

Approaches to Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

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What is SLA?

- “The study of how learners create a new language system.” (Gass, Behney, and Plonsky, 2013)
- Concerned with processes underlying language learning as well as their products.
- Other fields informing SLA: linguistics, psychology, education, cognitive science, sociology, anthropology.
- Subjects of inquiry within SLA:
 - How learners come to internalize the linguistic system of another language.
 - How learners make use of that linguistic system during comprehension and speech production.

Main Objective: Learning and NOT teaching

SLA and Second Language Teaching

- SLA and language instruction
- Pressure on the SLA field
- *Great Expectations: Second Language Acquisition Research and Classroom Teaching* by Patsy Lightbown
- Instructed SLA (focusing on the degree to which external manipulation can affect development).

SLA Theories and Frameworks

Universal Grammar

Emergentism and other usage-based theories

Declarative-Procedural Model

Complexity Theory/Dynamic Systems

Input Processing

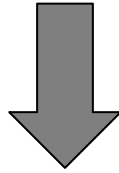
The Interaction Hypothesis

Processability Theory

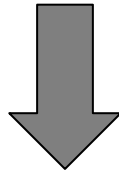
Sociocultural Theory

Skill Acquisition Theory

Approach



Method



Technique

Would you choose this approach for your course? Why? Why not? In answering you may want to consider the following:

- What are the needs of your students?
- What are the attitudes and aptitudes of your students?
- What are some of the instructional constraints you're likely to face (e.g. time, class size, materials, physical environment, etc.)?

Discussion

1. What has been the attitude toward the teaching of (a) pronunciation, (b) grammar, (c) vocabulary in the eight approaches introduced today? Has there been a swinging of the pendulum? Why or why not?
2. What changes have occurred regarding the position of spoken language and written language in these various approaches? Why?
3. Which of these approaches have you personally experienced as a language learner? What were your impressions and what is your assessment of the effectiveness of the approach or method?

For the Next Session (October 15th)

1. Think about the approaches discussed today. Which ones are most closely aligned with your own teaching? Where do these approaches fall short? How would you address their limitations?
2. Read *A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures* by The New London Group. Does the framework proposed by the authors aid in addressing the shortcomings of the approaches discussed today? Would it be successful when implemented in your own classroom?

THE END

