A BOOK REVIEW
COOK, VIVIAN (2008). SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING AND LANGUAGE TEACHING, (IV EDITION).LONDON : HODDER EDUCATION

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Second Language Learning and Language Teaching is a book of our times, for our times, written in the context of the growing interest in second language learning and language teaching in contemporary society. With its blend of theoretical insights from research, practical classroom ideas and suggestions, this valuable book is quite relevant in the field of second language learning. This book is particularly aimed at second language teachers, researchers who are interested in second language research and second language teacher educators. It is helpful to language teachers, student-teachers and students of M.A. courses in applied linguistics, TESOL, methodology of modern language teaching. It presents a wide spectrum of second language learning and language teaching by discussing all the relevant topics related to second language learning and language teaching in detail.

It is based on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research findings, so it provides theoretical orientation based on empirical evidence. The scope of the book ranges from particular aspects of language and language teaching to broader contexts of second language acquisition and general ideas of language teaching. It describes only a fraction of the SLA research often presenting only one or two of the possible approaches. The focus of the book is on the ideas about language, that is, applied linguistics, rather than those coming from psychology or education. However, it deals with more areas of second language acquisition research than most books that link SLA research to the areas of language teaching e.g. pronunciation, vocabulary and writing etc. This book brings together ideas from the wealth of research produced in the past twenty years.

According to the author, the book aims 'to communicate to those concerned with language teaching some of the ideas about how people acquire second languages that emerge from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research and to make suggestions of how these might benefit language teaching. It is intended for language teachers and trainee teachers. Most of the time, it tries not to take sides in reporting the various issues, inevitably my own interest in the multi-competence approach is hard to conceal'. (p.1). The author justifies the statement, as the book attempts to familiarize readers to how teaching activities link to the processes going on in the students' minds. It is not an exhaustive volume which is concerned only with second language research methods. In fact, it attempts to capture all the relevant topics connected with second language learning and language teaching. It is worth noting that much of the text discusses English as a second language and English as a foreign language. However, the teaching and learning of other modern languages are also discussed in-between. English language has been given prominence and discussed in detail, perhaps, due to its world-wide significance.

The remarkable feature of the book is that it is linked to an extensive website: www.hoddereducation.com/viviancook. The book is divided into 13 chapters. Chapter 1 shows the theoretical underpinnings of the background to second language acquisition research and language

teaching. Chapter 2 throws light on learning and teaching different types of grammar in L2. Chapter 3 describes strategies for undertaking, learning and teaching vocabulary in L2. Chapter 4 discusses on learning and teaching pronunciation in L2. Chapter 5 deals with acquisition and teaching a new writing system in L2. Chapter 6 contains strategies for communicating and learning in L2. Chapter 7 emphasizes listening and reading processes in L2. Chapter 8 gives an insight to the readers on individual differences in L2 users and L2 learners. Chapter 9 gives details on classroom interaction and conversation analysis. Chapter 10 is concerned with the L2 user and the native speaker. Chapter 11 focuses on the goals of language teaching. Chapter 12 highlights the general models of L2 learning. The last chapter, i.e., chapter 13 analyses the second language learning and language teaching styles.

Chapter 1 investigates the background to second language acquisition research and language teaching. After the introduction, it narrates the scope of the book. The author describes second language acquisition research, the history of second language acquisition research, the aspects of SLA research, how it evolved, the current status of second language acquisition research and some prominent facts that second language acquisition research has discovered. She maintains that insight from SLA research can help teachers, at the general level of understanding; knowing what language learning consists of builds on the teacher's awareness of everything that happens in the classroom and heightens the teacher's empathy with the students. In this way, in the chapter 1, the author gives background information regarding second language acquisition research and language teaching.

Chapter 2 gives a detailed account on learning and teaching different types of grammar in L2. The various types of grammar – prescriptive grammar, traditional grammar, structural grammar and grammar as knowledge in the mind are explained by giving appropriate examples and quotes by eminent linguists and authors. She, then, discusses structure words, morphemes and sequences of acquisition by providing terminology of key words and presenting the difference between content words and structure words in tabular form. A comparative table clearly mentions the difference between content words and structure words. The examples are given to enlighten the readers. The salient features of processability are also presented in a box. The author, then, discusses the principles of and parameters of grammar. She tries to describe how parameters capture the many grammatical differences between languages.

Chapter 3 is related to learning and teaching vocabulary in L2. Starting with word frequency, the author provides a list and a table which comprises the 20 most frequent nouns, verbs and adjectives in English. After it, a test is given to assess the vocabulary of readers. She maintains that frequency is, usually, established now-a-days from a large corpus of a language, such as the BNC for English and frequency is only one factor in the choice of words to teach. She, then, describes knowledge of words by throwing light on the forms of the words, grammatical properties, lexical proportion and meaning. She advocates that the L1 and the L2 sets of vocabulary in the L2 user's mind may be related in various ways, ranging from completely separate to completely integrated. She, then, describes components of meaning, lexical reflection, prototypes to discuss types of meaning. She raises a question whether meanings are universal or not. Later strategies based on emperical work for understanding and learning vocabulary are presented. At the end of this chapter, vocabulary and teaching section is dealt with in detail.

