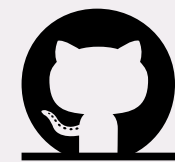

Applied Linguistics

LG 451/456 — Semester 2, 2021 (Jan-May 2022)

CLASS 3: SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Sakol Suethanapornkul



This presentation is adapted from LING 101
SLA lecture at Georgetown University

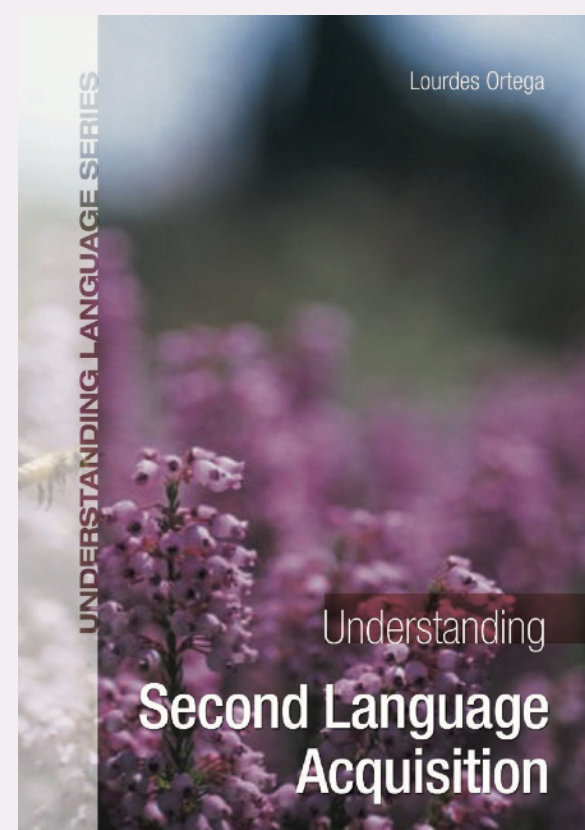
Outline: Week 3

- A gentle introduction to SLA
- (Some) history and major theories
- Looking ahead: Week 4

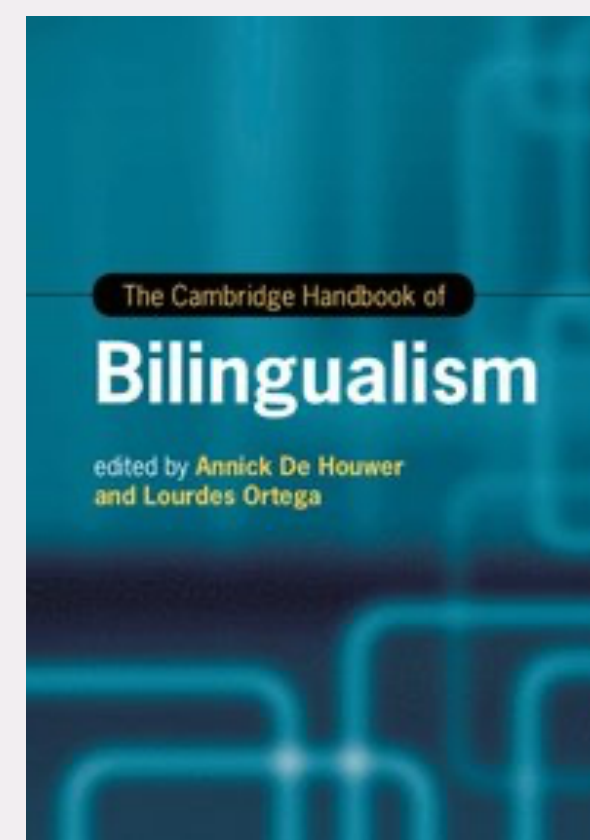
Author: Lourdes Ortega



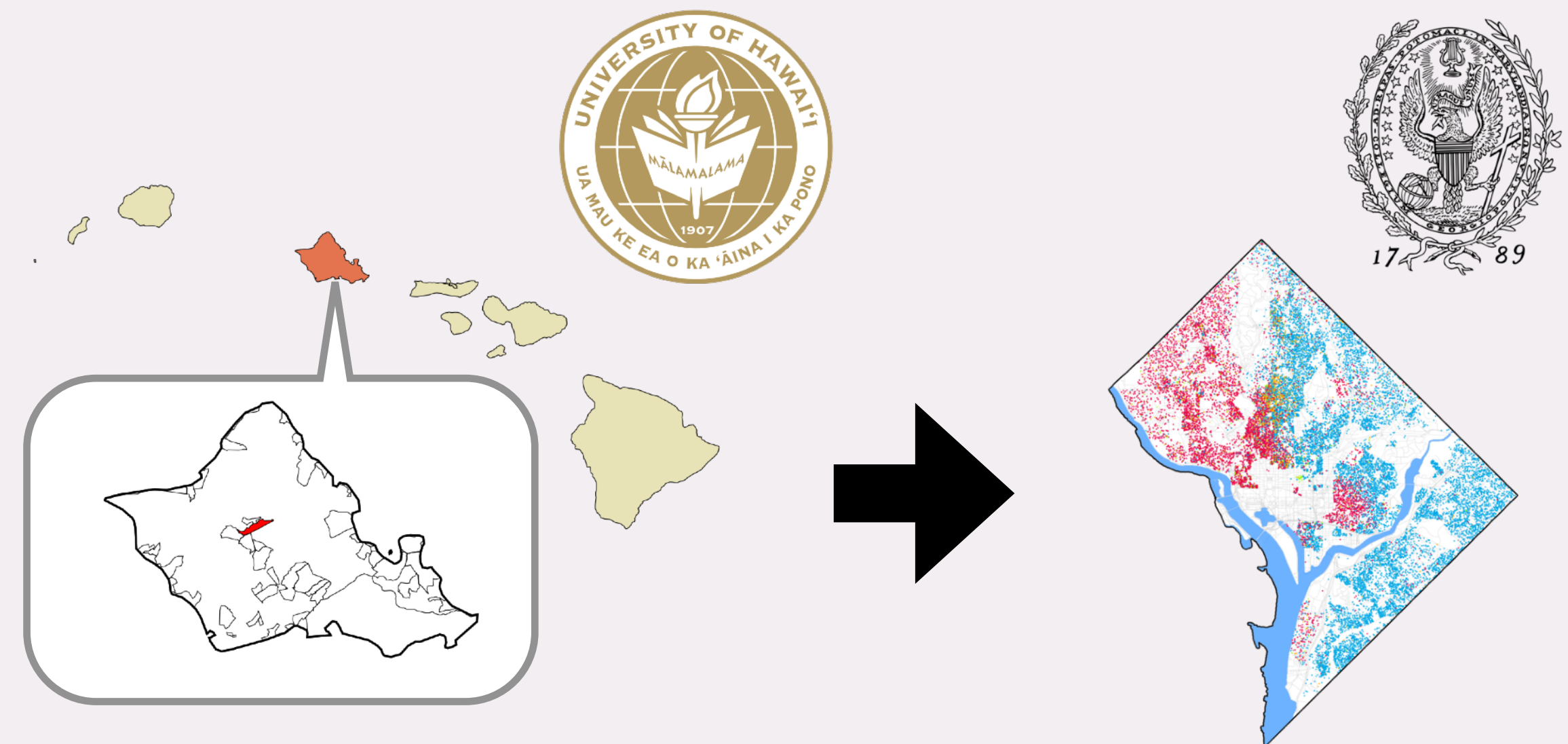
- Professor, Dept of Linguistics, Georgetown University
- Areas: SLA, Bilingualism and multilingualism



