Introducing Second Language Acquisition

Introducing Second Language Acquisition Introducing Second Language Acquisition Introducing second language acquisition is a fascinating journey that encompasses the process by which individuals learn a language other than their native tongue. In our increasingly interconnected world, mastering a second language has become a vital skill that opens doors to new cultures, enhances career prospects, and promotes cognitive development. Whether you're a student, a professional, or a traveler, understanding the fundamentals of how people acquire additional languages can help optimize learning strategies and foster a deeper appreciation for linguistic diversity. --- What Is Second Language Acquisition? Second language acquisition (SLA) refers to the process by which people learn a language other than their mother tongue after their initial language development. Unlike first language acquisition, which occurs naturally during childhood, SLA often involves conscious effort and formal instruction. It encompasses a wide array of learning contexts, from classroom settings to immersive environments, and varies greatly depending on individual factors. Key Differences Between First and Second Language Acquisition - Timing: First language acquisition typically happens in early childhood, whereas second language learning can occur at any age. - Learning Environment: Natural, immersive settings are common for first languages, while second languages are often learned through structured lessons. - Cognitive Processes: The mechanisms involved differ, with second language learning frequently requiring explicit instruction and conscious effort. --- Theories of Second Language Acquisition Understanding the theoretical frameworks behind SLA provides insight into how people learn languages and informs effective teaching methods. 1. Behaviorist Theory - Emphasizes learning through repetition, reinforcement, and conditioning. - Language acquisition occurs by mimicking and practicing language patterns. - Example: Correct pronunciation is reinforced through positive feedback. 2. Innatist Theory - Proposes that humans are born with an innate capacity for language learning. - Noam Chomsky's concept of the Universal Grammar suggests that underlying grammatical structures are hardwired in the brain. - Implication: Exposure to language triggers innate mechanisms. 3. Interactionist Theory - Combines innate abilities with social interaction. - Emphasizes the importance of communication and

meaningful interaction. - Learners acquire language through social exchanges and feedback. 4. Input Hypothesis - Developed by Stephen Krashen, posits that comprehensible input is crucial. - Learners acquire language best when exposed to language slightly above their current proficiency level (i+1). - Emphasizes the importance of exposure over explicit grammar instruction. --- Factors Influencing Second Language Acquisition Multiple factors can facilitate or hinder the process of acquiring a second language. Personal Factors - Age: Younger learners often attain higher pronunciation and accent accuracy. - Motivation: Intrinsic motivation 2 leads to more effective learning. - Cognitive Abilities: Memory, attention, and problem- solving skills play roles. - Language Aptitude: Natural talent for language learning varies among individuals. Environmental Factors - Exposure: Regular interaction with native speakers enhances fluency. - Instruction Quality: Effective teaching methods accelerate learning. - Cultural Context: Immersive environments promote better understanding. Social and Psychological Factors - Confidence and Anxiety: Lower anxiety levels foster better participation. - Attitudes Toward the Language: Positive attitudes increase motivation. - Support System: Encouragement from peers and teachers boosts progress. -- - Methods of Second Language Acquisition Several approaches and techniques can be employed to facilitate SLA, each with its advantages and limitations. Traditional Classroom Methods - Grammar-Translation Method: Focuses on grammar rules and vocabulary translation. - Audio-Lingual Method: Emphasizes repetition and drills. - Communicative Approach: Prioritizes meaningful communication and real-life language use. Modern Techniques - Total Physical Response (TPR): Uses physical movement to reinforce learning. - Task-Based Language Learning: Engages learners in real-world tasks. - Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): Combines subject matter learning with language practice. Technology-Enhanced Learning - Language Learning Apps: Duolingo, Babbel, and others offer interactive lessons. - Online Courses: Platforms like Coursera and edX provide structured programs. - Immersive Media: Podcasts, videos, and social media expose learners to authentic language use. --- Challenges in Second Language Acquisition Despite its benefits, SLA presents several challenges that learners often face. Common Difficulties - Pronunciation and Accent: Achieving native-like pronunciation can be difficult. - Grammar and Syntax: Complex grammatical structures may cause confusion. - Vocabulary Retention: Remembering new words requires repeated exposure. - Language Interference: Native language habits can interfere with

