

Review article: Three new complementing second language acquisition textbooks

Claire Foley

▶ **To cite this version:**

Claire Foley. Review article: Three new complementing second language acquisition textbooks. Second Language Research, 2007, 23 (3), pp.359-379. 10.1177/0267658307077645 . hal-00570732

HAL Id: hal-00570732
https://hal.science/hal-00570732

Submitted on 1 Mar 2011

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Second Language Research 23,3 (2007); pp. 359–379

Review article
Three new complementing second language acquisition textbooks

Claire Foley *Boston College*

Three new textbooks in second language acquisition (SLA) differ in their aims. Saville-Troike (2006) offers a concise introductory text with an interdisciplinary approach. De Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2005) provide a more comprehensive and more advanced introductory text with excerpts from the scholarly literature. Sanz (2005) presents an edited volume representing research in various subfields within an information-processing approach to SLA. All three offer valuable material for instructors to draw on, and they complement one another in interesting ways.

Keywords: second language acquisition textbooks; introductory SLA course

de Bot, K., Lowie, W. and **Verspoor, M.** 2005: *Second language acquisition: an advanced resource book*. New York: Routledge. 304 pages. $105.00 hardbound, $29.95 paperback. ISBN 0-415-33870-0.

Sanz, C., editor, 2005: *Mind and context in adult second language acquisition*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. 332 pages. $44.95 paperback. ISBN 1-58901-070-1.

Saville-Troike, M. 2006: *Introducing second language acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 206 pages. $75.00 hardbound, $29.99 paperback. ISBN 0-521-79407-2.

I Introduction

Three textbooks published in 2005 and 2006 offer new resources to instructors of courses in second language acquisition (SLA) and bilingualism.

Address for correspondence: Claire Foley, Program in Linguistics, Department of Slavic and Eastern Languages, 210 Lyons Hall, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467–3804, USA; email: foleycw@bc.edu

© 2007 SAGE Publications 10.1177/0267658307077645

The texts may be useful to *Second Language Research* readers in a variety of ways: as adopted course textbooks, as resources to draw upon for teaching, and as scholarly references.

To help *Second Language Research* readers determine whether and how they might find the texts helpful in any of these ways, this review seeks to:

1) provide a general summary of the approach and major topics of each text;
2) explain what kinds of data and activities from each might be adapted for use in teaching;
3) assess some of the strengths and limitations of each text; and
4) consider how each text would suit various course approaches and student backgrounds.

Sections II, III and IV below include annotated tables of contents to help address (1) and (2). Comments surrounding the tables address (1)–(3), and each section concludes with some thoughts on (4). Section V considers some ways the texts complement one another.

II de Bot, Lowie and Verspoor, 2005

The subtitle of Kees de Bot, Wander Lowie and Marjolijn Verspoor's *Second language acquisition* is apt: they provide an advanced resource book for both students and instructors. The text is an addition to Routledge's Applied Linguistics Series, which aims to introduce core areas of study within applied linguistics. The series also aims to provide access to illustrative readings from original research, and to offer suggestions for projects and activities that will allow students to integrate what they are learning.

The organization of the book follows a scheme established for all books in this Routledge series. The book includes three major sections. Section A, 'Introduction', presents key concepts, terminology, and analytical and methodological approaches for the field. Section B, 'Extension', develops these concepts and approaches by reprinting and commenting on excerpts from published research. Sections A and B both include activities and tasks for reflection and analysis. Section C, titled 'Exploration', shifts focus even more toward tasks and activities, providing guidance for students to carry out their own projects.

Each section includes seven subsections, or units, which are linked across the three sections. Table 1 summarizes the units and sections. The authors introduce and develop the application of Dynamic Systems Theory (which they explain originated in biology) to SLA as a way to account for several key properties of SLA, including the fact that developing language systems (1) change all the time and (2) include subsystems or variables that affect one another. This approach unifies their discussion of various concepts and methods in the field, and it partly guides their choice of readings in Section B.

Throughout units A and B, the authors have included 'tasks' to help readers think about the material being presented, or to prepare readers for a chapter section to come. Some of these tasks ask readers to reflect on their own SLA experience. For example, in unit A4, the authors present the debate over whether languages can be switched on or off in processing. Task A4.4 asks readers to consider whether, when and why they might have had the experience of retrieving a word in one language while speaking another. Some tasks include quotations or data for students to respond to or analyse. These tasks are an important resource for instructors: many could be usefully adapted for classroom activities or even assignments.

The range and depth of the primary source material in the excerpts in B – and the care with which the authors have presented the selections – are particularly excellent features of this text. The selections in B achieve what many instructors aim for with course packets that supplement texts: they provide exposure to a variety of original research that informs discoveries in the field. The authors interrupt the primary source material from time to time with explanations and definitions to clarify concepts, identify implications, or connect the ideas in a passage to material elsewhere in the book. (The authors paid attention to the fact that readers might get lost during the switches from primary material to commentary: they use different typeface for the source material on the one hand and the commentary or tasks on the other, and they include a box in the margin listing the section and the authors of the excerpt every time the text resumes. These boxes in the margins help tremendously with navigation.)

