

RECONCEPTUALISING NOTICING IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: TASK RELEVANCE, EFFORT, AND EVIDENTIAL LIMITS

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Abstract

Noticing in second language acquisition (SLA) research is routinely invoked as a necessary condition for learning, yet its conceptual status remains unstable, and its empirical operationalisation persistently contested. Across the literature, noticing has been variously equated with awareness, selective attention, discrepancy detection, depth of processing, intake, or learning itself—often without reconciliation. This article argues that the enduring difficulty of measuring noticing reflects a failure of definition rather than a lack of methodological sophistication. Building on communicative, interactionist, and cognitive perspectives, it advances a process-oriented reconceptualization of noticing as a functional boundary within ongoing communicative activity. Under this account, noticing marks the point at which automatic, predictive processing becomes insufficient for task continuation and processing effort must be renegotiated under task-relevant uncertainty. Noticing is thus treated as relational, transient, and process-internal, rather than as a directly observable mental state. The article shows how this reconceptualization clarifies longstanding evidential ambiguities and outlines its implications for theory and research across modalities in SLA.

Keywords: Noticing Hypothesis, second language acquisition, attention, task relevance, processing effort, communicative processing, inferential limits

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Why Noticing Still Resists Definition

Noticing occupies a paradoxical position in SLA research. It is routinely invoked as a necessary condition for learning, yet there is no stable agreement on its ontological status. Across the literature, noticing is alternately treated as conscious awareness, selective attention, detection of discrepancy, depth of processing, intake, or learning itself. These uses are rarely reconciled, yet they are often operationalised as if they referred to the same underlying phenomenon.

This article advances a deliberately strong claim: the field's persistent difficulty in measuring noticing reflects a failure of definition rather than a lack of methodological sophistication. Over several decades, research has repeatedly attempted to operationalise noticing without first establishing what kind of phenomenon noticing is supposed to be. As a result, empirical work has accumulated without producing conceptual convergence.

Against this background, the article adopts the following definition, which governs the entire argument:

Noticing is a process boundary within ongoing communicative activity, marking the moment at which automatic, predictive processing becomes insufficient for task continuation and the system must renegotiate effort under task-relevant uncertainty.

In its canonical formulation, the Noticing Hypothesis defines a direct and constitutive relationship between noticing and intake. Schmidt explicitly states that “noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for converting input into intake” (Schmidt, 1990, p. 130) and further clarifies that “intake is that part of the input that the learner notices” (Schmidt, 1990, p. 139). Within this framework, noticing functions as the decisive threshold between mere exposure and input which is relevant to learning.

The present account does not contest the internal coherence of this position. Rather, it questions its empirical and conceptual adequacy for modelling extended, goal-directed communicative activity—particularly in reading—where processing may remain sufficient for task continuation despite incomplete intake, and where effort may be strategically allocated or withdrawn without stable form commitment. In such contexts,

the assumption that noticing constitutes a necessary and sufficient gateway to intake risks conflating effort regulation with learning outcomes and obscures the dynamics of task-relevant uncertainty that precede, accompany, or bypass intake altogether.

This reconceptualization directly contradicts a long-standing assumption in SLA research—namely, that noticing is a detectable object whose presence or absence can be inferred from awareness reports, form-focused behaviour, or learning outcomes. Instead, noticing is treated here as relational, transient, and process-internal, and therefore systematically resistant to direct detection.

Crucially, this account also departs from the dominant interpretation of Schmidt's notion of "noticing the gap." In the present framework, the gap is not a discrepancy between interlanguage and target form, but a gap in task-sufficient understanding. Detection of such a gap does not itself constitute noticing; rather, it marks the point at which the process boundary called noticing becomes operationally consequential for subsequent relevance evaluation and the allocation or withdrawal of effort.

The Conceptual Inflation of Noticing

Since its original formulation, the Noticing Hypothesis has exercised an unusually strong gravitational pull on SLA research. Few claims are as intuitively compelling as the idea that learners cannot acquire what they do not notice. Yet this very plausibility has had an unintended consequence: noticing has gradually expanded to cover an ever-wider range of phenomena, often without clear justification. Rather than stabilising around a shared definition, the construct has come to function as a flexible placeholder for whatever aspect of processing a given method happens to foreground.

