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Review of *The Art of Teaching Spanish: Second
Language Acquisition from Research to Praxis* by B.
Lafford and R. Salaberry

Todd A. Hernandez
Marquette University, todd.hernandez@marquette.edu

Salaberry, Rafael, and Barbara A. Lafford, eds.
The Art of Teaching Spanish: Second Language Acquisition from Research to Praxis.

Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 2006. Pp. 244. ISBN: 978-1-58901-133-5.

This text examines the relationship between the teaching of Spanish and current research on second language acquisition and is intended for foreign language teachers and applied linguists interested in using the findings from the research to enhance foreign language instruction.

The text consists of a preface and 11 chapters. The first chapter introduces the issues examined in the text. In Chapter 2, Klee and Barnes-Karol review Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum (FLAC) programs. The authors explain how FLAC courses provide students with opportunities to use their developing language skills to explore academic subjects in the target language. The authors outline three models for FLAC, and then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each one, as well as the challenges that FLAC programs face.

Collentine examines three areas of research and their impact on classroom practice and curriculum design in chapter 3. The three areas of research are: (1) constructivism, (2) psycholinguistics and cognition, and (3) sociocultural cognition. The author states that the constructivist movement in second language education represented a significant shift from teacher- to student-centered practices. Collentine then describes how cognitive perspectives further shaped second language instruction. He discusses how researchers (Schmidt and Terrell) began to recognize that comprehensible input was not sufficient for the acquisition of certain linguistic structures. Subsequent research examined the use of Focus on Form to foster morphosyntactic and grammatical development. Collentine concludes the chapter with a discussion of the role of sociocultural cognition in second language instruction. The author emphasizes the importance of group work and private speech in promoting language development.

Chapter 4 is a review of the important role of input in second language acquisition. VanPatten and Lesser discuss a range of input-based activities in a communicative context. The authors conclude with a discussion of different methods of input enhancement.

In Chapter 5, Negueruela and Lantolf explore concept-based instruction. The authors contrast traditional grammar instruction with concept-based instruction and then demonstrate how concept-based instruction seeks to promote students' awareness and conceptual knowledge of grammar.

In Chapter 6, Lafford and Collentine examine research on the development of students' Spanish in study abroad and classroom contexts. Recent research has found that study abroad has a positive effect on some measures of language proficiency. The authors then discuss how these findings can be used to enhance classroom language instruction. Future research should examine the length of the study abroad program, the living conditions, and the pre-study abroad proficiency level of the students. Further research is also needed in areas such as pronunciation, morphosyntax, and pragmatic competence.

Blake and Delforge evaluate online language learning in Chapter 7. The authors compare the progress of students enrolled in an online course with students enrolled in traditional Spanish language courses. Their findings suggest that online courses are effective in providing language instruction. The authors state, however, that further research is needed to better determine the role of the online format in students' language development.

In Chapter 8, Salaberry and Cohen outline theoretical aspects of classroom language assessment. The authors describe different test formats. After discussing the relationship between assessment and curriculum, the authors offer recommendations for classroom testing.

Gutiérrez and Fairclough address the issue of incorporating sociolinguistic variation into the classroom in Chapter 9. The authors describe how current Spanish textbooks do not take into account the variations of Spanish spoken in the United States. Gutiérrez and Fairclough then discuss strategies for teaching linguistic variation — from the use of authentic materials written in different varieties of United States Spanish to activities and research projects that promote student interaction with Hispanic communities.

In Chapter 10, Valdés argues for a better connection between second language acquisition and the heritage language teaching profession. She reviews the goals and objectives of heritage language instruction as well as theories of heritage language acquisition. Valdés outlines a research agenda that centers on the development of appropriate assessment procedures for heritage language learners and experimental studies examining the role of instruction in the development of heritage language acquisition.

Colina demonstrates how second language acquisition research can inform the teaching of professional translation in Chapter 11. She explains the importance of incorporating research on reading and writing as well as on

pragmatics and discourse into the translation classroom. Colina also argues for the development of advanced proficiency scales to assess the proficiency of translators and interpreters. The author concludes the chapter with recommendations for the integration of translation and interpretation into the second language curriculum.

The Art of Teaching Spanish: Second Language Acquisition from Research to Praxis is an excellent collection of studies. The different chapters in this text explore issues critical to the teaching of Spanish as a second language: (1) FLAC programs and content-based instruction, (2) the intersection of second language acquisition research, classroom practices, and curriculum design, (3) the role of input, (4) the relationship between concept-based instruction and other pedagogical practices in the acquisition of Spanish, (5) the effect of study abroad on the acquisition of Spanish, (6) online language learning, (7) assessment issues, (8) sociolinguistic variation in the classroom, (9) the connection between second language acquisition research and heritage language instruction, and (10) the teaching of translation. In conclusion, this volume offers a comprehensive overview of Spanish second language acquisition research. I therefore recommend the text for both undergraduate and graduate courses in teacher preparation.

Todd Hernández
Assistant Professor of Spanish
Marquette University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin