

第二语言习得

(第四版)

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徐锦芬 注



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一、第二语言习得研究的学科概况

第二语言习得研究成为独立的学科大约是在 20 世纪 60 年代末、70 年代初期，主要探索人们如何学习第二语言，但现在它早已超越传统应用语言学研究的范畴，日益呈现出跨学科的特点。迄今为止，第二语言习得研究领域出现了大量颇具影响力的著作，如 Stephen D. Krashen (1981) 的 *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (《第二语言习得与二语学习》)，Susan M. Gass (1994) 的 *Second Language Acquisition—An Introductory Course* (《第二语言习得概论》)，Rod Ellis (1997) 的 *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (《第二语言习得研究》)，Kees de Bot、Wander Lowie and Marjolijn Vespoor (2005) 的 *Second Language Acquisition—An Advanced Resource Book* (《第二语言习得高级教程》)，等等；而在具体领域研究第二语言习得的著作和期刊论文更是不胜枚举。正是因为有了这些专门致力于第二语言习得研究的学者和他们的丰硕成果，第二语言习得研究才呈现出今天欣欣向荣的局面。

第二语言习得研究在多大程度上被视为一门自主的学科，主要取决于它是否有明确的研究对象、是否具备系统完备的知识体系和科学的研究方法。Gass (2008) 认为，经过 40 多年的发展，第二语言习得已经发展成为一个独立、自足的学科，有完备的研究体系。

第二语言习得研究什么？各学者结合自己的研究兴趣从不同视角给出了理解。Ellis (1999) 认为第二语言习得不仅要研究学习者习得的内容和方式，而且要关注个体学习者在第二语言习得中体现出的差异，以及教学对第二语言习得的影响和效果。Gass (2013) 则认为第二语言习得研究应该探索“学习者在与第二语言接触有限的条件下，是怎样学习第二语言的；学习者在学习过程中学会了什么，更重要的是，还有哪些没有学会；为什么大多数二语学习者的二语水平不能与其母语水平相媲美，但有的学习者又比其他的学习者学得好”。她进一步为第二语言习得研究提出更深层次的任务：第二语言习得中第二语言的规则与本族语的规则是否相似？是否存在普遍的语言范式？等等 (p.3)。从两位专家的解读不难看出，第二语言习得研究所关注的是学习者从接触二语语料输入开始，到能够输出二语话语的整个过程。研究者不仅要能够观察、描述第二语言习得过程中产生的各种现象，而且要能够在相关理论的指导下对

这些现象做出分析并给予合理解释，为二语的学习和教学的实践提供规律性参考。

毋庸置疑，第二语言习得领域具有跨学科性特点，学者们从不同的理论背景或实践需求出发，来探讨“人们如何学习第二语言”这个最基本的问题，比如语言学、教育学、心理学、社会学等。因此第二语言习得研究的热点便显得异彩纷呈，而且在当前学科融合日益成为趋势的背景下，研究热点也呈现出跨学科的特性。有学者对国内外近十年间第二语言习得研究进行综述后发现，尽管语言形式教学、词汇教学依然是第二语言习得研究的重点，但社会环境、教师教育和语言政策等宏观的外部因素对第二语言习得的影响开始越来越受到学者们关注（王立非、江进林，2012）；同时，显性知识、元语言意识和元语言知识等内容习得的受关注度也呈明显上升趋势；此外，学者们也开始重视学习认知过程的动态性特点。数据统计表明，第二语言习得研究的热点问题主要分布在“学习者内部因素”“学习者外部因素”“课堂教学”“学习内容”和“中介语”等五个领域，体现为词汇习得、语言运用、社会环境、任务型教学、学习者互动、音位意识、教师教育、话题熟悉度、纠错反馈、语言发展等近20个热点问题。

第二语言习得研究内容的跨学科性也决定了其研究方法的多样性，换言之，研究的视角不同，研究者所采取的方法必然会有差异（王璐璐、戴炜栋，2014）。我们可以分别以语言学、认知心理学、社会文化等视角为例对第二语言习得研究的方法做简要分析。以语言学理论为视角的研究者常将第二语言习得等同于二语语法习得，因此语法判断测试（Grammatical Judgment Test, GJT）成为这类研究中获取数据的主要手段。在实际操作中，研究者常根据需要灵活设计研究，如对低水平二语学习者采用可接受性判断（acceptability judgments）、对错判断（true-value judgments）和句子配对（sentence matching）等任务复杂度较低的提示应答形式，对高水平二语学习者则采用诱导模仿（elicited imitation）、结构式诱导（structured elicitation）、句子拼接（sentence combining）、图画描述（picture description）以及故事讲述（story telling）等任务复杂度相对较高的提示产出形式。心理语言学视角下第二语言习得研究关注认知心理加工机制及影响这些机制的因素。心理语言学家所持研究目的不同，所采用的研究方法也会有差异，比如，采集第二语言习得者的加工表征数据常使用反应时（reaction time）作为加工指标；要探索加工机制，则要设计启动实验（priming）诱导被试对目标项做出反应以产生启动；而探讨二语加工技能和策略等问题时通常采用词汇联想（word association）的任务设计以分析学习者的语义网络和心理词典结构；探究个体差异对加工的影响时研究者多采用自控速度阅读、眼动（eye movement）等在线研究方法，以及一些心理学的研究方法，如词汇判断（lexical decision）、动窗（moving window）

等。以社会文化理论为视角的第二语言习得研究者认为更加关注个体的变异性，更推崇质化研究的方法。常见的方法有学习/教学日志(journal)和个人叙事、会话和对话、个案研究等。当然，研究者在使用这些方法时会借助其他手段达到收集数据的目的，比如要获取被试的叙事数据，研究者可采用即时或延后的内省、刺激回忆、有声思维、自我评估等方法，也可以借助访谈、无声电影(silent films)等开展。值得一提的是，在第二语言习得研究领域使用语料库作为研究方法正受到越来越多的学者的青睐。

二、《第二语言习得》的内容评介

我们现在导读的《第二语言习得》(第四版)主要作者 Susan M. Gass 是美国密歇根州立大学语言学与日耳曼、斯拉夫、亚非语系的著名教授，研究领域为第二语言习得中的输入与互动、语言的共性与语言的迁移。她编著的很多第二语言习得研究著作都曾产生过较大影响，如 *Second Language Acquisition* 的前三版、*Language Transfer in Language Learning* 等。另外两位作者分别是美国扬斯敦州立大学的 Jennifer Behney 教授和美国北亚利桑那大学的 Luke Plonsky 副教授，前者是语言教育和社会语用学方面的专家，后者则对课堂第二语言习得研究感兴趣，并擅长定量研究。

《第二语言习得》(第四版)于 2013 年由 Routledge 出版公司出版，是一部从不同视角描述、解释二语学习过程，介绍第二语言习得领域研究成果的百科全书式专著。该版在第三版(2008 年出版，Susan M. Gass 与 Larry Selinker 合著)的基础上，对相关内容进行了修正和补充，并对有些章节的位置及内容进行了重新编排。更重要的是，该版将 2008 年以来第二语言习得研究领域的最新发展成果概括了进来，实现了内容的实时更新。因此，就其全面性和与时俱进的特点而言，本书无疑是目前第二语言习得研究领域最权威的著作之一。从内容来看，全书共 16 个章节，可分为五大部分。

第一部分为引言，为读者呈现了第二语言习得研究相关术语的定义，并强调本学科研究的焦点是洞察和理解二语学习者及其二语学习的过程。

第二部分包括第 2、3 两章，讨论第二语言习得研究的方法。“工欲善其事，必先利其器”。研究方法在应用性特色鲜明的第二语言习得研究中占有极其重要的地位。本书在这两章除了对研究类型进行分类之外，着重讨论了研究第二语言习得的各种“利器”，包括数据获取、数据处理和分析中使用的方法，如问卷调查等。值得注意的是，作者专辟一节(3.2)讨论语料库方法，足见其在第二语言习得研究中的地位日趋重要。为了方便读者理解和掌握这些方法，作者从文献中萃取了大量研究案例来进行阐释。

第三部分探讨本族语习得对第二语言习得的影响，涉及第4、5、6三章。当然，本族语在学习者第二语言习得中的影响无处不在，也是理解第二语言习得现象的最佳起点。但第二语言习得研究的历史表明，随着语言学理论的变迁，学者对本族语在第二语言习得中的作用在看法上也经历了很大的变化。

早期第二语言习得研究（第4章）受行为主义理论指导，认为第二语言习得同儿童母语习得一样，是自动培养语言习惯的过程，因此本族语的语言习惯被认为能够起到干扰、促进或者预测第二语言习得得与失的重要作用。作者虽然对基于这一理论产生的对比分析法和偏误分析法做了很多批判，但它们无疑曾是第二语言习得研究者们最青睐的方法。

