



This is a graded discussion: 10 points possible

due Feb 7

Week 2 Questions and Graded Discussion

12 74

Week 2 Questions

Choose two questions to answer:

1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?
2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?
3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

Post your answers and comments by Sunday, February 7, 2021. First answer due Wed., Feb 03.



← Reply



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203> **Christian Aguiar (He/Him/His)** (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Feb 2, 2021



1. *What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?*

It seems like social, cultural and environmental context is one important difference, both in terms of the variations in natural and educational context possible for L2 learners and in terms of the choices available to them (Ipek, p. 160). L1 learners have almost no control over the larger linguistic features of learning: they do not select the cultural context of their learning,

they do not select the type of language they will learn, and they do not select between conscious/formal learning and subconscious/acquisitional processes, as the latter are the default (p. 158). I think all of this accounts for the appearance of this L1 learning process being “natural”: it happens, and unless there are exceptional circumstances, it seems like it will always happen following fairly predictable patterns.

L2 learners have many more options, though, including selecting the *type* of language they’ll acquire. I found this particularly striking, as I’ve noticed that the L2 learners I teach often target different forms of English. As an HBCU that enrolls primarily working-class students, my institution, and thus my courses and students, have a complicated relationship with Standard American English, and this is reflected in L2 learners’ choices, with many language learners opting to learn AAVE or a DC variant. This makes sense in the context Ipek provides, as students will target the English that is most readily available, or that seems best, in their context.

If I follow correctly, the elements of “universal grammar” would help students use some of their L1 knowledge to acquire an LX. Where there are similar structures, they could easily build on existing knowledge, enabling them to focus on the elements unique to the new language. I have a question about this, though: does this apply to students carrying over knowledge from *any* language they’ve learned reasonably well? The Hayakawa article points to bilinguality as the underlying factor here, but is that power primarily from L1 to LX, or could it apply from L2 to LX?

3. *What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?*

I was most struck by what Kara Morgan-Short notes about her research, which shows “not only that some adults can learn through immersion, like children, but might enable us to match individual adult learners with the optimal learning contexts for them.” I’ve been trying to actively teach metacognitive strategies for years, whether it’s through actively teaching the study cycle, working with students to learn how to interact with texts, or assigning reflective tasks. I would be so excited if it were possible to use MRIs or other types of brain imaging to help determine the type of instruction that would most benefit a student (or me). Were this widely available, this would make it possible to design a few different versions of a course sequence that each use different teaching and learning strategies, then place students into the one that would suit them best. The only drawback I could see would be that the focus on a single style of teaching and learning might make the courses a bit boring.

Edited by [Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) on Feb 3 at 6:55am

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411)



Feb 3, 2021

Hello Christian,

I think it's so interesting (and cool) that your students choose different forms of English! Does your institution offer those as options or is that just what your students speak outside of class? Your questions about UG reminded me of a theory that I had learned about in the past that L2 can help to learn LX. Although I cannot remember the name (I'm starting to question if there even is a name), I found a short article about how L2 might influence LX. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201506/can-second-language-help-you-learn-third> [_ \(https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201506/can-second-language-help-you-learn-third\)_](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201506/can-second-language-help-you-learn-third)

Here is another paper about second language transfer when learning a third language: <https://journals.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/05/3.-Murphy-2003.pdf> [_ \(https://journals.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/05/3.-Murphy-2003.pdf\)_](https://journals.cdrs.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/05/3.-Murphy-2003.pdf)

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) [_ \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 4, 2021



Thanks for the resources, Michelle! I have heard the idea that knowing *how* to learn a language has transferable benefits, so that makes a lot of sense.

There's no formal differentiation of instruction within classes, so it's entirely what students bring to the classroom. I try to affirm those choices, while of course still doing the work of learning academic English.

Christian

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731) [_ \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 7, 2021



Christian and Michelle, Students transfer their knowledge of L1 structures and phonology to L2. They notice (or they need to be reminded by their teacher) that there are similarities or differences (Subject-Verb-Object or V-O-S sentence structure), that there are cognates in case of similar word origins, etc. I just heard from a student who said it was easier for him to pronounce some sounds of

Japanese because he found them similar to those of his first language, Spanish. That shows students come to classes with a lot of linguistic assets, but often they need to be pointed out to them. I may have mentioned that my husband's learning French now on Duolingo, and in doing that he draws on his linguistic background in English (his L2) and Croatian(his L2).

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 4, 2021

Hi Christian,

I felt your post about your students' choices of opting to learn AAVE or a DC variant very interesting. When I was taking an ESL class at college, I was not consciously choosing what type of English I wanted to learn. Do you think it is a conscious decision so that they could be accepted or assimilated into the school or community they belong to? Do you give them any suggestions about their choices?

The school I teach at invited a guest speaker about culturally responsive teaching related to English, and we were advised to accept different types of English such as AAVE and to not correct students' English in the classroom. Students' home languages, their culture, and identity are all intertwined, therefore, correcting their English because it is not grammatically correct is not the best approach and could be harmful to the students. However, I was wondering how English teachers would grade or correct their papers.

I think my example is different from your students, as your students are L2 learners, and the students in my case are mostly L1 and some L2 learners who speak so-called non-standard English. This might be more related to descriptive grammar and prescriptive grammar.

Edited by [Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607) on Feb 5 at 1:04pm

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 6, 2021

That's a great point, Chiaki. I sort of assumed it was an unconscious, or at least subconscious, choice. Mainly I based that on my own experience with languages - I grew up speaking accented Rhode Island English and, if I'm being honest, I never gave any thought to the fact that everyone around me sounded very different from TV English (even though I watched tons of TV) until a high school teacher from Missouri started making fun of us for it. Same thing with Portuguese: my people speak a dialect, Azorean, but I didn't really know for a long time.

In teaching, I think it's important to have a conversation about different types of Englishes, about the powers that relate to them, and about what we're learning. I don't correct non-"Standard" English as a default, but I will leave students feedback, i.e., "This pattern of subject-verb agreement isn't standard in academic English - is this something you want to work on?" I'll often include this video from my colleague Brandon Wallace (below), and then we'll take it from there. I've never had a student who didn't want to learn the rules of Standard English grammar and usage, but many had been put off by teachers who acted like that was *the* language and they were doing something wrong.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL1Tmbg-pu8&t=0s>
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL1Tmbg-pu8&t=0s>)

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Christian,

It is amazing that you speak Portuguese as well. I'm not familiar with Portuguese, so I've never heard of Azorean, but I assume it must sound different from the Portuguese that is most widely used as it is a dialect.

Thank you for sharing your colleague's video. I enjoyed watching it. I think the approach you take when you notice students' non- "standard" English is respectful to students, and they must feel comfortable.

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 7, 2021

Christian and Chiaki, I think you might find this interview with the (often controversial) linguist John McWhorter quite interesting. Note that the interview is from two years ago, so many things have changed. We should all use culturally responsive teaching, respect students home cultures, and not correct their speech, but their academic papers will still require standard English. It may change, though.

[John McWhorter - Talking Back, Talking Black](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoWGx060IyA) [_ \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoWGx060IyA\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoWGx060IyA)

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480) [_ \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 7, 2021



Hi Christian,

You wrote something that stood out to me: *"my institution, and thus my courses and students, have a complicated relationship with Standard American English, and this is reflected in L2 learners' choices, with many language learners opting to learn AAVE."*

When I was in sixth grade, we had a new foreign student from China. He came in with zero English language skills. Being Chinese myself, I do regret not befriending the kid. I could've helped him. But I was too ashamed of being associated with an "FOB" (fresh off the boat). Two years later, I ran into him in eighth grade, and he spoke in AAVE. The kids said he "sounded black" and spoke Ebonics. I realized that it was because the kids who took him in were Black and Filipino kids.

