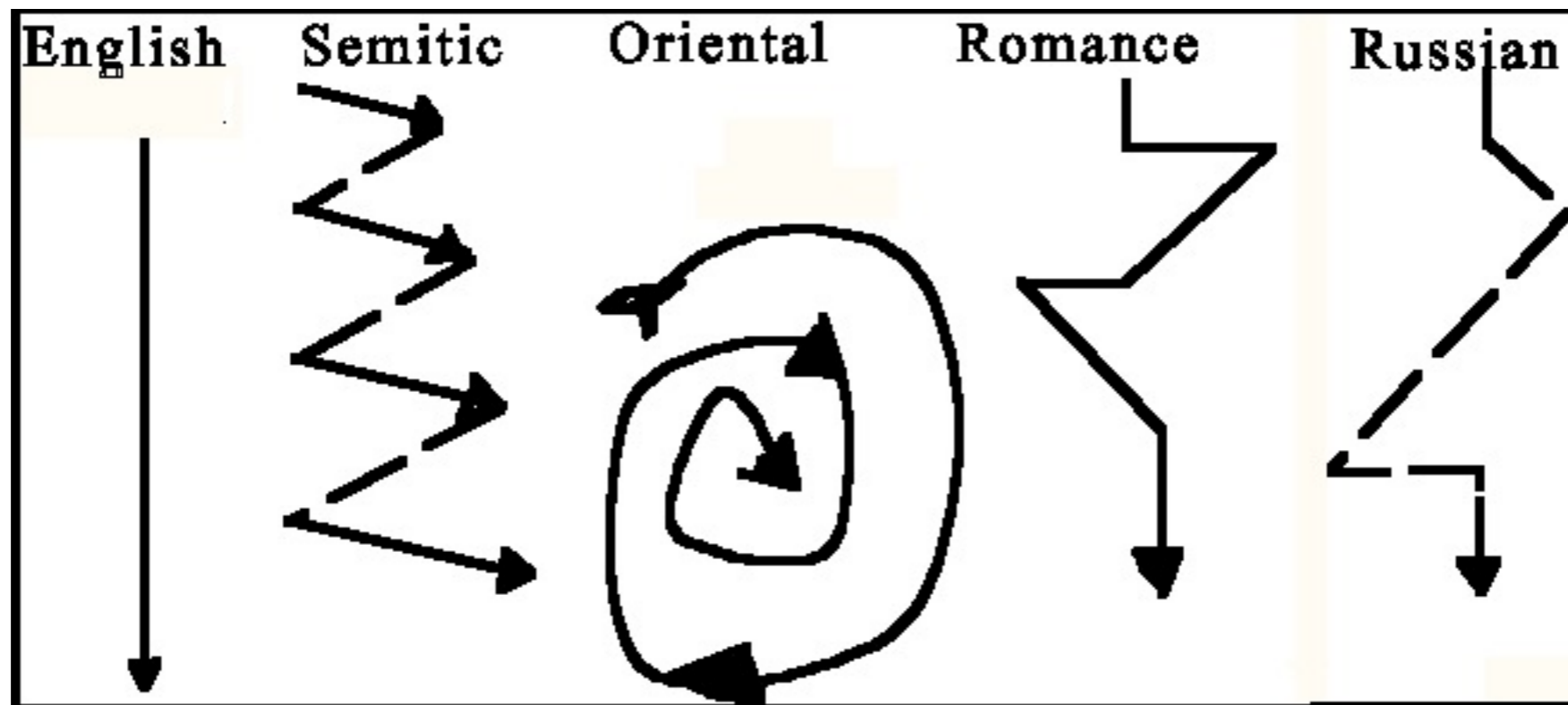
- Kaplan's diagrams and conclusions are simplistic and overgeneralized -> a "weak" position would be more appropriate

- Renewed wave of research on contrastive rhetoric: understanding students' 1st language related rhetorical traditions

4. Differences between L1 and L2 writing

- Tony Silva (1993): L2 writers plan less, are less fluent, less accurate, less effective

5. Authenticity

- how much of our classroom writing is "real" writing?

- real writing vs display writing

6. Responding to student writing

- CLT as a locus for process writing - facilitative role of the teacher

- Ferris (1997): more student revisions ensued when teachers (1) requests specific information (b) made summary comments on grammar

7. Voice and identity

- writing within students' own sociopolitical contexts

Micro- and Macroskills for writing (p. 399)

Microskills	Macroskills

Types of classroom writing performance

- Imitative, or writing down

- Intensive, or controlled

- Self-writing: note taking, journal writing

- Display writing

- Real writing: Academic, Vocational/technical, Personal

Principles for teaching writing skills

1. Incorporate practices of "good" writers

2. Balance process and product

3. Account for cultural/literary backgrounds

4. Connect reading and writing

5. Provide as much authentic writing as possible

6. Frame your techniques in terms of prewriting, drafting, and revising stages

- **prewriting**: encourages the generation of ideas through a) reading a passage b) skimming or scanning c) outside research d) brainstorming e) listing ... freewriting

- **Drafting and revising:** core of process writing - optimal monitoring, peer-reviewing for content, instructor's feedback, editing...

- Example (Figure 21.3-21.4 pp. 405-410)

7. Strive to offer techniques that are as interactive as possible

8. Sensitively apply methods of responding to and correcting your students' writing (pp. 411-412)

   - resist the temptation to treat minor grammatical errors, don't rewrite a student's sentences, comment holistically...

9. Clearly instruct students on the rhetorical, formal conventions of writing

Assessing writing

- In a process-oriented classroom, if you are a facilitator of students' performance in the ongoing process of writing, how can you be the judge?

- **Evaluation Checklists** (p. 413, table 21.2): content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary, mechanics

- Writing assessment tasks: imitative writing, intensive writing, responsive writing, extensive writing

Group work

- Review the <u>guidelines on methods of responding to written work</u> (pp. 411-412). Look at the sample *first* draft and try to provide written responses that would stimulate the writer to make appropriate revisions. Evaluate their effectiveness in groups.