本书将 Krashen 的监控模型理论当作第二语言习得研究的过渡期成果（第5章）。在这一时期，语言被认为是一套结构化的规则，而非习惯。语言学习不是模仿，而是学习者在理解语言内在原则、接触大量语言事实的基础上，积极构建语言规则的过程。基于对本族语在第二语言习得中的作用和词素习得顺序的研究成果，Krashen 提出“监控模型理论”。这一理论由习得一学得假说、自然顺序假说、监控假说、输入假说和情感过滤假说组成。虽然该理论毁誉参半，但它却是 20 世纪 70 年代最有影响的第二语言习得理论之一。

后来的研究者转而更多地关注学习者在第二语言习得过程中使用本族语的方式和时机，并从更深层次对其进行解释（第6章，由原第三版第五章内容拓展而成）。有些研究结论虽与行为主义理论主张不同，但已为学界接受，如本族语与二语的差异可以用来预测学习者使用某些特定的二语结构时出现的回避现象，本族语与二语的相似之处可能会给第二语言习得者带来困难，等等。

第四部分重点讨论不同视角和学科范畴下第二语言习得研究的理论和实践成果，从第7章到第15章，共9章，涉及形式语言学（普遍语法）、类型学和功能语言学、心理语言学、社会文化学、认知语言学等视角和其他相关学科。

Chomsky 的普遍语法在语言学领域的影响无处不在。作者在第7章中就详细介绍了该理论内容要点，并选择迁移和语音为例，探索普遍语法在理解第二语言习得规律中的重要作用。新版本添加了“最简方案”、修正后的“根本性差异假说”以及“句法语义接口假说”等较新的研究成果，不过作者也指出，普遍语法在解释复杂的第二语言习得现象时也存在短板。

鉴于其在第二语言习得中的重要性，讨论词汇的章节在本版中被提前到了第8章（第三版中为第13章），但内容基本没什么变化，主要涉及词汇知识的分类、词汇学习的方式、一语对词汇学习的影响以及词汇知识的感知等。但作者认为学界对第

二语言习得中词汇习得的研究不够。

第9章以语言类型学为视角,用一些案例呈现了第二语言习得中类型的普遍性;本章还介绍了功能主义理论视角下第二语言习得研究的成果,如体假说、语篇假说以及概念指向论等。可以认为,第7、8、9三章侧重从语言本体来探讨第二语言习得。

以心理学理论和认知主义理论为视角(第10章和第12章)讨论学习者第二语言习得的内在过程是本领域的重要内容。第10章侧重从心理学视角探讨中介语加工过程,除了我们熟悉的语言加工理论、知识类型以及知识类型接口之外,本版补充了句法启动理论(syntactic priming)和动态系统理论,并对涌现论模型进行了拓展。第12章介绍了基于认知主义理论的第二语言习得研究成果,主要涉及输入、理解、互动和输出等重要理论和假说。这两个章节从学习者内心世界来研究第二语言习得。

第11章和第13章讨论外部环境因素在第二语言习得中的作用。其中第11章重点介绍了Vygotsky社会文化理论中的核心概念,如调节、内化、最近发展区和私人话语等,本版对该理论的介绍更加详细丰富,这主要是因为近年来社会文化理论越来越受到学者的重视;另外,本章还补充了手势语与第二语言习得、留学环境中的语言学习等内容。第13章讨论教学在第二语言习得中的作用,涉及课堂语言、可教性/可学性、教学的作用等内容;本章同样也补充了对复杂性、准确性、流畅性和规划探讨的内容,文献综述显示,这也是第二语言习得研究的热点之一。

本书将学习者个体差异如年龄、学能、动机、情感和学习风格等因素视为影响第二语言习得的非语言范畴因素,在第14章中作集中探讨。此部分内容除了在案例上做了少量更新外,与第三版相比变化不大。

作为上述研究视角的补充,第15章中作者还讨论了与第二语言习得研究相关的其他一些学科,如双语、三语习得和多语习得、继承语现象、听觉障碍人士的第二语言习得等,这样就使第二语言习得研究显得更加全面、周密。

第五部分为结论部分(第16章),作者综合本书所述的前人研究,构建了第二语言习得研究模型。该模型完整再现了二语学习者将输入转化为输出的过程,即感知输入、理解输入、吸收、融合和输出五个环节,并详细讨论了处于环节之间各种因素的协调作用。

三、学习指导

(一) 本版书特点

本书为入门课程,在内容编排上,它仍然继承了前三版的主要特征:其一是理论与实践相结合。作者使用大量的实证研究案例来阐释主要理论,使抽象的语言学、

心理学和社会学理论读起来不再那么晦涩难懂；其二是内容翔实，信息量大。可以说本书囊括了迄今为止第二语言习得研究领域内几乎所有主要理论和研究热点问题，类似于一本简要的百科全书。在语言风格上，本书显然具备了科普读物的特征。语言浅显易懂，与读者有较多的互动，对专业术语的介绍，作者也都尽力做了通俗化处理。在结构安排上，本书具有很强的逻辑性。从全书来看，作者在概述第二语言习得研究范畴之后，便为读者提供第二语言习得“利器”，然后从我们熟悉的本族语习得谈起，引申到第二语言习得研究；从学习者内心世界在第二语言习得中的表现到外部环境对第二语言习得的作用，层次分明，非常符合绝大多数读者的逻辑思维习惯。章节结构安排也有很强的逻辑性，理论介绍、案例阐释、总结要点，环环相扣，便于读者理解和掌握。

除此之外，与第三版相比，本版还具有内容新和结构新的特点。

内容新。本版增加了第二语言习得领域最新的研究成果，包括新的研究理论（假说）和第二语言习得领域新应用的理论，如动态系统理论、任务型教学设计等；新的研究方法，如语料库、眼动、反应时等；新的研究领域，如手势语、听力障碍人士的第二语言习得等。

结构新。新版在第三版结构的基础上做了很多较大幅度的改进，增设了很多温馨的互动栏目，努力使其与读者形成“友好”的交流。具体来说，本版增加了很多新的特色栏目（Box），增强了与读者之间的互动。如“Time to Think（思考时间）”“More to Do and More to Think About...（多做多想……）”“Points to Remember（要点回顾）”和“Link（链接延伸）”等，充分调动读者思考的积极性，因为“学而不思则罔，思而不学则殆”。编排上也做了创新。将重要概念和专业术语用黑体字标出，突出其重要性，以引起读者注意；使用大量的表格，使重要信息一目了然；而且每小节要点回顾部分使用方框和深背景色以突出重点。

正如作者在序言中所说，希望本书可以成为学生获得学位的垫脚石，并可以为那些有志于成为语言教师的研究生提供参考（p.x）。我们读完本书后掩卷长思，第二语言习得研究领域的理论框架和最新研究发展动向如一幅恢宏长卷已经完整地呈现于脑海之中，显然，作者著作本书的意图已经达到了。

（二）学习建议

为使读者能够从这部经典力作中汲取尽可能多的知识养分，我们提出如下建议：

1. 要有求知的心态。作为国外高校第二语言习得课程使用最多的教材之一（赵杨, 2011），虽然标题中有“introductory”一词，但本书涵盖范围之广，涉论层次之深，在同类论著中绝不多见。对于读者来说，这应该是福音：通过研读本书，我们不仅可

以全面掌握第二语言习得的过去，还可以熟知它的现状，甚至可以预测其较近的将来；不仅可以深谙第二语言习得研究领域中的理论流派及其主张观点，而且可以知晓第二语言习得的研究方法。这部百科全书式的专著可以极大地满足读者的求知心态。

2. 要有探索的精神。作为第二语言习得研究的入门读物，本书在内容广度上“求全”的同时，必然因篇幅所限难以在内容深度上做到“责备”，很多理论或假说也只能做到“浅尝辄止”。因此，读者在阅读时就应该有探索的精神，通过书中的文献、章节末尾提供的链接、本书附录为读者提供的“难点注释与评析”部分中的中文或英文拓展阅读，或者直接依据自己设定的条件上网搜索查询，穷尽理论要点的来龙去脉。当然，也可以借助于每章节中大量的思考题，或独立思考，或与同行探讨，寻求内容上更深的理解。

3. 要有思辨的眼光。第二语言习得研究因视角不同、理论依据不同或研究方法不同，导致其结论不同甚至相反的案例比比皆是。这就需要读者在研读时持有思辨和批判的眼光，不“唯权威是从”，不“人云亦云”，敢于质疑，甚至动手复制研究以验证论证中的观点。本书中新增的互动栏目如“More to Do and More to Think About...”和“Time to Think”也是旨在鼓励读者在阅读的同时去做思辨和批判。倘若能够做到这些，读者阅读本书的收获必然会大大超出作者的期望。

此外，我们对各章节做了详细导读，并在本书末尾对各章节中的重点和难点做了标注，供读者参考，希望对读者的理解有所帮助。

徐锦芬

2019年9月

Preface

As I sit in Italy with my two-and-a-half-year-old grandson, I marvel, not only at his ability to learn English syntax (his native language), which progresses by leaps and bounds daily, but also at his ability to learn Italian, albeit not much. I am fascinated at how he knows that both a *gatto* and a cat go meow; that when one person gives something to him, he says *grazie*, and when another person gives something to him, he says *tank u*. A *horse* and a *cavallo* are the same thing. A *mucca* and a cow refer to the same animal, unless he is angry, then it's "that not *mucca*, that cow." After a few weeks in Italy, all dogs are now referred to as *cane*, regardless of language. This book takes these marvelous events and attempts to make sense of this highly complex phenomenon called language learning. I use these only as examples, because this book deals mostly with adults and brings in examples from children only as they relate to the main topic of this book, as a way of contextualizing the discipline of second language learning.