This expansion has not taken the form of explicit theoretical debate. Instead, it has unfolded incrementally, as noticing has been quietly reinterpreted in response to recurring methodological difficulties. When one way of evidencing noticing proved problematic, the construct itself was adjusted so that it could be supported by different kinds of data. Over time, noticing came to refer not to a single phenomenon viewed from multiple angles, but to a shifting set of processes linked primarily by terminological continuity.

The logic of conceptual inflation

The difficulty of defining noticing has not resulted in theoretical restraint; rather, it has encouraged conceptual expansion. Faced with persistent evidential challenges, researchers have repeatedly reinterpreted noticing in ways that align with the affordances of their chosen methods and theoretical commitments. What emerges is not a single construct with multiple operationalisations, but a family of phenomena that share a label while diverging in function.

This inflation follows a recurring logic. Introspective methods foreground awareness; verbal protocols foreground reportability; eye-tracking foregrounds visual attention; outcome measures foreground learning. In each case, noticing is reshaped to fit what the method can plausibly detect. Methodological convenience thus precedes conceptual clarity.

Schmidt himself repeatedly notes that noticing is constrained by task demands and learner goals. He explicitly observes that “what learners notice in input depends on what they are attending to, and what they attend to is determined by the task, the context, and the learner’s goals” (Schmidt, 1990, p. 143), and that when attention is directed primarily toward meaning, formal features may go unnoticed (Schmidt, 1990, p. 142). In later work, he reiterates that attention is selective and governed by current goals and task requirements (Schmidt, 2001). These observations are crucial, as they recognise that failure to notice form is not necessarily a deficit, but a predictable consequence of meaning-oriented activity. What remains under-theorised, however, is how task relevance regulates processing during ongoing activity and how learners renegotiate effort when task continuation is threatened—precisely the gap addressed by the present reconceptualization.

Noticing as reportable awareness

One response to the difficulty of evidencing noticing has been to equate it with reportable awareness. Following Schmidt’s operational emphasis on focal awareness and availability for verbal report, noticing is treated as present if learners can later articulate having noticed a form. This move underpins a wide range of introspective and post-task verbalisation methods.

While locally defensible, this operationalisation redefines noticing as what can be verbalised under experimental prompting. Processing that is rapid, automatic, or embedded in task performance is systematically excluded. Moreover, the absence of report cannot be taken as evidence that noticing did not occur, particularly in extended activities such as reading. The result is a construct that is method-bound rather than process-bound

Noticing as eye-tracked attention

As dissatisfaction with introspective methods grew, eye-tracking appeared to offer a more objective alternative. Fixations, regressions, and gaze duration could be measured continuously and without interrupting task performance. It was therefore tempting to treat prolonged or repeated fixations on linguistic forms as evidence that those forms had been noticed (e.g. Godfroid, 2012).

Here again, however, the construct shifts. Noticing is redescribed as visual attention, and visual attention as noticing. The inferential gap is substantial. The eyes may linger for many reasons—perceptual difficulty, unfamiliar orthography, momentary hesitation, or fatigue—none of which necessarily entail that processing priorities have been renegotiated. Within a process-boundary account, eye-tracking can constrain claims about superficial processing, but it cannot identify noticing itself.

Noticing as conscious awareness of form

In some strands of research, the ambiguity is resolved by stipulation: noticing is defined as conscious awareness of form. Learners are classified as noticers if they can report awareness of a feature during or after exposure (Rosa & O'Neill, 1999). This approach has the virtue of clarity, but at a cost.

Equating noticing with awareness narrows the construct to a specific experiential state and assumes that awareness coincides temporally with the moment of processing disruption. In extended activities such as reading, this assumption is difficult to sustain. Awareness may arise after effort has already been deployed, may lag behind the critical point of disruption, or may never arise at all despite task-relevant difficulty.

Under the present account, awareness is neither necessary nor sufficient for noticing. It is one possible accompaniment of processing disruption, not its defining feature.

Noticing as selective attention

Other researchers have attempted to sidestep the problem of awareness by redefining noticing as selective attention (Tomlin & Villa, 1994). On this view, what matters is not whether learners are conscious of a form, but whether attentional resources are allocated to it.

This move broadens the construct, but it does not stabilise it. Attention is itself a heterogeneous notion, encompassing alertness, orientation, and detection. Attentional capture can occur without disrupting automatic processing, and it does not, by itself, explain why effort becomes necessary at a particular moment.

