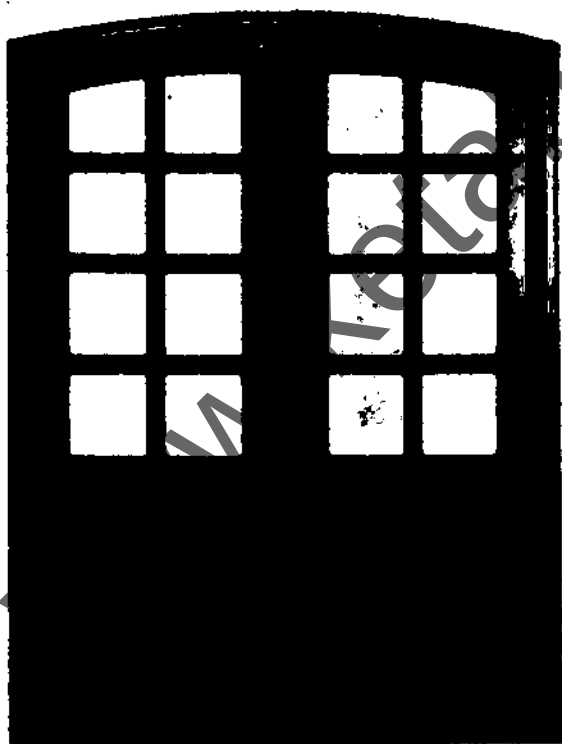


FIFTH EDITION

PRINCIPLES *of*
LANGUAGE LEARNING
AND TEACHING



PEARSON
Longman

H. DOUGLAS BROWN
San Francisco State University

A handwritten signature in black ink, located in the bottom right corner of the page. The signature is stylized and appears to be a cursive representation of a name.

Principles of Language Learning and Teaching, Fifth Edition

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PREFACE

WHEN THE first edition of *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* appeared in 1980, the field of second language acquisition (SLA) was relatively manageable. We had a handful of professional journals devoted to SLA, a good collection of anthologies and conference proceedings, a small but respectable number of books on SLA and teaching, and a budding community of researchers devoted to the field.

Today the field of SLA has a mind-boggling number of branches and subfields and specializations—so many that it is virtually impossible for one person to “manage” them all. In the most recent issue of *Language Teaching*, an abstracting journal covering SLA and its pedagogical implications and applications, 162 periodicals were listed as potential sources of research on SLA. In two recent Handbooks surveying research on second language acquisition (Doughty & Long, 2003; Hinkel, 2005), readers are treated to over 2000 pages and over 70 chapters of surveys of current research! All these publications, coupled with literally thousands of conference presentations annually on SLA worldwide and an impressive number of books, now cover dozens of major subject matter areas. From “A to Z”—Accent to the Zone of proximal development—SLA is a rich and diverse field of inquiry.

Today we can see that the manageable stockpile of research of just a few decades ago has been replaced by a coordinated, systematic storehouse of information. Subfields have been defined and explored. Researchers around the world are meeting, talking, exchanging findings, comparing data, and arriving at some mutually acceptable explanations. A remarkable number of respectable, refereed journals are printing the best and most interesting of this research. Our research miscarriages are fewer as we have collectively learned how to conceive the right questions.

On the other hand, the mysteries and wonder of human language acquisition still perplex the best of our sleuthing minds. It is a rare research report that does *not* end with some sort of caveat like, “more research is needed.” In the 888-page compendium edited by Doughty and Long (2003), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*, the penultimate author’s closing sentence reads: “It is hardly surprising, though, that theoretical and methodological problems still abound;

SLA is a newly merging scientific field, and problems come with the territory (Gregg, 2003, p. 856).

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Since its first publication in 1980, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, here in its fifth edition, has served a number of purposes for many audiences around the world. For graduates or advanced undergraduates in language-teacher education programs, it is a textbook on the theoretical foundations of language teaching, a survey of what research has revealed about how human beings acquire a second language. For a surprising number of people it has become a book that Master's degree candidates pore over in preparation for the SLA section of their comprehensive examinations or for references for their thesis research. For experienced teachers, it has become a handbook that provides an overview of current issues in the field with an index and bibliographic entries to aid in that overview.

For the most part, you do not need to have prior technical knowledge of linguistics or psychology in order to comprehend this book. An attempt has been made to build, from the beginning, on what an educated person knows about the world, life, people, and communication. And the book can be used in programs for educating teachers of *any* foreign language, even though many illustrative examples here are in English since that is the language common to all readers.