Learning a second language is something about which everyone seems to have an opinion. Even a casual airplane conversation with a seatmate, during which we are asked what we do, always elicits opinions about second language acquisition (SLA), some of which are accurate, some of which are not (I just patiently listen and smile). It is our intent to help set the record straight on this complex research area by bringing to the reader a bit of disciplinary history, accompanied by current directions.

The field of second language learning is old and new at the same time. It is old in the sense that scholars, for centuries, have been fascinated by the questions posed by the nature of foreign language learning and language teaching. It is new in the sense that the field, as it is now represented, only goes back about 40–50 years. In the earlier part of the modern phase, most scholarly articles emphasized language teaching and only had a secondary interest in language learning. In other words, the impetus for studying language learning originated in pedagogical concerns.

In the past 40 years or so, the field of SLA has developed into an independent and autonomous discipline, complete with its own research agenda. One only has to look at the increase in the number of conferences (of both a general and a topical nature) dealing exclusively with SLA, as well as special sessions on SLA as part of larger conferences. Furthermore, the field now has journals devoted exclusively to research in the field (*Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *Language Learning*, *Second Language*

Research), as well as others in which reports of second language studies comprise a major part (e.g., *Applied Linguistics*, *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *The Modern Language Journal*). There are also numerous edited volumes dealing with sub-areas of the field (e.g., language transfer, language input, language variation, Universal Grammar, Critical Period) and, in recent years, entire books concerned with sub-areas of the field, as well as numerous texts dealing with research methodologies. All of these attest to the vitality and vibrancy of the field. In this book, we present the old and the new as a way of helping the reader understand some of the history of the field and how we got to where we are today.

What is particularly noteworthy about the discipline of SLA is its interdisciplinary character. Second language research is concerned with the general question: How are second languages learned? With the belief that there are a number of perspectives one can take in answering this question, scholars have approached the field from a wide range of backgrounds: sociology, psychology, education, and linguistics, to name a few. This has both positive and negative effects on the field. The advantage is that, through the multiplicity of perspectives, we are able to see a richer picture of acquisition, a picture that appears to be more representative of the phenomenon of acquisition, in that learning a second language undoubtedly involves factors relating to sociology, psychology, education, and linguistics. On the other hand, multiple perspectives on what purports to be a single discipline bring confusion, because it is frequently the case that scholars approaching SLA from different (often opposing and seemingly incompatible) frameworks are not able to talk to one another. This is so because each perspective brings with it its own way of approaching data and its own research methodology. This book attempts to bring together these disparate threads, to place them within a coherent framework, and, importantly, to make the field accessible to large numbers of students with varying interests and varying goals for wanting to learn about second language learning. To that end, we take a multidisciplinary approach, in that what we have selected to present represents research with origins in other, well-established disciplines, but with implications for the central question: How are languages beyond one's primary language learned?

The book is designed to be used in an introductory course for advanced undergraduate or graduate students. The goal is to make the information contained herein available to students with a wide variety of background knowledge. The book can be used by those with a background in languages and/or linguistics and those with little or no background in these areas. The book developed out of the belief that the complexities of the field can, and should, be brought to the attention of many students, both those who are intending to delve further into the field and those who are only curious about the pervasive phenomenon of learning a second language.

This book has as its major focus second language learning. It is not a book that talks directly about language teaching, but we firmly believe that it is an important book for language teachers, in that it helps them understand the complex phenomenon that each and every student is struggling with. As teachers think about how to use this book, we encourage you to use some of the new pedagogical features in a way that

best suits you and your students. We aimed the book at a broad audience, ranging from students who will use this as a stepping-stone as they pursue their advanced degrees in the field, to those in an advanced undergraduate program or MA program, whose main goal is to become teachers. For the former, some of the historical background may be more important as they begin their path to becoming professionals and eventually imparting this information to others. For the latter, a more cursory read can be given to those parts. Thus, more or less time can be given to any area by covering more than one chapter in a lesson or two or by extending chapters over a longer period of time. The “More to Do and More to Think About...” sections at the end of chapters can be used differently, depending on the students’ goals. For example, more theoretical questions can be eliminated for those who are not planning PhD work; more pedagogical questions can be eliminated for those who are, and/or for students more interested in acquisition than pedagogy. It is our firm belief, however, that, regardless of ultimate goals, both groups (and those in between) can benefit from an understanding of how learning takes place.

This book is the fourth edition of one originally published in 1994, which I co-authored with Larry Selinker. The field has shown considerable growth since the first edition, and this edition reflects that growth, in part, by tracing the development of the field from its early stages to the present. This edition has been updated and rearranged, new sections have been added, and, in some cases, sections have been rewritten.

This edition has a number of new pedagogical features. For example, throughout each chapter there are “Time to Think...” and “Time to Do...” boxes, which are intended to encourage students to think about what they have just read and relate it to their own language learning experiences and, in some cases, to their own language teaching experiences (present or future). We have also put in boldface the first relevant mention of items in the glossary, so that students can find that item as they are reading. We have provided chapter summaries under the heading “Points to Remember,” at the end of each chapter. Additionally, there is a companion website (www.routledge.com/cw/gass; for students and for teachers) that can be used for additional exercises. That website also includes PowerPoints that can be used for class presentations as well as other supplementary materials.

There are many people to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. First and foremost is Larry Selinker, who co-authored the first three editions with me. His influence on the field, on my thinking, and on this book has been enormous; without him, the field of SLA would not be where it is. A second individual to whom great thanks are due is Josh Ard, who has been instrumental in many areas of the book through all four editions. Josh provided detailed information on some of the original chapters. Through discussions with him, I have been better able to determine what is relevant and what is not. He painstakingly read through chapters, helped with references, and, in general, made extraordinarily perceptive comments throughout. He provided valuable clues as to what was involved in writing an introductory textbook, the goal of which was, in part, to “normalize” the field and make it informative and interesting to novices. His reading of the text many times over led to minor and major changes throughout. I

am extraordinarily grateful.

Specific colleagues in the field provided detailed comments on earlier editions and completed surveys that helped us figure out where we could be clearer, where we needed to add parts, and where we needed to delete sections from earlier editions. We are grateful to all of them for their feedback. In particular, Bill VanPatten read through the manuscript of a previous edition and made perceptive comments about organization and ways to present research more clearly. Alison Mackey also read the entire manuscript of previous editions and many times made us rethink conclusions and suggested more research to look at. Her comments were detailed and insightful.

We have benefited from numerous individuals reading earlier versions of chapters of this edition. Some wished to remain anonymous, but you know who you are, and we thank you. Thanks also go to Jacqueline Aiello of New York University, Joyce Guat Ph Aw of Nanyang Technological University, National Institute of Education (Singapore), Jean-Marc Dewaele of Birkbeck, University of London, and Lucy Pickering of Texas A & M, for detailed comments on earlier versions of some of the chapters in this book. Debbie Pichler of Gallaudet University provided important comments on earlier versions of some chapters and also gave freely of her time to help us understand what is involved when sign language gets into the mix. We considered all of your comments (those from anonymous and non-anonymous sources) and, in many/most cases, were able to adjust the manuscript to align with your suggestions. In those cases where changes were not made, it is not because we did not think about doing so, but, in the end, we opted to leave chapters as we had originally planned, partly because, in many instances, we received suggestions such as “Change x” and “Don’t change x.”

