Second language Acquisition/Learning
Second Language Learning

• Foreign language setting vs. second language setting.
• Examples for both settings: Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Malaysia, Egypt, etc.
Acquisition and Learning

• Acquisition: gradual development of ability in language by using it naturally in communicative situations

• Learning applies to more conscious process of accumulating knowledge of the features such as vocabulary and grammar of a language in an institutional setting
• Activities associated with learning have traditionally been used in language teaching in schools.

• Activities associated with acquisition are those experienced by young children, and by analogy those who pick a second language from long periods spent in interaction with native speakers of the language.
Acquisition Barriers

• For most people the experience with an L2 is fundamentally different from their L1 experience and it is hardly conducive to learning.

• They usually encounter L2 during their teenage or adult years in a few hours each week of school time.
• They already know another language which they use for their daily communication
• Even in ideal acquisition situations, very few adults seem to reach native-like proficiency in using an L2.
Affective factors

• Affective factors are negative feelings that can create a barrier to acquisition.

• Basically, if we are stressed, uncomfortable, self-conscious or unmotivated, we are unlikely to learn anything.
Focus on Method

• Despite learning/acquisition barriers, the need for instruction in other languages has led to a variety of educational approaches and methods aimed at fostering L2 learning.
The Grammar-Translation Method

• This method has its roots in the traditional teaching of Latin.
• It treats L2 learning in the same way as any other subject.
• Vocabulary lists and sets of grammar rules are used to define the target of learning.
• This method produces students who are knowledgeable about grammar and vocabulary but they could not not use the language for communication
The Audio-lingual Method

• This method became popular in the middle of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century.

• It emphasized the spoken language. It involving L2 structure, moving from the simple to the more complex in the forms of drills that the student had to repeat.
Communicative Approach

• It is understood to be a partial reaction against the artificiality of “pattern-practice” and against the belief that knowledge of grammar will result in ability to use the language.

• It is based that functions of the language should be emphasized rather than the forms of the language
• Classroom lessons are organized around concepts such as “asking for things” in different social settings
Focus on the Learner

• The fundamental change in the area of L2 learning in recent years has been a shift from concern with the teacher, the textbook and the method to an interest in the learner and the acquisition process.

• One of the radical of the communicative method is the toleration of errors produced by the students.
• Traditionally, errors are regarded negatively and had to be avoided or eradicated.

• Rather than consider a learner’s “in the room there are three women” as simply a failure to learn correct English, we can look at this utterance as an indication of the natural L2 acquisition process in action.
Transfer

• Some of the errors may be due to transfer, i.e. using sounds, expressions or structures from the L1 when performing in the L2.

• If L1 and L2 have similar features, then the learner may be able to benefit from the positive transfer.
On the other hand, transfer can be negative if L1 and L2 are different. It is more common in the early stages of L2 Learning and often decreases as the learner develops familiarity with the L2.
Interlanguage

• The language produced by the L2 learners contains a large number of errors that seem to have no connection to the forms of either the L1 or L2. This system is called the interlanguage.

• If the learner develop a fairly fixed repertoire of L2 expressions, containing forms that do not match the target language, and seem not to be processing any further, their interlanguage is said to have fossilized.
• The process of fossilization in L2 pronunciation seems to be most likely basis of what is perceived as a foreign accent.

• However, the interlanguage is not designed to fossilize. It will naturally develop and become a more effective means of L2 communication given appropriate conditions.
Motivation

• Motivation is important for success in L2 learning. It is of two types: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation.

• Instrumentally motivated learners are those who want to learn L2 to achieve some other goal

• Interactively motivated learners are those who want to learn L2 for social purposes.
Input and Output

• The term input is used to describe the language that learner is exposed to. To be beneficial, that input must comprehensible.

• Output is the language forms that the learner has acquired and produced in communicative situations.
Communicative Competence

• Communicative competence (CC) is the ability to use the language accurately, appropriately and flexibly.
• The first component is grammatical competence, which involves the accurate use of words and structures.
• The second component is sociolinguistic competence, which is the ability to use appropriate language.
• The third component is the strategic competence. This is the ability to organize a message effectively and to compensate for any difficulty.
• For instance, saying “the things that horse wear under their feet” to compensate for the word horseshoes.
Applied Linguistics

• In investigating the nature of L2 learning, linguists appeal to ideas from linguistic analysis, communication studies, education, psychology and sociology. This large-scale endeavor is often described as applied linguistics.