**Second Language Acquisition**

It began in 1970’s with the interest in learners’ errors and language learning. It is the field of study that investigates the processes by which a foreign language or a second language is learned. A focus on language learning thus emerged as a complementary perspective to teaching, beginning with an interest in learners’ errors as evidence of learning processes. It subsequently developed to what is now referred to as the field of language acquisition (SLA). The latter involves the development of the knowledge of a complex system of sounds, words, structures, and meanings of any native language by children or adults. It also involves the acquisition of the ability to use that system appropriately in different social settings. SLA follows the footsteps of L1 acquisition research both in methodology and in many of the issues that have been treated.

**SLA and FLA (Foreign Language Acquisition)**

The two terms are used interchangeably, yet the former (SLA) has gained sway in recent literature and has come to cover both classroom and naturalistic acquisition. Technically speaking, learning a foreign language is learning a language that is not spoken in the surrounding community, and learning a second language is learning a language that is spoken in the surrounding community.

**SLA Stages of Language Acquisition**

**Stage1: Pre-production**

This is a silent period; learners may know up to 5 hundred words in their receptive language but they are not speaking yet. Some students can repeat everything they hear, but this is parroting not producing.

**Stage 2: Early Production**

This stage may last to 6 months. Learners may develop a receptive and active vocabulary of about 1000 words. They can speak in one or two word phrases, and memorize short chunks that may not be used accurately.

**Stage 3: Speech Emergence**

Learners may know up to 3000 words and may communicate with simple phrases and sentences. They can ask simple questions that may or may not be grammatically correct. They can imitate short conversations and understand easy stories supported with pictures.

**Stage 4: Intermediate Fluency**

Learners may know 6000 active words. They start using more complex sentences and express ideas when speaking and writing. They can use some strategies from their native language to learn content in English and may translate from their native language. Their comprehension of English literature and social sciences content is increasing.

**Stage 5: Advanced Fluency**

It may take 4 to 10 years to be achieved. Learners develop a cognitive and an academic language proficiency that enables them to perform at near native ability.