Our colleagues and friends in the field deserve special mention. Although they have not all read the manuscript and may not all approve of the conclusions drawn from their writings, they have all been influential in our thinking and our development as researchers in the field. They are too numerous to mention, but they know who they are, and we thank them. Colleagues at Michigan State University have taught from this book and have helped us see where we could improve areas. A hearty thank you to all of you.

In expressing our gratitude to these individuals, we wish that we could also blame them for any errors (factual or interpretive) in this book. Alas, scholarly ethics do not allow us this luxury, and we accept all errors as our own.

In preparing for this fourth edition, Ivy Ip, our editor from Taylor & Francis, solicited opinions and feedback from prior users. In most cases, we do not know who these individuals are, but we hope that you will see your excellent suggestions reflected in these new pages. Thanks to Ivy for her patience and for soliciting comments, and thanks to those of you who are anonymous to us. Leah Babb-Rosenfeld and Rebecca Pearce worked with us through the preparation of this manuscript. I know that you had hoped for an earlier submission, and all I can do is express gratitude for your sticking with it. It goes without saying that your comments and patience throughout this process were always welcome.

A final group to be thanked consists of students over the years, many of whom provided welcome and helpful comments. Students have not hesitated to let us know

when material was unclear and when some revision was necessary. There are too many to thank personally, but they are out there somewhere, possibly teaching courses in SLA. We hope that they have benefited from the material contained in those courses as much as we benefited from their feedback. In particular, LeAnne Spino volunteered to make comments on all aspects of the third edition. Her summary reflected comments that (1) came from her reading of the textbook and included suggestions for better wording and greater clarity; (2) were based on class discussion, where one concept or another could have been made clearer; and (3) included suggestions for additional, up-to-date references. A big thank you for volunteering to take on this task.

Others contributed in major and minor ways. Yeon Heo, my research assistant, went through all of the chapters to make them consistent. She saved us from many embarrassments, and we appreciate that. Others have read through individual sections and/or provided suggestions about their own research area that allowed us to be up to date or that helped us simplify the content (without destroying it), to make it more accessible to a nonspecialized audience. In particular, we recognize the significant contributions made by Rebecca Foote, Patti Spiner, and Nicole Tracy-Ventura. And, as usual, Russ Werner helped with technical support from beginning to end. Russ, you are one of a kind! I am grateful to Dean Karin Wurst of MSU's College of Arts and Letters for granting me time to complete this manuscript—I definitely needed to get out of town to do this. My leave from campus could not have taken place without the willingness of so many people to pick up the pieces that I left behind—Anna Davis, Pat Walters, Carol Wilson Duffy, and Larry Zwier of the ELC; David Prestel of CeLTA and our Iraq partnership; and Anne Baker and Joy Campbell of CLEAR/CeLTA. Thanks so much!

Special recognition to my partners in crime, Jennifer Behney, now of Youngstown State University, and Luke Plonsky, now of Northern Arizona University—it's a great partnership!

To you, the student, who will make use of the book, we have provided you with a summary of what is known today in the field of SLA. We hope that this book is but the beginning of a deeper quest into the nature of the learning process. We hope that your interest will be piqued by the text itself, but equally important is the emphasis we have placed on the follow-up activities for each chapter and moments within chapters to pause and reflect. It is our belief that these activities will give you the opportunity to think about the complexity and beauty of learning and using more than one language.

The subtitle of this book is *An Introductory Course*. It is well known in SLA circles that a truly introductory treatment of our field is difficult to achieve. We have tried hard and hope that we have been successful in our endeavor, and that we have succeeded in making the subject matter relevant and interesting to a wide range of students. Many of you will go on to be language teachers, and we hope to have given you an understanding of what your students are going through and how difficult and complex it is to learn a second or even third or fourth language.

Susan Gass
Collepio, Italy
July 4, 2012

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To the memory of my parents
Gertrude Zemon-Gass, PhD
H. Harvey Gass, MD
whose love, encouragement, and
support enabled me to do what I love doing.
Their memory is a blessing.
They live on in the generations of the future.
Samuel Zemon Ard
SMG

To Fabio
JB

To Mateo and Ruby, the two most fascinating
(and adorable) language learners in my life.
LDP

Introduction

章节导读

本章主要介绍了第二语言习得的一系列基本概念和第二语言习得研究的特点，从不同学科视角审视了人们如何习得第二语言，并从语言系统的主要方面描述了本族语者及非本族语者语言知识的特点。

第二语言习得研究作为一门独立的学科形成于 20 世纪 60 年代末和 70 年代初。这一领域的研究是为了探讨第二语言习得的本质和习得的过程，以及解释为什么学习者能够学习第二语言。尽管第二语言习得研究已经建立了自己独立的研究体系，但它利用了许多其他领域的研究成果，同时也对这些领域产生影响，是一门跨学科领域的研究。

首先，对于人们如何学习第二语言这一重要问题，作者从语言学、语言教学法、跨文化交际和语言使用、语言政策和语言规划的角度进行了阐述。作为语言和语言行为研究的一部分，第二语言习得研究除了确定哪些因素制约和影响第二语言的语法形式，也探究了人类本质的东西，即人类心智的特性，这种特性是人类所特有的（Chomsky, 1968）。第二语言习得的研究领域也包括对语言学习发生方式和学习过程的研究，这形成了语言教学法的基础，也决定了不同语言教学法的使用。第二语言习得研究除了了解非本族语使用者如何使用语言，还需要抛弃建立在非本族语形式上的对目标语文化的老套观念，把跨文化交际中产生的问题与套路化的言语行为或个人特点区分开来；第二语言习得研究中对第二语言学习的本质、现实情况以及制约因素的认识也会影响语言规划和语言政策中的很多问题。因此，第二语言习得是一个复杂的领域，理解第二语言习得的各个过程具有重要的意义。

其次，作者对第二语言习得领域一些常用的基本术语进行了定义和解释，包括本族语（native language, NL）、目标语（target language, TL）、第二语言习得（second language acquisition, SLA）、外语学习（foreign language learning）。通过对这些术语的解释与对比，作者对第二语言习得的特征给出了明确的说明，即第二语言习得是

指在学习本族语后学习另外一门非本族语的过程，它既可以指课堂情景中的第二语言习得，也可以指自然接触第二语言的情形，但两种情形下都可以大量接触到使用这种非本族语的人。

作者接下来从语音系统、句法、形态和词汇、语义以及语用的角度对第二语言习得中需要学习的内容进行了系统描述。在语音系统方面，学习者需要掌握该语言中哪些音是可能存在的、哪些音是不可能的，区分在不同语速下不同的发音，知道不同的发音是否有可能合并，以及在词语中语音所应该出现的位置。在句法方面，作者指出句法是研究句中成分及其出现的顺序，即语法，一般分为规定性语法和描述性语法；与语音知识相似，掌握句法知识需要知道哪些句子在语言中是可以接受的，哪些句子的意义大致相同，句子的意义是如何受到句子中移动成分的影响的。在形态和词汇方面，构成词语的最小意义单位是词素，包括粘着词素和自由词素。对于词汇知识，我们不仅研究词语的构成，知道如何利用词缀构词，也需要知道词语使用时的搭配关系。语义学的研究是指对意义的研究。当然语义不等同于语法规则，但是两者也是相互关联的——有意义的句子不一定符合语法规则，而符合语法规则的句子结构则不一定有意义，句子的意义往往会受到词和小句不同组合方式的影响。此外，语义知识蕴涵着指称知识，词语的指称意义往往会受到同音异义现象的影响。在语用方面，作者指出语用即语境中的语言使用方式，也是第二语言学习者需要学习的部分。语境对词语和句子的意义会有影响，在不同语境中相同词语和句子的意义可能不同；此外，在一些语境中，语序对意义也会有影响。

最后，作者讨论了非本族语者语言知识的特点。第二语言习得研究的基本假设是：学习者在接触到的目标语基础上构建了一个语言体系，这种独立的语言体系就是中介语（interlanguage, IL）。中介语体系由很多元素构成，其中最重要的是本族语和目标语的元素，但它既有别于学习者的本族语体系，也有别于所学习的目标语体系，它的主要特征之一就是具有过渡性，处于不断变化之中。学习者在逐步增加对目标语了解的过程中，逐渐在大脑中构建了一个内化的语言体系。中介语理论的核心是石化（fossilization）概念，即学习者在中介语中长期建立起来的异于目标语的语言形式，无论学习者怎样持续接触目标语，还是会出现在语言行为中，往往表现为学习者语言学习的停滞不前。

1.1 THE STUDY OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

How do people learn a second, or a third, or a fourth language? The simple answer is “with great difficulty.” This book considers this basic question from a variety of perspectives.