2009



2019



Introduction to SLA

What SLA researchers want to know?

How do people learn additional language(s) after they have acquired their native language(s)?

What SLA researchers want to know?

How do **people** learn additional language(s) after they have acquired their native language(s)?

Research subjects:

- People of (almost) all age groups



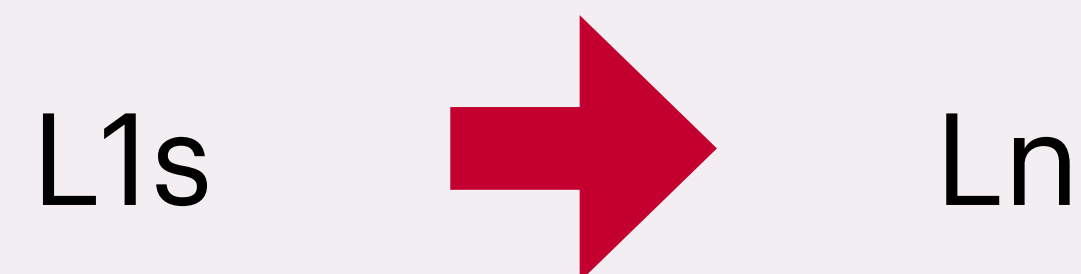
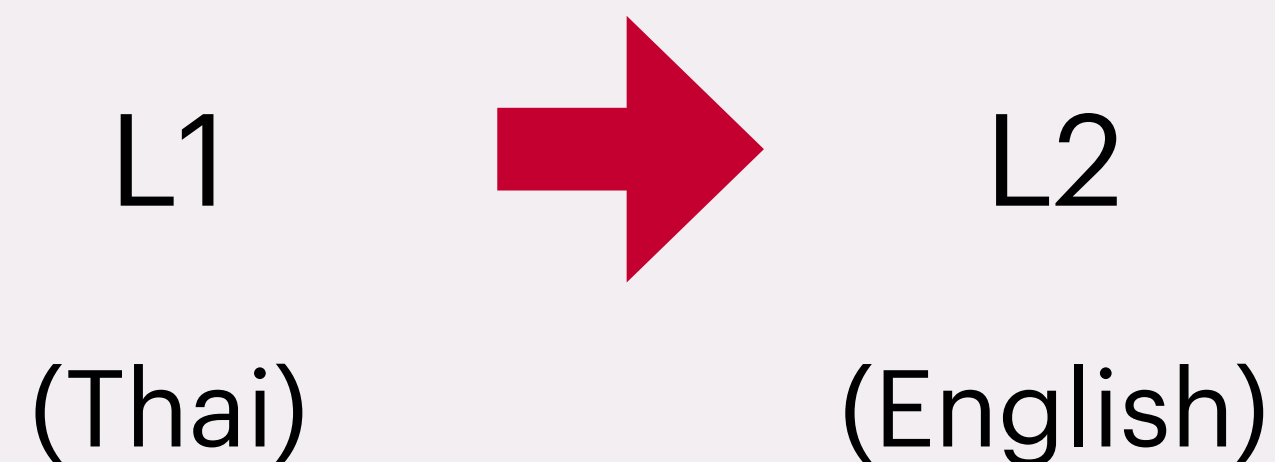
What SLA researchers want to know?

How do people learn additional language(s) after they have acquired their **native language(s)**?



What SLA researchers want to know?

How do people learn **additional language(s)** after they have acquired their native language(s)?