second language production. Overcoming Challenges - Engage consistently with the language through reading, listening, speaking, and writing. - Use mnemonic devices to remember vocabulary. - Practice speaking with native speakers or language exchange partners. - Be patient and persistent, recognizing that proficiency takes time. --- Benefits of Second Language Acquisition Learning a second language offers multifaceted advantages that extend beyond linguistic competence. Cognitive Benefits - Enhances problem-solving, creativity, and multitasking skills. - Delays cognitive decline and reduces the risk of dementia. Cultural and Social Benefits - Promotes cross-cultural understanding and empathy. - Facilitates international travel and global networking. Career Advantages - Increases employability and opportunities in multinational companies. - Enables participation in international projects and collaborations. --- Tips for Successful Second Language Acquisition To maximize your language learning journey, consider these practical tips: - Set Clear Goals: Define what proficiency level you aim for. - Immerse Yourself: Surround yourself with the language through media and conversations. - Practice Regularly: 3 Consistency is key; dedicate daily time to practice. - Use a Variety of Resources: Combine textbooks, apps, podcasts, and live conversations. - Seek Feedback: Engage with teachers or native speakers for constructive critique. - Be Patient and Persistent: Progress may be gradual, but persistence pays off. --- Conclusion Introducing second language acquisition is an essential step toward understanding how humans learn languages beyond their mother tongue. It involves complex cognitive, social, and environmental factors, and is influenced by various theoretical perspectives and practical methods. Embracing the challenges and leveraging effective strategies can lead to successful language mastery, enriching personal, professional, and cultural experiences. As the world continues to globalize, the importance of second language acquisition will only grow, making it a valuable skill for the 21st century and beyond. QuestionAnswer What is second language acquisition? Second language acquisition refers to the process by which people learn a language other than their native language, often through formal education, immersion, or practice, aiming to develop proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. How does second language acquisition differ from first language learning? While first language acquisition occurs naturally during early childhood through immersion and social interaction, second language acquisition typically involves conscious learning, formal instruction, and may be influenced by age, motivation, and exposure. What are the main theories explaining second language

acquisition? Key theories include Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes comprehensible input; the Interaction Hypothesis, highlighting the importance of meaningful communication; and the Sociocultural Theory, focusing on social interaction's role in learning. What are common challenges faced in second language acquisition? Common challenges include achieving fluency, overcoming pronunciation difficulties, maintaining motivation, understanding cultural nuances, and overcoming interference from the first language. How does age affect second language acquisition? Age can influence acquisition; younger learners often acquire pronunciation more naturally and may attain native-like fluency more easily, while older learners may have more developed cognitive skills but face greater challenges in pronunciation and accent. What are effective methods for learning a second language? Effective methods include immersive experiences, engaging in conversations, using multimedia resources, practicing regularly, and incorporating cultural context to enhance motivation and retention. 4 Why is motivation important in second language acquisition? Motivation drives learners to persist through challenges, engage actively with the language, and maintain consistent practice, all of which are crucial for successful acquisition and long-term proficiency. Introducing Second Language Acquisition Second language acquisition (SLA) is a fascinating and complex process that involves learning a language other than one's native tongue. Whether driven by personal interest, academic pursuits, professional needs, or cultural integration, acquiring a second language can profoundly influence an individual's cognitive abilities, cultural understanding, and social opportunities. As globalization continues to shrink distances and foster intercultural exchanges, understanding how individuals acquire additional languages has become more important than ever. This article aims to provide a comprehensive introduction to second language acquisition, exploring its theories, methods, challenges, and benefits. Understanding Second Language Acquisition Second language acquisition refers to the process by which people learn a language other than their mother tongue after childhood. Unlike first language acquisition, which occurs naturally during early childhood, SLA often involves formal education, immersive experiences, or self-directed learning. The process is influenced by numerous factors, including age, motivation, environment, cognitive abilities, and teaching methods. Difference Between Second Language Acquisition and Learning While often used interchangeably, SLA and second language learning have nuanced distinctions: - Acquisition: Usually refers to the subconscious, natural process of