Chapter 4 is concerned with acquisition and teaching of pronunciation in L_2. The chapter starts with background information and one test (instant accent test for English consonants). The author throws light on phonemes and second language acquisition, by providing key words and a list of characteristics of speakers of different L_1 using English. She advocates that a critical aspect of

language acquisition is the mastery of syllable structure. She tries to list down the causes of problems which L_2 learners face while learning L_2, particularly, in pronunciation. She describes the ontogeny phylogeny model to explain L_2 phonological acquisition in a second language. At the end of the chapter, the sub topic 'learning and teaching intonation' is also taken. The author concludes that major L_2 learning problem is moving between the two major ways of using intonation in the world's languages: tone languages where intonation shows difference in lexical meaning and intonation languages where intonation shows grammar and attitude.

Chapter 5 begins with the assertion that SLA research and language teaching have assumed that writing depends on speech, rather than being another mode of language. It provides background information regarding writing systems. The author reviews research on the writing system. One exercise related to the extract of Charles Dickens' the Pickwick papers has also been given for the readers. The figure mentioning meaning-based and sound-based writing is helpful in explaining writing systems. The author gives examples from various languages to explain writing systems. In order to deal with these topics, she starts with spelling, mentioning structure words spelling, and structure word spelling rules and vowel correspondence rules and mistakes with English spelling. She gives a list of problems for users of specific L_1 writing systems to put forth his point. She gives examples from English language that the English spelling system has a number of specific rules such as structure word rules and L_2 learners of English make spelling mistakes based in part on their L_1 writing system, in part on lack of knowledge of the English spelling rules. Word test exercises are also given to acquaint the readers what mistakes the students make.

Chapter 6 examines strategies for communicating and learning. It begins with investigating communication strategies as social interaction and as psychological problem solving. The author highlights the fact that L_2 learners attempt to communicate through a language that is not their own. She provides different approaches to L_2 communication strategies dividing it into three main categories: socially motivated strategies, psychologically motivated strategies and compensatory strategies. She reflects that communication strategies are a natural part of conversational interaction that people fall back on when they have difficulty in getting things across. The second important thing is that students fall back on the first language strategies, so teaching can heighten students' awareness of which of their natural strategies are useful in a second language. She further emphasizes on the types of learning strategies. She substantiates his views by giving ample research evidence on learning strategies and language teaching.

Chapter 7 deals with listening and reading processes. She initiates the discussion by describing the schema theory, scripts and discourse and scripts and schema theory in teaching. She sums up that knowledge of conventional situations (scripts) is important to L_2 use and background knowledge (schemata) is important to L_2 learners. She concludes this part that use of vague words hinders lower-level learners. She analyses the elements of listening, mentioning bottom-up parsing and top-down parsing and presenting figure – 'phrase structure tree' to clarify the topic. She further throws light on the teaching of listening. He reviews researches and gives example of the COBUILD English course. The suggestive guidelines for teachers i.e. to build up student's background knowledge, emphasis on vocabulary in the teaching of texts, allow for students' inherent loss of efficiency in processing the L_2 and help students to appreciate different cultural schemas.

The concern of Chapter 8 is with how L_2 learners vary as individuals. It focuses on the individual differences in L_2 users and L_2 learners. The author reiterates that children learn their L_1 naturally in the intimate situations of their family and school learners learn L_2 formally in the public

situation of the classroom. This chapter looks at some of the ways in which individuals differ that have been linked to how well they learn a second language in the classroom. This chapter is linked with chapter 6, in the sense, that individuals choose for themselves how to process or learn language. The author analyses the factors related to L_2 learning - motivation, attitudes, aptitude, age and other personality traits. She gives examples of eminent personalities such as Gandhi, Einstein, Picasso, Marie Curie and Samuel Beckett, are bilinguals, who are never mentioned as successful L_2 users. The author gives suggestive guidelines, which are quite relevant i.e. the variety and nature of motivations need to be recognized. Teachers should work with, not against, student motivation in materials and context and different teaching can be provided for learners with different type of aptitude even streaming into fast and slow streams.

Chapter 9 is a helpful section on classroom interaction and conversation analysis with respect to second language. It examines L_2 learning inside and outside classrooms. The author reviews the research and discusses on the language of classrooms in general and language in the language teaching classroom. She tries to bring out differences between the language teaching classroom and other classrooms. The distinction between authentic and non-authentic language has been presented and the justification for the use of authentic text in communication teaching are presented.