Outside class



Inside

Some terminology

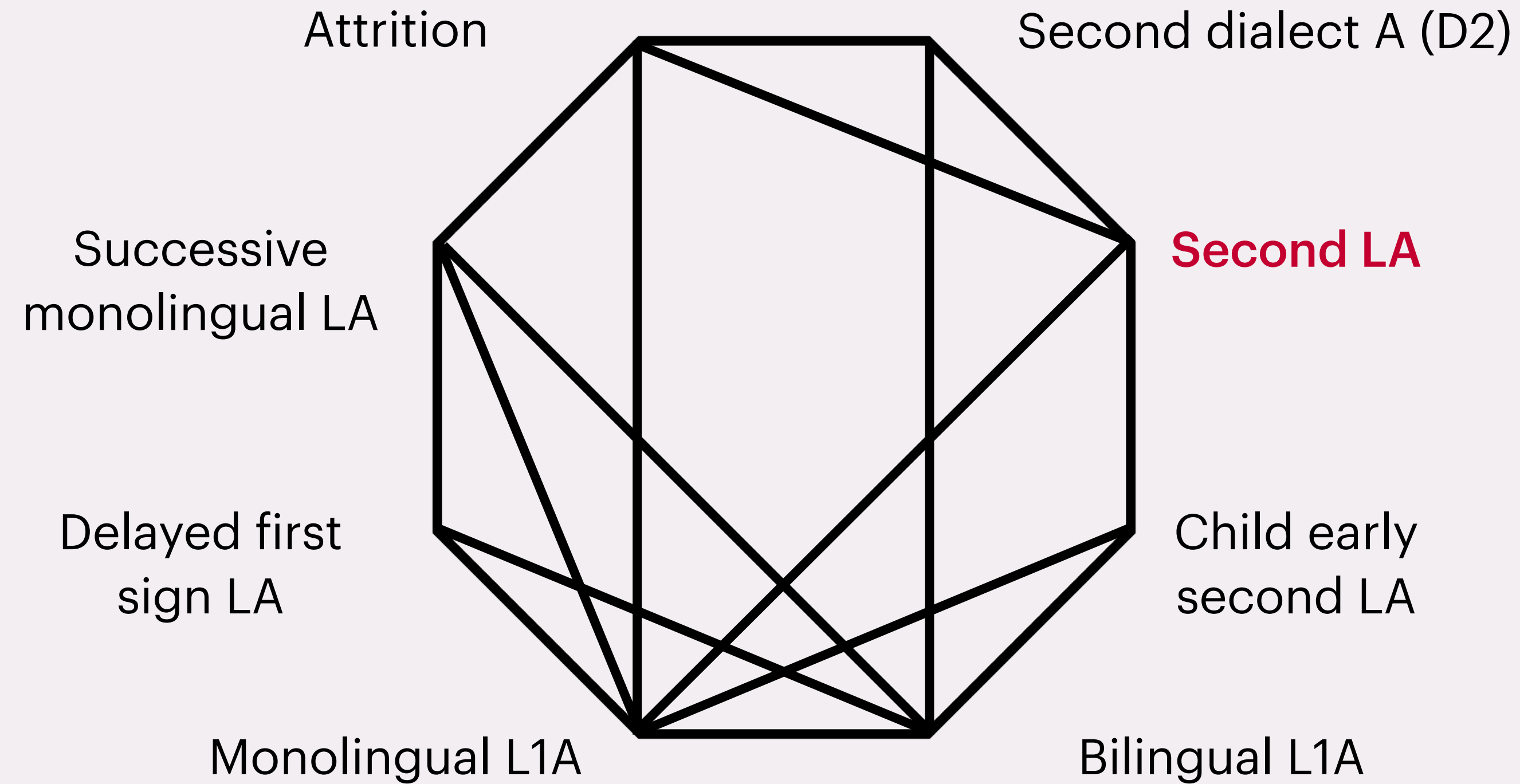
1. **L1**
 - a. That takes place within an educational context
2. **L2**
 - b. People who are using/learning an L2
3. **Acquisition**
 - c. The target, to-be-learned language(s)
4. **L2 users**
 - d. Learning, the process whereby a language is learned
5. **Instructed**
 - e. The language acquired during childhood

What SLA researchers want to know?

Overarching questions:

- How do we learn an L_n after the L₁(s) is/are acquired
- In what ways is the learning of L_n similar/different from that of L₁(s) from birth
- What factors contribute to the variability in rates and outcomes of L_n learning?
- (What does it takes to attain advanced competencies in L_n?)