picking up a language through exposure and interaction, similar to how children acquire their first language. - Learning: Implies a conscious, deliberate effort to study and understand a language, often through formal instruction. Understanding this distinction helps educators tailor approaches that either mimic natural acquisition or emphasize structured learning, depending on learners' needs. Theories of Second Language Acquisition Several influential theories shed light on how individuals acquire second languages. They provide frameworks to understand the cognitive, social, and emotional factors involved. Behaviorist Theory Rooted in B.F. Skinner's work, this theory posits that language learning is a result of operant conditioning—learners repeat behaviors that are reinforced and avoid those that are punished. It emphasizes imitation, practice, and reinforcement. Features: - Focus on Introducing Second Language Acquisition 5 repetition and reinforcement. - Use of drills and memorization. - Suitable for initial vocabulary acquisition. Pros: - Clear structure and immediate feedback. - Easy to implement in classroom settings. Cons: - Does not account for the complexity of language use. - Overemphasis on rote learning can hinder fluency. Input Hypothesis (Krashen) Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis suggests that learners acquire language best when they are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current level (i+1). This input must be meaningful and contextual. Features: - Emphasizes natural exposure over explicit grammar instruction. - Encourages reading, listening, and immersion. Pros: - Promotes natural language development. - Reduces anxiety and fosters confidence. Cons: - May be slow for learners needing structured grammar. - Less effective without sufficient exposure. Interactionist Theory This theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in SLA. Learners acquire language through meaningful communication and negotiation of meaning. Features: - Focus on conversations and social context. - Feedback from interlocutors aids learning. Pros: - Enhances pragmatic and conversational skills. - Builds cultural competence. Cons: - Requires opportunities for interaction. - Can be challenging for shy or isolated learners. Cognitive Approaches and The Noticing Hypothesis Cognitive theories argue that learners actively process language input, noticing features like grammar and vocabulary, which facilitates learning. Richard Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis states that conscious attention to language forms is essential for acquisition. Features: - Emphasizes awareness and reflection. - Supports explicit instruction of rules. Pros: - Accelerates mastery of grammar. - Suitable for adult learners. Cons: - Can be overwhelming without proper scaffolding. - May detract from

fluency if overemphasized. Methods of Second Language Teaching Various instructional methods have been developed to facilitate SLA, each with its strengths and limitations. Grammar-Translation Method One of the oldest approaches, it involves translating texts and memorizing grammar rules. Features: - Focus on reading and writing. - Emphasis on grammar and vocabulary. Pros: - Useful for understanding language structure. - Good for literary analysis. Cons: - Limited speaking and listening practice. - Less engaging for communicative skills. Introducing Second Language Acquisition 6 Direct Method Focuses on immersive learning, teaching vocabulary and grammar through conversation and context. Features: - No translation; use of real-life situations. - Emphasis on pronunciation and spontaneous speech. Pros: - Enhances speaking and listening skills. - Develops intuitive understanding. Cons: - Requires skilled teachers. - Less focus on explicit grammar rules. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Prioritizes meaningful communication, real-life interaction, and functional language use. Features: - Role-plays, discussions, and problem-solving. - Focus on fluency over accuracy initially. Pros: - Highly engaging and practical. - Prepares learners for real-world use. Cons: - Can neglect grammatical accuracy. - Needs well-trained teachers. Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL) Learners complete meaningful tasks such as planning trips or solving problems, promoting authentic language use. Features: - Focus on accomplishing specific goals. - Integration of skills (reading, writing, speaking). Pros: - Motivates learners with real-world relevance. - Encourages collaboration. Cons: - Requires careful task design. - May be challenging to assess progress. Challenges in Second Language Acquisition Despite advances in pedagogy, SLA presents several challenges: - Age Factor: Younger learners often acquire pronunciation more naturally, but adults benefit from explicit instruction. - Motivation: High motivation correlates with success; lack of motivation hampers progress. - Transfer and Interference: Native language influences can cause errors. - Environmental Exposure: Limited opportunities for practice reduce fluency. - Anxiety and Confidence: Fear of making mistakes can inhibit participation. - Cultural Barriers: Understanding cultural nuances is essential for pragmatic competence. Benefits of Second Language Acquisition Mastering a second language offers numerous advantages: - Cognitive Benefits: - Improved problem-solving skills. - Enhanced multitasking and memory. - Academic and Professional Opportunities: - Access to diverse educational resources. - Increased employability in global markets. - Cultural Awareness: - Deeper understanding of different cultures. - Greater empathy