CHANGES IN THE FIFTH EDITION

The first question people ask me when they hear that a new edition is about to appear is, "What changes will you make?" or from some students I hear, "Is the last edition really different from the current one?" In anticipation of these questions about the fifth edition, I offer the following highlights:

1. **New issues and topics.** In a field growing as rapidly as ours, a period of six or seven years sees many advances. In a reflection of this growth, the current edition features a number of new topics, listed in capsulized form below, sequenced in the order they appear in chapters.
 - Vygotsky's and Bakhtin's theories; language teaching historical overview
 - Connectionism, emergentism, principles and parameters
 - Age-related evidence—new findings; order of acquisition—new research
 - Thorndike's law of effect, language aptitude—new research, multiple intelligences—update
 - Kinesthetic style, autonomy, awareness, strategies-based instruction—new research

- Attribution theory, self-efficacy, willingness to communicate, LCDH (in anxiety research), Flow theory, orientations—new perspectives
 - Culture definitions—update, NESTs and non-NESTs, linguistic imperialism—new perspectives
 - Corpus linguistics, contrastive rhetoric
 - Competition model, fossilization (stabilization) critique, noticing, attention, feedback types, recasts, uptake, frequency of input
 - “Hot topics” in SLA research, output hypothesis—new research, awareness
2. **Updates and new references.** Other topics from the previous edition have been updated with new findings and new perspectives. Some of these updates are reflected in a reorganization of material within the chapters. And out of literally thousands of new articles, books, and chapters that have appeared since the last edition, I have added a selection of over 300 new bibliographic references that report the latest work in SLA.
 3. **Permutation of Chapters 8 and 9.** With recent emphases on the blending of linguistic factors with related macro-theories of SLA, a better logical continuity is provided by (1) connecting sociocultural factors (Chapter 7) with questions about communicative competence, pragmatics, and conversation analysis (formerly Chapter 9, now Chapter 8); and (2) connecting learner language, error analysis, and form-focused instruction (formerly Chapter 8, now Chapter 9) with overall theoretical perspectives (Chapter 10).
 4. **Amalgamation of pedagogical (methodological) implications.** Users of the previous edition have suggested that the end-of-chapter vignettes on methodology be amalgamated into the text. I have followed this suggestion by incorporating methodological concerns and issues into appropriate chapters. So for example, Chapter 4, which covers learning theories, now has a new section on two learning theory-inspired methods that were in stark contrast: the Audiolingual Method, and Community Language Learning.
 5. **New “Classroom Connections.”** Another way to bridge what might still be too much of a gap between research findings and classroom *praxis* is now featured in periodic capsules called “Classroom Connections.” Here, the reader is reminded of a research issue that is being discussed, and on the same page is referred to some thoughts about how such research may have implications or applications for language classroom pedagogy.
 6. **Glossary of technical terminology.** Throughout the book, new terminology that is central to the study of second language acquisition is boldfaced in its first appearance. To provide the reader with a convenient reference to all such terms, this Fifth Edition features a glossary of technical terminology at the end of the book. I suggest that such a lexicon become a tool for reminders and review rather than a method of long-term internalization of concepts. Retention is always better served by embedding terminology into concurrent reading and by association with one’s experience, and not by the rote memorization of endless lists of jargon.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES

7. **Classroom-oriented end-of-chapter exercises.** In previous editions, the end-of-chapter exercises were designed for individual contemplation and possibly for teachers to adapt to classroom discussion. In this edition, new and improved classroom-tested exercises are explicitly designed for in-class group work, pair work, whole-class discussion, and individual work.
8. **Accessible suggestions for further reading.** In this edition the suggestions for further reading target an audience of students just beginning in the field of SLA. Few esoteric, technical articles are listed, and instead students are led to more reader-friendly material.
9. **Journal guidelines for a language learning experience.** I have always recommended that the information in a book like this is best internalized if the reader is concurrently taking a course in a foreign language. At the end of each chapter in this edition is a new section that offers classroom-tested journal-writing guidelines for the reader either to reflect on a current experience learning another language or to take a retrospective look at a previous foreign language learning experience. In both cases, the reader is asked to apply concepts and constructs and models to a personal experience learning a foreign language.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has grown out of graduate courses in second language acquisition that I have taught at San Francisco State University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Michigan. My first debt of gratitude is therefore to my students—for their insights, enthusiasm, and support. They offered invaluable comments on the first four editions of the book, and I have attempted to incorporate those insights into this fifth edition. I always learn so much from my students!

I am also grateful to faculty colleagues both here at San Francisco State University, at the American Language Institute, and around the world for offering verbal commentary, informal written opinion, and formal published reviews, all of which were useful in fashioning this fifth edition. I also want to thank the publisher's anonymous reviewers for constructive feedback and encouragement.

Finally, on a personal note, my wife, Mary, and I have this past year just become first-time grandparents—Carson William Brown, born to Jeff and Christina Brown in 2004. So readers can look forward to the *sixth* edition in which Carson's budding first language acquisition skills will be well documented! And I of course want to say yet another huge thank you to Mary once again for being so patiently supportive of a cranky, driven author as I churned out this fifth edition.

H. Douglas Brown
San Francisco, California