What is the study of **second language acquisition**¹? It is the study of how second languages are learned. It is the study of how learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to a second language. It is the study of what is learned

of a second language and, importantly, what is not learned; it is the study of why most second language learners do not achieve the same degree of proficiency in a second language as they do in their **native language**; it is also the study of why some individuals appear to achieve native-like proficiency in more than one language. Additionally, SLA is concerned with the nature of the hypotheses (whether conscious or unconscious) that learners come up with regarding the rules of the second language. Are the rules like those of the native language? Are they like the rules of the language being learned? Are there patterns that are common to all learners, regardless of the native language and regardless of the language being learned? Do the rules created by second language learners vary according to the context of use? Given these varied questions, the study of SLA impacts on, and draws from, many other areas of study, among them linguistics, psychology, psycholinguistics, sociology, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and education, to name a few.

Given the close relationship between SLA and other areas of inquiry, there are numerous approaches from which to examine the questions raised above. Each area of inquiry examines second language data from a unique perspective, which includes goals, data-collection methods, and analytic tools. Thus, SLA is truly an interdisciplinary field. This introductory text attempts to shed light on the nature of SLA from multiple perspectives.

One way to define the field of SLA is to state what it is not. Over the years, the study of SLA has become inextricably intertwined with language pedagogy; in this text, one goal is to disentangle the two fields. SLA is not about pedagogy, unless the pedagogy affects the course of acquisition (this topic will be explored in Chapter 13). Although it may be the case that those who are interested in learning about how second languages are learned are ultimately interested in doing so for the light this knowledge sheds on the field of language teaching, this is not the only reason SLA is of interest, nor is it the major reason scholars in the field of SLA conduct their research.

Let us briefly consider some of the reasons why it might be important for us to understand how second languages are learned.

- **Linguistics**

When we study human language, we are approaching what some might call the human essence, the distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to [humans].

(Chomsky, 1968, p.100)

The study of how second languages are learned is part of the broader study of language and language behavior. It is no more central or peripheral than any other part of linguistic study, which, in turn, has as its larger goal the study of the nature of the human mind. In fact, a major goal of SLA research is the determination of linguistic constraints on the formation of second language grammars. Because theories of language are concerned with human language knowledge, one can reasonably assume that this knowledge is not limited to first language knowledge, and that linguistic principles reflect the possibilities of human language creation and the limits of human language variation. This scope of inquiry includes second languages.

- **Language pedagogy**

Most graduate programs with the goal to train students in language teaching have required course work in SLA. Why should this be the case? If one is to develop language-teaching methodologies, there has to be a firm basis for those methodologies in language learning. It would be counterproductive to base language-teaching methodologies on something other than an understanding of how language learning does and does not take place. To give an example, some language-teaching methodologies are based exclusively on rule memorization and translation exercises. That is, a student in a language class is expected to memorize rules and then translate sentences from the native language to the language being learned, and vice versa. However, over the years, research in SLA has made language teachers and curriculum designers aware that language learning consists of more than rule memorization; it also involves learning to express communicative needs. The details of this conceptualization of what language learning is about have resulted in methodologies that emphasize communication. In other words, pedagogical decision-making must reflect what is known about the process of learning, which is the domain of SLA.

A second rationale related to language pedagogy has to do with the expectations that teachers have of their students. Let's assume that a teacher spends a class hour drilling students on a particular grammatical structure. Let's further assume that the students are all producing the structure correctly, and even in an appropriate context. If, after the class is over and the drill is finished, a student comes up to the teacher and uses the incorrect form of what had just been drilled and drilled in spontaneous speech, what should the teacher think? Has the lesson been a waste of time? Or is this type of linguistic behavior to be expected? If a student produces a correct form, does that necessarily mean that the student has learned the correct rule? These sorts of issues are part of what teachers need to be aware of when assessing the success or failure of their teaching practices.

- **Cross-cultural communication**

We noted above some expectations that teachers have about students. Similarly, in interactions with speakers of another language/culture, we have certain expectations and we often produce stereotyped reactions. For example, we may find ourselves making judgments about individuals based on their language. It turns out that many stereotypes of people from other cultures (e.g., rudeness, unassertiveness) are based on patterns of nonnative speech. These judgments, in many instances, are not justified, because many of the speech patterns that nonnative speakers use reflect their nonnativeness, rather than being characteristics of their personality. As an example, consider the following exchange between a teacher and a former student (NNS = nonnative speaker; NS = native speaker):

(1-1) From Goldschmidt (1996, p.255)

NNS: I have a favor to ask you.

NS: Sure, what can I do for you?

NNS: You need to write a recommendation for me.

Many teachers would, of course, react negatively to the seeming gall of this “request,” perhaps initially thinking to themselves, “What do you mean I need to write a letter?”, when most likely the only problem is this nonnative speaker’s lack of understanding of the forceful meaning of *need*. It is our point of view that understanding how second languages are learned and how nonnative speakers use language allows us to separate issues of cross-cultural communication from issues of stereotyped behavior or personal idiosyncrasies.

- **Language policy and language planning**

Many issues of language policy are dependent on a knowledge of how second languages are learned. For example, issues surrounding **bilingualism**², such as the English Only Movement in the United States, or bilingual education (including immersion programs) can only be debated if one is properly informed about the realities and constraints of learning a second language. National language programs often involve decision-making that is dependent on (a) information about second language learning, (b) the kinds of instruction that can be brought to bear on issues of acquisition, and (c) the realities and expectations one can have of such programs. All too often, these issues are debated without a clear understanding of the object of debate, that is, the nature of how second languages are learned.

In sum, SLA is a complex field, the focus of which is the attempt to understand the processes underlying the learning and use of a second language. It is important to reemphasize that the study of SLA is separate from the study of language pedagogy, although this does not mean that there are not implications that can be drawn from SLA to the related discipline of language teaching, or that ideas that arise in classrooms cannot be useful in the understanding of SLA.

TIME TO THINK...

What is your motivation for studying SLA? How do you think a knowledge of SLA will help you?

How would you describe the relationship between SLA and language pedagogy? Do you have to know something about SLA to teach well? Do you have to know something about teaching to understand SLA?

1.2 DEFINITIONS

The study of any new discipline involves familiarizing oneself with the specific terminology of that field. In this section, we present some basic terminology common to the field of SLA, accompanied by brief definitions. Other terms are introduced and defined as the text progresses. For an extensive list of definitions, see Loewen and Reinders’ (2011) and VanPatten and Benati’s (2010) books on key concepts.

- **Native language (NL):** This refers to the first language that a child learns. It is also known as the primary language, the mother tongue, or the **L1** (first language). In this book, we use the common abbreviation NL and/or L1.
- **Target language (TL):** This refers to the language being learned.
- **Second language acquisition:** This is the common term used for the name of the discipline and deals with the many areas covered in this book. In general, SLA refers to the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned. Sometimes, the term even refers to the learning of a third or fourth language. The important aspect is that SLA refers to the learning of a nonnative language *after* the learning of one's native or primary language. The second language is commonly referred to as the **L2**. As with the phrase "second language," L2 can refer to any language learned *after* the L1 has been learned, regardless of whether it is the second, third, fourth, or fifth language. By this term, we mean the acquisition of a second language both in a classroom situation, as well as in more "natural" exposure situations. In addition to referring to the discipline, as noted above, the term *second language acquisition* (not capitalized) can also refer to the process of learning another language.
- **Foreign language learning:** Foreign language is generally differentiated from second language in that the former refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment of one's native language (e.g., French speakers learning English in France [EFL] or Spanish speakers learning French in Spain, Argentina, or Mexico [FFL]). This is most commonly done within the context of the classroom. Second language, on the other hand, generally refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment in which that language is spoken (e.g., German speakers learning Japanese in Japan [JSL] or Punjabi speakers learning English in the United Kingdom [ESL]). This may or may not take place in a classroom setting. The important point is that learning in a second language environment takes place with considerable access to speakers of the language being learned, whereas learning in a foreign language environment usually does not.^❶ In this book, we use the generic term SLA to assume learning in a second language and a foreign language context.
- **Learners/L2ers:** Throughout this book, we often refer to those learning a second/foreign language as learners; one also finds the term L2ers to refer to the same group of individuals, although this term is not used in this book.
- **L2 acquisition:** This term, along with the more general term SLA, refers to the process of learning as well as to the field more generally.

❶ In reality, the picture is more complex, because there are language-learning situations where a variety of the language being learned is spoken widely, although for the most part it is not natively spoken (e.g., English in India).

TIME TO THINK...