SLA within language sciences



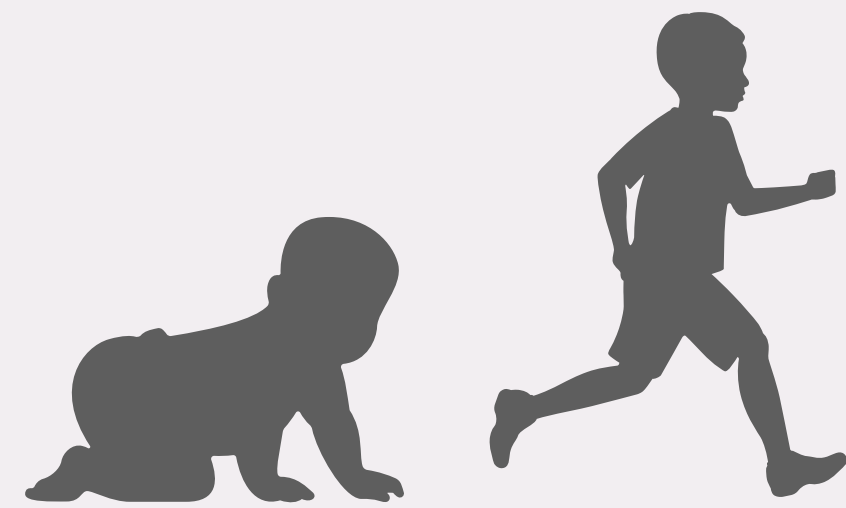
SLA within language sciences

Whole-class

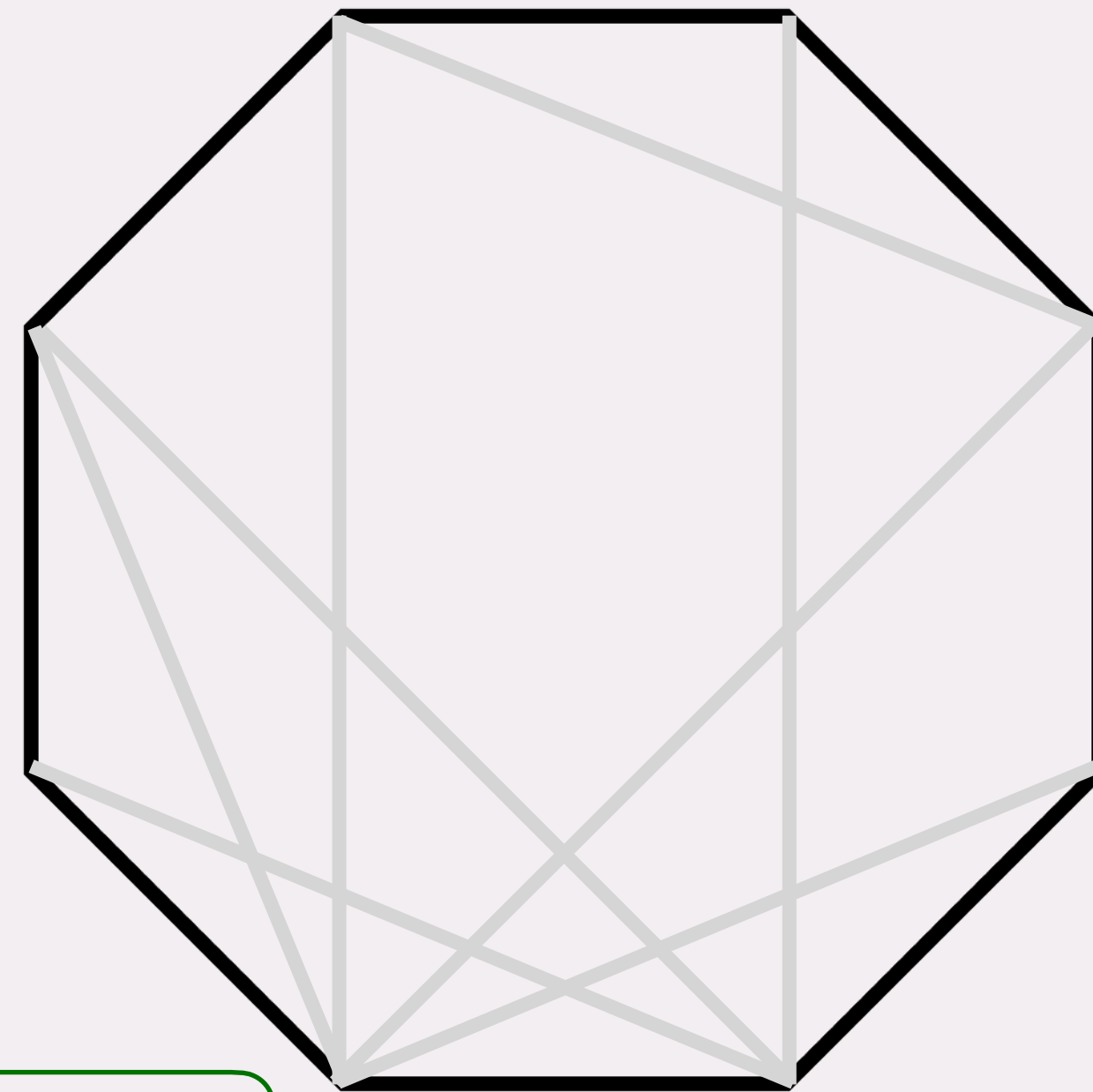
Questions:

- How do we define success in L2 acquisition?
- What does it mean to be “successful” L2 users (or learners)?
- Who do we compare L2 users to or against?