I once watched an interview of an NBA basketball player, Yao Ming, who was an import from China. He "sounded black" and that reminded me of my old classmate. It makes sense. If his world was the basketball locker room and the court, then of course the natural language to pick up would be the one most useful to him.

The point of those anecdotes is that they demonstrate the use of descriptive grammar, rather than prescriptive. That there's no such thing as "proper" and what matters is that L2 English learners are able to connect and communicate with the people around them.

As for that link to John McWhorter, that was very well articulated. Language isn't just learning grammar and communication. It's also about learning how culture is integrated with that language.

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 9, 2021

Hi professor Lejko-Lacan,

Thank you for the information and the video. I didn't know about McWhorter, but the interview was interesting.

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 11, 2021

It really is! It's taken me a minute to get back and watch it, but it's a fascinating discussion of the dynamics of language & race in the U.S.

I think it's telling that when he reaches for an example to show that "correcting" Black English might be okay, he reaches for poor/working-class Southern English, which certainly would have provoked the same ire if proposed for inclusion in school curricula. He says it's "just chance," but the argument he uses would suggest that it's not chance - it's class and/or power. When he breaks down the complexities of "done" or "up," it speaks to an underlying utility that reflects a certain brilliance, the same way (poor, immigrant) white people where I grew up use "yous" because English lacks the very necessary second person plural.

Edited by [Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203) on Feb 11 at 7:53am

← [Reply](#)



[Diana Burga \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042)

Feb 2, 2021

1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

From the readings I gathered that first language acquisition comes easily and naturally. Simply by speaking and listening in that language one acquires it. Our brain adapts to the sounds we hear and we recreate these sounds. There's a window in which infants are open and receptive to the sounds they hear. Bilingual infants have that window open longer. However after time our brain molds to these sounds. The way we hear things and can pronounce things, which can make learning second languages tricky depending on what your native language is (it's phonemes) and what the second language is you're trying to learn. If the first language you learned has similar sounds the second one you acquire may be easier. Knowledge of the first language acquisition can be helpful in understanding what the students may hear and certain words or sounds they may have difficulty with. It's helpful for the student to know this so they don't get frustrated and lose interest in the language altogether.

3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

There are many *theories* about the way we learn language and what the *best* way to learn is. However, these are just *theories* because it's complex and it depends on the lens in which you wish to look at and study language learning. What is known for sure is that humans are capable of learning multiple languages. The sooner the better. And that learning multiple languages fires different parts of your brain, making it more resilient and in a way "stronger".

Edited by [Diana Burga \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042) on Feb 2 at 5:52pm

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 3, 2021

It's interesting how important sounds are, isn't it? You point out how much second language acquisition is impacted by the ability to produce the sounds of the second language, which is in turn impacted by the sounds of the first language. This makes me think it should be easier to learn to read or write in a second language than to speak, but that doesn't seem to be the case (at least not for me).

Christian

← [Reply](#)



[Diana Burga \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042)

Feb 3, 2021

Hey Christian,

We are all so different! My experience with French (my third language) is that its much easier for me to understand it written and to write it myself. When is comes to speaking I mix Spanish and English words!

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\)](#) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Feb 4, 2021

That's fascinating, Diana. Actually, if I think about it, I guess I have a similar experience to yours: I can read Spanish much more easily than speak it for the same reason - English and Portuguese interfere. Do you think reading is easier because of the common Latin roots?

I think I had my attempts to learn Korean in mind when I responded - I could listen, then speak, then read, and writing has never really happened for me.

Christian

← [Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine](#) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411>)

Feb 3, 2021

Hello Diana,

I agree that learning multiple languages have plenty of benefits for the brain. While theories aim to find a pattern and maybe the *best* way to learn, studies on second language acquisition usually also recognize and emphasize individual differences. It is hard to do a longitudinal study on a large sample, so many are based on case studies. The circumstances are different for every participants too, which makes it difficult to apply everyone. That being said, I do think that they are great to look at for reference. Not everyone has the motivation to learn another language, so looking at these theories can definitely help teachers to develop a curriculum that will encourage students.

Edited by [Michelle Akamine](#) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411>) on Feb 3 at 4:43pm

← [Reply](#)



[Diana Burga](#) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/118042>)

Feb 3, 2021

Hi Michelle,

You bring up some great points. It's true that not everyone has the motivation to learn another language, especially in the US where it's not really encouraged by society. I agree with you that studying how difficult it is to study language learning and agree that applying theories to one's lesson plans and seeing by your own experience has tremendous benefits.

[← Reply](#)

○



[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)



Feb 2, 2021

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

According to Stephen Krashen, formal learning is less important than acquisition, which is the way children get their first language. A key component of acquiring a language subconsciously is by first going through the silent period, in which one spends time listening and becoming familiar with a language. Krashen argues that the silent period builds competence in the learner. However, while John Gibbons in his 2006 paper, "The silent period: An examination," agrees that children learning their first language are usually silent, he calls this a period of silent incomprehension, and if prolonged, may result in psychological withdrawal rather than language acquisition.

In my own case, I did not speak at all until I was three years old. Instead I would grunt when requesting an object from my two older brothers. My mother took me to the doctor, who assured her that there was nothing wrong with me and that my brothers should not respond to my grunting. My mother told me that as soon as I was forced to speak, I spoke in whole sentences. So at least in my case, this silent period was a state of acquisition and not a stage of incomprehension.

For some, a silent period is important because many beginners don't want to make mistakes when speaking English. Krashen calls this mental block an affective filter. I believe there is much to be gained by integrating the silent period into the beginning learning stage, and there are practical methods to modify the silent period for classroom use. One method is called Total Physical Response, created by Dr. James J. Asher. It is based on the learning pattern of first language acquisition, in which parents instruct and their children physically respond before being able to speak. In the classroom, the teacher could give a command while demonstrating that action. The teacher then repeats the command and the students do the action. After repeating this a few times, the teacher could have the students repeat the command as they do the action. A volunteer could then take over the teacher's role. Other methods include

allowing students to draw a response, using visuals to explain meaning, and pairing up students so the student only has to practice speaking with one person rather than in front of the whole class.

3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

While we lose plasticity and thus the ease of acquiring a language after the age of four, technology may be of great benefit to older language learners. In a UCSF study, Edward Chang used electrodes to discover that the brain organizes sound into phonetic categories, and he was able to map the brain by correlating the clusters of neurons which were activated by certain sounds. Similarly in Alison Mackey's article, MRI scans showed that while the brains of English-speakers were activated in two different regions when hearing the "r" sound and the "l" sound, the brains of Japanese speakers were only activated in one region. But by using a software program that exaggerated each sound, the distinction between "r" and "l" was learned by Japanese speakers. Mackey suggested that in the future, ultrasound machines could show language learners images of how their tongue, lips, and jaw should move in order to articulate difficult-to-make sounds.

In the same article, electrophysiology showed the effects of acquiring versus learning a language on the brain. Kara Morgan-Short and her team taught an artificial language to two groups of volunteers; one group learned the rules of the language while the other group was immersed in the language. While both groups learned, it was the immersed learners whose brain processes were most like those of native speakers. And six months later, those immersed learners still performed well on tests, and their brain processes had become even more native-like.

However, in my own experience, I have found immersion-style instruction in the classroom to be ineffective in the beginning stage. I remember sitting in my first class in Russian and being pressured to respond to questions in Russian without any explanation in English, and feeling lost and intimidated. Without a modified silent period, the immersion approach puts undue pressure on second language learners. If that pressure is removed, I believe immersion can be effective. But couldn't a hybrid approach be taken? A period of listening and taking direction could be followed by a period of conscious learning, which could then be followed by questions and answers in the target language. Each segment could use the same material, thereby providing opportunities for short-term memory to be converted into long-term memory.

