

DEPARTMENT OF
SECOND LANGUAGE STUDIES

❁ German: Zweitspracherwerb ❁

SLS HOME

ADMISSIONS

DEGREES

COURSES

FACULTY

- Abe
- Bardovi-Harlig
- Darcy
- deJong
- Dekydtspotter
- Félix-Brasdefer
- Friedman
- Geeslin
- Hartford
- LeSourd
- Shin
- Sprouse
- Stringer
- Yilmaz

VISITING
SCHOLARS

PUBLICATIONS

ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
INSTRUCTION

CONTACT US

MEET THE FACULTY

Rex A. Sprouse

- Professor, Second Language Studies and Germanic Studies
- Director, Graduate Studies

Education:

- Ph.D. in Germanic linguistics, Princeton University, 1989
- M.A. in Germanic linguistics, Princeton University, 1983
- B.A. in comparative literature and German, Hiram College, 1979



Contact Information

rsprouse@indiana.edu

<http://www.indiana.edu/~dsls/faculty/sprouse.shtml>

BH 661

office: (812) 855-3248; cell: (812) 272-3332

Research Interests

Second language acquisition, structure and history of the languages of Western Europe (Germanic, Romance, Celtic) and Turkish, syntactic theory, language contact

Personal Statement:

The primary goal of my research is to gain a better understanding of the adult second language paradox: Why is that adults exposed to a nonnative language develop systems of linguistic knowledge of a startlingly rich and complex nature, including properties for which there is little or no evidence in the input ("poverty/bankruptcy of the stimulus"), while still (in a large percentage of cases) experiencing significant difficulty in the acquisition and use of relatively "simple" features of word choice and form? I am best known in second language studies for proposing (together with Bonnie D. Schwartz, University of Hawaii/) the Full Transfer/Full Access hypothesis and for pioneering (together with Laurent Dekydtspotter, Indiana University) research on the syntax-semantics interface in English-French interlanguage. I am currently developing the Deep Lexical Transfer Hypothesis, which re-conceptualizes Full Transfer in terms of relexification/relabeling in the sense that Claire Lefebvre (Université du Québec à Montréal) has used these terms to describe creole genesis. I am also considering ways in which the Language Instinct becomes "blunted" over the course of the life span, even though the fundamental architecture of grammars and processing mechanisms remain untouched.

Additional topics that have captured my interest over the years include case and agreement in German and Icelandic, perfect auxiliary selection in Romance and Germanic, the comparative correlative construction in German, the syntax of ditransitive verbs in the Germanic languages, and the development of tag questions in

Welsh.

Courses Recently Taught:

- Acquiring New Language Systems
- English Grammar for Learning and Teaching
- Introduction to Second Language Acquisition
- Seminar in Applied Linguistics: The Bilingual Mental Lexicon
- The Successful Language Learner

Current Faculty-Student Research Group:

- L2 Acquisition of the English Dative Alternation

Recent publication highlights

Schwartz, Bonnie D. & Rex A. Sprouse (2013)

Generative approaches and the poverty of the stimulus. In Julia Herschensohn & Martha Young-Scholten (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 137-158. .

Darcy, Isabelle, Laurent Dedytspotter, Rex A. Sprouse, Justin Glover, Christiane Kaden, Michael McGuire & John H.G. Scott (2012) Direct mapping of acoustics to phonology: On the lexical encoding of front round vowels in L1 English-L2 French acquisition. *Second Language Research* 28: 5-4

Sprouse, Rex A. (2011) The Interface Hypothesis and Full Transfer/Full Access/Full Parse: A brief comparison. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 1: 97-100.

Sprouse, Rex A. (2010) The invisibility of SLA theory in mainstream creole linguistics. *Second Language*

Research 26: 261-277.

Sprouse, Rex A. (2009) Creoles and interlanguages, conclusions and research desiderata: A reply to Plag. *Language, Interaction of Acquisition/Language, Interaction and Acquisition* 1: 273-291.