From a process-oriented perspective, attention is a background condition that may make noticing possible, but it does not define noticing itself. Collapsing the two blurs the distinction between being momentarily drawn to an element and reaching a point where task continuation requires a change in processing strategy.

Noticing as discrepancy detection

Schmidt's notion of "noticing the gap" is often interpreted as the detection of discrepancy between interlanguage and target form (Schmidt, 1990). In later empirical work, this idea has been operationalised through error detection, contrastive feedback, or form–meaning mismatch tasks.

This interpretation shifts noticing toward metalinguistic comparison and implicitly privileges normative accuracy. The gap that matters is a deviation from target form, not a breakdown in task-sufficient understanding.

The present account departs from this view in a fundamental way. The relevant gap is not formal discrepancy but insufficiency for task progress. Detecting such a gap does not itself constitute noticing; it marks the point at which noticing becomes consequential by triggering relevance evaluation. Treating discrepancy detection as noticing therefore mistakes a precursor condition for the process boundary itself.

Noticing as depth of processing

In pedagogically oriented research, noticing is often absorbed into depth of processing, particularly in Leow's work (Leow, 1997; 2018). Here, noticing is associated with elaboration, hypothesis testing, and increasing cognitive engagement. Awareness and effort function as graded indices of noticing.

While coherent within an explicit-learning framework, this move effectively dissolves noticing as a distinct construct. Effort becomes both evidence of noticing and the mechanism by which learning occurs. The question of *why* effort becomes necessary at a particular moment is displaced by the question of *how much* effort is invested.

From a communicative perspective, this conflation is problematic. Effortful processing does not guarantee learning, and successful task performance often relies on underspecified representations. Equating noticing with depth of processing therefore collapses regulation into investment and obscures the functional transition the construct was meant to capture.

Noticing as learning itself

At the far end of this trajectory, noticing is inferred directly from learning outcomes. When learners demonstrate acquisition of a target feature, it is assumed that they must have noticed it during instruction or exposure (e.g. Shintani & Ellis, 2010). Noticing is reconstructed retrospectively from success. Here, the construct collapses entirely into its supposed consequence. Processing is inferred from outcome and then invoked to explain that same outcome. The circularity is obvious.

Under the present account, learning is explicitly decoupled from noticing. Noticing regulates effort under uncertainty; learning is one possible downstream consequence. Treating outcomes as evidence of noticing therefore obscures the very process the construct was introduced to explain.

Communicative Accounts and the Intake Problem

The difficulty of defining noticing has never arisen in isolation. It is tightly bound to a broader problem that has shaped SLA research since its inception: the relationship between input, intake, and successful task engagement. Communicative accounts of

language learning have long recognised that learners do not process all available input uniformly, nor do they necessarily convert attended material into stable knowledge. Yet these accounts differ markedly in how they conceptualise the role of disruption, effort, and breakdown in communicative activity.

Two influential positions—Krashen’s Input Hypothesis and Gass’s interactionist framework—are particularly instructive in this respect. Both foreground meaning and communication, but they diverge in how they treat difficulty, attention, and the conditions under which processing becomes consequential. Examining these positions clarifies both what the present account inherits and where it departs.

Krashen: comprehension without disruption

Krashen’s Input Hypothesis represents the strongest possible commitment to meaning-first processing. By collapsing the distinction between input and intake, Krashen argues that acquisition follows naturally from exposure to comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982; 1985). When learners understand messages slightly beyond their current level, acquisition mechanisms are activated without the need for conscious attention to form, effortful processing, or explicit noticing.

From a communicative perspective, this position has considerable appeal. It foregrounds comprehension as the central driver of learning and aligns with the everyday observation that language users often succeed without analysing linguistic form. However, precisely because of this emphasis, Krashen’s account leaves little room for processing disruption. Difficulty, hesitation, or breakdown are treated as peripheral rather than constitutive features of communicative activity.

This becomes problematic when we turn to, for instance, extended, goal-directed reading in a second language. Readers routinely encounter moments where comprehension is threatened but not entirely blocked, where understanding is partial, provisional, or strategically maintained. These moments are neither captured by a simple notion of comprehensible input nor easily assimilated to Krashen’s acquisition logic. The present account takes such moments seriously. It treats them not as failures of input quality, but as points at which automatic processing becomes insufficient and effort must

be renegotiated. In this sense, noticing—as redefined here—marks precisely the kind of disruption that Krashen’s model leaves theoretically unarticulated.