SLA within language sciences



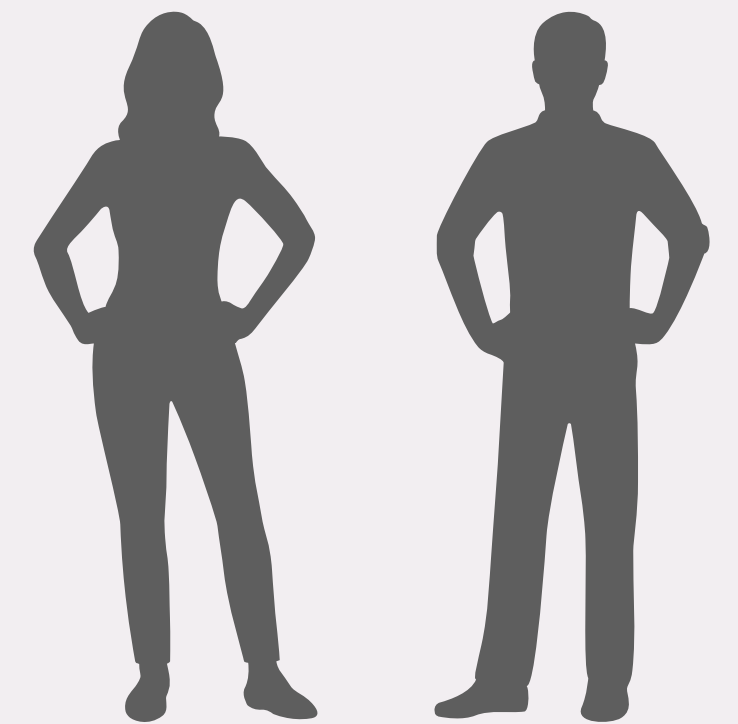
Early
Monolingual



Child L1A

Adult L2A

Bilingual
Late



SLA within language sciences

a monolingual native speaker bias



Early

Monolingual



Single-language
competencies during
early childhood

Child L1A

≠

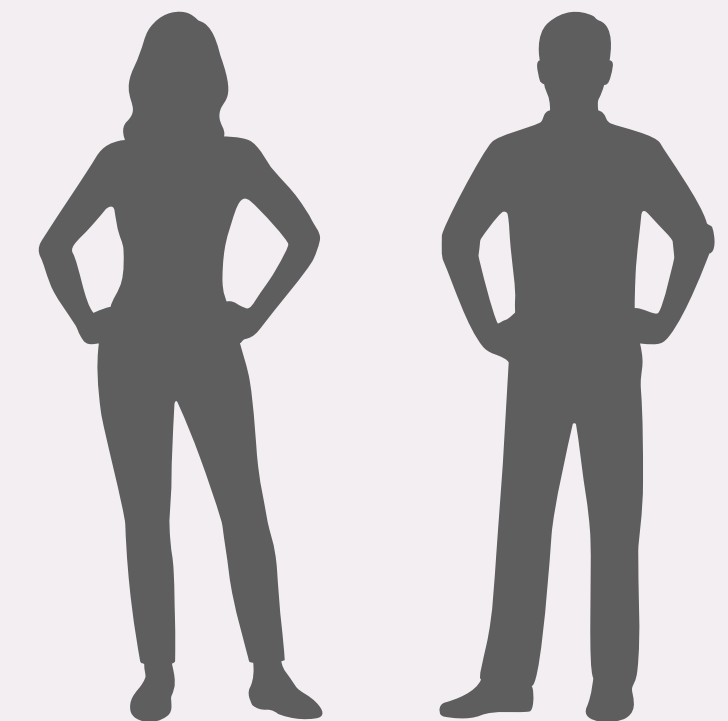


Multiple-language
competencies later
in life

Adult L2A

Bilingual

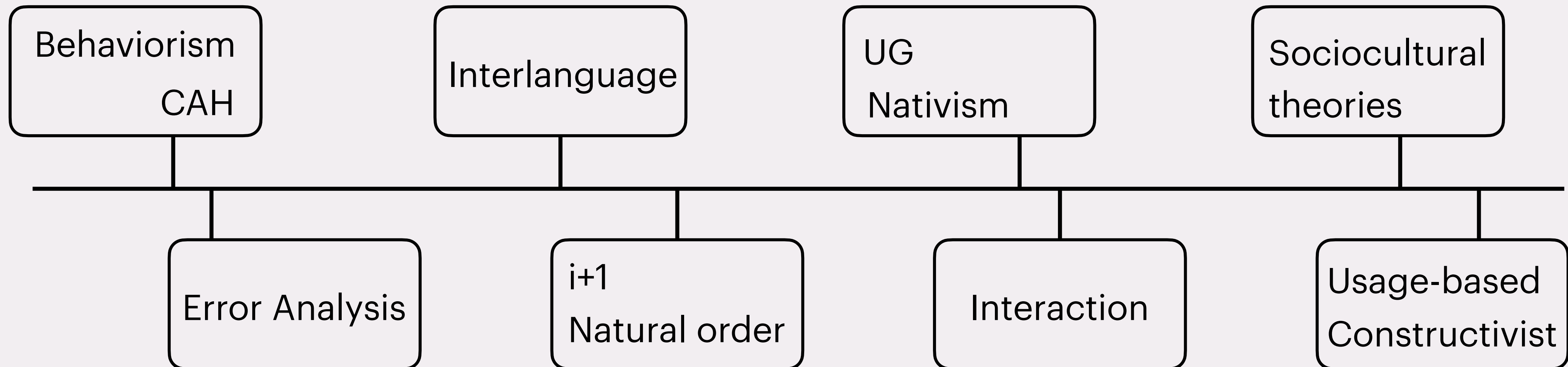
Late



History and (Some) Theories

Theories of SLA

★ The “awakenings”



