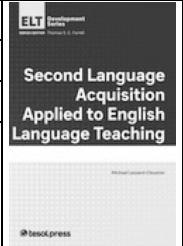


Second Language Acquisition Applied to English Language Teaching

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Second Language Acquisition Applied to English Language Teaching			
Author:	Michael Lessard-Clouston (2018)		
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Second Language Acquisition Applied to English Language Teaching is part of the English Language Teacher Development (ELTD) series published by TESOL Press. Authored by Michael Lessard-Clouston, the book explores how second language acquisition (SLA) theory is relevant and applicable to English language teaching (ELT), a subject of immediate relevance for those in the field of English language education. This concise, albeit robust resource book, is intended for ELT professionals of various English language learning program models and is appropriate for K-12 through higher education contexts. Like its counterparts in the ELTD series, the book aims at providing teachers a fresh approach to second language (L2) teaching that is grounded in both theory and practice. A salient feature of the book (and a common element within the series) is the opportunity for reflective practice. Woven throughout the book are spaces which offer teachers opportunities to conscientiously engage with the content. The book exposes readers to principles and key issues in SLA, as well as relevant research in order to support and better inform teachers in their ELT practice.

Lessard-Clouston coherently unpacks the role of SLA theory in ELT in eight distinct, yet unified chapters. The first two chapters of the book introduce definitions and frameworks for understanding SLA, including Cook’s (2016) multi-competence perspective of L2 users and Krashen’s (2003) five SLA principles (acquisition-learning hypothesis, natural order hypothesis, Monitor hypothesis, input hypothesis, and affective filter hypothesis). In Chapter 1, SLA is defined as the learning process of all languages acquired subsequent to learning one’s first language. Lessard-Clouston emphasizes that when both teachers and students bring previous language learning experiences to the classroom, everyone benefits in the overall language learning process.

Chapters 3-5 provide readers with an overview of components central to students’ English language learning (e.g., input, output, and interaction) and their importance in L2 learning. Teachers can use these components to inform and assess their ELT. Lessard-Clouston not only draws on relevant research, but he also offers practical ways to engage in input, output,

and interaction such as extensive reading, pushed output activities, and teachers modeling correct language (Krashen, 2003; Swain, 1993).

The subsequent chapters address the complexity of L2 learning through the examination of key issues (e.g., age, anxiety, and error correction), as well as the importance of teachers using meaningful ELT material. Similar to the previous section, Lessard-Clouston offers thoughts on reducing student anxiety and applying error correction techniques, such as distinguishing between global versus local errors and corrective feedback strategies. He concludes the book by tying together Chapters 1-7 and discussing what SLA can offer teachers in the classroom.

As previously mentioned, the targeted readership of the book is English language teachers in various teaching contexts. Both native and non-native, novice and experienced teachers can benefit from the book as an introductory SLA resource or a short comprehensive refresher of SLA. It is ideal for busy practicing teachers who have little time for supplemental training, allowing for the application of current SLA research to immediate classroom practice. Any ELT professional engaged in L2 instruction and curriculum will find Lessard-Clouston's material invaluable.

Overall the book is well organized. For example, in order for pre-service teachers to develop SLA-principled material, they would first need to grasp frameworks and essential components needed for L2 learning (e.g., meaningful input, appropriate output, and varied interaction) covered in preceding chapters. In addition to its structure, while the book is not intended to take the place of an SLA course, it can be used as a text in an SLA course. Furthermore, sections of the book can be modified to teach higher-level adult ELLs in order to help students become aware of their own language learning gaps.

Though not completely jargon-free as the ELTD series claims to be, Lessard-Clouston provides definitions and clear explanations of SLA-specific terminology appropriate for novice and even pre-service teachers. Additionally, while each chapter does not follow a specific format, readers can expect to engage in reflective practice at critical junctions of discussion. Reflection questions are well-positioned throughout chapters to promote purposeful thinking about SLA and engage readers in ELT self-examination in order to direct future teaching. There are also a few realistic classroom vignettes incorporated into reflective questions in the latter half of the book, furthering deeper examination of one's own classroom practices and how they relate to ELT. According to Farrell (2013), when teachers engage in reflective practice, there are beneficial outcomes: awareness of one's own values and beliefs related to ELT, and a gauge as to whether or not classroom practices align with one's beliefs. The book's reflective questions can easily be used as part of a small or large group discussion. Both pre-service and current teachers will find the reflective practice beneficial for the development of teaching philosophies.

Lastly, given that the field of SLA has expanded in the last 30-40 years, there are topics related to SLA that can impact one's ELT that are not addressed in the book, including: sociocultural factors, learner differences, language transfer, etc. However, since the ELTD series is designed to be a set of short resource books, each containing no more than 50 pages, it is unrealistic to include every topic that can affect SLA. Knowing how broad-based the discipline is, Lessard-Clouston does an excellent job focusing on topics that are foundational

and most relevant to SLA theory. Overall, *Second Language Acquisition Applied to English Language Teaching* fulfills its objective in introducing readers to principles, key issues and research in SLA to better inform teachers in their ELT. I recommend this book particularly for pre-service and novice teachers, as well as practicing teachers looking to deepen their understanding in SLA.

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