

***Understanding Second Language Acquisition* by Lourdes Ortega**  
**Discussion Questions for Chapter 2: Age**

1. Consider your own experiences and observations of language learning, the material in the text (particularly pages 16-17), and Ioup et al (1994). Discuss the ways in which age influences the *rate* of L2 acquisition. Then discuss what other factors (such as the characteristics of the language learning context or biological explanations) interact with age to affect *rate*.
  
2. Consider your own experiences and observations of language learning, the material in the text (particularly pages 16-17), and Ioup et al (1994). Discuss the ways in which age influences *ultimate attainment* of L2 acquisition. Then discuss what other factors (such as the characteristics of the language learning context or biological explanations) interact with age to affect *ultimate attainment*.
  
3. Ortega problematizes the monolingual bias in measuring L2 acquisition/competence by L1 acquisition/competence, arguing that because "bilingual attainment, whether in early or late bilinguals, cannot be directly compared to monolingual attainment" (p. 26), this may mean that "it is impossible for bilinguals to be monolinguals" (p. 27). What implications does this have for the study of SLA and the use of some of the methods discussed in class (i.e., grammaticality judgment tasks, accent ratings) to measure attainment?
  
4. What does our current knowledge about age effects suggest for policy issues in your countries?