NOTE: These theories/approaches did not develop chronologically as shown

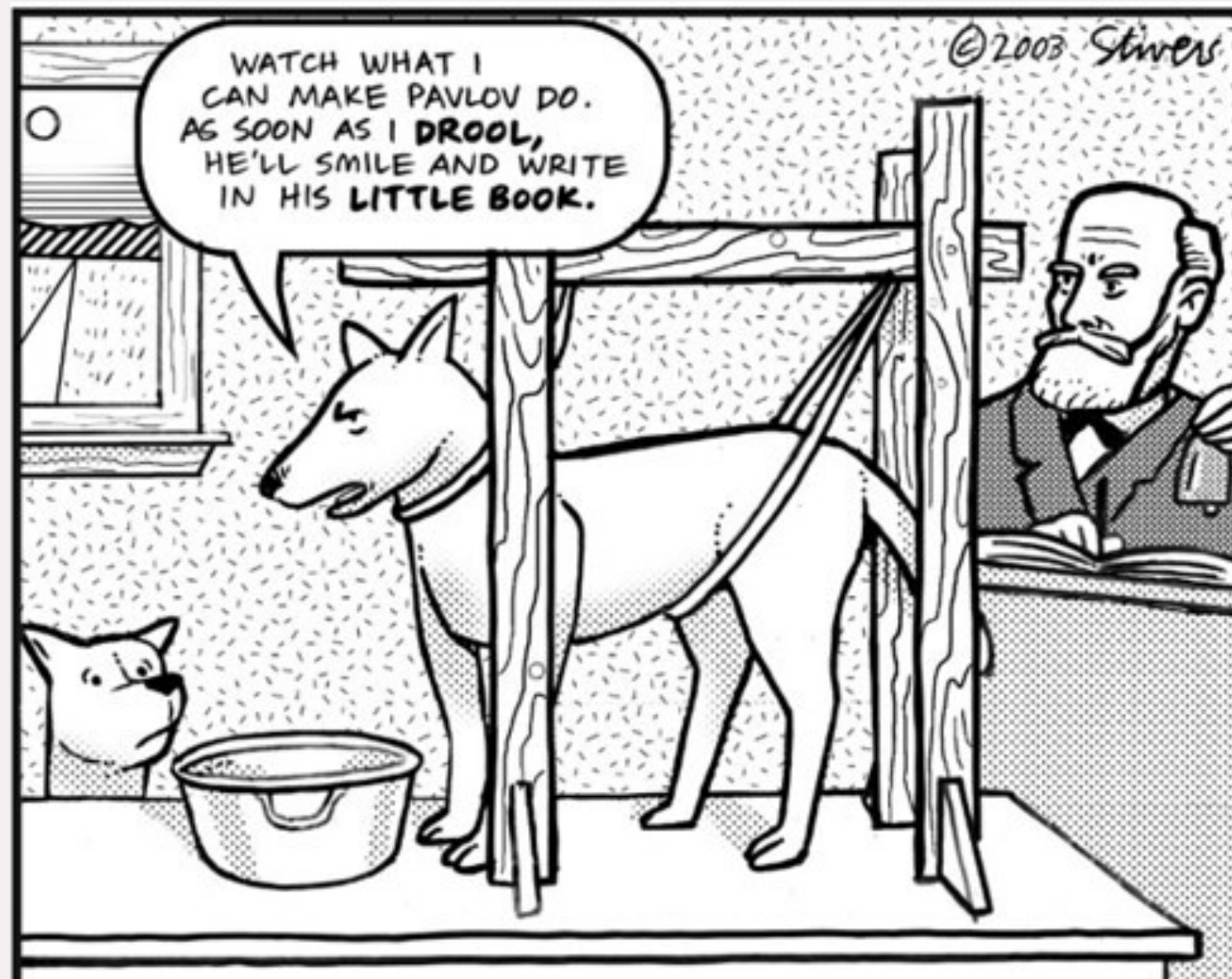
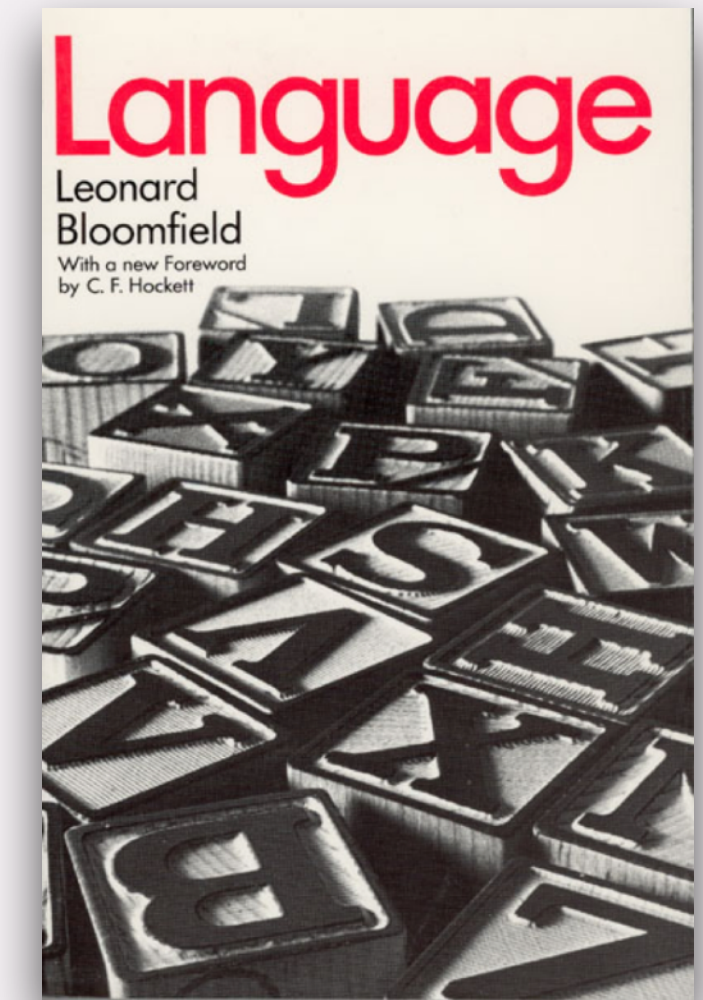
Theories of SLA: In a nutshell

- Each theory (since the “awakenings”) provides a piece of the puzzle
- Some tensions and disagreements
 - What linguistic knowledge do L2 users start out with? (tabula rasa + L1, UG principles, basic cognitive/social skills)
 - What system are L2 users acquiring? (habits, UG parameters, constructions)
 - What is the focus? (grammatical vs. communicative competence)
 - Is input important? What about interaction?
 - Is language learning a cognitive or social endeavor?

Behaviorism

Bloomfield (1933); Prevalent until 1960s

- Language = verbal behavior
- Language learning = habit formation (input → output)
- Errors → L1 interference (bad habits)



Pedagogy: repetition and reinforcement emphasized

Critique:

- more to learning than habit formation;
- can't explain errors in learner language (but not in the input)

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)

Lado (1957); Prevalent until late 1960s



- Analyzing the differences between L1 and L2 in order to predict problematic areas
 - Differences between L1 and L2 are the major source of errors

Pedagogy: learn the differences; ignore the similarities

Critique:

- many errors can't be traced back to L1 (*I goed)
- errors are not always bi-directional

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)



Lado (1957); Prevalent until late 1960s

- Differences between L1 and L2 are the major source of errors

English

The dog bought
S V

The dog bought
S V

Spanish

El perro compró la flor
S V O

El perro la compró
S O V

- CAH predicts

L1 English → L2 Spanish
*El perro compró la

L1 Spanish → L2 English
*The dog it bought

Error Analysis

- Analyzing errors rather than predicting the errors L2 users might make
 - Starts with the errors L2 users make and tries to understand why they are made, with reference to L2, L1, and other factors
 - Descriptive; looks for patterns in the language of L2 users