As the table above shows, the selections excerpted in Section B are mostly recent: of the 15 selections, four were published in 2000 or later,

Table 1 Summary of units within sections A, B and C in de Bot *et al.*, 2005

A1: Defining the field: Introduces core issues in SLA, including definitions of key or controversial terms (e.g. monolingual/-bilingual/multilingual, second vs. foreign language acquisition, acquisition vs. learning, implicit vs. explicit learning)	*B1: Reading and finding SLA literature:* Discusses how to read critically and conduct literature searches	*C1: Doing SLA research:* • Introduces some types of SLA research (e.g. quantitative vs. qualitative) • Discusses reporting on research
A2: Dynamic aspects of SLA: Introduces concepts of Dynamic Systems Theory (DST)	*B2: Dynamic aspects of SLA extended:* Excerpts from Cook, 1995; Hansen and Chen, 2002; and Pallier *et al.*, 2003	*C2: Dynamic aspects of SLA explored:* Activities: case studies on acquisition, attrition and relearning
A3: Historical perspectives: • Reviews empiricist and rationalist approaches to language acquisition • Reviews key SLA approaches, including Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and Monitor Model	*B3: Historical perspectives extended:* Excerpts from Corder, 1967; Gregg, 1984; Kellerman, 2000*	*C3: Historical perspectives explored:* Activities: L1 data analysis, error analysis of interlanguage data, and polysemous-words project based on Kellerman, 2000
A4: The multilingual mind: • Reviews Levelt's (1993) processing model • Reviews models for multilingual lexicon • Introduces a dynamic model for multilingual lexicon	*B4: The multilingual mind extended:* Excerpts from Kroll and Stewart, 1994; Kroll and Dijkstra, 2002	*C4: The multilingual mind explored:* Activities: verbal fluency (listing category members), simultaneous translation, lexical access in reading
A5: The developing system: Discusses learning mechanisms, including Competition Model, and distinguishes between explicit and implicit learning and knowledge	*B5: The developing system extended:* Excerpts from Swain and Lapkin, 1995; Gass *et al.*, 1998	*C5: The developing system explored:* Activities: knowledge of English possessive formation rule, use of corpus data to test frequency-based predictions, Competition Model experiment
A6: Learners' characteristics: Addresses age (with discussion of critical period hypothesis), aptitude and intelligence, and attitude and motivation	*B6: Learners' characteristics extended:* Excerpts from Sparks and Ganschow, 1991; Gardner *et al.*, 1997; Bongaerts, 1999	*C6: Learners' characteristics explored:* Activities: role of working memory, perception and production, attitude and motivation surveys

A7: The role of instruction:	*B7: The role of instruction extended:*	*C7: The role of instruction explored:*
• Traces some historical developments in teaching approaches • Introduces Communicative Language Teaching, Content-Based Instruction, Sociocultural Theory, and form-focused instruction	Excerpts from Spada, 1997; Mackey, 1999	Activities: devising instruction plan, role of interaction

Note: *Since I have not yet obtained Kellerman (2000), I list the citation as it appears in de Bot *et al.* (2005).

nine in the 1990s, and two before 1990 (Corder, 1967; Gregg, 1984). The excerpts extend core concepts and advance the aims of the text in a variety of ways. To list a few:

- Some selections supplement the core material in the A units. For example, the excerpt in unit B6 from Gardner *et al.* (1997) includes a review of studies on individual differences that probe various factors (including anxiety, field dependence/independence and language learning strategies) not discussed in unit A6, which introduced the individual factors of age, aptitude and intelligence, and attitude and motivation. Another example is the selection in unit B3 from Corder (1967), which further traces the history of thought about SLA presented in unit A3.
- Sometimes the authors interrupt a selection to offer comments or pose questions guiding students in critical reading (discussed further below).
- In some cases, selections are juxtaposed to illustrate development of theories in SLA. For example, in unit B4, the excerpt from Kroll and Dijkstra (2002) questions and revisits an assumption of the preceding excerpt from Kroll and Stewart (1994) (the assumption that different languages have separate mental lexicons).
- The selections provide original data and arguments that students can draw on as they consider and evaluate major claims in SLA. For example, the excerpt in unit B6 from Bongaerts (1999) provides empirical evidence directly relevant to debates of the critical period hypothesis (and on its formulation). The excerpt from Hansen and Chen (2002) includes two tables and two line graphs that efficiently present much data bearing on the phenomenon of language attrition.

- All selections provide a window into SLA research history, design, methods, and/or findings that is available only through immersion in the primary literature.

There are limitations to the excerpting approach and choices as well.

- Students may wonder about details from the omitted sections of the selected readings. For example, some may ask about abbreviations in unit B2's excerpt from the Pallier *et al.* (2003) brain-imaging study (e.g. 'activation in the right STS'). Some may want more details about the z-tests in unit B6's excerpt from Bongaerts (1999).
- Because the book uses Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) as an organizing approach to understanding SLA, the range of excerpts does not fully represent the range of approaches to SLA research often presented in introductory courses.

