

UNDERSTANDING SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION BY LOURDES ORTEGA

Discussion Questions for Chapter 7: Foreign Language Aptitude

1. Briefly summarize your understanding of (a) the construct of language aptitude in relation to SLA, and (b) how it is typically measured, and (c) how this construct overlaps with the constructs of intelligence and first language ability.
2. Keeping in mind your answer to question one, and considering both Ortega's explanation of the MLAT as well as your own experience with the MLAT in class, problematize language aptitude as measured by the MLAT.
3. In relation to an L2 learning context that you are familiar with, discuss how a weakness in *language analytic ability* would likely play out over time in the L2 learning rate, route, and ultimate attainment of learners. In your answer, be sure to (a) clarify the particulars of the context (e.g., instructed/naturalistic), (b) define the construct of language analytic ability, and (c) select relevant concepts discussed by Ortega (e.g., the role of literacy) to deepen your discussion.
4. In relation to an L2 learning context that you are familiar with, discuss how a weakness in *memory capacities* would likely play out over time in the L2 learning rate, route, and ultimate attainment of learners. In your answer, be sure to (a) clarify the particulars of the context (e.g., instructed/naturalistic), (b) define the construct of memory capacity, and (c) select relevant concepts discussed by Ortega (e.g., short-term memory as it relates to vocabulary acquisition) to deepen your discussion.