Consider your own language learning experience. Was it second language learning or foreign language learning, or both? Were they different experiences? In what ways? Consider differences and similarities in areas of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Is it easier to learn pronunciation in a second or a foreign language environment? What about grammar or vocabulary?

1.3 THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

Fundamental to the understanding of the nature of SLA is an understanding of what it is that needs to be learned. A facile answer is that a second language learner needs to learn the “grammar” of the TL. But what is meant by this? What is language? How can we characterize the knowledge that humans have of language?

All humans with normal access to natural language acquire a language in the first few years of life. The knowledge acquired is largely of an unconscious sort. That is, very young children learn how to form particular grammatical structures, such as relative clauses. They also learn that relative clauses often have a modifying function, but in a conscious sense do not know that it is a relative clause, and could presumably not state what relative clauses are used for. Take as an example the following sentence:

(1-2) I want the toy that the little boy is playing with.

A child could utter this fully formed sentence, which includes a relative clause (“that the little boy is playing with”), without being able to articulate the function of relative clauses (either this one, or relative clauses in general) and without being able to easily divide this sentence into its component parts. It is in this sense that the complex knowledge we have about our native language is largely unconscious.

There are a number of aspects of language that can be described systematically. In the next few sections, we deal with the **phonology**, **syntax**, **morphology**, **semantics**, and **pragmatics** of language.

1.3.1 Sound Systems

Knowledge of the sound system (phonology) of our native language is complex. Minimally, it entails knowing what are possible and what are not possible sounds in the language. For example, a native speaker of English knows that the first vowel sound in the German word Goethe is not a sound in English. This knowledge is reflected in recognition as well as in production, as generally a close English sound is substituted when one attempts to utter that word in English.

Phonological knowledge also involves knowing what happens to words in fast speech as opposed to more carefully articulated speech. For example, if a native speaker of American English wanted to express the following idea:

(1-3) I am going to write a letter.

that person would undoubtedly say something like the following:

(1-4) I'm gonna wriDa leDer.

We can see that speakers know when to combine sounds and when not to. We know that in “normal, fast” speech we combine words, but that in clearer, more articulated speech we do not.

A final point to make is that, as native speakers of a language, we know not only what are possible sounds and what are not possible sounds, but we also know what are possible combinations of sounds and what sounds are found in what parts of words. We know, for example, that in English, although [b] and [n] are both sounds of English, they cannot form a “blend” in the way that [b] and [r] can: **bnick*^❶ versus *brain*. Or, to take another example, consider the sound at the end of the word *ping* [ŋ], which is frequent in English. Native speakers of English know that it cannot appear at the beginning of words in English, although it can in other languages.

1.3.2 Syntax

In this section, we briefly describe what speakers know about the syntax of their language. This is what is frequently known as grammar, referring primarily to the knowledge we have of the order of elements in a sentence. We point out briefly that there are two kinds of grammars that are generally referred to: (a) **prescriptive grammar** and (b) **descriptive grammar**.³ By prescriptive grammar, we mean such rules as are generally taught in school, often without regard to the way native speakers of a language actually use language. We have in mind such rules as “Don’t end a sentence with a preposition,” “Don’t split infinitives,” “Don’t begin a sentence with a conjunction,” “Don’t use contractions in writing,” and “Use between with two items and among with more than two” (Associated Press rule, as cited in Safire, 1999, p.24). To illustrate that these so-called rules are something other than appropriate, McCawley (also cited in Safire), gives the following example: “He held four golf balls between his fingers.” Even though there are more than two fingers involved, one cannot say: “He held four golf balls *among* his fingers.” Additionally, many well-known versions exist of an anecdote involving Winston Churchill. One version refers to an editor who had rearranged something that Churchill had written so that the sentence in question would not end with a preposition. The story goes that Churchill responded with: “This is the sort of English up with which I will not put” (*The American Heritage Book of English*

❶ An * is used to indicate a form that does not or cannot exist in a language.

Usage, p.27).

Linguists are concerned with descriptive grammars: They attempt to describe languages as they are actually used. Thus, when talking about knowledge of syntax, we are referring to descriptive grammars. The rules just stated are not always true of descriptive grammars, because native speakers of English may violate the prescriptive rules.

As with phonological knowledge, discussed in section 1.3.1, native speakers of a language know which are possible sentences of their language and which are not. For example, below, we know that sentences 1-5 and 1-6 are possible English sentences, whereas sentences 1-7 and 1-8 are not possible or are ungrammatical:

(1-5) The big book is on the brown table.

(1-6) The woman whom I met yesterday is reading the same book that I read last night.

(1-7) *The book big brown table the on is.

(1-8) *Canceling what's but general how then the two actually.

Thus, part of what we know about language is the order in which elements can and cannot occur. This is, of course, not as simple as the preceding examples suggest. Are sentences 1-9 and 1-10 possible English sentences?

(1-9) Have him to call me back.

(1-10) That's the man that I am taller than.

For many speakers of English, these are strange-sounding; for others, they are perfectly acceptable.

Not only do we know which sentences are acceptable in our language, we also know which sentences are grossly equivalent in terms of meaning. For example, sentences 1-11 and 1-12 have the same general meaning, in the sense that they refer to the same event:

(1-11) Tom was hit by a car.

(1-12) A car hit Tom.

While we know that both sentences above can be assumed to be paraphrases of one another, we also know that they have slightly different functions in English. If someone asks, *What did that car hit?*, the most likely answer would be, *It hit Tom*, rather than *Tom was hit by it*. Thus, we as native speakers know, not only what is equivalent to what, but also when to use different grammatical patterns.

Another aspect of language that we know is how meaning is affected by moving elements within a sentence. For example, adverbs can generally be moved in a

sentence without affecting the meaning, whereas nouns cannot. Sentences 1-13 and 1-14 are roughly equivalent in meaning:

(1-13) Yesterday Sally saw Jane.

(1-14) Sally saw Jane yesterday.

but (1-15) and (1-16) do not share a common meaning:

(1-15) Yesterday Sally saw Jane.

(1-16) Yesterday Jane saw Sally.

Thus, knowing a language entails knowing a set of rules with which we can produce an infinite set of sentences. As a demonstration of the rule-governed nature of language and our ability to comprehend novel sentences, consider 1-17:

(1-17) The woman wearing the green scarf ran across the street to see the gorilla that had just escaped from the zoo.

Even though this sentence is probably one you have never encountered before, you have little difficulty in understanding what it means.

1.3.3 Morphology and the Lexicon

The study of morphology is the study of word formation. In many cases, words are made up of more than one part. For example, the word *unforeseen* is made up of three parts: *un*, which has a negative function; *fore*, which means earlier in time; and *seen*, which means to visualize. Each part is referred to as a **morpheme**⁴, which can be defined as the minimal unit of meaning.

There are two classes of morphemes that we can identify: bound and free. A bound morpheme is one that can never be a word by itself, such as the *un* of *unlikely*. A free morpheme is one that is a word in and of itself, such as *man*, *woman*, *book*, or *table*. Words can be created by adding morphemes, as in the following children's favorite:

establish
establish + ment
dis + establish + ment
dis + establish + ment + ari + an + ism
anti + dis + establish + ment + ari + an +ism

Not only do we know how to form words using affixes (prefixes, suffixes, infixes), but we also know what words can go with other words, as in *Mt. Everest is a high mountain*, but not **The Empire State Building is a high building*. *Tall* is more likely to describe a building than *high*.

1.3.4 Semantics

The study of semantics refers to the study of meaning. This, of course, does not necessarily correspond to grammaticality, because many ungrammatical sentences are meaningful, as can be seen in the following sentences:

(1-18) *That woman beautiful is my mother.

(1-19) *I'll happy if I can get your paper.

These and many other sentences, which may be uttered by nonnative speakers of a language, are perfectly comprehensible, despite the fact that they do not follow the "rules" of English. The reverse side of the picture is the sentence that is grammatically formed but that, because of the content, is meaningless (at least without additional contextualization), as in 1-20:

(1-20) That bachelor is married.

Knowledge of the semantics of a language entails knowledge of the reference of words. For example, in English, we know that a *table* refers to an object with a flat top and either three or four legs, or that a *leaf* most often refers to part of a tree. But, as native speakers, we also have to be able to distinguish between the meaning of the *leaf* of a tree and the *leaf* of a table. When we hear an advertisement on television for a table with extra leaves, it is this knowledge of homonyms that comes into play to help us interpret the advertisement in the manner intended. For a learner, of course, it is not so easy, as he or she might struggle to imagine a table with tree leaves.

Additionally, it is important to note that the limits of a word are not always clear. What is the difference between a *cup* and a *glass*? For many objects, the boundaries are obvious; for others, boundaries between objects are less so.