The first limitation is an inevitable consequence of excerpting, not a flaw in the authors' workmanship (and, in fact, their extensive comments often bridge the gaps in sections or summarize conclusions, and they are conscientious about marking spots where material is skipped). In an ideal world, this first limitation might be addressed by seeking permission to make the full text of the chosen articles available on the internet for those who have purchased the book. (A website already exists for the book, and it includes a set of links helpful for SLA research and links to some of the excerpt authors' websites.) This solution would be especially helpful for less-accessible sources like Kellerman (2000), which was published in Barcelona, with excerpts apparently translated into English by the textbook authors.

The second limitation is also not a shortcoming, stemming rather from the volume's scope, but might be addressed in part by references to anthologies spanning sub-disciplines, like Ritchie and Bhatia (1996), Doughty and Long (2003) and Hinkel (2005). Another option would be to include references to edited volumes that typify a range of approaches to SLA; e.g. Flynn *et al.*, 1998; Archibald, 2000; Sanz, 2005 (reviewed below).

The guided activities in Section C are another outstanding contribution of this book. Some of the tasks invite students to draw on their own SLA experiences. Others are mini-replications of published SLA studies.

For example, one task in unit C5 is based on Bates and MacWhinney (1981) and Bates *et al.* (1987): it guides students in creating a set of sentences in English and another language to use in a test of whether L1 and L2 speakers of the languages can identify the agent in the sentence. Similar adaptations draw on Flege (1993), Mackey (1999) and Kellerman (2000). A third kind of task presents data reported in the primary literature for students to analyse. Finally, there are tasks with original data, such as a set of sentences from Vietnamese speakers acquiring English. These tasks are a rich resource, giving students a taste of empirical work, and offering instructors the freedom either to support students in the analysis steps outlined or to create new analysis tasks.

Another helpful feature of this text is the orientation to scholarship that units B1 and C1 offer. Unit B1, 'Reading and finding SLA literature', helps beginning readers of the primary literature to start reading critically. It provides specific guidance, for example, in assessing whether an assertion is adequately supported. Unit B1 also reviews some techniques for searching the literature, listing specific databases and discussing the selection of search terms. Unit C1 helps students consider, for example, to what extent findings from a study can be generalized. These sections are complementary to the type of orientation offered in Sanz (2005), reviewed below: Sanz does not include sections on critical reading and literature searches, but her introductory chapter introduces students to some of the key scholarly conferences in the field, and the design of the Sanz volume permits a much fuller discussion of qualitative research methods and principles of statistical analysis.

De Bot *et al.*'s text is an impressive achievement. Beyond its usefulness as a resource, some instructors may choose it as a basic text in introductory SLA courses. Although it is grounded in Dynamic Systems Theory as a theoretical approach, discussion of DST is not so pervasive as to present a barrier to instructors wishing to present multiple theoretical approaches to SLA. (In fact, instructors who did want to explore DST itself would probably supplement this text with other readings.) Instructors seeking to provide a basic introduction to (for example) linguistic, psychological and sociological approaches to SLA would need to supplement the text with class presentations and possibly other readings; but, for many, the value of the excerpts from the scholarly literature and the quality of the activities would make adoption worthwhile.

Advanced undergraduates or graduate students are the likeliest audience. The text presupposes some background in linguistics, assuming a basic familiarity with the sub-fields of phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. (For example, an exercise in unit A3 provides a small data set and invites students to '[i]solate the morphemes' and consider the 'syntactic function' of each.) Thus, instructors will be called upon to introduce linguistic terminology and concepts for those who need it; but, again, this is unlikely to argue against adoption for an introductory SLA course.

III Sanz, 2005

In *Mind and context in adult second language acquisition*, editor Cristina Sanz presents 10 chapters, authored by different scholars, on information-processing approaches to SLA. The reviews of research are so current and so comprehensive that they are likely to be fruitful even for those who are already immersed in SLA research from an information-processing perspective. The editor's introduction identifies information-processing approaches as those that probe 'how nonnative languages are learned . . . and how knowledge of such second languages is used.' Following the introduction, the book includes four sections, summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Summary of organization and some major topics in Sanz, 2005

Part 1: Theory and methodology:		
Chapter 1: Adult SLA: the interaction between external and internal factors	Cristina Sanz	• Provides an overview of some information-processing approaches to SLA, situating them in a wider academic context • Contrasts generative and nativist approaches
Chapter 2: Research methodology: quantitative approaches	Rusan Chen	• Defines and illustrates core statistical terminology • Introduces statistical tests common in experimental work in SLA: *t*-tests, ANOVA, simple and multiple regression, chi-square tests • Suggests further readings on statistics
Chapter 3: Research methodology: qualitative research	Rebecca Adams, Akiko Fujii, Alison Mackey	• Distinguishes between quantitative and qualitative research, with comments on philosophical assumptions about the nature of research