and intercultural competence. - Personal Growth: - Increased confidence. - Expanded social networks. Introducing Second Language Acquisition 7 Factors Influencing Second Language Acquisition Success in SLA depends on various interrelated factors: - Age: Younger learners tend to acquire pronunciation more easily, but adults may grasp grammar faster. - Motivation: Intrinsic motivation fosters sustained effort. - Learning Environment: Immersive contexts accelerate learning. - Previous Language Knowledge: Similarities between languages can facilitate transfer. - Learning Strategies: Effective use of mnemonic devices, practice, and feedback. The Role of Technology in SLA Recent technological advancements have revolutionized SLA: - Language Learning Apps: Duolingo, Babbel, and others offer accessible practice. - Online Courses: Platforms like Coursera and edX provide structured learning. - Virtual Reality (VR): Immersive environments simulate real-life interactions. - Social Media: Connecting with native speakers enhances practical skills. - Artificial Intelligence (AI): Personalized feedback and adaptive learning systems. Pros: - Flexible and accessible. - Exposure to authentic language use. Cons: - Over-reliance may reduce face-to-face interaction. - Quality varies across platforms. Conclusion Introducing second language acquisition involves understanding its multifaceted nature, from theoretical foundations to practical teaching strategies. While challenges exist, the benefits—cognitive, social, cultural, and personal—are substantial. As research continues to evolve, integrating traditional methods with technological innovations offers promising avenues for effective SLA. Ultimately, successful second language acquisition enriches individuals' lives, opening doors to intercultural understanding and global participation. --- If you wish to explore specific aspects further or need guidance on particular methodologies, feel free to ask! second language learning, language acquisition theories, bilingualism, language teaching methods, second language proficiency, linguistic development, immersion programs, language learning strategies, cognitive benefits of bilingualism, language education research

Second Language AcquisitionThe New Handbook of Second Language AcquisitionThe Study of Second Language AcquisitionKey Concepts in Second Language AcquisitionUnderstanding Second Language AcquisitionKey Terms in Second Language AcquisitionThe Routledge Encyclopedia of Second Language AcquisitionModelling and Assessing Second Language AcquisitionThe Handbook of Second Language AcquisitionPrinciples and Practice in Second Language AcquisitionIntroducing Second Language AcquisitionIntroducing Second Language