Edited by [MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764) on Feb 2 at 7:57pm

↳ [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 3, 2021



Your point about the immersion class is so interesting, Mary Ann. I have found immersion to be the most helpful approach when I'm trying to learn a language. I studied Korean for months before moving to SK for work, and I just wasn't that motivated - I'd study every day after work, and all that stuck were a few dozen vocabulary words, and really random ones too, like table and rat and sky. Once I was in Seoul, fully immersed, the language seemed to just accumulate. That said, I was *painfully* shy at the time, so I had my own silent period of a sort anyway.

The idea of a hybrid setup is intriguing. Would you blend class levels in a fishbowl style, where you have more advanced learners conduct a class while beginners observe?

← [Reply](#)



[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

Feb 3, 2021

Hi Christian,

Based on your experience, is it better to go for immersion after you have a foundation? I don't think I could just pick up a language out of thin air, unless I have enough familiarity and knowledge to be able to fill in the gaps.

I've been thinking a lot about my own language-learning experiences because of this course, and I now realize that it was utterly futile to invest so much time into learning languages. There's no way I could ever become close to fluent unless I moved to the country of the target language. After all those years of studying and memorizing, I have forgotten so much.

I wasn't thinking of blending class levels, but having volunteer students (who just went through the exercise) take turns playing the role of the instructor. That would give those students another way to put the new material into their synapses.

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 4, 2021

I think I had a lot of external motivation to master the basics - at a certain point, it was either master the basics or live on convenience store food. There were a ton of gaps, though, and I remember being frustrated all the time when I just couldn't

piece stuff together with context, so I do think it would have been better to have more knowledge. However, my learning beforehand just didn't stick.

Do you think all the cognitive benefits of all those hours studying have stuck around, Mary Ann?

Christian

[← Reply](#)



MaryAnn Wilson (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764>)

Feb 4, 2021



I hear that (about gaps). It's maddening to understand something only partially, and because of the gaps, remain ignorant to what is being said.

I just don't know about cognitive benefits. I read the brain gets bigger from learning a language, and it is true that my hat size is a large. So there's that. Joking aside, I think the attempt has made me thoughtful and considerate toward English language learners.

Did you attain some fluency, or did you end up like me: a regretful monolingual?

[← Reply](#)



Christian Aguiar (He/Him/His)

(<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203>)

Feb 6, 2021



I definitely buy XXL hats now. I guess I'd say my Portuguese is rusty from disuse, but I don't think I'll ever lose it as such. Korean and Latin are gone, though, just memories of distinct grammar systems and handfuls of scattered vocab words. What were the L2s that you studied?

[← Reply](#)



Viktorija Lejko-Lacan (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731>)

Feb 9, 2021



Mary Ann, Here's a video about cognitive benefits of bilingualism. It may cheer you up.

[Cognitive benefits of bilingualism](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-ml2dD4SIk) [_\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-ml2dD4SIk\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-ml2dD4SIk)

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607) [_\(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 5, 2021

Hi Mary Ann,

Your post about the brains of English-speakers and that of Japanese speakers react differently when hearing the “r” sound and the “l” sound interesting. My first language is Japanese, so I try to make two different sounds carefully when I need to pronounce words with r and l. There must be more sounds that don't exist in other languages. I thought it would be helpful for EL learners to use the software program and ultrasound machines when they practice pronunciation.

← [Reply](#)



[MaryAnn Wilson](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764) [_\(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

Feb 5, 2021

Hi Chiaki,

And what's great about using software is that students can practice listening and speaking when they're alone. I'm sure a lot of students would appreciate not having to embarrass themselves or feel like their tutor or teacher is getting tired of them making the same mistake over and over.

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731) [_\(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 12, 2021

Mary Ann and Chiaki,

Have you ever used Audacity or Soundtrap? Great programs to practice pronunciation..

[← Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 14, 2021

Hello Professor Lejko-Lacan,

I have used Audacity in my class a couple of years ago, but I don't remember well. I don't know about Soundtrap, but I would like to try it too. Thank you for the information.

[← Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Mary Ann,

Thank you for sharing your experience with the immersion in the beginning stage of learning Russian. I think it also depends on the types of the written script the L2 uses. Immersion including written language could be effective in the case of an English speaker learning another similar alphabet-based language as you can then visually connect the dots between the written script and sounds, but I, too, would be so lost and intimidated if I was sitting in a Russian class with the Cyrillic script to which I have no clue. I also had a modified silent period myself of listening to music in LX a lot before I started taking LX classes in some of the languages I speak, so your approach resonated with me.

That said, while I am a supporter of more spoken language observation and education, I also think reading comprehension is so important in language learning as it allows you to be able to access a wealth of information out in the world. If reading comprehension is not developed, the student's access to knowledge (be it in books or on the internet) will be much more limited. It really comes to a balance so I like your hybrid approach suggestions.

[← Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 3, 2021

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

The research of how we acquire our first language can help a foreign language teacher understand the way we will 'acquire' or 'learn' a second language. As we learned in the article "Comparing and Contrasting First and Second Language Acquisition: Implications for Language Teachers", the studies presented by Rod Ellis (1984) outline the similarities and differences in the cognitive development for L1 and L2 learners in the three developmental stages: the silent period, formulaic speech, and structural and semantic simplification. For an L1 learner, the silent period is a time for language processing, and although an L2 learner may not have this advantage, the teacher can use this knowledge to recognize and allow for this 'processing' to happen in L2 learners. Otherwise, 'erroneous production, inhibited students or high anxiety in the classroom' is a likely possibility. The silent period may not be a method that can be implemented in the classroom, but it will allow us to understand why L2 learners may seem shy or reluctant to 'produce' speech at the beginning. Formulaic speech, the second stage of these developmental stages, is present in both L1 and L2 learning and can be encouraged by teaching commonly used phrases or sentence structures. Finally, understanding the last of these developmental stages, structural and semantic simplification, can allow teachers to better recognize flawed 'language production' and adjust his/her teaching to reinforce that aspect of speech production.

In a summarized manner, understanding the way we process language (whether L1 or L2) can help teachers better design their classroom: choosing activities, designing the curriculum, selecting teaching methods, and even accommodate for appropriate assessment of language acquisition.

3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

What I find the most fascinating from all these articles is the evidence about the different areas of the brain affected when we recognize and differentiate diverse sounds. I was particularly intrigued by the study that used ultrasound machines to demonstrate to students how to recreate the sounds of a language. This made me wonder if in the future we'll be able to teach accent-free phonetics at any age only by exercising these buccal movements. Although speaking the target language without an accent is not the goal in language acquisition, students' parents still demand a great deal of attention is paid in this area. I think it's important to recognize our knowledge about the brain and understand that technology used in neurological research only further develops our tools in language learning.

Edited by [Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473) on Feb 5 at 12:55am

← [Reply](#)



[Silver Park \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686)

Feb 3, 2021



Hi Valeria, it is amazing to see how our brain works with different sounds of languages. I agree that our knowledge on the great importance of technology used in neuroscience will further develop in language learning.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Valeria,

I liked your comments about teaching accent-free phonetics at any age only by exercising buccal movements. You mentioned that speaking the target language without an accent is not the goal in language acquisition, and while I agree with the statement, I do see merit in teaching "how to move your mouth" more than it is normally taught.

I think that after all, you can't pronounce what you can't hear and recognize, so in a reverse manner, if you can physically pronounce the sounds by training yourself to use the correct positions of the tongue, lips, etc. that are foreign to you, you will be able to recognize those sounds as a listener as well, therefore will be able to understand L2 speech better. It's very hard to figure out the correct positioning of those facial parts by yourself, so it would be great if L2 teachers can step in with an accent reduction workshop.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Valeria,

The brain seems to be malleable at a young age, and yet, it's interesting when I meet bilingual five-year-olds who have accents. It's also very interesting that adults can acquire accents in their native language. For example, I remember seeing an interview with Elijah Wood during that time he was promoting Lord of the Rings. He had a Kiwi accent and his original language was American English! That was wild to me, because I remember living in New Zealand for a bit and I never picked up a Kiwi accent.