(*continued*)

Table 2 (*Continued*)

		• Reviews some topics treated in qualitative work • Describes specific qualitative methods
Part 2: Internal factors:		
Chapter 4: Individual differences: age, sex, working memory, and prior knowledge	Harriet Wood Bowden, Cristina Sanz, Catherine A. Stafford	• Introduces and explores Critical Period Hypothesis • Reviews research on sex differences in SLA • Re-examines aptitude in terms of working memory • Reviews research on the role of prior experience
Chapter 5: A cognitive neuroscience perspective on second language acquisition: the declarative/procedural model	Michael T. Ullman	• Provides background on neurocognition, memory, and brain structure • Introduces the declarative/procedural model • Presents some features of competing frameworks for neurocognition and language
Chapter 6: Attention and awareness in SLA	Ronald P. Leow, Melissa A. Bowles	• Reviews models of attention • Reviews a range of empirical approaches • Presents verbal reports method in detail • Reviews role of noticing in L2 development
Part 3: External factors:		
Chapter 7: Input and interaction	Alison Mackey, Rebekha Abbuhl	• Introduces the interaction hypothesis • Includes sections on input, feedback, and output, with both surveys of literature and in-depth reports on some studies
Chapter 8: Explicitness in pedagogical interventions: input, practice and feedback	Cristina Sanz, Kara Morgan-Short	• Introduces explicit and implicit learning • Discusses findings on explicitness in both rule presentation and in feedback, and illustrates with specific studies • Summarizes thirteen studies on explicitness in a set of appendix tables
Part 4: Pedagogical Implications:		
Chapter 9: Processing instruction	Bill VanPatten	• Outlines a model of input processing for SLA • Introduces pedagogical approach of Processing Instruction
Chapter 10: Content-based foreign language instruction	Heidi Byrnes	• Describes features of content-based instruction (CBI) • Reviews curriculum initiatives and innovations that relate to CBI • Proposes new ways to view CBI and its significance for pedagogy and curriculum

Part 1 orients readers to information-processing approaches in general and to the topics in subsequent chapters in particular. In Chapter 1, Sanz names and explains many of the specific internal and external variables that influence adult SLA and that are addressed later in the volume. Chen's introductions in Chapter 2 to core statistical terms are remarkably concise and clear, and the overview of specific statistical tests is important background for understanding research results discussed in Parts 2 and 3 of the book. (The suggested readings in Chapter 2 emphasize general references rather than work specific to language studies and might, for example, be supplemented by citing some of the nine books reviewed by Brown, 2004). Adams, Fujii and Mackey's discussion of the differences between qualitative and quantitative work in Chapter 3 is thoughtful and is grounded in specific examples. Students will appreciate their overview of some of the topics addressed through qualitative research, as well as the specific descriptions of methods (e.g. classroom observations, case studies, ethnographies, think-aloud and retrospective protocols, diaries and journals, questionnaires and interviews).

In Sanz' introduction, she describes Parts 2 and 3 as the book's 'heart'. One strength of these central chapters is the way they treat several core topics of concern to any instructor in an SLA course, regardless of the course approach. For example, in their section on age in Chapter 4, Bowden, Sanz and Stafford include an especially coherent introduction to the critical period hypothesis that will provide a basis for students to evaluate the extent to which (and the ways in which) various research studies bear on the hypothesis in its different forms. Another example is the introduction to the interaction hypothesis in Chapter 7. Mackey and Abbuhl summarize particular studies exploring the role of input, feedback or output. The authors achieve a great deal in a short space: these summaries exemplify (among other things) the ways researchers have:

- attempted to isolate variables from a complex set of influences on SLA;
- selected test groups and methods to examine the influence of these variables; and
- drawn conclusions from complex findings.

This approach teaches readers both about the findings themselves and about research design.

Another strength of Parts 2 and 3 is the window they provide into the links between cognitive psychology more generally and SLA research in particular. Readers will learn about a variety of such links:

- Memory: In Chapter 5, Ullman introduces the contrasting declarative and procedural memory systems, citing the functional, neuroanatomical and biochemical evidence that sheds light on their nature (and argues for their existence as distinct systems). Also, in Chapter 4, Bowden, Sanz and Stafford link recent findings on working memory to L2 research.
- Neurocognition and the brain: Chapters 4 and 5 also link neurocognition more generally to L2 work, and Chapter 5's four figures illustrating brain structure provide important background.
- Learning: In Chapter 8, Sanz and Morgan-Short discuss the differences between explicit and implicit learning as they have been explored in cognitive psychology, and relate this work to SLA studies, explaining how differences between the fields lead to limitations in extending results from one to the other.
- Attention: Chapter 6 begins with an overview of models of attention: first several models from cognitive psychology, then models specific to SLA.