AcquisitionA Philosophy of Second Language AcquisitionSecond Language AcquisitionThe Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and PragmaticsSecond Language Acquisition MythsThe Age Factor in Second Language AcquisitionSecond Language AcquisitionAn Introduction to Second Language Acquisition ResearchTheories in Second Language Acquisition Rod Ellis William C. Ritchie Rod Ellis Shawn Loewen Lourdes Ortega Bill VanPatten Peter Jake Robinson Kenneth Hyltenstam Catherine J. Doughty Stephen D. Krashen Muriel Saville-Troike Muriel Saville-Troike Marysia Johnson Wolfgang Klein Naoko Taguchi Steven Brown David Michael Singleton Susan M. Gass Diane Larsen-Freeman Bill VanPatten Second Language Acquisition The New Handbook of Second Language Acquisition The Study of Second Language Acquisition Key Concepts in Second Language Acquisition Understanding Second Language Acquisition Key Terms in Second Language Acquisition The Routledge Encyclopedia of Second Language Acquisition Modelling and Assessing Second Language Acquisition The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition Introducing Second Language Acquisition Introducing Second Language Acquisition A Philosophy of Second Language Acquisition Second Language Acquisition The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pragmatics Second Language Acquisition Myths The Age Factor in Second Language Acquisition Second Language Acquisition An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research Theories in Second Language Acquisition *Rod Ellis William C. Ritchie Rod Ellis Shawn Loewen Lourdes Ortega Bill VanPatten Peter Jake Robinson Kenneth Hyltenstam Catherine J. Doughty Stephen D. Krashen Muriel Saville-Troike Muriel Saville-Troike Marysia Johnson Wolfgang Klein Naoko Taguchi Steven Brown David Michael Singleton Susan M. Gass Diane Larsen-Freeman Bill VanPatten*

in the age of the global village and the world wide web understanding the way in which people learn languages is of ever increasing importance this book makes the essentials of this rapidly expanding area of study accessible to readers encountering it for the first time

the new handbook of second language acquisition is a thoroughly revised re organized and re worked edition of ritchie and bhatia s 1996 handbook the work is divided into six parts each devoted to a different aspect of the study of sla part i includes a recent history of methods used in sla research and an overview of currently used methods

part ii contains chapters on universal grammar emergentism variationism information processing sociocultural and cognitive linguistic part iii is devoted to overviews of sla research on lexicon morphosyntax phonology pragmatics sentence processing and the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge part iv examines neuropsycholgy of sla another on child sla and the effects of age on second language acquisition and use part v is concerned with the contribution of the linguistic environment to sla including work on acquisition in different environments through the internet and by deaf learners finally part vi treats social factors in sla including research on acquisition in contact circumstances on social identity in sla on individual differences in sla and on the final state of sla bilingualism

this thorough introduction to second language research provides a comprehensive review of the research into learner language internal and external factors in language acquisition individual differences and classroom second language learning

what does it mean to acquire a language what is considered a second language in multilingual settings this practical and comprehensive guide provides an opportunity to consider these issues providing easy access to concise definitions of key terms and concepts in the study of second language acquisition

whether we grow up with one two or several languages during our early years of life many of us will learn a second foreign or heritage language in later years the field of second language acquisition sla for short investigates the human capacity to learn additional languages in late childhood adolescence or adulthood after the first language in the case of monolinguals or languages in the case of bilinguals have already been acquired understanding second language acquisition offers a wide encompassing survey of this burgeoning field its accumulated findings and proposed theories its developed research paradigms and its pending questions for the future the book zooms in and out of universal individual and social forces in each case evaluating the research findings that have been generated across diverse naturalistic and formal contexts for second language acquisition it assumes no background in sla and provides helpful chapter by chapter summaries and suggestions for further reading ideal as a textbook for students of applied linguistics foreign language education tesol and education it is also recommended for students of linguistics developmental psycholinguistics psychology and cognitive science supporting resources for tutors are available free at routledge com ortega

vanpatten and benati give linguistics and language students a comprehensive overview of key issues and key terms in second language acquisition