I used to think that accent reduction was important when teaching foreigners English. I do not know if that's a priority anymore, unless you're an actor, or if you really want to sound less like a foreigner.

Edited by [Russell Fung \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480) on Feb 7 at 10:09pm

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 13, 2021

Russel, How important accent reduction is depends on an individual. There may be students who feel they haven't mastered the language if they speak with an accent, but in general it doesn't matter as long as the speech is comprehensible. Some people even want to keep an accent as a part of their identity (their language ego). Of course, we know only famous people like Schwarzenegger or Antonio Banderas, or Henry Kissinger earlier, but people are more tolerant of others who speak with an accent.

[Reply](#)



[Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411)

Feb 3, 2021

What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

Something that I remember learning during undergrad is the difference between language acquisition and learning. L1 is considered to be "acquired" since it happens naturally, except in extreme cases. L2, on the other hand, is "learned" because often times people are explicitly taught after the L1 is established. An exception to this would be simultaneous bilinguals, who have exposure to more than one language from birth and, therefore "acquire" two (or more) languages. It is important to keep in mind, however, that these differences can be complex at times and are not always clear-cut (i.e. adoptees who grow up in a different country from where they are born).

One difference when learning an L2 is that students are able to use their L1 as a tool. Adult learners (in particular) have metalinguistic awareness, in other words, they are able to reflect back on their native language and apply that knowledge to the target language. Comparing L1 with the L2 can also lead to both positive and negative language transfer. Even if the manner of acquisition is different, there is no doubt that L1 influences L2 learning.

How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

One of the similarities with first and second language acquisition is the pattern of development which are broken down into three stages: the silent period, formulaic speech, and simplification (Ipek, p.155). Certain grammatical morphemes also have an order that they are acquired.

Understanding this order can help teachers to decide how to structure their class. Teaching that corresponds with the developmental sequence can also help the class to be more fluid and “natural”.

Foreign language teachers, where the students most likely have the same L1, are able to think about the similarities and differences between the two languages and adjust accordingly. Chomsky’s notion of universal grammar states that there are certain rules to grammar which can be applied to all languages (p.157). These unmarked features are typically learned faster due to the fact that students can reflect on their L1 and find some commonality with the L2. Marked features take longer to learn because learners are unfamiliar with the concept. I find this to be true based on my own L2 experience with Japanese. Learning the various levels of politeness have always been difficult for me since English does not have that much distinction. Keeping this in mind, teachers can choose to focus on aspects of the L2 that students are likely to have more difficulty in.

Edited by [Michelle Akamine \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/153411) on Feb 3 at 4:17pm

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Michelle,

Thank you for making a good suggestion to think about similarities and differences between the students' L1 and L2 and focus on the marked features or the aspects of the L2 that they are likely to have more difficulty in, rather than the universal grammar that can be applied to all languages. While L2 teachers don't have to be fluent in their students' L1s, it definitely helps to be at least aware of the existence of the marked concepts that don't exist in L2, in your own example the levels of politeness in Japanese. Good point!

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 3, 2021

1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

One of the differences between first and second language acquisition is related to the period of time at language acquisition. The first language is acquired naturally from an early age, but the second language takes place at different periods of one’s life.

According to Lenneberg's the Critical Period Hypothesis, "there is a critical, biologically determined period of language acquisition between the ages of 2 and 12," and "a critical period for second language acquisition is due until puberty." The theory claims that adult language learners are not able to reach full competency and native-like pronunciation in the second language is due to neurological, psychomotor reasons, and affective filters. (Ipek, pg. 158)

This theory reminded me of an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) that my students took several years ago. Twenty four students--12 ninth and 12 tenth graders--who had completed the Japanese immersion program from K-5 and continued taking Japanese courses through middle school participated in the interview to assess their Japanese language skills in 9th or 10th grade in high school.

The range of their proficiency based on ACTFL proficiency guidelines was between intermediate-low and advanced-high, and seven students fell within the range of advanced-mid to advanced high.

Among the 24 students, 11 students started learning Japanese from birth, meanwhile the other 13 started learning Japanese when they entered the immersion program at the age of 4 or 5. Of this group of 24 students, 14 never received a Japanese language education outside of the immersion program, and their home languages were not Japanese.

The interview results show that most students acquired high language skills in speaking and listening. In addition, the students who do not have a Japanese speaking environment at home were able to acquire high language skills and native-like pronunciation in their second language by 9th or 10th grade through language instruction only at school.

I teach not only the immersion track, but also the Japanese-as-a-foreign-language track. In the latter track, the students start studying the language in 9th grade for the first time and some continue through the 12th grade. The two groups' length of study and method of language learning are different, so they are not easily comparable, but few students in the foreign language track have acquired native-like pronunciation and high listening and speaking skills by 12th grade as immersion students have.

Comparing the two groups of students, the immersion students' proficient language acquisition could be accounted for the fact that the students received second language education during the critical period before puberty.

As for the influence of first language acquisition on second language learning, it may be explained by Chomsky's Universal Grammar. According to the theory, second language learners depend on their knowledge of first language to fill in the insufficient second language input as first language learners rely on equipped skills that enable them to conquer inadequacy (Ipek, p. 157). If so, when teaching a group of students who share the same first language, it will be helpful for a teacher to gain an understanding of the distinct difference between English

and the students' first language. The teacher can apply the knowledge when creating lessons or activities.

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

One aspect of the first language acquisition that helps a second language teacher is that the first and second language have a similar acquisition order of language learning. As Krashen (1982) claimed, "we acquire the rules of language in a predictable order" (Ipek, p. 156). Another aspect is that learners experience similar developmental sequences in the first and second language acquisition as Ellis (1984) proposed (Ipek, p. 155). When creating a program and a course curriculum, it is crucial to take them into consideration. For example, it is beneficial to know that second language learners experience the first developmental stage (the silent period) as first language learners do (Ipek, p. 155). Teachers should keep this in mind when teaching a beginning-level course.

Edited by [Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607) on Feb 3 at 6:07pm

← [Reply](#)



[Christian Aguiar \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/130203)

Feb 4, 2021

Thank you for sharing all of this, Chiaki - those results are fascinating. Can I ask some follow-ups? Were the students in the immersion track learning all of their subjects in Japanese? Was their L1/home language mostly English, or did you have students with L1s other than English or Japanese?

Christian

← [Reply](#)



[Chiaki \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/112607)

Feb 4, 2021

Hi Christian,

Thank you for your response. The students in the immersion track learn all of their subjects in Japanese in K-5, but I heard they take classes in English as well occasionally in the upper grades. From 6th-10th, they continuously learn Japanese, but the focus is more on the target language and its culture.

As for the home language of students who participated in the OPI, 11 students' home language was Japanese, while 12 students' home language was English, and 1 student speak Mandarin at home. I'm always impressed with their great language skills.

← [Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435>

Feb 3, 2021

1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

First acquisition language is natural and does not require formal instruction to create proper sentence structure and grammar. It just flows. This process involves learning through osmosis. Second language acquisition is more of an effort usually needing proper guidance or full immersion into the language the speaker wishes to learn. The ease of learning a second language is strongly determined by the strength of the first language skills of the mother tongue. Our tone and intonations of thoughts, conversations, and sentences may be lost in translation from our native language to our learning language. I also believe that the technique one uses in learning a new language has a lot to do with the success of fluency. For example, conversational instruction can work best for some because it is a similar pattern to how a speaker learned a first language. The degree of difficulty in learning a new language can also depend on what the first language is and what the second language will be. For instance, Romance language speakers have an easier time learning other Romance languages. A Spanish native speaker would have a much easier time learning Italian than learning Korean.