Gass: noticing as mediated availability

Gass’s interactionist framework occupies a different position. While retaining a communicative orientation, it reintroduces the distinction between input and intake and treats noticing as a necessary but insufficient condition for learning (Gass, 1997; Gass & Mackey, 2007). Crucially, noticing in this framework is often externally induced. Interactional difficulty, negotiation of meaning, feedback, and communicative pressure make certain aspects of input salient and thereby available for further processing.

This account has two important strengths. First, it recognises that attention is not evenly distributed, but regulated by communicative demands. Second, it acknowledges that noticing alone does not guarantee learning; it merely creates the conditions under which learning may occur. In this respect, the present account converges strongly with Gass’s emphasis on relevance and task demands.

The point of departure lies in how noticing itself is conceptualised. In interactionist work, noticing tends to function as a mediating stage between input and intake, triggered by external contingencies. The communicative environment signals that something requires attention, and noticing follows. What remains under-theorised, however, is how relevance is evaluated and how effort is regulated when such external cues are absent or muted—as in silent, goal-directed reading.

The present framework extends Gass’s insights inward. It treats noticing not as a stage that mediates between input and intake, but as a functional transition within ongoing processing. Noticing marks the point at which task progress can no longer be sustained automatically and where relevance must be evaluated internally. Interactional pressure is thus reinterpreted as one possible external instantiation of a more general regulatory mechanism, rather than as the defining source of noticing itself.

The intake problem revisited

Both Krashen’s and Gass’s accounts confront, in different ways, the fragility of intake. Krashen resolves the problem by collapsing intake into comprehension, thereby

minimising the role of disruption. Gass preserves intake as a distinct construct but relies heavily on interactional triggers to explain how input becomes available for processing.

What neither account fully articulates is how learners manage uncertainty when communicative activity continues despite incomplete understanding. In reading, listening, and even speaking, language users often proceed with underspecified representations, tolerating ambiguity as long as task goals remain achievable. Effort is deployed selectively, withdrawn strategically, and not always aligned with learning outcomes.

The present account addresses this gap by reconceptualising noticing as a process boundary rather than as a mediating stage or a property of input. Noticing does not transform input into intake; it regulates effort under task-relevant uncertainty. Intake, where it occurs, is a downstream consequence of how this regulation unfolds, not its defining outcome.

Seen in this light, communicative success and learning outcomes can no longer function as proxies for noticing. A learner may notice and withdraw effort, notice and persist without learning, or achieve task success without stable intake. These trajectories are not anomalies but expected consequences of goal-directed communicative processing.

Why Form, Awareness, and Outcomes Are Insufficient

Much of the empirical literature on noticing has converged, implicitly or explicitly, on three classes of indicators: sensitivity to linguistic form, reports of conscious awareness, and evidence of learning outcomes. These indicators have proven attractive precisely because they are observable, reportable, or measurable. They offer the promise of grounding an elusive construct in data that can be collected, coded, and compared. Yet it is this very attractiveness that has obscured their conceptual limitations.

Sensitivity to form, whether indexed through behavioural manipulation, error detection, or increased attentional focus on linguistic features, is often taken as evidence that noticing has occurred. However, form sensitivity alone does not specify *why* processing priorities shift at a given moment, nor whether such shifts are functionally

consequential for task continuation. Readers and listeners frequently register formal irregularities or unfamiliar elements without altering their processing strategy, particularly when those elements are judged peripheral to communicative goals. Form sensitivity, in other words, may accompany noticing, but it does not define it.

Awareness reports, whether elicited through questionnaires, stimulated recall, or verbal protocols, appear to offer more direct access to noticing by foregrounding subjective experience. Yet these reports are necessarily reconstructive. They reflect how learners make sense of their own processing after the fact, filtered through task demands, expectations, and available metalanguage. In extended activities such as reading or listening, the moment at which processing becomes insufficient for task continuation may precede, follow, or fail to coincide with conscious awareness of form. Treating awareness as constitutive of noticing therefore risks misplacing the phenomenon temporally and functionally.