Chapter 10 brings together themes about the relationship between people who know more than one language and monolingual native speakers. The author points out that a central issue in SLA research and language teaching is the concept of the native speaker. The authors' suggestions regarding ways of using the L_1 in classroom are practical i.e. teacher using L_1 for conveying meaning of words or sentences and for explaining grammar, teacher using L_1 for managing the classroom, for giving instructions, for teaching activities and for teaching and using as part of main learning ability.

Chapter 11 looks at language as the possessions of a group and at the L_2 user as a member of a specific group. It describes some of the roles that second language plays in people's lives and how they can be translated into goals of language teaching. It raises the fundamental questions of why we are teaching a second language, what students want to be, what groups they want to belong to, things which teachers, often, neglect to think about in their absorbing teaching lives. The chapter discusses the goals of language teaching. The author discusses the different roles of second languages in people's lives by refuting the myth that bilingualism in itself has a bad effect on children. By citing empirical evidence, she justifies the advantages of bilingualism. He throws light on various aspects of bilingualism – bilingualism by choice, second language for religious use, official languages and L_2 learning and multilingualism and L_2 learning.

Chapter 12 applies to some general ideas from second language acquisition research to language teaching. It deals with some of the general models and approaches that researchers have devised to explain how people learn second languages, rather than with individual pieces of research or different areas of language. The educational implications of the universal grammar model of L_2 learning are – teachers should design optimum input for triggering parameters and emphasize the teaching of vocabulary items with specification of how they can occur in grammatical structures. The author moves the discussion by presenting processing models which evolved as a revolt against universal grammar.

The last chapter i.e. Chapter 13 looks at some general questions of teaching methodology in the light of second language acquisition research. It reverses the direction of chapter 12 by proceeding from teaching to L_2 learning. It also provides an overview of the diversity of alternative language teaching methods that teachers should be aware of. The chapter examines second language

learning and language teaching styles. The author, by citing researches, links the teaching method with earlier topics presented in chapter 1. The author gives suggestions for teaching which are relevant, Such as use it with academic students who have individual goals of self-development rather than international or local goals, supplement it with other components and process of language and remember to develop the powerful individual goals for the students, rather than be carried away by the sheer knowledge of grammar.

The major strength of the book is that it makes suggestions and comments, rather than giving asserted dogmatic axioms. It provides a suggestive framework to all practising teachers which they should weigh them against all other factors in their unique teaching situation before deciding how seriously to take them. I appreciate the way in which the book has been written because considering teaching from an L_2 learning perspective in such a way will certainly lead in the future to a more comprehensive and scientifically based view of language teaching. According to the language learning journal, it is "….a very valuable text for foreign language teachers and those in training and should feature…on reading lists of initial teacher education courses."

The back cover page prints about the book:

'The fourth edition of this classic textbook has been revised to reflect recent developments in language teaching and learning yet retains the basic structure and approach so popular with its readers. Teaching and learning content has been updated, particularly taking into account the rise of task-based learning, conversational analysis and social models of second language acquisition, changes in national syllabus and examinations and the increasing controversy over the role of the native speaker target'. This claim is justified as the book remains an essential textbook for all student-teachers of modern languages and TESOL as well as applied linguistics. It claims to offer an introduction to the application of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research to language teaching and it accomplishes its goals.

As far as the presentation is concerned, it is very much impressive. Each chapter starts with introduction enabling the readers to link the topic with their previous knowledge or understanding of the content and motivating them to read further. Focus questions, which encourage the readers to check their own assumptions regarding language teaching and assess their knowledge regarding various topics have been posed. For example, 'who do you know who is good at languages? Why do you think this is so? So you think that everybody learns a second language in roughly the same way? (p. 6) compel the reader to think on second language acquisition research. Each chapter comprises these key words which are explained in an appropriate manner. One of the distinguishing characteristics in this book is that it incorporates empirical evidence while describing the topics.

Various figures further enlighten the reader to build on understanding regarding topics. Each chapter presents useful information in the box. The prominent feature of the boxes is that in these boxes, important information is presented in pointers for the easy access of the reader. At the end of each chapter, discussion topics are given which are relevant and motivate the reader to reflect on their understanding.

All these topics invite the readers to express their views and opinions. Each chapter contains discussion topics which are stimulating enough to enable the reader to build on his/her own understanding. There is a list of further reading at the end of each chapter which enriches the readers with a variety of books they can refer to, build in order to a broader perspective regarding issues. An answer key is also given at the end of those chapters in which question have been asked in-between the lesson.

The book contains a detailed list of course books mentioned at the end. It begins with a 'note to teachers' explaining the scope of the book and mentioning the web source. It rightly states that it presupposes no previous background and provides explanations and glossaries of important term. Most sections of each chapter start with focus questions and keywords and end with summaries of the area and of this application, as well as presenting discussion topic and further reading.