Referential meanings are clearly not the only way of expressing meaning. As native speakers of a language, we know that the way we combine elements in sentences affects their meaning. Sentences 1-21 and 1-22 are different in meaning. Thus, we know the extent to which syntax and meaning interrelate.

(1-21) The man bit the dog.

(1-22) The dog bit the man.

In some languages, the translation equivalents of those sentences (with possibly different intonation contours) can be interpreted as referring to the same event.

1.3.5 Pragmatics

Yet another area of language that we consider and that is part of what second language learners need to learn has to do with pragmatics, or the way in which we use

language in context. For example, when we answer the telephone and someone says *Is Samuel there?*, we know that this is a request to speak with Samuel. It would be strange to respond *yes*, with the caller then saying *thank you* and hanging up, unless the caller did not want to carry on the conversation with Samuel present, or only wanted to know whether or not Samuel was present. Clearly, the phrase *Is X there?* in the context of telephone usage is a request to speak with someone, and not an information question. When the intent is the latter—as, for example, a parent checking on the whereabouts of a child—the conversation might be slightly modified.

(1-23) FATHER 1: This is Samuel's father. Is Samuel there?

FATHER 2: Yes.

FATHER 1: Thanks, I just wanted to know where he was.

Similarly, word order, as discussed earlier, may have an effect on meaning (see sentences 1-21 and 1-22) in some grammatical contexts, but in others, it does not.

The following conversation exemplifies this:

(1-24) (Setting: Ice cream store; child, age 4)

CHILD: I want a raspberry and vanilla cone.

SHOPKEEPER: OK, one vanilla and raspberry cone coming up.

CHILD: No, I want a raspberry and vanilla cone.

SHOPKEEPER: That's what I'm getting you.

In this instance, the child was using word order to reflect the ordering of scoops of ice cream; the shopkeeper was not. Thus, what we have learned as adult native speakers of a language is what the real-life function of word order is in our language. In English, it does not necessarily refer to the ordering of physical objects.

TIME TO DO...

Read the first few paragraphs of the article (see Link #1 in the Link section at the end of this chapter) and consider the following: As a native or very fluent speaker of English, is this passage (easily) comprehensible? Consider this question in light of what it means to know one's first language.

1.4 THE NATURE OF NONNATIVE SPEAKER KNOWLEDGE

We have briefly characterized some areas of language knowledge that a native speaker has of a language. Knowing a second language well means knowing information similar to that of a native speaker of a language. Given the complexity of the knowledge that must be learned, it should be clear that the study of the acquisition of that knowledge

is a highly complex field.

The basic assumption in SLA research is that learners create a language system, known as an **interlanguage**⁵ (IL). This system is composed of numerous elements, not the least of which are elements from the NL and the TL. There are also elements in the IL that do not have their origin in either the NL or the TL. What is important is that the learners themselves impose structure on the available linguistic data and formulate an internalized system (IL).¹ Patterns in IL systems are both consistent and dynamic. What we eventually want to understand is: What is the nature of the IL system, how does it come to be, and why does it generally fail to be the same as a system underlying native speaker knowledge. With regard to the latter, an important question is: Why are learners exposed to something (often many times) but still remain unable to reproduce it in a way that matches that of native speakers?

Central to the concept of IL is the concept of **fossilization**⁶, which generally refers to the cessation of learning. The *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (Flexner & Hauck, 1988, p.755) defines fossilization of a linguistic form, feature, rule, and so forth in the following way: “to become permanently established in the interlanguage of a second language learner in a form that is deviant from the target-language norm and that continues to appear in performance regardless of further exposure to the target language.”

Because of the difficulty in determining when learning has ceased, one frequently refers to **stabilization** of linguistic forms, rather than fossilization or cessation of learning. In SLA, one often notes that IL plateaus are far from the TL norms. Furthermore, it appears to be the case that fossilized or stabilized ILs exist, no matter what learners do in terms of further exposure to the TL. Unfortunately, a solid explanation of permanent or temporary learning plateaus is lacking at present, owing, in part, to the paucity of **longitudinal studies**⁷ (see Chapter 3) that would be necessary to create the databases necessary to come to conclusions regarding “getting stuck” in another language.

TIME TO THINK...

In what ways is your knowledge of a second language similar or different from your L1 knowledge?

The following sentences were produced by native speakers of Arabic:

1. I bought a couple of towel.
2. There is many kind of way you make baklawa.
3. There are about one and half-million inhabitant in Jeddah.

¹ Since the early 1970s, a number of terms have been used to describe basically the same concept: *approximative system* (Nemser, 1971), *transitional competence* (Corder, 1967), *idiosyncratic dialect* (Corder, 1971), *learner language* (Færch, Haastrup, & Phillipson, 1984). Each of these terms has a slightly different focus. However, interlanguage is the most commonly used one.

Which linguistic items (and arrangements of items) do you think come from the target language, which come from the native language, and which are autonomous? As a way to begin, think about whether learners of English or languages other than Arabic are likely to utter similar sentences.

1.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have presented a series of basic definitions to help the reader begin the journey of the study of SLA. As has been seen, inherent in an analysis of IL data is a focus on the learner and on the processes involved in learning. In the following chapters, we present additional information about ILs and variables found to be related to IL development, beginning with a discussion in Chapter 2 of ways of analyzing second language data.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

In this chapter, you have learned about:

- SLA as an interdisciplinary discipline by nature, drawing on and contributing to a number of other social sciences that study human behavior, such as linguistics, education, psychology, and many others. The questions asked in these and other fields and the means or methods used to answer those questions have had a substantial influence on the interests of SLA researchers.
- Many purposes exist for studying SLA and the numerous applications. Findings from SLA research are used to inform the practices and decisions made by language teachers and educational policymakers, among others.
- Terminology:
 - NL
 - TL
 - SLA
 - Foreign language versus second language learning;
- Basic linguistic concepts:
 - sound systems/phonology
 - syntax
 - morphology
 - lexicon
 - semantics
 - pragmatics;

- Nonnative speaker knowledge and how it differs from native-speaker knowledge:
 - quantitatively (e.g., breadth of vocabulary);
 - qualitatively (e.g., conscious versus subconscious knowledge of structures and patterns).

难点注释与评析

1. Second language acquisition, 第二语言习得, 是指在习得本族语之后学习其他非本族语的过程。“第二语言”指一语学习之后的任何一种语言, 不论是第二、第三或第四种语言。这个术语既可以指课堂环境中的第二语言习得, 也可以指更加自然地接触二语的情形。有些学者会更倾向于使用第二语言研究 (second language studies) 或者第二语言发展 (second language development), 但本书仍使用第二语言习得作为各种现象的总名称, 因为人们主要是通过这个术语来了解这个领域的。
2. Bilingualism, 双语制, 指的是一个国家或地区实行的官方语言是两种或多种, 即官方规定两种或多种语言并用的语言制度或语言政策 (language policy)。双语制是由该国历史发展和文化背景而决定的, 从实际情况来看, 双语制和一个社会的双语程度没有必然的关联。在一个单语制的国家内, 社会的双语程度可能很高, 而在一个双语制的国家内, 社会的双语程度却可能很低。
3. Prescriptive grammar, 规定语法; descriptive grammar, 描述语法。规定语法是指学校里教的语法规则, 明确规定什么正确、什么不正确, 而常常不考虑本族语者实际使用语言的方式。描述语法则是按照实际使用的情形描写语言, 解释人们实际运用语言的方式, 它关注于描述语言是如何被人们所使用的, 而不是规定语言应当如何使用。
4. Morpheme, 词素, 是最小的语法单位, 也是最小的语音语义结合体。我们能够识别两类词素, 即黏着词素 (bound morpheme) 和自由词素 (free morpheme)。黏着词素本身不是词, 只可以和其他词素以固定位置组合成词, 如前缀、后缀和中缀。自由词素本身也是一个词, 通过添加词素可以构成新词。如 unbreakable 这个单词包含三个词素: un- (黏着词素)、break (自由词素)、-able (黏着词素)。
5. Interlanguage, 中介语, 由语言学家 Selinker 在《中介语》(1972) 一文中首先提出。它是指在第二语言习得过程中, 学习者通过一定的学习策略, 在目标语输入的基础上所形成的一种既不同于其本族语也不同于目标语, 而是随着学习的进展向目的语逐渐过渡的动态的语言系统。这个概念确认了学习者语言的地位, 它不是一个带有不规则偏误的缺损的语言体系, 而是有其内在结构的自足系统。这个系统由众多元素构成, 最重要的是来自本族语和目标语的元素。中介语理论的重要意义在于它把第二语言学习看作是一种心理过程, 并提供了一个理论框架来解释这种心理过程, 而且这种理论为后来人们采用实验的方法研究第二语言的学习提供了理论基础。
6. Fossilization, 石化, 这一概念是中介语理论的核心, 是 Selinker (1972) 首先提出的。石化就是“母语的词条、规则和词系统倾向保留在与目的语相关的中介语中, 不管学习者的年龄有多大, 也不管学习者接受的解释和指导有多少, 这种倾向都不会改变”。后来, Selinker 和 Han (2001) 进一步概括了石化定义的 6 个特征: (1) 石化就是发展的停滞; (2) 石化的特征出现在中介语的各个层面, 包括语音、音位、词法、句法、