Learning outcomes, finally, have often been invoked as retrospective evidence of noticing. When acquisition is observed, noticing is inferred; when learning fails to occur, noticing is assumed to have been absent. This logic collapses process into outcome and renders noticing explanatorily redundant. If noticing is inferred from learning and then used to explain learning, the construct loses its independent theoretical role.

Taken together, these approaches share a common assumption: that noticing must leave a durable trace—on form, in awareness, or in learning—that can be detected after the fact. From a communicative perspective, this assumption is unwarranted. Language users routinely succeed in understanding and task completion with partial, provisional, or underspecified representations. Processing may be disrupted, effort renegotiated, and priorities shifted without producing stable awareness or lasting learning. What form-, awareness-, and outcome-based approaches capture are *possible consequences* of such disruptions, not the functional transition itself.

The difficulty, then, is not that these indicators are useless, but that they have been asked to do too much theoretical work. They constrain interpretation, but they cannot define noticing. A different conceptualisation is therefore required—one that does not depend on the existence of a detectable residue.

Noticing Redefined: A Process-Boundary Account

The reconceptualization proposed here begins from a simple observation: communicative activity is ordinarily sustained by automatic, predictive processing. Readers, listeners, and speakers continually anticipate what comes next, allocating minimal effort unless expectations are violated or task progress is threatened. Within this flow, noticing does not appear as an object or state, but as a *functional turning point*.

Under the present account, noticing is defined as a *process boundary*—the moment at which automatic processing becomes insufficient to sustain task continuation, and processing effort must be renegotiated under conditions of task-relevant uncertainty. This boundary is not identical with detection, awareness, attention, or learning. Rather, it is the point at which these phenomena may become consequential.

Detection of a gap in understanding often precedes noticing, but it does not define it. A gap may be registered and immediately dismissed as irrelevant, allowing processing to continue unchanged. Conversely, processing priorities may shift even when the source of difficulty cannot be explicitly identified. Noticing, in this sense, is not the recognition of a discrepancy, but the *functional significance* that such a discrepancy acquires for ongoing activity.

Similarly, awareness is not constitutive of noticing. Conscious awareness may arise as a result of processing disruption, or it may fail to arise altogether. What matters is not whether the learner can later report having noticed something, but whether the system was forced to reassess effort allocation in order to continue the task.

This account also departs from dominant interpretations of Schmidt's notion of "noticing the gap." Here, the relevant gap is not a discrepancy between interlanguage and target form, but a gap in *task-sufficient understanding*. The concern is not whether a form deviates from a norm, but whether current processing resources suffice to maintain communicative progress. In this sense, noticing is fundamentally communicative rather than normative.

Redefining noticing as a process boundary explains why it has resisted stable operationalisation. Process boundaries are transient, relational, and internal to activity.

They do not persist as states, nor do they guarantee downstream effects such as awareness or learning. Yet they play a crucial regulatory role by determining when and how effort is mobilised.

This reconceptualization does not deny the relevance of form, awareness, or learning. It repositions them. They become downstream phenomena whose presence or absence depends on how effort is managed after noticing occurs. By separating the *trigger* for effort renegotiation from its possible outcomes, the present account restores conceptual clarity to a construct that has long been stretched beyond its explanatory capacity.

Extending a Process-Boundary Account Beyond Form and Modality

The reconceptualization proposed in this article is intentionally modest in scope. Its primary aim has been to clarify what kind of phenomenon noticing is, not to offer a comprehensive process model or an exhaustive taxonomy of learning mechanisms. By redefining noticing as a process boundary within ongoing communicative activity, the article seeks to resolve a persistent definitional problem that has undermined decades of empirical work.

If this reconceptualization is plausible, however, it has implications that extend beyond the specific contexts in which noticing has traditionally been studied. In particular, it suggests that noticing should not be treated as a construct tied exclusively to lexical items, grammatical structures, or form-focused instruction, nor as a phenomenon confined to a single language skill.

Under a process-boundary account, noticing arises when automatic, predictive processing becomes insufficient to sustain task progress and effort must be renegotiated under task-relevant uncertainty. This condition is not specific to reading, or speaking, or listening, nor to the processing of form. It is a general property of communicative activity across modalities.