A third major strength of Parts 2 and 3 is every chapter's remarkable balance of context and research content. The various authors provide context by defining important terms in efficient ways and by drawing needed distinctions. An example from Chapter 8: Sanz and Morgan-Short distinguish initially among explicit evidence in the input, explicit processing and explicit knowledge; and this initial clarity paves the way for better understanding of discussions of explicitness across academic fields and across complex studies. The presentation of context is smooth and never patronizing. At the same time, the research surveyed is voluminous and complex. The number of studies cited per chapter in Parts 2 and 3 ranges from about 70 to about 220, averaging about 120 each. The cited work is either situated in the field in a way that is useful for reference or discussed at length in ways that deepen our understanding of how information-processing research works in SLA. Chapter 6 illustrates the kind of effective compromise authors choose in order to provide representative citations without sacrificing depth: in their section on awareness and learning, Leow and Bowles first cite a range of approaches (e.g. one paragraph on methodology cites 21 studies to

provide examples of research across seven different empirical methods) and next present one method, verbal reports, in detail, citing about 40 studies that either underlie, develop or use the method. Chapter 8 reveals another strategy: in a set of appendix tables, Sanz and Morgan-Short present an organized comparison of many design features, findings and limitations of thirteen studies bearing on explicitness.

Part 4 of the book includes topics that will be helpful to readers who are beginning to consider the implications of SLA research for instruction and curriculum. In Chapter 9, VanPatten describes some of the basic features of processing instruction (PI) and illustrates them with sample linguistic forms and activities from instruction in French. The specific examples will help readers new to the topic, and the chapter also discusses how PI differs from other input-related pedagogical approaches. In Chapter 10, Byrnes extends the discussion of pedagogy to the level of curriculum. Byrnes describes some of the features of content-based instruction (CBI), reviewing the history of SLA research that bears on the integration of meaning and form in instruction. In one of several sections with interesting epistemological implications, Byrnes discusses the 'integrative' nature of CBI, citing work that explores what is learned when the content focus is texts rather than linguistic systems. In another, she probes what CBI might mean for our understanding of language itself. These sections are likely to engage linguists and philosophers of language.

A minor limitation of the book is that its treatment of experimental design and methods in quantitative studies is somewhat indirect. Although Chen introduces quantitative data analysis in Chapter 2, an extensive discussion of particular methods and types of design susceptible to statistical analysis is beyond the intended scope. Readers will glean much information about design and method as they learn about statistics in Chapter 2, because Chen uses published SLA studies and concepts from SLA research for illustration; for example, types of measurement scales are illustrated with examples from SLA research. Also, Chapter 3 includes a discussion of questionnaires, and in their discussions of specific studies, subsequent chapters provide a window into design. This minor limitation might be further addressed in Chapter 2 by citing surveys like Lazaraton (2005), which also lists sources for statistics for applied linguists.

A second limitation is a result of the book's aims, and also its provenance. It does not aim to provide a broad survey of psychological approaches to SLA; for example, it does not include in-depth discussion of such approaches as the Competition Model or connectionism. It seeks instead to provide a 'picture of the latest research on processing approaches to SLA' (p. ix). The editor writes that this volume grew from a series of guest lectures on current research presented in a Georgetown University course titled 'Instructed SLA', so the range of topics and approaches was also influenced by the research goals and interests of the writers.

Because it stems from a decision to tap the knowledge of specialists, this limitation is the corollary of an important strength; and, in fact, if permissions are granted, many of the chapters are likely to be popular for course packets. For example, Chen's chapter on statistical methods would supplement readings for a range of courses on language acquisition.

For course adoptions, the book would therefore best suit an advanced undergraduate or graduate seminar. It does not extensively discuss broad SLA approaches or history: for example, chapter 1 does not cite Lado (1957) or Corder (1967). It cites Burt *et al.*'s (1975) book on the Bilingual Syntax Measure, but does not cite Dulay and Burt (1973). (Nor does it define or discuss morpheme-order studies, either when it cites Brown (1973) or when it mentions the Bilingual Syntax Measure.) These examples illustrate the fact that neither this chapter nor the book as a whole aims to serve as a basic text in SLA. Its aims are different, which means that instructors who adopt this text in an introductory SLA course will need to either adopt a more general and more basic text alongside it, or provide such background in their own presentations.

This book is a valuable reference, especially for those seeking to enlarge their knowledge of information-processing approaches to SLA. Also, Chapters 2–8 each end with an 'Exercises' section that includes data analysis and a guided critique of a study. Like the activities discussed above in de Bot *et al.*'s Section C, these exercises allow students to immerse themselves in original data and research, getting a feel for what work in the field under this approach is like. The exercises are also likely to prove useful to instructors who own the book but have not adopted it, because they include helpful approaches and data that might be used for illustration.

IV Saville-Troike, 2006

Muriel Saville-Troike's *Introducing second language acquisition* is a new addition to the set available for adoption in undergraduate introductory courses in SLA. The text is part of the Cambridge Introductions to Language and Linguistics series, which includes texts that '[assume] no prior knowledge of the subject' (p. ii). The book addresses this requirement well, both through its efficient presentation of background (e.g. modular areas of language knowledge) and through its particularly excellent use of tables and figures to present examples and summaries of key discoveries from research.

