



## Key Topics in Second Language Acquisition

**Authors:** Vivian Cook and David Singleton

**Publisher:** MM Textbooks

**Year of publication:** 2014

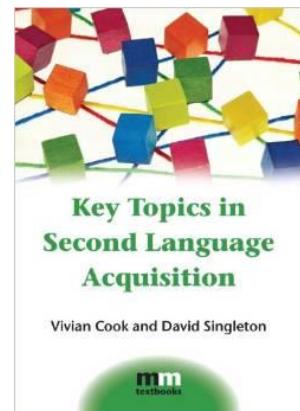
**ISBN-13:** 978-1-78309-180-5 (hbk)

978-1-78309-179-9 (pbk)

**Pages:** 149 pp.

**Reviewer:** Monthon Kanokpermpon,

School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences,  
Newcastle University, UK



*Key Topics in Second Language Acquisition* serves as an orientation to second language acquisition research (SLA) for language teachers and researchers. It covers a number of topics within SLA research from learners' characteristics and linguistic features to a conjuncture between SLA research and practice. Each topic begins with an engaging question or statement that allows the reader to reflect upon one's own experience regarding specific SLA research. It then guides the reader through an exploration of key research issues within that particular field of SLA research and provides supplementary information to prompt the reader to become more research-minded. Each topic ends with concluding remarks, which open doors for further study or reflection.

The first two topics focus on learner (or user) characteristics. Topic 1 deals primarily with issues concerning bilinguals and the bilingual mind. A comparison between first language users and second language users is also featured. Topic 2 further discusses the role of age in second language acquisition and the effects it has upon certain linguistic features.

Topics 3 through 5 cover areas of linguistic acquisition ranging from the smallest linguistic unit (or words) to a larger discourse (or writing). Topic 3 covers research of lexical acquisition from an early age, and then demonstrates word learning in different scenarios. In Topic 4, various understandings of grammar are explored, followed by grammatical features of SLA. Topic 5 discusses the development of writing systems and how each writing element is learned and acquired.

In Topic 6, major reasons why learners or users learn a second language are discussed through the lens of attitude and motivation research. This topic also explores a potential bridge between research and instruction.

The final two topics expand SLA research into classroom implementation and the goals of language teaching. Topic 7 discusses potential links between SLA research and language teaching methods, and examines each teaching method in light of SLA research. The final topic concludes SLA research with its application towards the goals of language learning. It presents different views of language from second language users who are eligible for teaching second languages.

Overall, the book covers the key areas of SLA and how these areas could be utilised in the teaching and learning of language. Research and experiments discussed



in each topic exemplify how second language is studied, which could then be used by teachers or researchers as a guideline for further reflection and study. Alternatively, questions and statements presented in suggestion boxes within each topic encourage thought-provoking questions from the reader. This in turn helps the reader to engage in research through reflection upon one's own experience of language learning and/or teaching.

The book is not only suitable for teachers and researchers, but also for students of second language acquisition who could benefit from key issues in this book. Since each topic is treated independently by each particular author, those who are interested in a specific area of SLA could engage in study and reflection as well as exploration through the further reading section.

To conclude, this book is a user-friendly reference for those who are interested in vibrant research of SLA and its application in language teaching and learning. For readers without a solid foundation in SLA research, the engaging activities, thought-provoking issues, and well-crafted organisation of the book can provide the reader with an in-depth understanding of key topics in SLA in a reader-friendly way.