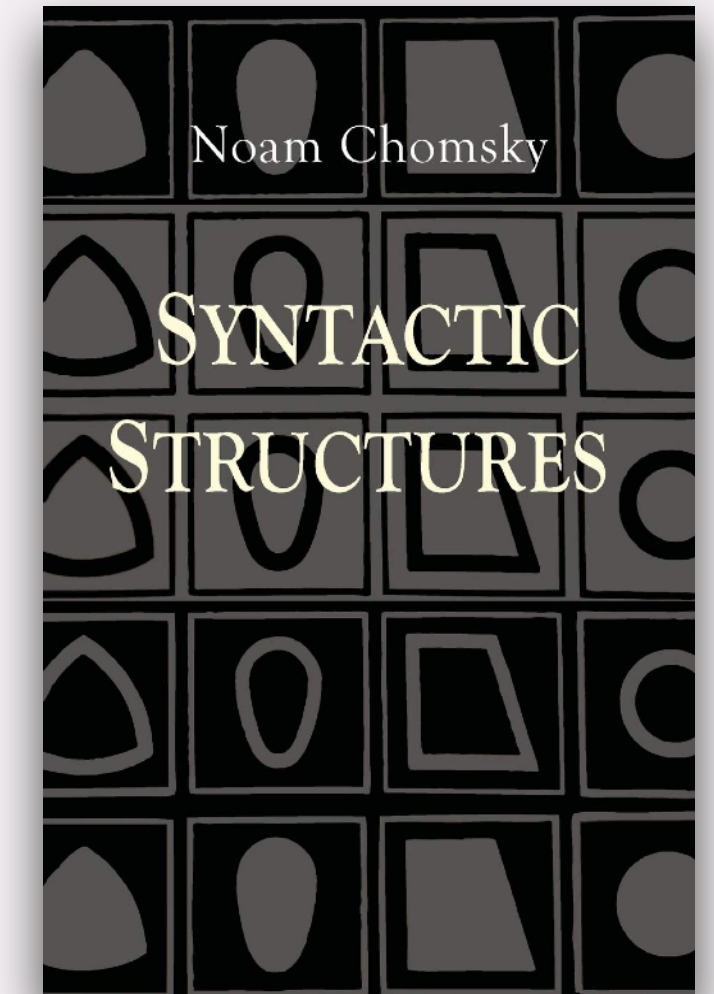
Critique:

- Doesn't account for error avoidance
- By focusing on errors Rs may miss evidence of progress

The “awakenings”

1970s and beyond

- Shift in linguistics initiated by *Syntactic Structure*
 - Structuralist (description of surface structure in language)
 - Generativist (rule-governed and creative nature of language)
- Shift in psychology
 - Behavioralist (environment as pre-eminent)
 - Developmentalist (learning driven by inner forces, e.g., Piaget)



Interlanguage

Selinker (1972)

- Developing L2 knowledge
 - Systematic and rule-governed
 - Dynamic and continually evolving
 - Fossilization: when some language features stop changing*
- Developmental sequences
 - Initial evidence for L2 sequences from naturalistic learners
 - Research with instructed learners in classrooms revealed similar patterns

Developmental Sequences

Progression

No bicycle

I no like it

Not my friend

He don't like it

I don't can sing

You can not go there

She don't like rice

It doesn't work

I didn't went there

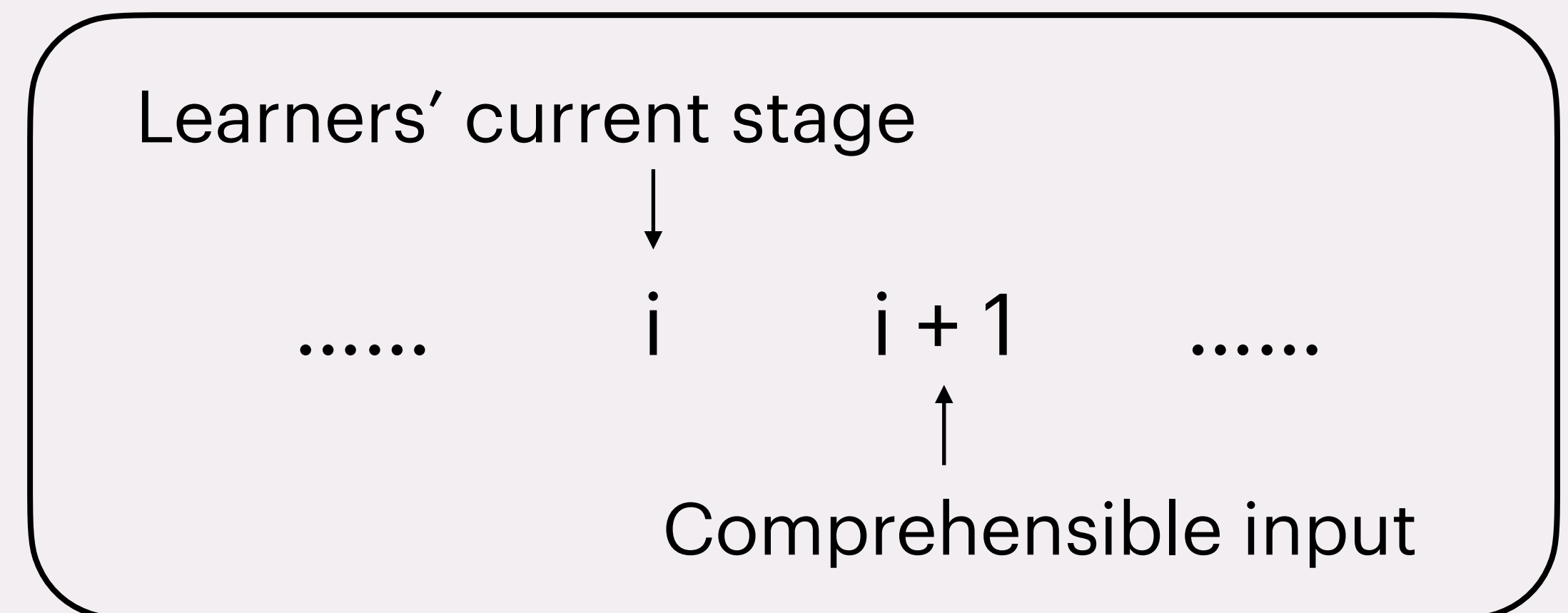
(She come not to home [L1 German])