语义、篇章和语用等层面;(3)石化的特征是持久的并有抵抗力的;(4)不管二语学习者是成人还是儿童,石化现象都会出现;(5)石化的特征往往表现为语言的回退(backsliding)、固化了的错误(stabilized error)、学习高原(learning plateau)、典型错误(typical error)、持久的非目的语语言运用(persistent non-target-like performance)、否定性反馈无法纠正的错误(errors that are impervious to negative feedback)、习惯性错误(habitual errors)和长期的自由变异(long-lasting free variation)等一些中介语形式的反复出现;(6)具体的、持久的中介语特征可以通过实证研究被发现。事实上,二语习得领域关于石化的争议较多,集中在石化的定义、石化的表现行为、石化是否真正存在以及石化与教学的关系等方面。文秋芳在其专著《二语习得重点问题研究》(2010)中专门用一个章节梳理了这些内容,推荐感兴趣的读者进一步阅读。

7. Longitudinal study, 纵向研究,也叫追踪研究,是指在一段相对长的时间内对同一个或同一批被试对象进行有系统的定期研究,或者从时间的发展过程中考察研究对象的研究方案。通过纵向研究我们能看到比较完整的发展过程和发展过程中变量的关键变化,但纵向研究由于历时较长,往往也比较花费物力、财力和人力,研究结果的时效性也比较差。

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

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Linguistics: An introduction (1999). Andrew Radford, Martin Atkinson, David Britain, Harald Clahsen, and Andrew Spencer. Cambridge University Press.

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The language instinct: How the mind creates language (1994). Steven Pinker. Morrow.

MORE TO DO AND MORE TO THINK ABOUT...

1. A teacher has drilled students in a structure called indirect questions:

Do you know where my book is?

Do you know what time it is?

Did he tell you what time it is?

As a direct result of the drills, all students in the class were able to produce the structure correctly in class. After class, a student came up to the teacher and

asked, “Do you know where is Mrs. Irving?” In other words, only minutes after the class, in spontaneous speech, the student used the structure practiced in class incorrectly. Describe what you think the reason is for this misuse. Had the lesson been a waste of time? How would you find out?

2. Consider the differences between child language acquisition and adult SLA. Specifically, consider the example provided in (1-2).

(1-2) I want the toy that the little boy is playing with.

With regard to this sentence, we state in this chapter that,

A child could utter this fully formed sentence, which includes a relative clause (“that the little boy is playing with”), without being able to articulate the function of relative clauses (either this one, or relative clauses in general) and without being able to easily divide this sentence into its component parts. It is in this sense that the complex knowledge we have about our native language is largely unconscious.

Do you think that this comment is also valid for adults learning a second language? Specifically, do you think that an adult needs to consciously learn the grammar of relative clauses *before* being able to use them spontaneously in IL? Take an example from your own language-learning or language-teaching experience and relate it to these child versus adult distinctions.

3. Create a list of some of the main reasons for the well-attested existence of fossilization in IL. Exchange your list with that of someone else and come up with a common list.
4. In section 1.3.2, we describe the types of knowledge that individuals have about sentences in their native language. We note that there is variation in native speakers’ acceptance of sentences, as in sentences 1-9 and 1-10.

(1-9) Have him to call me back.

(1-10) That’s the man that I am taller than.

Are these sentences acceptable to you? If not, what would you say instead? In what situations, if any, would you say these sentences? Consider how and when such variation might occur in terms of second language syntactic knowledge. If native speakers vary in what they think is or is not acceptable, how does that affect second language learning?

5. Following are English translations of compositions written by two schoolchildren in their native language (Tatar) and compositions written by the same children in Russian, their L2. In all instances, the children were describing a picture.

Child 1 (written in Tatar):

The long awaited spring has come. The days are getting warmer and warmer. The blue sky is covered by white fluffy clouds. They skim like sailboats through the sky. The ice is breaking away on the river to the north. The birds have returned after having flown from us to a warm region. The apples have bloomed. Children are planting tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, and other vegetables. They are watering the trees. Azat is planting flowers. Rustam is watering the apples. The children are happily working in the garden. They are very happy.

Child 1 (written in Russian):

In the schoolyard there is a large garden. Children are digging in the earth. Children are working in the garden. In the garden there is a pine tree, an oak, and tomatoes. An apple tree is growing there. They are planting flower beds.

Child 2 (written in Tatar):

It was a beautiful spring day. The sun was shining. The birds who had returned from distant lands were singing. The trees were swallowed up by the greenery of the luxuriant spring foliage. The children have come into their garden. There the apple trees have already blossomed. Rustam is watering the flowers. The remaining children are planting vegetables. The teacher is watching the work of her pupils. She's pleased with their work, she smiles.

Child 2 (written in Russian):

In the schoolyard there is a large garden. Children are working there. The garden is big. In the garden there are trees. A child is planting a tree. A child is pouring water from a watering pot. In the garden a poplar is growing.

What kind of information (e.g., descriptive or evaluative) do these children include in their TL descriptions of these pictures? In their NL descriptions of the pictures? What similarities/differences are there between the NL and TL versions of these pictures?

6. In pairs, answer "True" or "False" to the following statements. Justify your responses. Once you come to a consensus, compare your answers with those of another pair. Note that, in some of the cases, arguments can be made for a "true" response as well as a "false" response.
- (a) Any child without cognitive disabilities can learn any language with equal ease.
 - (b) Learning an L2 is a matter of learning a new set of habits.
 - (c) The only reason that some people cannot learn a second or foreign language is that they are insufficiently motivated.
 - (d) All children can learn a second language accent-free.
 - (e) All human beings have an innate capacity to learn language.
 - (f) Vocabulary is the most important part of learning an L2.

- (g) Vocabulary is the most difficult part of learning an L2.
- (h) Instruction is a waste of time.
- (i) Learning an L2 takes no more time than learning an L1.

LINK

1. <http://goo.gl/5Km8W>

Second and Foreign Language Data

章节导读

本章通过向读者展示几组语料，并对这些语料一步一步分析，展示了中介语语料分析范式，希望能引导读者理解甚至质疑分析过程中的逻辑和推理。在展示语料之前，作者特别指出，对第二语言习得语料常可做多种解释，因此在分析中介语语料时并没有什么“正确”答案，不过逻辑缜密的推理的确能减少分析中所产生的歧义。

作者展示并分析了三组语料，分别是“复数”“动词 + -ing”标记和“介词”语料。分析模式分为三步：首先对语料进行归类并提出假设，然后验证假设，最后对语料不能回答的问题进行讨论，并提出如何进一步收集数据以获得更全面深入的理解。第一组语料中作者演示如何分析本族语为阿拉伯语者所使用的英语中关于“复数”的语料。研究者先根据“英语式”和“非英语式”将这些语料分类，然后运用中介语的一些原则解释复数标记模式，最后作者指出，在详尽的分析之后，如果还有一些地方没有把握，就需要额外收集一些语料来检验特定的假设，如收集新语料来分析复数使用在口语和书面语中存在的差异。第二组是关于“动词 + -ing”标记的语料分析演示。所用语料是阿拉伯语本族语者在学习英语早期阶段产出的自然话语。作者根据语料提出假设并不断检验假设，最后作者同样建议，要想解释语料中阿拉伯英语学习者为什么会同时使用带有“-ing”标记和动词简单式来表达“进行”含义这一异常现象，还需要重新收集更多的语料；例如，及物和不及物动词是否影响表达“进行”的意思，外化主语（overt subject）的存在是否影响表达“进行”这一含义的效果，等等。最后一组语料是对介词语料的分析。作者根据三组阿拉伯语—英语中介语句子，依次提出多个假设并一一验证。作者指出，由于各种语料是混合在一起的，诸如个体差异、口语与书面语对中介语规则有何影响等问题尚未搞清楚，而且也不排除学习者选用介词时存在随意性，因此还需收集新的语料做进一步探究。

最后，作者介绍了他们发现的五个中介语规则，包括：只要 X 存在，Y 就会存在，