the routledge encyclopedia of second language acquisition offers a user friendly authoritative survey of terms and constructs that are important to understanding research in second language acquisition sla and its applications the encyclopedia is designed for use as a reference tool by students researchers teachers and professionals with an interest in sla the encyclopedia has the following features 252 alphabetized entries written in an accessible style including cross references to other related entries in the encyclopedia and suggestions for further reading among these 9 survey entries that cover the foundational areas of sla in detail development in sla discourse and pragmatics in sla individual differences in sla instructed sla language and the lexicon in sla measuring and researching sla psycholingustics of sla social and sociocultural approaches to sla theoretical constructs in sla the rest of the entries cover all the major subdisciplines methodologies and concepts of sla from accommodation to the zisa project written by an international team of specialists the routledge encyclopedia of second language acquisition is an invaluable resource for students and researchers with an academic interest in sla

this book forms an invaluable reference work for all teachers of second languages and researchers in the field of l2 acquisition it discusses the contribution that modern research into l2 acquisition makes to the curriculum development process it also provides the reader with arguments for and against the various approaches to teaching

the handbook of second language acquisition presents an integrated discussion of key and sometimes controversial issues in second language acquisition research discusses the biological and cognitive underpinnings of sla mechanisms processes and constraints on sla the level of ultimate attainment research methods and the status of sla as a cognitive science includes contributions from twenty seven of the world s leading scholars provides an invaluable resource for all students and scholars of human cognition including those in linguistics psychology applied linguistics esl foreign languages and cognitive science

the present volume examines the relationship between second language practice and what is known about the process of second language acquisition summarising the current state of second language acquisition theory drawing general conclusions about

its application to methods and materials and describing what characteristics effective materials should have the author concludes that a solution to language teaching lies not so much in expensive equipment exotic new methods or sophisticated language analysis but rather in the full utilisation of the most important resources native speakers of the language in real communication

third edition of the leading interdisciplinary introduction to second language acquisition covering linguistic psychological and social aspects

written for students encountering the topic for the first time this is a clear and practical introduction to second language acquisition sla it explains in non technical language how a second language is acquired what the second language learner needs to know and why some learners are more successful than others the textbook introduces in a step by step fashion a range of fundamental concepts such as sla in adults and children in formal and informal learning contexts and in diverse socio cultural settings and takes an interdisciplinary approach encouraging students to consider sla from linguistic psychological and social perspectives each chapter contains a list of key terms a summary and a range of graded exercises suitable for self testing or class discussion providing a solid foundation in sla this book is set to become the leading introduction to the field for students of linguistics psychology and education and trainee language teachers

divdivhow does a person learn a second language in this provocative book marysia johnson proposes a new model of second language acquisition sla a model that shifts the focus from language competence the ability to pass a language exam to language performance using language competently in real life contexts johnson argues that current sla theory and research is heavily biased in the direction of the cognitive and experimental scientific tradition she shows that most models of sla are linear in nature and subscribe to the conduit metaphor of knowledge transfer the speaker encodes a message the hearer decodes the sent message such models establish a strict demarcation between learners mental and social processes yet the origin of second language acquisition is located not exclusively in the learner s mind but also in a dialogical interaction conducted in a variety of sociocultural and institutional settings says the author drawing on vygotsky s sociocultural theory and bakhtin s literary theory she constructs an alternative framework for second language theory research teaching and testing this approach directs attention toward the investigation of dynamic and

dialectical relationships between the interpersonal social plane and the intrapersonal individual plane johnson s model shifts the focus of sla away from a narrow emphasis on language competence toward a broader view that encompasses the interaction between language competence and performance original and controversial a philosophy of second language acquisition offers an introduction to vygotsky s sociocultural theory and bakhtin s literary theory both of which support an alternative framework for second language acquisition an examination of the existing cognitive bias in sla theory and research a radically new model of second language acquisition div div

an up to date account of the main problems and theoretical and practical issues raised by second language acquisition research as such this introduction provides students with a real understanding of the fundamental topics in the field and the advances achieved by empirical research

