

Jorge Pinto, Nélia Alexandre: Multilingualism and third language acquisition: Learning and teaching trends

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The book entitled *Multilingualism and third language acquisition: Learning and teaching trends* was published by Language Science Press in 2021.

It was written as a contribution to the field of language learning and teaching as well as language acquisition. This book aims to present a collection of research papers that incorporate various fields and studies of multilingualism and third language acquisition. The objectives are to present recent theoretical and empirical research results in the aforementioned areas conducted by an international group of researchers. The book is divided into two main parts: language acquisition and learning. It consists of 9 chapters written by 16 scholars from 8 countries that are presented in three thematic elements, providing this volume with a transparent structure. Following the table of contents and acknowledgments in the preface, Jorge Pinto and Nélia Alexandre from the University of Lisbon address the main topic, that is, second and third language acquisition, as well as its complexity before moving on to the significance of this research area which clarifies the process of additional language acquisition and highlights the advantages of multilingual education.

Part I, *Language Acquisition*, was written by four authors who focused on selective attention, phonology, and working memory within language acquisition. In the first chapter of Part 1, entitled *Cognitive processes and interpreting expertise: Autonomous exercise of Master's students*, Serena Ghiselli demonstrates the research results from part of a Ph.D. study on conference interpreting students at the University of Bologna, selective attention as well as working memory. Following a well-structured introduction to the theoretical background of skill acquisition, the author presents the research, which evaluated working memory and selective attention by carrying out psychological tests, before outlining its findings that aimed to prove her hypothesis that both working memory and selective attention can be improved over time by completing certain extra activities during self-study.

The following chapter, entitled *On the Acquisition of European Portuguese liquid consonants by L1-Mandarin Learners* written by Chao Zhou, Maria João Freitas, and Adelina Castelo from the University of Lisbon, investigates 14 L1-Mandarin speakers' acquisition of European Portuguese liquid consonants and the prosodic effect on L2 phonological acquisition by picture-naming tasks. After a brief overview of possible reasons for L2 speech learning difficulties concerning liquid consonants in European Portuguese and Mandarin, the authors present their study and its findings. Their study is a valuable contribution to the research on the acquisition of novel liquids, as the results indicate that the difficulty with EP

liquids for L1-Mandarin speakers depends on the relationship between the L1 and L2 categories.

Six authors contributed to Part II, entitled *Language Teaching*. In the first chapter, entitled *A close look at how context of acquisition of previous languages influences third language pedagogy: Does one model fit all?* written by Ana Carvalho, the focus shifts to third language acquisition from a pedagogical perspective. She highlights the importance of identifying the context of language acquisition with regard to the already acquired languages as well as in terms of classroom performance and the perception of the learning process. Carvalho focuses on two groups of English-Spanish bilinguals learning Portuguese as their L3: learners who acquired Spanish as a heritage language and those who acquired it as an L2. The author presents her study on Spanish L1, L2, and Heritage-Language speakers learning Portuguese as their L3 at the University of Arizona. She identifies significant differences between these groups based on learning strategies and preferred teaching methods.

In the following chapter, entitled *Multilingual Teachers, plurilingual approach and L3 Acquisition: Interviews with multilingual teachers and their L3/L3+ Students*, Emel Kucukali focuses on plurilingual approaches. Beginning with a theoretical overview, the author provides a brief review of the differences between second and third-language acquisition and plurilingual approaches, providing a holistic view of multilingualism. Following the review, readers are acquainted with research conducted on the plurilingual approaches of three multilingual teachers at a Turkish public university in three different foreign language classrooms, namely English, German, and Russian, as well as on the responses of their L3/L3+ students participating in the lessons. This chapter and the study's results demonstrate the individuality of each student's language background, language knowledge, and metalinguistic level.

In the third chapter, entitled *Debunking student teachers' beliefs regarding the target-language-only rule*, Pierre-Luc Paquet and Nina Woll address the controversial topic of the target-language-only rule in classrooms. The authors present their research results from a vignette-based questionnaire of 40 student teachers from Quebec and Mexico. The participants were given certain situations in which they had to reflect on using other languages in the classroom besides the target language. The results of the study are impressive and thought-provoking, revealing a substantial difference between the two groups of student teachers as well as attempting to give an insight into and provide an explanation for the different attitudes in addition to approaches to the target-language-only rule in the classroom context from the perspective of these student teachers.

In the last chapter of Part 2, entitled *Training teachers for the challenges of multilingual education*, Julia Barnes and Margareta Almgren demonstrate a field of study that would require more in-depth research, that is, as the title suggests, how trainee teachers are prepared for multilingual classrooms. As their research

was done on the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain, the authors provide an overview of the sociolinguistic situation there to familiarize the readers with it before presenting their impressive project named *One child's linguistic picture* where trainee teachers measured and mapped the language development, production, and understanding of 4-year-old children from both Spain and the Basque Autonomous Community. The tests, questionnaires, and research as a whole could be valuable resources for trainee teachers working in multilingual environments and for students taking part in teacher-training courses.

Part III, entitled *Language Learning*, was compiled from the work of four contributors. In the first chapter of Part 3, entitled *Exploring learner attitudes in multilingual contexts: An empirical investigation at the primary school level*, Barbara Hofer from the University of Innsbruck focuses on a critical aspect of language learning, specifically, language-learning attitude. The author of this chapter investigates how different contexts, for example, sociolinguistic and educational, can affect learners' attitudes toward language learning. The study was conducted in one of the best settings for studying multilingualism, South Tyrol, which is highly linguistically diverse due to the language conflict of the three spoken languages there, namely Italian, German, and Ladin. Two hundred nine primary school students participated in her research, examining the attitude of multilingual language learners towards Italian as an L2. Her study and results revealed that multilingual learning programs can boost the motivation and attitude of students toward language learning.

In the next chapter, entitled *Building Bridges between Languages: How students develop crosslinguistic awareness in multilingual learning settings*, Gisela Mayr investigated crosslinguistic awareness in South Tyrol with the participation of secondary school students in a multilingual learning setting, where their L1 is German, L2 Italian, L3 English, and L4 French. Firstly, the author provides a brief overview of crosslinguistic awareness and plurilingual task-based learning, which are both essential concepts in this research, before moving on to the study itself and its results which demonstrate how plurilingual task-based learning leads to raising consciousness, thereby enabling students to judge their own linguistic competences as well as develop an awareness of the different cultures and acquired languages.

In the last chapter of the book, entitled *Students' Perceptions of Plurilingual nonnative Teachers in higher education: An added or a muddled value?*, Patchareerat Yanaprasart and Sílvia Melo-Pfeifer compare students' perceptions of nonnative teachers and their performance and how their perceptions affect their academic achievements. Twenty-seven students from the University of Geneva and 60 from the University of Hamburg participated in the research. The results of the study were surprising as neither of the groups reported any superiority of "nativism" nor differentiated between native and nonnative teachers, since their

expectations of both teachers are the same, moreover are unanimously in favor of plurilingualism as it is regarded as a cognitive and pedagogical advantage.

This diverse book offers an impressive and fascinating insight into multilingualism in numerous countries worldwide by presenting a comprehensive overview of the presence of third language acquisition and multilingualism in education. This publication, along with its collection of various theoretical articles on perspectives, theories, current trends, and empirical research into language learning and teaching as well as multilingual acquisition, is undoubtedly a valuable resource for both undergraduate and Ph.D. students doing research, for researchers in the field of third language acquisition and multilingualism, and for teachers interested in cultural diversity.

Reference

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