There are seven chapters, which are summarized in Table 3. The book is interdisciplinary in its approach and, from the first chapter, it presents a variety of dimensions of SLA that researchers grounded in different disciplines choose to emphasize. Chapter 1, a six-page introduction, lists three key questions that are addressed by various approaches to SLA and that later chapters return to again and again:

- What exactly does the L2 learner come to know?
- How does the learner acquire this knowledge?
- Why are some learners more successful than others?

Both the interdisciplinary approach of the text and a particular sensitivity to contexts for language use are reflected even in this short initial chapter. For example, in her discussion of competence vs. performance, Saville-Troike distinguishes linguistic, communicative and pragmatic competence, in keeping with the interdisciplinary perspective of the entire book. Also, in addition to distinguishing 'second' and 'foreign' languages, Saville-Troike defines 'library language' ('one which functions primarily as a tool for further learning through reading'; for example, when primary scholarly literature is in a non-native language) and 'auxiliary language' ('one which learners need to know for some official functions in their immediate political setting, or will need for purposes of wider communication, although their first language serves most other needs in their lives') (p. 4). This early recognition of multiple distinctions in degree and type of multilingualism reflects an emphasis on contexts for language use that extends throughout the text.

Table 3 Summary of organization and some major topics in Saville-Troike, 2006

Chapter 1: Introducing second language acquisition	• Presents organizational framework for the text • Introduces key terminology (e.g. SLA, simultaneous vs. sequential multilingualism)
Chapter 2: Foundations of second language acquisition	• Discusses multilingualism across the globe • Provides background on L1 acquisition • Introduces linguistic, psychological and social approaches to SLA
Chapter 3: The linguistics of SLA	• Traces historical developments in SLA • Introduces morpheme-order studies • Introduces UG and functional-linguistic approaches
Chapter 4: The psychology of SLA	• Introduces representation of multiple languages in the brain • Introduces various psychology-based approaches to SLA • Discusses individual differences • Presents cognitive effects of multilingualism
Chapter 5: Social contexts of SLA	• Defines communicative competence • Discusses microsocial and macrosocial factors
Chapter 6: Acquiring knowledge for L2 use	• Distinguishes competence and use • Distinguishes types of communicative competence (e.g. academic and interpersonal) • Probes components of language knowledge • Discusses receptive and productive language use
Chapter 7: L2 learning and teaching	• Integrates discoveries from linguistic, psychological and social perspectives • Discusses 'near-native' competence • Presents implications for language teaching

Chapter 2 provides foundations in L1 acquisition, first introducing general features of the roles of nature and nurture, and then discussing some similarities and differences between L1 and L2 acquisition. The latter section introduces some core terminology (e.g. transfer, feedback). Chapter 2 also introduces the frameworks for SLA study that are explored in the subsequent three chapters: linguistic, psychological and social.

Chapter 3 presents early linguistic approaches to SLA, followed by UG and functional-linguistic approaches. Chapter 4 introduces some major discoveries and questions about the representation of multiple languages in the brain, and then turns to information-processing approaches, the Competition Model and connectionism, among other topics. The discussion of individual differences includes age, sex, aptitude,

motivation, cognitive style, personality and learning strategies. Chapter 5's discussion of communicative competence provides the grounding readers need to explore such microsocial factors as communicative context and such macrosocial factors as global and national status of an L2, institutional forces and social categories.

Chapters 5 and 6 are the two places where readers will most profit from the author's own expertise. Chapter 5 includes figures with original data illustrating, for example, various ways a native or non-native speaker might modify speech in interactions, and the surrounding discussion leads to a section on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory that considers the role of interaction as 'a causative force' in SLA (p. 111). The chapter also includes original observations and discoveries from the author's own fieldwork. Chapter 6, 'Acquiring knowledge for L2 use', further probes the notion of communicative competence, and builds on topics from earlier chapters as it explores how learners synthesize what they know, both for listening and reading and for speaking and writing.

Chapter 7 efficiently combines a synthesis of discoveries from across disciplines and an overview of implications for learning and teaching. The chapter includes concise lists of responses to the three guiding questions introduces in Chapter 1: for example, the response to the third guiding question ('Why are some learners more successful than others?') summarizes findings relating to seven factors: social context, social experience, relationship of L1 and L2, age, aptitude, motivation and instruction.

A major strength of the book is the quality of the tables and figures. These include a Chapter 3 table of types of interference, with examples, and the Chapter 5 table on interactional modifications. Because so many of the tables include original data, instructors who own the book will find them to be an important resource. The fact that the author has made all figures available in the form of PowerPoint slides on the book's website will make this resource particularly helpful to instructors who adopt the book.

