Bringing the SLA Syllabus to the Ground with *Exploring Learner Language*

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Overview

1. My learning experiences with Elaine

2. Brief review of *Exploring Learner Language*

3. SLA syllabus at Minnesota

4. SLA syllabus at MIIS

5. Lessons learned

The "Tarone Experience"

- SLA course at UMN

- CARLA Lunchtime Presentation

- Informal mentor

- MIIS external reviewer
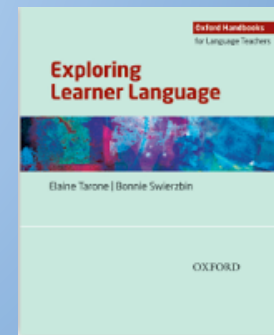
Exploring Learner Language

Exploring Learner Language

- "This manual...prepares foreign/second language teachers to identify and tackle problems of practice using an "exploratory practice" framework (Allwright, 2005). It is unique amongst the many other books on second language acquisition in that it positions teachers as knowledge generators, valuing the contributions that they make to the field of second language teaching and learning." (Martel, 2011, p. 37)

Exploring Learner Language

- Tarone and Swierzbin's adoption of this framework demonstrates their belief that second language acquisition courses should go beyond the mere coverage of major theories and should instead equip teachers with the necessary skills for ably analyzing their students' learner language." (Martel, 2011, p. 37)

Exploring Learner Language

- Exploratory practice and post-method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2001)

- Pedagogy of particularity: one that is "sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular social milieu" (p. 538)

- Pedagogy of practicality: one that "encourag[es] and enabl[es] teachers themselves to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize" (p. 541)

Hitting the Ground

- *Exploring Learner Language* is a central text for bringing the SLA syllabus "to the ground" in second language teacher preparation and professional development programs

SLA @ UMN

- Course texts: *Exploring Learner Language* and *How Languages are Learned* (Lightbown & Spada, 2006)

- Deliverables: Language learner biography, exercises from *Exploring Learner Language*, learner language study, reflection on philosophy statement

- Topical syllabus

SLA @ UMN

1. Introduction	9. Devt. sequences	17. Reference
2. SLA origins	10. Devt. sequences, cont.	18. BICS/CALP
3. SLA origins, cont.	11. Variation	19. BICS/CALP, cont.
4. Individual differences	12. Teacher talk	20. Heritage learners
5. Theories of SLA	13. Teacher talk, cont.	21. LESLLA
6. Noticing/output	14. Codeswitching	22. History of English
7. Sociocultural theory	15. Corrective fdbk.	23. Tchrs. as rschrs.
8. Input processing	16. Corrective fdbk., cont.	24. Wrap up

SLA @ MIIS

- Course texts: *Exploring Learner Language*, *Theories in Second Language Acquisition: An Introduction* (VanPatten & White, 2007), and *Exploring Language Pedagogy through Second Language Acquisition Research* (Ellis & Shintani, 2013)

- Deliverables: Beliefs reflection, materials analysis, CBI analysis, replication of de Graaff et al. (2007) study, L2 learner case study

- Thematic syllabus

Ellis & Shintani (2013)

- "Our aim is to draw on SLA theory and research to examine pedagogical issues and problems. Our starting point is not SLA but language pedagogy. We want to explore to what extent various pedagogical practices are supported by what is currently known about how learners acquire another language. Thus we are not seeking to 'apply' SLA to language pedagogy but rather to 'use' it as a resource to investigate the kinds of claims that characterize pedagogical accounts of how to teach a language." (p. 1)
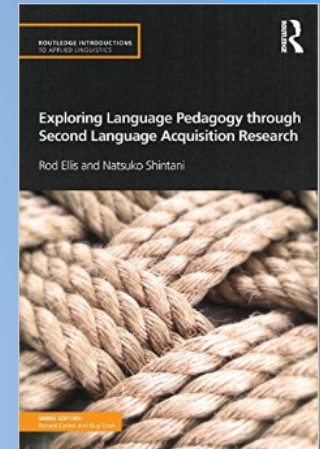
SLA @ MIIS

Theme 1: Overview/Introduction ● What is SLA? ● What are the roots/history of SLA? ● What general principles inform instructed SLA?	**Theme 4: Internal Perspective** ● What is the interface between classroom discourse and SLA?
Theme 2: Theories of SLA ● How are second languages learned?	**Theme 5: Learner Differences** ● How do learner differences influence SLA? ● How can teachers accommodate learner differences?
Theme 3: External Perspective ● How do current/popular methods, approaches, and teaching practices line up against SLA theory and research?	**Theme 6: Wrap-Up** ● What is the nature of a L2 learner's competence? ● What do we really know about SLA? ● Just helpful is SLA theory and research for teaching?

Lessons Learned

- Elaine Tarone (2007) wrote, "Language teacher education...is primarily a matter of equipping teachers to analyze language in continuously new settings so as to develop creative and effective environments for language learning."

Lessons Learned

- Elaine is amazing

- Language teaching and learning are better because of Elaine

- I am better because of Elaine

Thank You

Please feel free to contact me with any questions:

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