3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

As educators, it is important that we acquire the knowledge of what allows students to learn in different ways. I was struck to discover through our weekly readings on how the brain hears and interprets voices. The implications of these studies have the potential to be enormous in terms of understanding language disorders.

← [Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686>

Feb 3, 2021

Hi Melinda, I agree with what you said here "the ease of learning a second language is strongly determined by the strength of the first language skills of the mother tongue. Our tone and intonations of thoughts, conversations, and sentences may be lost in translation from our native language to our learning language." A simple example I can think of is when a person is talkative in their mother tongue, he/she tends to acquire a second language a lot faster in speaking.

← [Reply](#)



MaryAnn Wilson (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764>)

Feb 4, 2021

Hi Melinda, what you said about acquiring one's first language really resonated with me; that it just flows and happens through osmosis. I am now thinking about all the things I picked up in English without question. Whereas in learning another language, I constantly over-analyzed in order to structure my understanding. Roger Brown talks about this (Ipek, p. 159), saying that adults who have a cognitive superiority basically suck at learning a second language, because they tend to over-analyze and intellectualize. I really like what you said about using conversational instruction because it is patterned after acquiring one's first language. There has to be a way to get the brain to just accept the irrational aspects of a new language, and probably spending more time listening to it and conversing casually are key.

← [Reply](#)



Viktorija Lejko-Lacan (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731>)

Feb 12, 2021

Mary Ann, With my adult Russian students, I've also noticed that some students tend to over-analyze and then say, "This makes no sense. My first language is much more logical." One student got really frustrated when, after having practiced question forms with did, he found out that the question "Who lost the game last night?" was also correct. He didn't quite agree with a very logical reason for that.

← [Reply](#)



Lisa Bradbury (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949>)

Feb 6, 2021

The brain is so fascinating. To think that a child could learn twenty-six languages fluently before the age of seven is unbelievable. As teachers, we need to be doing more in the younger grades than we already are. We underestimate our little people. It is time to start listening to the research and apply it in the classroom.

← [Reply](#)



[Simiry Cuadra \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594)

Feb 7, 2021

Hello Melinda,

I liked how you explained that the learning of a second language has to do with the strength of the first language. As a Spanish native speaker, I can admit that Korean is a challenging language for me to learn. I like how you explain that "it is important that we acquire the knowledge of what allows students to learn in different ways". As educators, we have to understand and explore ways that meet student needs.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 3, 2021

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

According to Ipek's paper, the first step is to understand that L1 is "acquired" which occurs naturally to very young children, and L2 is "learned" which is obtained through conscious efforts. However, if placed in an immersive environment, L2 learners in the "critical period" of approximately 2-12 years olds can turn L2 "learning" into "acquisition," especially with native speaker-like pronunciation, and certain learning techniques have a potential to also turn "learning" into "acquisition" even for adult L2 learners to a limited degree.

This knowledge helps L2 teachers adjust their teaching methods and lesson plans according to the student demographics. For pre-puberty students in the critical period, I would provide a more immersive, natural environment with a lot of auditory input to simulate L1 acquisition environment. For adult learners, one of Ipek's specific suggestions was to provide more pronunciation assistance. I had never really thought of this myself before this class, but most adult L2 learners are not even aware of their own physical speech muscle limitations. It's helpful if the teacher actually shows them how to move the lips, tongue, chin, and such to produce certain sounds, which may not be as necessary to do for pre-puberty students in the

critical period. As an ESL speaker myself, there are many sounds in English that I was not producing well without myself even noticing that I wasn't, so coaching adult students by physically explaining how to move the mouth, even if it may sound silly, would be very helpful.

The paper argues that while there is a "silent period" in the development sequence of both L1 and L2 acquisition/learning, it can be challenging to apply the silent period to the L2 classroom because of time and curriculum limitations. In my personal experience, I learned more when I was in a group of two or more native speakers than one-on-one interaction opportunities with one native speaker, because I was able to observe how the native speakers interacted in a natural setting. Looking back, this worked for me as the "silent period." I see the merit of the "Interactionist Approach" as well, but I felt my empty toolbox had to be filled first to be able to start using the tools to be creative and interactive. The input I gained from the "silent period" observations filled that toolbox.

Krashen's argument that "input should be slightly above the level of the language learner" (p. 157) is a good point for L2 teachers to be aware of when creating a lesson plan. L2 teachers can also make recommendations on TV programs, podcasts, movies and such in the target language outside the classroom to help students create a simulated silent period whenever possible.

Some of the most useful concepts L2 teachers can implement in the classroom are the affective filter hypothesis which deals with the negative effects of the development of inhibitions and language ego after puberty, and the societal theories such as Schuman's "Acculturation Theory." For the former, "Mistakes can be seen as a threat to one's ego" and "With the fear to make mistakes, the adult language learner can resist to speak in the classroom" (p. 159). Many classmates, including myself, have experienced this a lot as L2 learners ourselves.

L2 teachers with this knowledge can work to create a positive and welcoming classroom where students feel relaxed and non-threatened to speak up. They can create a friendly atmosphere with colorful visual aids and to set students' expectations, explicitly assure them by saying that it's OK to make a mistake so let's try, and praise students for speaking up, whether their comments were good or bad. L2 teachers can also pay attention to the "air time" they give to each student so that no single person is dominating the conversation with everyone else being silent. A cheerful attitude with smiles and humor will always help, too, and L2 teachers can tell stories to students about their own failures with humor.

As to the societal theories, young children are naturally unbiased but can "acquire" a "negative attitude to the target language, target language speakers, the target language culture, and the social value of learning a second language" (p. 159). L2 teachers can promote the target language culture in the classroom by highlighting positive aspects of the country and/or culture including sports and entertainment figures, introducing festivals, movies, music (not just

traditional but subcultural ones as well), poetry, and such, and telling inspiring personal stories about the merit of learning LX to help release their mental block.

Schuman's Acculturation Theory, which argues that "the process of acculturation requires both social and psychological adaption. Acculturation is determined by the degree of social and psychological "distance" between the learner and the target-language culture" (p.160), seems to be the other side of the same coin. This theory resonated with me the most as an adult LX learner and immigrant.

I found Chomsky's "Universal Grammar" concept interesting. I speak several languages (in varying degrees of fluency from lower intermediate to fluent) and it was increasingly easier for me to learn L3-L6 after L2, as I was able to spot the core patterns of a new target language faster each time. Granted, 3 of them are romance languages so it is obviously easier, but this was the case even with the ones in the different language groups. Though I'm not sure if this can be attributed to the "core rules" (p. 156) of Universal Grammar, or simply because my own analytical cognition abilities matured as an adult.

I also found the "Behaviorist" theory curious even though it has limited implications, as it is based on a reward and conditioning system, which I thought was like training a dog. Well, it was inspired by Pavlov with the famous dog study and Pavlonian conditioning, so no wonder. While I don't think L2 teachers should use the punishing aspect of conditioning, they can reward students for good answers in the classroom.

Edited by [Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025) on Feb 3 at 11:04pm

← [Reply](#)

○



[Silver Park \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147686)

Feb 3, 2021



1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

The difference between first and second language acquisition is that the first language is adapted in a natural form unconsciously whereas a second language can be acquired by learning and structures first. There are actually a lot of similarities between the first and second language acquisition. They both can be learned in an organic setting of environments. There are progressive stages in both sequences when acquiring a language. Everyone starts from a simple word to complicated sentences.

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

The knowledge of first language acquisition helps a second language teacher by seeing the similarities in obtaining a language with a general form. Knowing the structures and grammars of the language that are being taught is important to be able to deliver the right materials and lessons. Everybody learns a language and whether or not they are aware of it and understanding the learning processes through the knowledge of first language acquisition can guide teachers in their own teaching of a language.