Monitor Model

Krashen (1977); elsewhere



- With the right kind of **input** and the right **attitude**, L2 will naturally emerge in a predetermined order
- Comprehensible input (i+1) & affective filter
 - motivation
 - attitude
 - self-confidence
 - anxiety



Monitor Model

Krashen (1977); elsewhere



- Pedagogy:
 - Modified input at early levels
 - Curriculum follows natural order
 - Teacher's role: provide $i+1$
 - Emphasis on increasing motivation
- Critique
 - Difficult to define $i+1$
 - No role for grammar instruction

Universal Grammar/Nativism

White (2003) for SLA



- **Principles:** the universal properties of languages
- **Parameters:** the properties that vary from one language to another
- Learning an L2 requires resetting of parameters
- Do L2 users have access to UG?
 - Full access
 - Partial/Indirect access
 - No access (e.g., Bley-Vroman, 1989)

Interaction Hypothesis

Long (1981)



- **Social interaction** in L2 creates optimal opportunities for L2 development
- Four essential elements for L2 learning:
 - Input
 - Output
 - Negotiation of meaning
 - Corrective feedback
- Some aspects of grammar require **attention to form**

Interaction Hypothesis

Examples of corrective feedback

Student: He looking look, is he saw something strange?

Teacher: DID he see. For past tense you say DID he see.

Is he saw? Could you say that again?

Pardon? ... Excuse me?

Is he saw something strange?

Oh, did he see something strange?

Student: Yes, did he see something strange?

Interaction Hypothesis

Long (1981)

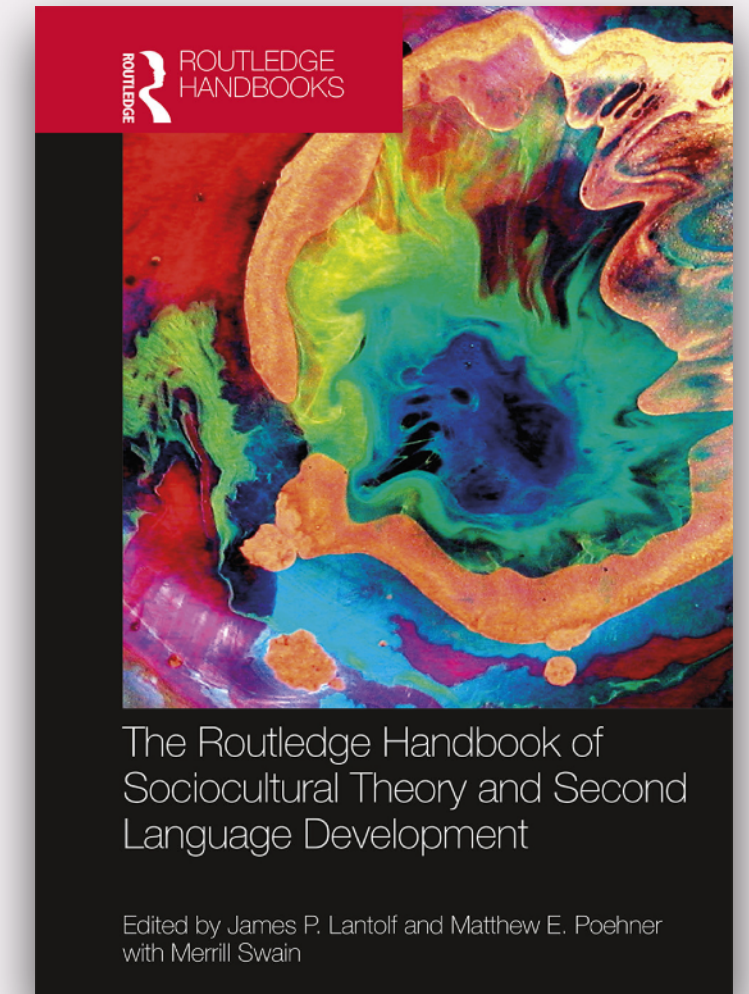


- Pedagogy:
 - create opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful communication in the TL
 - provide corrective feedback and encourage modified output
- Critique
 - Interaction only provides opportunities for learning but does not guarantee it
 - Overly cognitivist view of learning, ignores many social aspects of interaction
 - Monolithic view of learners; ignores other identities

Sociocultural theory

(e.g., Lantolf & Thorne, 2006)

- Social constructivism vs. Cognitive interactionism
 - Learning is socially situated
 - Knowledge is collaboratively constructed
- Key concepts
 - Zone of Proximal Development
 - Scaffolding



Sociocultural theory

A scaffolded interaction

Teacher (T): Look at this one

Student (S): Man and a...

T: What's it doing? It's..... It's raining

S: Huh?

T: Raining

S: Raining

T: What's the man holding in his hand? Do you know what it's called?
Begins with a u... um___

S: ((sounds of trying to remember)) Umbrella

Usage-based, constructivist approach

e.g., Ellis and Wulff (2020)



- Language acquisition is the result of exposure to language
- Input frequency is a key determinant of learning
- Language acquisition is based on the same cognitive mechanisms that allow humans to learn many other things (categorization, chunking)
 - Trajectory: chunks and formulas → abstract constructions (S V Obj₁ Obj₂)
 - Chunking: creating connections between “things” that go together

Reflection

Whole-class

Questions:

- Which theory or set of theories do you find most convincing? Why?
- Which theory or theories do you think are the basis for the pedagogical approaches you've experienced in your language classes? Why do you think so?

Next week...

- Topic: Bilingualism (and cognition)
 - How does being bilingual affect our linguistic representation?
 - How does being bilingual affect other aspects of our cognition
- Reading:
 - De Groot (2020) *Bilingualism and cognition*