The book's cover page is attractive, showing knots of threads of various colours. It may connote the various languages that the native language speaker tries to learn. The thread can be taken as symbol of one particular language. The union of various threads shows multilingual aspect. As the book deals with the various aspects related to second language acquisition by learners and teaching second language, the book's title has been selected as Second Language Learning and Language Teaching which is apt, appealing and captures the attention of the readers.

The book declares itself to be not prescriptive and comprehensive on SLA research, but a basis for shared discussion and concentrates on those based on ideas about language, that is, applied linguistics. The text is dense and contains a multitude of figures, tables, key questions and is regularly punctuated with discussion topics, further reading and suggestion for personal reflection. The topics give teachers the confidence to tackle relevant issues at an appropriate level, the vocabulary used in each chapter is clear. The language is easily comprehensive and illustrations are easy to follow. The book serves its purpose to acquaint the readers with all related topics regarding second language learning and language teaching. The book is readable and informative, as well as thought-provoking. It may be particularly interesting for language teachers, student-teachers and students of applied linguistics.

The book is full of useful information and extended advice but many of the salient points may be lost in the denseness of the text. I think that while discussing on second language acquisition, the author should use a wide variety of different languages to provide examples, but he restricts himself to emphasize on English rather than other languages. The author also acknowledges this fact and agrees to this point that much of the discussion of the book is concerned with English as a second language and English as a foreign language, which is partly due to much of SLA research investigates English rather than other languages. He rightly acknowledges that his book features only a fraction of SLA research on a given topic. Given the strong focus of this book on language teaching, it should not be considered a weakness of the book. Readers interested in a broader overview of SLA research into specific topics should consult other relevant publication such as, Cook's 'Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition' (1993); R. Ellis' 'The study of second language acquisition' (1994); Myles and Mitchell's 'Second Language Learning Theories' (1998); Ernesto Macaro's 'Teaching and Learning a Second Language : A guide to recent research and its implication' (2003); and Leaver, Betly Lou, Ehrman, Medeline and Sheckhtman, Borio'. 'Achieving success in second language acquisition' (2005); Porte, Graeme Keitn's 'Appraising research in Second Language Learning: A practical approach to critical analysis of quantitative research' (2002).

Vivian's book covers several aspects regarding second language learning and language teaching, yet some aspects are missing. I feel that focus of the book is more on second language learning and the concepts which are related to teaching, they are not covered in much detail. For example, the role of second language teachers is not discussed, the role of second language teacher educators is not taken into account, teacher cognition in language teaching is altogether missing in the book, the relationship between cognition and practice is not described and task designs are not mentioned. The field of teacher education is relatively underexplored one in both second and foreign language teaching. As we move from a period of "teacher training," characterized by approaches that

view teacher preparation as familiarizing student-teachers with techniques and skills to apply in the classroom, to "teacher education," characterized by approaches that involve teachers in developing theories of teaching, understanding the nature of teacher decision making and strategies for critical self-awareness and self-evaluation, teacher educators need to reassess their current positions and practices and examine afresh the assumptions underlying their own programmes and practices. The need for such a comprehensive overview of issues in teacher education in second language teaching is prompted by the fact that the field of second and foreign language teaching is constantly being renewed both by different claims as to what teachers need to know, as well as by different approaches to the process of developing this knowledge base in future teachers.

Chapter 7 throws light on listening and reading processes, but I think that listening and reading processes should be discussed in separate chapters as they need elaborate classification. I find that the chapter 'Acquiring and teaching a new writing system' does not include feedback in second language writing. According to me, it should be included as the teacher's feedback to L_2 writers has its own significance. Surveys of students' feedback preferences indicate that ESL students greatly value teacher written feedback and consistently rate it more highly than alternative forms, such as paper feedback and Oral feedback in writing conferences (Leki, 1991; Saito, 1994; Zhang, 1995).

The book also does not include the aspect of evaluation. In second language education, there has long been dissatisfaction with evaluation which has been methodologically inflexible and uncertain or misguided as to its role. L_2 evaluation as a self-conscious discipline has only recently evolved and educational evaluation also spent a long time getting its house in order. Keeping this in view, the evaluation of second language education should be given its due space in the book. Vivian's book may not serve as a core text but of course, it is a background text enlightening the readers on second language learning and language teaching.

To sum up, the fourth edition of Cook's book can be seen to be a very valuable text for foreign language teachers and teacher trainers. It is indispensable as a reference guide to anyone who is interested in second language learning and language teaching. It may also prove valuable in stimulating thoughts about second language acquisition research and encourage readers to reflect on their own understanding regarding second language learning and language teaching. In short, this book is a practical, comprehensive and enriching resource for readers.