Another strength is the engaging way in which many topics are developed. For example, Chapter 2's discussion of multilingualism across the world will be useful for both students and instructors, and its analysis of why the numbers of L1 and L2 speakers of particular languages are uncertain provides an immediately fresh way of thinking about the social phenomenon of multilingualism. Another example is

from a discussion of components of language knowledge in Chapter 6. Figure 6.4 draws on McCarthy and Carter (1997) to list the 50 most frequent words in written vs. spoken English. This is a distinction that is likely to foster thinking about differences between competence and use.

Yet another strength is the book's useful website, which offers a 'Professional resources' link. Subsections include a list of 22 journals related to SLA, a list of professional associations (which includes the Modern Language Association but mysteriously omits the Linguistic Society of America), and a list of institutes of research and development. This site provides some scholarly orientation for students, and many researchers will find something new to them in at least one of the lists.

The book is somewhat limited in its utility as a guide to scholarly literature: in keeping with its pedagogical aims, the book is less reference-intensive than the two texts reviewed above. It does include at the end of each chapter an annotated bibliography of about 5–9 sources for further reading. These lists are supplemented by additional annotated bibliographies on the book's website, entitled 'Primary suggestions for further reading', listing 8–10 sources for each of Chapters 3–5 and a few sources for Chapters 2 and 6. The selection criteria for the sources included on these lists vary in their obviousness. For example, in the list for Chapter 3, the selections for 'Early approaches to SLA' have clearly been chosen because they represent three historical shifts in emphasis in the field. The subsequent linguistics readings are relevant, but it is less clear what guided their selection.

Although the book's central aim is not to serve as a bibliographic resource, the findings and debates presented in the text are so consistently interesting that it is easy to imagine readers wanting to track sources down. Thus, in the few places where references are missing, readers may want them. (For example, Chapter 4 ends with an engaging discussion of the possible beneficial effects of multilingualism, citing findings from Diaz (1985) and Diaz and Klingler (1991); this discussion even-handedly mentions possible negative effects, but does not cite evidence. Another example is the absence of references for some of the interesting findings reported in Chapter 6.)

The book is certainly suitable for adoption as an introductory text for students with little background in SLA. Saville-Troike traces some of

the history of the field that many instructors would aim for in an introductory course, presenting Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Creative Construction and the Monitor Model, and introducing morpheme-order studies in a way that newcomers to the field would easily follow. The discussion of modular components of language knowledge, illustrated with examples, in Chapter 6 will make the book useful to instructors teaching SLA courses that fulfil linguistics requirements. (The same is true for Chapter 4's introduction to language and the brain.)

Introducing Second Language Acquisition is distinct from other introductory texts. First, it relatively short. For example, at 206 pages, it is somewhat shorter than Lightbown and Spada (2006) at 252 pages, and about half the length of Gass and Selinker (2001) at 488 pages. The three texts are comparable in the topics they treat, but Saville-Troike's stated aim is a 'brief but comprehensive introduction' (p. vii); and so, incorporating the kinds of data and argumentation that Gass and Selinker include, for instance, is out of scope. Second, the text's particular emphasis on contexts for language use, and its development of the concept of communicative competence, distinguish it from other introductory texts that also approach SLA from an interdisciplinary perspective.

For instructors, the excellent tables and figures, especially those including original data, make this book an important resource. For students, the book's succinct introductions to key approaches in SLA will provide a solid introduction to the field. Because the book is short enough to be combined with other assigned readings in a course, it might be a good choice for instructors who want a basic text to supplement with a course packet of more advanced readings.

V How the texts complement one another

Of the three texts, only Saville-Troike (2006) aims to introduce the field at a basic level, with an approach broadly comparable to that of texts like Gass and Selinker (2001) or Lightbown and Spada (2006). In an obvious way, therefore, it complements de Bot *et al.* (2005) and Sanz (2005) by providing a background reference for students new to SLA.

The texts are complementary in their approach to exercises. Some of Saville-Troike's exercises are simply recall questions to help students

review new knowledge of terms. Her text does include some more open-ended exercises, but none have the data intensity of the activities in Sanz (2005). Neither of these texts offers the extensive guidance in setting up mini-replications of experiments that de Bot *et al.* provide.

As noted above, the texts are complementary in the kinds of orientation to the field of SLA that they offer students. Sanz exceeds the others in depth of discussion of various methods. Saville-Troike provides an especially comprehensive set of links to professional resources on her book's website. De Bot *et al.* are alone in this set in their guidance on reading critically and conducting literature searches. De Bot *et al.* provide the only extensive excerpts from published research in this set, offering a unique kind of exposure to SLA data but, because of its different aims, Sanz (2005) presents a guide to a wider set of literature within an information-processing approach.

These texts, therefore, are not in competition with one another. The ways each complements the others will make them all useful for *Second Language Research* readers who are teaching courses at various levels, and for readers seeking to deepen their knowledge in the areas of SLA that the texts represent.

Acknowledgements

For helpful comments and discussion, I thank Sarah Morrison, Margaret Thomas, and an anonymous *Second Language Research* reviewer. Any errors are my own.