← [Reply](#)



[Lisa Bradbury \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949)

Feb 6, 2021

Hi Silver,

I do agree that that the L1 is acquired and the L2 is learned. If there are strong language skills in the L1, that makes it all the more easier for the L2 to be learned. I find it fascinating that a child can learn up to 26 languages perfectly before the age of seven. Children are like sponges and the human brain is so amazing. I wish that we would take advantage of that and teach a second language to all young children. We wait too long to have them take foreign languages in middle school or high school, when the "Language Acquisition Device" or LAD has shut down by puberty.

← [Reply](#)



[Simiry Cuadra \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Silver,

I agree with you in explaining that both the first and second language can be obtained in an organic setting environment. The knowledge of first language acquisition can definitely help learn a second language with similarities. One of them can include the alphabet. For example, in many cases, letters along with their sounds can share similarities. However, this is not the case for all languages. It can be challenging to learn a sound that is not known from their L1.

← [Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/146949>

Feb 3, 2021



1. It is held by linguists that the first language is acquired while the second language is learned. Learning a second language is a lot easier and faster if the learner has strong language learning skills acquired from the first language. There are many factors that influence second language learning but I think high motivation is the prime influence on how one learns a second language.

3. The implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching can help us know how students learn best, so that we can tailor lessons for each student. It must be noted however, that, "Language development is a complex and a unique human quality that no theory is as yet able to completely explain." (Wanjohi, 2010). As teachers, we need to realize that all students are different and we need to be patient and understanding when it comes to L2 learners.

[← Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 7, 2021



Hi Lisa,

Motivation is very important! As teachers, we are focused on tailoring the "right" content for our students -practicing pronunciation, using the correct grammar, memorizing sentence structures, developing the vocabulary, etc.- so that they may reap the immediate benefit when they leave the classroom. This is often not the consistent outcome. From this week's readings, we've learned how the different learning stages affect the student's outputs and challenge the teacher's expectations (and how important it is for the teacher to recognize and react accordingly to this dynamic). When students come to the classroom to learn as an extracurricular choice, motivation may not be a concern. Nonetheless, when the student arrives in a country where another language is spoken and must learn this language to communicate, for example, the motivation is completely different. What are some of the ways you've managed classroom motivation in your experience as a teacher and student?

Valeria.

Edited by [Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473) on Feb 7 at 2:18pm

[← Reply](#)



[Juan Ochoa \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)



Feb 7, 2021

Hi Lisa, I also believe that high motivation is a prime factor on how one learns a second language. Some people seem to be more motivated than others especially in a college class where some students will just take a language for a grade where as others are genuinely interested. In addition to high motivation I also believe positive reinforcement plays a part in motivation. Giving constant negative feedback could cause a student to lose that motivation which could cause them to not want to look at the material. Unlike other subjects, language is one that has to be constantly reviewed and practiced and not doing so could harm the learning process.

← [Reply](#)



[Melinda Cavalletto \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435)

Feb 7, 2021

Lisa,

I one hundred percent agree that ambition is critical to learning a second language. I am on Duolingo, attempting to learn Spanish as a second language. My motivation is the opportunity to utilize my TESOL certificate in South America. I also know that once I am immersed into the language, my speaking and understanding of Spanish will excel. I remember reading about your time in the Middle East and that you now have an understanding of Arabic. I am impressed!

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 12, 2021

Motivation or ambition is definitely the key. Below is a link to a video clip of the late UCLA professor Michael Heim in which he explains why he learned different languages.

[**Michael Heim on why and how he learned languages**](#)

[\(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfCiTD4ShLA\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfCiTD4ShLA)

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 16, 2021

Thank you for sharing the video of Michael Heim. It's really good to see one person demonstrating five languages fluently. It shows me that it's very possible with the right motivations.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222)

Feb 8, 2021

Hi Lisa, your answer to Q3 makes me think more about L2 learning. As an English learner, I used to think there is one correct answer I cannot reach, and it always frustrated me. But this quotation and your answer give me the courage and make me want to be a patient teacher like you. I think "all students are different" is the key point. Thanks for sharing your opinion!

Edited by [Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) on Feb 8 at 5:59am

← [Reply](#)



[Raquel Armendariz \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028)

Feb 3, 2021

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

In the article, Comparing and Contrasting First and Second Language Acquisition: Implications for Language Teachers by Anadolu University, Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu, Yunus Emre Kampusu, Eskisehir, the authors describe a very fascinating observation. *"children imitate a piece of language they hear and if they receive positive reinforcement they continue to imitate and practice that piece of language which then turns into a 'habit' (Williams & Burden, 1997)."* As a behavior analyst, I found it particularly interesting to read that the article included behavioristic views of language acquisition. Noting that Pavlov's views centered on explaining it in terms of conditioning and habit formation, and following him, B.F. Skinner, the father of behavior analysis, not surprisingly, explained language in terms of operant conditioning; in other words, seeing language as a behavior that can be taught/learned. This school of thought

suggests that a part of the second language/foreign language acts as a stimulus to which once presented, the learner responds. And in our field, when a stimulus elicits a correct response (successfully knowing the answer to a question, putting together a sentence correctly, or being understood in L2), and the correct response is reinforced (praise, approval getting the object you are requesting in L2, etc.), the likelihood of the behavior, in this case, using L2, is increased.

Personally, knowing this aspect of first and second language acquisition has been very insightful and helpful. Realizing that as a teacher, by contrast, if the student's attempt at using L2 to communicate a request results in embarrassment, or any kind of punishing consequence, the behavior would happen less frequently.

Helps reinforce my belief that all behavior is communication.

3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

I really enjoyed this week's reading material. When I read UCSF's study showing how the brain sorts sound to make language and the physical complexities involved, I became fascinated by the findings of the various research that exists. But I have to say that I started to relate the readings to personal experiences, with Sayuri Hayakawa and Viorica Marian's article *How Language Shapes the Brain*, "When two neurons respond to a stimulus (such as a word), they begin to form chemical and physical pathways to each other, which are strengthened or weakened depending on how often they are co-activated." But, **Theories of Language Development in Children** goes, in a very succinct way, over the theories that have been developed to explain language learning such as, behavioral, linguistic, and interactional at the theories and the history of language theory development helping us see and think about language development from approaches. So much so that it made me think of my bilingual children and I stopped feeling guilty about the decision to teach them a second language at such an early age. But the Social Interaction theory approach to language acquisition, based on culture and environment. "In fact, the theory holds that language is never universal, but always context- and time-bound." Meaning that language "seems to be provincial, but also utilitarian, because it develops in the environment where it is most needed and most likely to be understood." It reminded me of my mother and the fact that after living in the United States for over 30 years, well over half her life, she still does not speak English fluently; despite 3-4 attempts at finishing ESL courses. Why? My personal theory: because she went to these community courses to meet and interact with other people in her native language. Living and working in environments in which she's managed to find people with whom she can talk, work, and even make new friends in the language she learned as a child, has prevented her from having the motivation (or quite frankly, the need) to learn a second language. I always wondered what kind of teachers she had at various attempts at night school. Now I wonder what kind of student my mother must have been.

Edited by [Raquel Armendariz \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028) on Feb 7 at 10:47pm

← [Reply](#)



[Juan Ochoa \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)

Feb 7, 2021



Hi Raquel, I also found that part of the reading really interesting and it made me think about my experience in the classroom. I can recall one of my Russian teachers using humiliations and insults in the class as a motivator for students to learn and study the material. Personally I couldn't learn in such a stressful environment and I found that I would often learn the material so I can say it in class and then forget about it and move on to the next subject. The teaching of languages, especially in a college setting where the teacher is very limited on time, is a real challenge. creating an environment where a student knows that it is ok to make mistakes is the most important thing that should be established early on. Because with out mistakes, there can be no progress.