In reading, such boundaries emerge when underspecified lexical or propositional representations threaten coherence and the reader must decide whether further inferencing is warranted. In listening, they arise when acoustic degradation, unfamiliar

expressions, or rapid speech compromise comprehension and tolerance of ambiguity must be reassessed. In speaking, they surface during formulation, repair, or monitoring, when automatic production fails to meet communicative demands and additional effort must be allocated—or strategically withheld.

Across these domains, the functional role of noticing remains constant. It does not consist in the conscious apprehension of linguistic form, nor in the accumulation of detailed representations, but in the regulation of effort in response to task demands. Awareness may accompany this regulation; learning may follow from it; neither defines it.

Importantly, this account also decouples noticing from specific instructional targets. Noticing is not inherently about lexis or grammar, nor does it privilege accuracy over communicative sufficiency. It operates wherever communicative activity is sustained under uncertainty, regardless of whether the outcome is precise, partial, or strategically underspecified.

The implication is not that noticing should be studied everywhere at once, but that its conceptualisation should not be artificially restricted to those domains where it has been most easily operationalised. Treating noticing as a process boundary rather than as a detectable object allows its role in reading, listening, and speaking to be theorised within a single coherent framework, without presupposing that it must be evidenced in the same way across tasks or modalities.

This article does not attempt to formalise these extensions. Nor does it propose a unified model of processing across skills. Its contribution lies in establishing a conceptual footing from which such extensions become possible without reproducing the definitional instability that has characterised earlier work. If noticing is a process boundary within communicative activity, then its relevance is not limited by modality, linguistic domain, or instructional focus, but by the conditions under which effort must be renegotiated to sustain meaning-oriented action.

Summary and implications for future research

This article has argued that the long-standing difficulty of operationalising noticing in second language acquisition is not, at its core, a methodological failure, but a

conceptual one. Over time, noticing has been stretched to cover awareness, attention, discrepancy detection, processing depth, intake, and learning itself, producing a sense of continuity in terminology while obscuring differences in function. The result has been an accumulation of evidence without corresponding conceptual convergence.

Against this background, the article has proposed a reconceptualisation of noticing as a process boundary within ongoing communicative activity. Noticing is understood here not as a mental state or measurable quantity, but as the functional point at which automatic processing no longer suffices and effort must be renegotiated under task-relevant uncertainty. Detection of difficulty may precede this boundary, and awareness or learning may follow from it, but none defines noticing itself.

Framed in this way, noticing's resistance to stable measurement becomes intelligible rather than problematic. Process boundaries are transient, relational, and internal to activity, which explains why form sensitivity, awareness reports, and learning outcomes cannot serve as privileged indicators, even when triangulated. At the same time, this reconceptualisation restores noticing to a central regulatory role in communicative processing, aligning it with how language users manage uncertainty in real time rather than with retrospective evidence or normative accuracy.

Finally, the article has suggested that treating noticing as a process boundary is not limited to specific linguistic targets or skills. Wherever communicative progress is sustained under uncertainty—whether in reading, listening, or speaking—the same type of boundary arises: the moment at which effort must be reassessed to continue the task. The contribution offered here is therefore conceptual rather than empirical: a principled redefinition intended to constrain interpretation, sharpen inference, and provide a more stable foundation for future research on attention, effort, and learning in SLA.

Reconceptualising noticing as a process boundary within communicative activity has several implications for future SLA research. First, it suggests that empirical work should shift away from attempts to detect noticing directly and toward designs that examine how learners manage uncertainty, relevance, and processing effort under task constraints. Rather than asking whether noticing occurred, studies can investigate when

and why effort is allocated, sustained, or withdrawn, and how these trajectories relate to task success without presupposing learning.

Second, the account calls for greater inferential discipline in the use of existing methods. Eye-tracking, verbal reports, neurophysiological measures, and learning outcomes can all contribute evidence, but only as constraints on interpretation, not as indicators of noticing itself.

Third, the process-boundary account invites broader scope. If noticing marks a functional transition rather than a form-specific event, it can be examined across modalities and skills—reading, listening and speaking—and in relation to discourse-level coherence rather than isolated linguistic features.

Finally, the reconceptualisation opens space for research that treats partial understanding, strategic disengagement, and withdrawal of effort not as noise or failure, but as theoretically informative responses to task demands. Such work would move SLA research closer to modelling how language users actually regulate processing in real communicative activity, rather than how they approximate idealised learning outcomes.

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