the routledge handbook of second language acquisition and pragmatics is a comprehensive critical survey of the field of l2 pragmatics collecting a number of chapters that highlight the key theories methods pedagogies and research findings throughout its development over the last four decades demonstrating the ways in which pragmatics has long served as a lens through which to examine patterns of l2 development the volume is divided into six parts which reflect the field s structure and evolution constructs and units of analysis theoretical approaches methodological approaches pedagogical approaches contexts and individual considerations l2 pragmatics in the global era the handbook has a particular focus on covering not only traditional topics in the field such as constructs of pragmatic competence e g speech acts implicature teaching and assessment and pragmatics learning in a study abroad program but also emerging areas of study including interactional pragmatics intercultural pragmatics usage based approaches corpus linguistics and psycholinguistic experimentation each chapter introduces the topic and follows with a description of its theoretical underpinnings an overview of existing literature appraisal of current practice concluding with a discussion of future directions for research and key readings the routledge handbook of second language acquisition and pragmatics is an essential resource for those with an interest in second language acquisition pragmatics and language teaching

this volume was conceived as a first book in sla for advanced undergraduate or

introductory master s courses that include education majors foreign language education majors and english majors it s also an excellent resource for practicing teachers both the research and pedagogy in this book are based on the newest research in the field of second language acquisition it is not the goal of this book to address every sla theory or teach research methodology it does however address the myths and questions that non specialist teacher candidates have about language learning steven brown is the co author of the introductory applied linguistics textbook understanding language structure interaction and variation textbook and workbook the myths challenged in this book are children learn languages quickly and easily while adults are ineffective in comparison a true bilingual is someone who speaks two languages perfectly you can acquire a language simply through listening or reading practice makes perfect language students learn and retain what they are taught language learners always benefit from correction individual differences are a major perhaps the major factor in sla language acquisition is the individual acquisition of grammar

this book takes a hard look at some of the assumptions that are customarily made concerning the role of age in second language acquisition the evidence and arguments the contributors present run counter to the notion that an early start in second language learning is of itself either absolutely sufficient or necessary for the attainment of native like mastery of a second language another theme of the book is a doubt that there is a particular stage of maturity beyond which language learning is no longer fully possible in short the book presents a challenge to those who take it as given that second language learning is inevitably different in its essential nature from language acquisition in the childhood years and that second language knowledge acquired beyond the critical period is in all circumstances and in all respects doomed to fossilize at a non native like level

now in a fourth edition this bestselling introductory textbook remains the cornerstone volume for the study of second language acquisition sla its chapters have been fully updated and reorganized where appropriate to provide a comprehensive yet accessible overview of the field and its related disciplines to reflect current developments new sections on using learner corpora semantics and morphosyntax within formal approaches to sla sociocultural approaches gesture priming research and chaos theory have been added students will also find expanded discussions of heritage language

learning bilingualism pragmatics and much more the redesigned fourth edition of second language acquisition retains the features that students found useful in the current edition but also provides new pedagogical tools that encourage students to reflect upon the experiences of second language learners as with previous editions discussion questions and problems at the end of each chapter help students apply their knowledge and a glossary defines and reinforces must know terminology this clearly written comprehensive and current textbook by expert sue gass is the ideal textbook for the introductory sla course in second language studies applied linguistics linguistics tesol and language education programs

understanding how people learn and fail to learn second and foreign languages is increasingly recognised as a critical social and psycholinguistic issue this book provides a synthesis of empirical findings on second and foreign language learning by children and adults emphasising the design and execution of appropriate research

the second edition of theories in second language acquisition seeks to build on the strengths of the first edition by surveying the major theories currently used in second language acquisition research this volume is an ideal introductory text for undergraduate and graduate students in sla and language teaching each chapter focuses on a single theory written by a leading scholar in the field in an easy to follow style a basic foundational description of the theory relevant data or research models used with this theory common misunderstandings and a sample study from the field to show the theory in practice this text is designed to provide a consistent and coherent presentation for those new to the field who seek basic understanding of theories that underlie contemporary sla research researchers will also find the book useful as a quick guide to theoretical work outside their respective domains

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