← [Reply](#)



[Raquel Armendariz \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028)

Feb 7, 2021



Wow, Juan! Using insults and humiliation as a "motivator"? That's not only a stressful environment, it is punishing. reinforces by Behavior that is reinforced is increased, conversely, behavior that is punished, decreases. "if the learner responds inappropriately then the behavior is punished and the likelihood of this behavior to occur is decreased (Brown, 1994)." Being proficient, or having knowledge of a subject, does not automatically make one a good teacher. I'm not surprised you were unable to learn just enough and just retain long enough to avoid humiliation. -Having these experiences and undergoing this preparation (our current courses) will make you a great instructor, I'm sure.

← [Reply](#)



[Viktorija Lejko-Lacan \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/731)

Feb 12, 2021



True, Juan. Without mistakes, there is no language learning. Some mistakes are just a sign that a student's language is progressing (developmental errors). Your experience with an unforgiving teacher reminds of David Sedaris's recounting of his learning French with a strict French teacher. In addition to being funny, this story end with a wonderful moment when David realizes that he finally understands the language. Here it is.

[David Sedaris Me Talk Pretty-1.doc \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/files/4907410/download?download_frd=1&verifier=rugelEZ9SboHEYQ7vPRfmcJCKKSevMlp2YOJK2kl\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/files/4907410/download?download_frd=1&verifier=rugelEZ9SboHEYQ7vPRfmcJCKKSevMlp2YOJK2kl)

← [Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Raquel,

Wow, thanks for your input. Although we've learned that the views on language acquisition -behaviorist, innatist, and interactionist- are not mutually exclusive, I have found your behaviorist-focused post very interesting. From personal experience, I've placed more importance on the interactionist view myself: I believe our surroundings will greatly influence our learning. This is from personal language-learning experience. Nonetheless, your belief that "second language/foreign language acts as a stimulus to which once presented, the learner responds", opened my eyes to believe that, in a certain fashion, the interactionist view nurtures a similar idea: acquiring a language is a result of the stimulus received from the student's environment thus rendering it a behavioral interaction(?). This may seem confusing but what I'm trying to say is that from the way you explain the behaviorist view, the interactionist view may be the same but explained through a different focus. I'm still making sense of this as I read and re-read your post and my response, and I hope you can add your input.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Raquel,

I actually thought of you as I was reading the behaviorist theory section of the paper, based on what you shared about your profession in the first week. While I don't necessarily promote this theory fully (especially the punishing implications to discourage the "incorrect" responses), I found the observations quite fascinating myself, as children

do form habits based on the positive or negative reaction of their caretakers to their actions. This is even true for adults, as our behavior is often reinforced when we receive positive recognition. I took this theory as a classroom tool to positively manipulate students' actions, which we can use not to reward the correct answers, but rather, the act of someone speaking up itself.

← Reply



Raquel Armendariz (She/Her/Hers) (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028>)

Feb 7, 2021



Hi Yoko,

I think learning from the combination of theories presented, has been eye-opening, or mind-opening for me. Re: the punishing implications, it makes reference to a theory of behaviorism in which, in simplest/general terms: Behavior that is reinforced, increases; while behavior that is punished, decreases. A "punishing" response could be something as common as not giving someone the correct item they are requesting, simply because the listener didn't understand the request correctly. it's not always intentional. Behavior analysis also recognizes that punishing is quite the opposite of teaching. But I agree with you in that this theory is not at the top of my list either. Based on my personal experiences, I'm more Team Social Interaction theory.

:)

← Reply



Yoon-Jung Cho (<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222>)

Feb 3, 2021



1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

Krashen and Terrel said "Language acquisition is the "natural" way to develop linguistic ability, and is subconscious progress; children for example are not necessary aware that they are acquiring language, they are only aware that are communicating ... Language learning is

“knowing about” language, or “formal knowledge” of a language ... Learning refers to “explicit” knowledge of rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them”(Krashen and Terrel 1983). From this perspective, people ‘naturally acquire’ a first language(hereafter L1), whereas ‘artificially learns’ a second language(hereafter L2). If a learner is old enough to recognize a certain language as L2, one should ‘study’ it with a certain motivation and aim, not like L1.

We can refer to McLaughlin about ‘How first language acquisition influences second language learning’. He differentiated L2 learning in adult from L1 acquisition in children. According to him, L1 interferes L2 learning process.

“For example, when an English-speaking adult says ‘Ich warte fur ihn’ in German, the English prepositional construction in the English equivalent, ‘I wait for him’, has interfered and displaced the correct German form, ‘Ich warte auf ihn’. Children acquiring German as a first language do not make such mistakes; hence the two experiences involve basically different process.”(McLaughlin 1985)

That is, when someone learns L2, one must think something in L1 first, and then translates it into L2. It creates interruption of L1, and L2 learners are supposed to make mistakes in word order, sentence structures, and so on.

References

S.D. Krashen & T.D. Terrell, “The natural approach: language acquisition in the classroom”, 1983.

B. McLaughlin, *Second Language Acquisition in Childhood*, 1985.

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

Based on Q1 discussion, humans acquire L1 naturally. If teachers apply this idea to L2 learning, it will help learners acquire L2 more spontaneously. For instance, children acquire L1 in this order: listening – speaking – reading – writing. Also, when people acquire L1, they are exposed to L1 all day long. L2 instructors can apply these ideas of L1 acquisition to L2 learning. L2 learning in school is mostly based on reading books and grammars, but a language is not a product of system and grammars. A language is not systematically created based on grammars, but is naturally occurred. Grammars are rules organized retroactively after the occurrence of a language, and a language is not created based on grammar. The relationship between Signifier and Signified is arbitrary. If learners ‘study’ language from

grammars, they should artificially memorize a number of exceptions caused by the arbitrary nature of a language, so there can be a limitation to acquire a language as a natural conversation.

Edited by [Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) on Feb 8 at 6:21am

← [Reply](#)



[MaryAnn Wilson \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/94764)

Feb 5, 2021

Hi Yoon-Jung,

I agree that a language is not systematically created based on grammar, and yet curriculum is based on learning grammar beginning on day one without allowing students to first through a listening period, even if somewhat modified. So much frustration comes with memorizing every rule and its exception (of which there are always many), in contrast to native speakers who don't have to learn these rules because the grammar they use just sounds right to them. This also bears out in the experiment done by Kara Morgan-Short, in which it was shown that the brains of students who learned an artificial language via immersion had developed processes that were more like native speakers.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222)

Feb 8, 2021

Hi Mary, thanks for your opinion. I will look into the experiment done by Kara Morgan-Short. Also, you said "the grammar they use just sounds right to them [native speakers]" and it is the important point. Foreign friends who study Korean sometimes ask me Korean grammar questions, but I do not know what to say, because grammar is not a result of logic, it is just a social promise. Koreans just know instantly what sounds awkward. This is why the immersion method is effective for L2 learners. I totally agree with your comments.

← [Reply](#)



[Russell Fung \(He/Him/His\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/147480)

Feb 3, 2021

The difference between first and second language acquisition: The primary language is absorbed and developed without adhering to any rules of the language. The second language acquisition is different from the first in that there is a template and structure already in place. We have Chomsky, who believes that language development is innate. That the ability to learn a language is universal. Whatever environment and society the child is brought up in will be the dominant language. When it comes to second language acquisition, we can look more towards Piaget's theory. Piaget believes in the stages of maturity that affect how and when a person develops language. Depending on the age and environment, a person's ability to learn a language varies.

What we know about the brain for language teaching:

Brain scans indicate that the window for language learning is best before the age of four. It's a crucial time for toddlers to absorb two languages. They have the innate ability to distinguish sounds or phonemes of different languages. Exposure in early life to two languages will make it easier for them to learn a third or fourth language. Little is known of the grey and white matter that form in the brain, but there is a strong belief that there are connections at work as the brain develops.