VI References

Archibald, J., editor, 2000: *Second language acquisition and linguistic theory*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Bates, E., Friederici, A.D. and **Wulfeck, B.** 1987: Comprehension in aphasia: a cross-linguistic study. *Brain and Language* 32, 19–67.

Bates, E. and **MacWhinney, B.** 1981: Second language acquisition from a functionalist perspective: pragmatic, semantic and perceptual strategies. In Winitz, H., editor, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences conference on native and foreign language acquisition*. New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 190–214.

Bongaerts, T. 1999: Ultimate attainment in L2 pronunciation: the case of very advanced late L2 learners. In Birdsong, D., editor, *Second language*

acquisition and the critical period hypothesis. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 133–59.

Brown, J.D. 2004: Resources on quantitative/statistical research for applied linguists. *Second Language Research* 20, 372–93.

Brown, R. 1973: *A first language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cook, V. 1995: Multi-competence and the learning of many languages. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 8, 93–8.

Corder, S. 1967: The significance of learners' errors. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 5, 161–69.

Burt, M., Dulay, H. and **Hernández-Chávez, E.** 1975: *Bilingual syntax measure*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Diaz, R.M. 1985: The intellectual power of bilingualism. *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition* 7, 16–22.

Diaz, R.M. and **Klingler, C.** 1991: Towards an explanatory model of the interaction between bilingualism and cognitive development. In Bialoystok, E., editor, *Language processing in bilingual children*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 167–92.

Doughty, C.J. and **Long, M.H.**, editors, 2003: *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Dulay, H. and **Burt, M.** 1973: Should we teach children syntax? *Language Learning* 23, 245–58.

Flege, J.E. 1993: Production and perception of a novel, 2nd-language phonetic contrast. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 93, 1589–1608.

Flynn, S., Martohardjono, G. and **O'Neil, W.**, editors, 1998: *The generative study of second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Gardner, R.C., Tremblay, P.F. and **Masgoret, A.-M.** 1997. Towards a full model of second language learning: an empirical investigation. *Modern Language Journal* 81, 344–62.

Gass, S., Mackey, A. and **Pica, T.** 1998: The role of input and interaction in second language acquisition: introduction to the special issue. *Modern Language Journal* 82, 299–307.

Gass, S.M. and **Selinker, L.** 2001: *Second language acquisition: an introductory course*. 2nd edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Gregg, K.R. 1984: Krashen's monitor and Occam's razor. *Applied Linguistics* 5, 79–100.

Hansen, L. and **Chen, Y.-L.** 2002: What counts in the acquisition and attrition of numeral classifiers? *JALT Journal* 23, 90–110.

Hinkel, E., editor, 2005: *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kellerman, E. 2000: What fruit can tell us about lexicosemantic transfer: a non-structural dimension to learners' perceptions of linguistic relations. In Muñoz, C., editor, *Segundas lenguas: adquisición en al aula [Second language: acquisition in the classroom]*. Barcelona: Ariel.

Kroll, J.F. and **Dijkstra, T.** 2002: The bilingual lexicon. In Kaplan, R., editor, *The Oxford handbook of applied linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 301–21.

Kroll, J.F. and **Stewart, E.** 1994: Category interference in translation and picture naming: evidence for asymmetric connections between bilingual memory representations. *Journal of Memory and Language* 33, 149–74.

Lado, R. 1957: *Linguistics across cultures*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Lazaraton, A. 2005: Quantitative research methods. In Hinkel, E., editor, *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 209–24.

Levelt, W.J.M. 1993: The architecture of normal spoken language use. In Blanken, G., Dittman, J., Grimm, H., Marshall, J.C. and Wallesch, C.-W., editors, *Linguistic disorders and pathologies: an international handbook*. New York: de Gruyter, 1–15.

Lightbown, P. and **Spada, N.** 2006: *How languages are learned*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mackey, A. 1999: Input, interaction and second language development: an empirical study of question formation in ESL. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 21, 557–87.

McCarthy, M. and **Carter, R.** 1997: Written and spoken vocabulary. In Schmitt, N. and McCarthy, M., editors, *Vocabulary: description, acquisition and pedagogy.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 20–39.

Pallier, C., Dehaene, S., Poline, J.B., LeBihan, D., Argenti, A.M., Dupoux, E. and **Mehler, J.** 2003: Brain imaging of language plasticity in adopted adults: can a second language replace the first? *Cerebral Cortex* 13, 155–61.

Ritchie, W.C. and **Bhatia, T.K.**, editors, 1996: *Handbook of second language acquisition*. Boston: Academic Press.

Spada, N. 1997: Form-focused instruction and second language acquisition: a review of classroom and laboratory research. *Language Teaching* 30, 73–87.

Sparks, R.L. and **Ganschow, L.** 1991: Foreign language learning differences: affective or native language aptitude differences? *Modern Language Journal* 75, 3–16.

Swain, M. and **Lapkin, S.** 1995: Problems in output and the cognitive processes they generate: a step towards second language learning. *Applied Linguistics* 16, 371–91.