As teachers, this is helpful to know. When we understand what the brain is doing, we can devise strategies that would best utilize a person's history of language development.

← [Reply](#)



[Valeria Barrera \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/160473)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Russell!

Hasn't Piaget only validated what we shared last week concerning how we were all successful/unsuccessful in language learning? Each student's environment is very important! A very interactionist view for myself. Having said this, a lot of the research on the importance of our brain in language development makes me hopeful that we may be able to not only understand how our environment affects us but rather use those findings to better meet each student's learning needs. This only highlights Kara Morgan-Short's research, which Christian emphasized in his post at the beginning of this thread.

← [Reply](#)



[Melinda Cavalletto \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/150435)

Feb 7, 2021

Hi Russell,

I feel like I missed my calling before age 4 as I only speak and understand one language. Darn it! The study of the brain is fascinating. What is even more astonishing is that science behind what most of us already asserted is that languages are easier to learn at an early age. I agree that first language acquisition is simply through osmosis.

← [Reply](#)

○



[https://](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)

[Juan Ochoa \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/163772)

⋮

Feb 4, 2021

1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

While both L1 and L2 learners share similar patterns in learning (silent period, Formulaic Speech, Structural and Semantic Simplification) one thing that clearly stands out from the two is how the L1 learner masters a language. A Childs innate ability to acquire a language with very little input seems to be greatly influenced by their environment.

Behavioral Theory explains that children acquire language through stimuli and their environment. This Idea is supported in the article *How Language Shapes the Brain* where it explains that children are hardwired to adapt to the sounds of their environment "The brain's ability to adapt to its environment explains how we become specialized to the sounds of our native tongue." This can also explain why L2 learners find it difficult to produce sounds from environments that they are not familiar, such as (English to Chinese) or have an easier time learning sounds from a similar environment (Spanish to Italian).

While L1 learners must be surrounded by their environment in order to absorb a language L2 learners have more flexibility. Young children need to be in an environment relevant to their language to learn. For example, L1 Spanish speakers who live in the United States will slowly lose the ability to speak Spanish if not enforced. This happens because Spanish speakers are not in an environment relevant to Spanish and although they have spoken it for years this ability can still diminish. This ties in to the Social Interactionist Theory that states "the basic appeal of this approach is the importance it places on the home and the cultural environment in early-childhood language acquisition." while being surrounded by an environment can help speed the learning process, Adult L2 learners do not need these environments because they have already developed attitudes towards races, cultures, and ethnic groups (IPEK)

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

The biggest challenge I see for teaching children an L2 is coming up with ways to make the language relevant and creating a good environment that will make the child continue to want to

learn. **The Critical period Hypothesis** states that children have a biological determined period of time that allows them to learn a language. It would make sense that a child in a French class would excel given they have this innate ability. However, given what we know about how a Childs environment shapes his learning it would be very unlikely that he would succeed in the class. A child might also be discouraged in a class with difficult pronunciations such as an English speaker attempting to speak Mandarin. Therefore, a teacher must maintain positive reinforcement while also creating an environment relevant to the language learner. having some knowledge of the students native language can be beneficial because it can tell which grammar structures or sounds will be difficult to the learner.

← [Reply](#)



[Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222)

Feb 8, 2021

Hi Juan, I agree with your idea of a learning environment. While L2 learners intentionally study L2, L1 learners are just naturally exposed to their mother tongue through five senses. That is the key difference between L1 and L2. If we try to make an English-Friendly environment for L2 learners, it will help them acquire English more naturally. Behavioral Theory sounds interesting and I want to study and apply it when I teach later. Thank you for sharing your thought.

Edited by [Yoon-Jung Cho \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/151222) on Feb 8 at 1:27am

← [Reply](#)



[Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025)

Feb 7, 2021

This is my second one:

3. What are the implications of our knowledge about the brain for language teaching?

It is interesting to learn about those neuroscientific aspects of language acquisition and learning, based on how the brain collects and processes the sounds of language(s), which could even alter physical reality.

I found the knowledge gained from the article by Sayuri Hayakawa and Viorica Marian, "How Language Shapes the Brain", the most useful to use to motivate adult L2 learners. While many articles tend to discuss the importance of the crucial development period in a very early

stage of human life which one normally does not have much control of after-the-fact, this article brings a very positive message for adult and older learners.

It argues that extensive exposure to multilingual speech forces the brain to use more regions of the brain, thereby physically training the “brain muscle,” if you will, expanding the capacity of the brain with an increased formation of gray and white matters, which leads to enhanced multitasking performance and cross-functional abilities.

In my personal case, I naturally use different tones of voice and even different personalities when speaking in English and Japanese, respectively. I had always attributed this to cultural factors, but perhaps it is because my brain is also sending those different sets of information to differently filtered regions of the brain and reacting differently if I follow along with this article.

This article goes on that “increased gray and white matter, as well as the ability to flexibly recruit different brain regions, may help explain why bilingualism can delay the onset of dementia symptoms by four to six years. Fortunately, there doesn’t appear to be a deadline for fortifying your brain, as learning a foreign language can still have an impact well into adulthood after relatively brief amounts of training.”

What is particularly promising is that this validates and promotes lifetime learning. L2 teachers can promote this research to their adult L2 students, particularly older immigrants who were brought to the host country but tend to rely on their younger family members to translate for them rather than learn L2. Older adults would be motivated upon learning that one of the benefits of multilingualism is dementia prevention- by four to six years, no less. I speak several languages so hopefully, I will never develop dementia in my lifetime!

(Though I have also heard elsewhere that when multilingual people develop dementia, they suddenly go back to speaking only their native tongues?)

Edited by [Yoko Matsubara \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/161025) on Feb 7 at 5:38pm

← Reply



[Raquel Armendariz \(She/Her/Hers\) \(https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028\)](https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/129028)

Feb 7, 2021



"Though I have also heard elsewhere that when multilingual people develop dementia, they suddenly go back to speaking only their native tongues" - REALLY?! another fascinating study of language.

Speaking of older immigrants who move to a different (language) country but tend to rely on their younger family members to translate for them or somehow manage to find other

common language community members and community access that the motivation to learn the new language is never strong enough, simply because it is not absolutely necessary. -My mother is one such person. Sadly. She has lived in this country for over 30 years but somehow has more friend I've ever had, has taken community ESL courses multiple times at different points of her life, always to walk out of the courses with more monolingual friends and a decreased need to learn the new country's language.

← [Reply](#)



<https://my.uclaextension.edu/courses/32476/users/123594>

Feb 14, 2021



1. What are the differences between first and second language acquisition? How does first language acquisition influence second language learning?

The difference between the first and second language acquisition is from the development they have. According to Anthony M. Wanjohi's article, "Theories of Language Development in Children", It is said that language is acquired through imitation. He states that speaking the language is what makes it real. In order to acquire a language, you need to speak it. So for second language acquisition, if you are able to understand it, but not speak it, then it is not acquired yet.

2. How can the knowledge of first language acquisition help a second/foreign language teacher?

The knowledge of first language acquisition helps a second language teacher by understanding the sounds the learner knows. The article "How Language Shapes the Brain", written by Sayuri Hayakaway and Viorica Marian, they explain that bilinguals connect frontal to the posterior and subcortical sensory and motor regions. This allows them to learn a second language more effectively. Having the acquisition of the first language fluently will enable learners with more vocabulary and understanding of how words are formed. This can lead to sounds and how the human body can have better cognitive control in learning a new language. First language acquisition also help a second language within 2-3 years, as reported in the glossary of second and primary language acquisition terms. In BICS, students encounter a second language with a simple language structure.

← [Reply](#)